

BOOK REVIEWS

Marpeck: A Life of Dissent and Conformity. By Walter Klaassen and William Klassen. Scottdale, Pa.: Herald Press. 2008. Pp. 423. \$32.99.

For those interested in the contribution of Pilgram Marpeck to Anabaptist traditions and of those traditions to historical and contemporary reflections on faith and practice, this eagerly anticipated biography stands as a masterly summary of earlier scholarship and a platform for future studies. Its two authors could not be better prepared to render this service. By offering translations of many of Marpeck's then-known works in 1978, Walter Klaassen and William Klassen made this fascinating figure and capable theologian accessible to new generations of students and scholars, spurring a virtual renaissance in Marpeck studies. Now, thirty years later, they judiciously combine the work of more recent scholars (Neal Blough, Stephen Boyd, Heinold Fast, Martin Rothkegel, John Rempel and Werner Packull) with that of earlier ones (Johann Loserth, J. C. Wenger, J. J. Kiwiet, Harold Bender), while contributing original research and perspectives of their own about Marpeck's context, life and work.

The authors follow the chronological trajectory of Marpeck's life—his early professional and religious activity in the Tirol; his resignation and relocation to Moravia; his commissioning and move to Strasbourg; his emergence there as an Anabaptist leader and his disagreements with Spiritualists, as well as magisterial reformers and evangelical councilors; his expulsion, followed by travels and work in Switzerland, Bavaria and Moravia; and, finally, his residence, professional work and pastoral activity in Augsburg. The authors' narrative casts into relief issues or events that illuminate important aspects of Marpeck's work. For example, their exposition of the technology involved with mining, wood delivery and water works sheds light on Marpeck's value to the regimes in Strasbourg, St. Gall and Augsburg, and helps to explain why they tolerated his Anabaptist activities as long as they did. In addition, the authors' careful, historical delineation of the comings and goings of Anabaptists and Spiritualists in Strasbourg makes clear the purposes of Marpeck's booklets from that period, as well as the threat he posed to the evangelical reformers and city councilors. Further, Klaassen and Klassen draw together a great deal of work on the role of Anabaptist women in the mission and family life of the movements, which makes possible more nuanced judgments about gender during the period. Finally, two appendices provide clear and helpful guides to Marpeck's extended *Response (Antwort)* to Caspar Scwhenckfeld and to the disparate collection of writings called the *Kunstabuch*.

Klaassen and Klassen frame their interpretation of Marpeck, as the title makes clear, stating that he was “. . . a man who was both a dissenter to injustice and a conformist to the highest human values, especially the right to live according to one's conscience so that all people some day may be free” (22).

The authors observe that Marpeck defied the Constantinian domination of people's lives and faith by ruling elites—whether old (Charles V and Ferdinand

l) or new (city councilors, such as Strasbourg's Jakob Sturm). Marpeck and his fellow believers insisted on seeking "forgiveness without the mediation of priest or bishop" (352). He strove to build communities of mutual respect from the bottom up, including miners and laborers, as well as those of noble birth. Affirming personal sovereignty in matters of faith and ethics, he rejected coercion in matters of faith and violence as a means to settle differences. Klaassen and Klassen offer a sustained analysis of Marpeck's nuanced and evolving position on the various oaths common to the period. His position, they claim, reserved the right to dissent from the use of deadly force, while affirming the claims on him by the authorities and his responsibilities to others outside the conventicle. As examples of that responsiveness, they detail the "public works projects in various cities, resulting in the direct improvement in people's living and working conditions" (352). Refusing to split "religious realities into inner and outer, spiritual and material," Marpeck believed the gathered Body of Christ must "affirm joy and make peace and justice available not just to members of the kingdom of God but to all humanity" (353).

In all of these areas, Klaassen and Klassen effectively synthesize earlier scholarship and lay the foundation for further interesting work. I offer one example of possible future directions: their careful attention to the aims of Archduke Ferdinand I of Austria (later King of Bohemia and Holy Roman Emperor) and the connections Marpeck had with him throughout his life begs for further development.

Ferdinand came to power in a time of increasing tension between dynastic rulers and leaders of the four estates—the clergy, nobility, the cities and the business community. His grandfather, Emperor Maximilian, tended to "ease the financial burdens and grant [the estates] even greater local autonomy" (76). By contrast, Ferdinand decided, early in his career, that he would protect and advance his monarchic prerogatives, with an insistence on obedience to the sacerdotal Roman faith as a central tool. At 19, he orchestrated, in Wiener-Neustadt, the public execution of seventeen civic leaders, "including the mayor of Vienna, nobles, judges, city councilors, and a distinguished professor" (75). Throughout his life, Ferdinand brooked no opinion or action—public or private—that challenged the authority of the Old Faith and, by extension, his own.

When ordered to implement Ferdinand's religio-political policies of uniformity and obedience among the miners, Marpeck refused and resigned his office. Baptized in Moravia, Marpeck probably left for Strasbourg after Ferdinand sent a letter asking about his activities there. For the rest of his life, Marpeck encountered Ferdinand's persistent attempts, through threats of deadly force, to impose a Catholic uniformity throughout the empire.

Adult baptism was a capital offense in the empire since the time of Justinian precisely because infant baptism was one of a number of practices that trained the bodies and minds of subjects to accept submission to the ruling elite. Baptism, then, was not simply a spiritual, or religious act; it was also a political, social and economic act. By constituting communities committed to mutual spiritual, social and economic service, adult baptism created new cultural spaces that served as antidotes to the deadening virus of domination spread by the

ruling elite's tactics of terror. The early enthusiasm and spread of Anabaptist ideas and practices among the miners he served in the Tirol, for example, must have been fueled, at least in part, by those new possibilities. For that reason, I agree and disagree with Klaassen and Klassen when they say:

But Marpeck was politically quite traditional. He upheld the legitimate authority of emperors, kings, and councils for the maintenance of social order. He had no vision for a new social order or political order such as that held by the Anabaptists of Münster in Westphalia or by John Calvin. But he believed in the autonomy of God's kingdom in the midst of the kingdoms of this world, and he devoted himself to that vision (26).

He did uphold legitimate, secular authorities—with some limits—as they regulated the exchange of goods and services necessary for the flourishing of an interdependent humanity. However, Marpeck's commitment to the autonomy of small, strictly voluntary communities of mutual support and discipline led to the possibility of a new, more just social and political order. Certainly, that order would not be imposed by force—as in Münster and Geneva—but could grow and spread as others were drawn to it.

Wake Forest University

STEPHEN B. BOYD

Mennonite Women in Canada: A History. By Marlene Epp. Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press. 2008. Pp. 378. \$50, cloth; \$26.95, paper.

Marlene Epp's lyrical narrative captures her readers from her first words and carries them gently and swiftly through to her final chapter. Reading her prose is like coursing downstream on a wide, broad river; her explanations and guidance adroitly maneuver her readers into new streams of understandings and analysis. Her style is important—and capture us she must, for when it comes to writing history, scholars of Mennonite women often face a difficult and twofold challenge, that of defense and of education.

Historians of Mennonite women almost inevitably write from a defensive position. Their task, to legitimize Clio Yoder (the mythical muse of Mennonite women's history) to scholars of institutional and community memory, is fraught with stumbling blocks. These stumbling blocks—namely unawareness and aversion on the part of fellow scholars—rest on a cornerstone set in the broader community that has historically silenced women and that contains subgroups whose acceptance of patriarchy is considered normative. Within this context, writing women back into history is still viewed as somewhat suspect. It is a good thing that women's historians cultivate a great sense of humor. It is a better thing when historians like Marlene Epp pull out all the stops and write not only from their minds but also from their hearts, exhibiting a passion for a scholarly pursuit, which is also a cause, and an impressive ability to draw readers into the narrative. Some might criticize this as too political but writing women back into history is a political act and will remain so until women are as present in the narratives as they were in history.

There is also a dire need for education. As Epp notes in her introductory chapter, women's history among scholars of Mennonites remains shrouded in a

low-lying fog. She offers recent examples of women being overlooked as church founders and community builders. When mentioned at all, they are usually listed as “wives of.” But we know that women were more than “wives of.” They were there, always there, doing work that shaped Mennonite institutions, communities and churches. While women’s historians have graduated from including these “women worthies” in their narratives to posing questions about how gender is constructed among Anabaptist groups, in the general field of Mennonite history the fog has not lifted. To the task of illuminating the long-forgotten and teaching theory, Epp uses all the tools at the historian’s disposal. She tells stories, posits theories, and gives voice to the contexts and work of women’s lives and experiences.

Epp starts each chapter with three stories or anecdotes that illustrate the chapter’s major themes. Some readers might view her initial approach to women’s history as a pass of sorts. Why start with stories? First, the stories serve to introduce the reader to the histories of particular Mennonite women. Here we meet women like Agatha Loewen Schmidt and Helen Loewen Warkentin. Agatha was a preacher who served her congregation long before women were sanctioned in the pulpit. Helen worked as a missionary in India for four decades and upon the establishment of an orphanage in her name and memory she was told, “But for your color, you are bone of our bone and pain of our pain.” In Epp’s book women are given a place in history as those whose work was critical, not marginal, to Mennonite institutions.

By including nonconformists, nonresisters and citizens, Epp reaches beyond missionaries, church builders and others whose contributions are perhaps easily identified. We meet nonconformist Malinda Bricker who objected to the plain dress codes of her time but nonetheless donned the bonnet and joined the church. We meet nonresisters who established homes, managed farms, worked and nurtured families with absent fathers, and supported the convictions of conscientious objector men. They did this in spite of being excluded from “the discourse regarding possibly the primary signifier over time of what it meant to be a Mennonite” (204). These women operated in a public sphere, their concerns and lives in part shaped by decisions meant to challenge the dominant political ideas of the day.

In a graceful inclusive sweep, Epp stretches even further out of the public sphere and into the private, including quilters, canners and writers, the women whose pursuits, often restricted by a domestic ideology, have not typically been recognized as “kingdom building.” The stories illustrate deftly the applicability of feminist theory and gender analysis to Mennonite communities. Those establishment, community and lay historians who are open and who can hear women’s voices speaking through time will, in Epp’s book, learn how to include women in their narratives.

Of concern to women’s historians is a rigorous application of theory. Separate spheres theory was first applied to extrapolate women’s experience during the Industrial Revolution. Many women’s historians have shown how the ideology and physical reality of separate spheres distinguished male from female, public from private, and work from home. Over time women’s historians found the theory inadequate and theories of mutuality surpassed separate spheres.

However, Mennonite theological emphasis on a dual worldview, including a rejection of “worldly” influences, or a separation of “the world” from the “community of believers,” may result in a particular brand of gender separation. Epp speculates that separate spheres theory remains pertinent to analyzing Mennonite women’s spiritual and material lives. If one accepts this notion then women’s canning, quilting, baking and sewing takes on a heightened significance for it is the work of material culture that has in large part shaped Mennonite identity.

And finally, Epp’s analysis reaches to include diverse women. While many of her Mennonite women are traditional “ethnics” from European backgrounds, the narrative also includes stories of insider women whose skin color and ethnicities are different. We learn that Hmong (Laotian) immigrants experienced war, migration and resettlement in Canadian churches in ways surprisingly parallel to Russian Mennonite immigrants of the World War II era. Both groups of women contained large numbers of women heads of households, who after fleeing hardship and war and immigrating to new worlds (metaphorically and physically), faced significant challenges in participating in established churches.

Epp’s inclusive vision invigorates Mennonite history, Canadian immigration history and the histories of women in religion. She presents a masterful synthesis of Mennonite women’s history in Canada. The bibliography, an exhaustive list of the best writing in the field and a great source for any scholar looking to familiarize herself with the current state of the field, is contribution enough.

Although Epp’s work shines through the fog, chasing away enveloping patriarchal clouds, it is hardly conceivable that the fog will evaporate any time soon. Perhaps the fog will lift when historians routinely – instead of selectively – see women in their histories. Proud nonconformists, Mennonite groups have nevertheless largely borrowed their gendered expectations from the broader societies in which they find themselves. Given the state of Mennonite women’s history, one could argue that while we borrow, we borrow late. In spite of the many fine contributions by Epp and others, Mennonite women’s history lags behind other groups. On the other hand—and hear this, all ye graduate students—the field is still ripe, fertile and ready for the many, many unexplored gendered dimensions of women in the Mennonite Church and related communities.

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KIMBERLY D. SCHMIDT

Searching for Sacred Ground: The Journey of Chief Lawrence Hart, Mennonite. By Raylene Hinz-Penner. Telford, Pa.: Cascadia Publishing House. 2007. Pp. 205. \$19.95.

For a scholarly journal such as *The Mennonite Quarterly Review*, what are the criteria for this book? Those of religious studies? Mennonite studies? Literature? History and biography? All of these?

The subtitle can mislead. This volume is not only about Chief Hart as Mennonite; it surely also is about him as Cheyenne. Equally or more, it is about Raylene Hinz-Penner’s personal search for spirituality. For that search, Hinz-

Penner turned to Chief Hart and his story. Like Hart, she had been reared in rural Oklahoma, absorbing the moods of its landscape. She too was not only Mennonite but also deeply conscious of how, especially in Oklahoma, Mennonite and Native American histories have intertwined. Most of all, her personal religious quest led her to cherish traditional Cheyenne spirituality. Hart is both a Cheyenne peace chief and a Mennonite minister. In his story she found Mennonitism and Native American spirituality mixing to form a rich blend. As a work of personal inspiration and a source for religious studies, *Searching for Sacred Ground* clearly succeeds.

The book is also a primary-source document of Mennonite mood and outlook. Very often, the current outlook is one of inclusion, of joining hands across old boundaries. It also favors liturgies and ceremony (much of it borrowed) more than doctrine, and frequently seems to find inspiration in God's physical creation as much as in Scripture. If all that is true, Hinz-Penner's book illustrates the current Mennonite outlook.

Literary qualities? According to the book's ancillary information, Hinz-Penner has taught literature in colleges for many years and written poetry. In this book, not nearly all of her prose is remarkable, but some is. Especially as she describes the Oklahoma countryside or, even more, Cheyenne rituals or Hart's deep attachments, her language rises to poetry. At the same time, readers may not find the book's organization quite so artistic. As she wrote, she constantly shifted back and forth, often quite abruptly, from subject matter to her own feelings and responses, her personal history, her research process and her travels. Someone who picks up this book (as I did) for what the subtitle promises—that is, "*The Journey of Chief Lawrence Hart*"—may be irritated at the way she fragments Hart's story with excerpts about herself. Another Mennonite poet, Julie Kasdorf, writing *Joseph W. Yoder, Amish American*, used a different strategy. Kasdorf's book is roughly comparable to Hinz-Penner's, in that both used biography as a vehicle for personal agenda. But instead of intruding herself into the biography of Yoder, Kasdorf confined her personal agenda almost entirely to preface and afterword. The results are less intrusion, less fragmentation.

A fourth way to read *Searching for Sacred Ground* is as history. Historically, Lawrence Hart's biography and journey are worthy topics indeed. Born in 1933, Hart is a direct descendent of the well-known peace chief Black Kettle. Even more importantly, when Hart was 44 his tribe chose him to be a peace chief in Black Kettle's tradition. Deeply imprinted in Hart's consciousness are the searing stories of Black Kettle's survival in the historic Sand Creek massacre, his role in the Treaty of Medicine Lodge, and then, despite his strenuous efforts for peace, his death in the Washita Battle (or massacre) in 1868. Later, Hart's grandfather attended the famous or infamous Carlisle Indian School in Pennsylvania. Under the Dawes Act of 1887, whose policies attacked tribes' cultures and ways, the grandfather and Hart's father became settled farmers. Meanwhile, the grandfather traveled over several states as a leader of the Native American Church, which had emerged out of the peyote cult.

Meanwhile also, German-speaking Mennonites began missions among the Cheyenne and Arapaho tribes. Hart's grandmother and mother became Mennonites and his father a lay Mennonite minister. Rather late in life the

grandfather too became Mennonite, yet somehow still traveled on behalf of the Native American Church. As a lad, Lawrence Hart sometimes went with him.

Indeed, in his pre-school years, the child Lawrence lived with his grandparents, spoke Cheyenne before English, and—as Hinz-Penner shrewdly observed—was thereby a generation closer to his Native-American heritage than were many of his peers. After high school he attended Bethel College, the General Conference Mennonite school in Kansas; fulfilled a boyhood dream by becoming an aviator (in the U.S. Navy); married a German-American Mennonite, Betty Bartel; attended the Mennonite seminary at Elkhart, Indiana; and became a Mennonite pastor at Clinton, Oklahoma. Hinz-Penner's chronology is not rigorous, but apparently Hart was already a Mennonite pastor when his Cheyenne people made him their peace chief. Perhaps he was one of several; again, such details are not clear. Whatever the case, in that role he often led, and leads, Cheyenne people in their traditional celebrations and rituals. Yet he is also a modern kind of leader who has busily provided a Cheyenne cultural center along with social services for his community's Native American peoples. He has held various Mennonite offices and his civic contributions are such that Oklahoma has declared him a "state treasure."

In Lawrence Hart's story, history runs broad and deep. Readers wanting to understand that history may wish at certain points that Hinz-Penner had offered a few more paragraphs of context. Obviously, the Dawes Act of 1887 was a potent influence that deeply changed the Hart family's way of life and made their people's communal life and rituals much harder to maintain. Yet Hinz-Penner did not explore standard textbook information about the Act. And despite the role of Hart's grandfather in the Native American Church, with the young Lawrence often at his side, she offered not even a paragraph or two to explain that faith. As for Mennonite interactions with Native Americans, her approach is celebratory, not critical analysis. The celebratory approach is appropriate for her purpose, not a fault. Still, readers who want analysis have to look elsewhere. A good place to start is chapters 2-4 of Lois Barrett's *The Vision and the Reality* (1983), a historical study of General Conference Mennonite missions. In Barrett's telling, the interaction of General Conference missionaries with Native Americans takes on quite a different tone.

Even if it does not always satisfy, the history in Hinz-Penner's book is truly valuable. It is priceless to have the Mennonite story in North America enriched by this sensitive account of how the complex encounters of European Mennonites with Native Americans worked themselves out in the life of so talented a leader. Whether Hart's story enriches Cheyenne history in a similar way, this reviewer is not competent to say. Surely it enriches national history. U.S. history needs an abundance of authentic accounts about what eventually happened to tribes and bands and individual Native Americans. Those accounts need to communicate quite a bit through Native American eyes and speak from Native American hearts. Hinz-Penner's many conversations and interviews with Lawrence Hart do both.

Searching for Sacred Ground is first of all a book about Hinz-Penner's search for spirituality. She found her treasure in Hart's story and, not least, in his people's history. The history she then transmitted is celebratory. Critical, analytical

history was not her purpose. Nonetheless, what she delivered enriches even that kind.

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Theron F. Schlabach

Paul Tschetter: The Story of a Hutterite Immigrant Leader, Pioneer and Pastor. By Rod Janzen. Eugene, Ore.: Pickwick Publications. 2009. Pp. 304. \$35.

Rod Janzen, senior scholar and professor at Fresno Pacific University, tells two important stories in this volume. As Janzen describes the life and times of Paul Tschetter, he also provides insights into the history of the noncommunal, or *Prairieleut*, Hutterites. The two themes are inseparable because Paul Tschetter's life revolved around his leadership of the noncommunal Hutterites and his attempt to maintain their traditions and beliefs. Hutterites were among the numerous groups of Anabaptists with different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds and experiences who migrated from various parts of Europe and Russia to North America in the 1870s. These immigrants became the "prairie people," as they settled from central Kansas to Manitoba. Elucidating the differences and similarities among the Mennonite and Hutterite groups is a significant contribution of this volume, and understanding these relationships makes it valuable reading for anyone interested in or descended from these Mennonite or Hutterite immigrants.

Although very few noncommunal Hutterite churches survive today and their history is completely overshadowed by their communal branches, roughly two thirds of the Hutterites who arrived in North America in the 1870s were noncommunal. Paul Tschetter was their leader and with his uncle, Lohrentz, represented the Hutterites on a delegation that explored settlement sites in North America in 1873. Ten of the delegates were Mennonites. Born in 1842, Tschetter was younger than the other delegates, an early recognition of his leadership abilities. His diary during these travels, which is reprinted here (227-266), provides insights into his beliefs and serves as the best account of the delegation's work. One of the highlights of the trip was Tschetter's audience with President Grant to discuss the issue of a military service exemption.

Janzen investigates a mystery as to why after wintering in Elkhart, Indiana, for four months in late 1879, the Hutterites ended up settling near what is now Freeman, South Dakota, along with a large group of Volhynian Mennonites, when their intent had been to establish more compact and isolated colonies along the Red River in the northern Dakota Territory. Ironically, escaping the "corrupting" influence of the much larger Mennonite groups in Russia had been a major motive pushing Tschetter to advocate leaving Russia.

The similarity of noncommunal Hutterite and Mennonite beliefs and practices will likely surprise some readers. The foundation of both groups' belief systems were believer's baptism and nonresistance. Both preached in German during two-hour church services with men and women on separate sides of the sanctuary. Singing was a cappella and leaders "lined" the hymns. The daily routines and challenges of prairie life were virtually identical for Mennonites and

Hutterites—from planting Turkey Red wheat through encounters with blizzards, grasshoppers and tornados. Still, Janzen notes some important exceptions. For example, unlike many prairie Mennonites who were influenced by the Prohibition movement during the last quarter of the nineteenth century, Tschetter and most Hutterites were not teetotalers.

Tschetter became the leader of the Neu Hutterthaler community and congregation near Freeman, a position he held until his death in 1919. Much of his role can be seen as holding back change. Tschetter opposed gun ownership, baseball, bowling, pool, musical instruments in church, bicycles, missions or evangelism, and tobacco. Many Hutterites and some Mennonites held similar positions on these issues, but he tended to be more intransigent and dogmatic than even most of the noncommunal Hutterites. Most of the other leaders of the 1870s migration were older and gone by the beginning of the twentieth century. So when it came to boundary maintenance and resistance to acculturation, Tschetter held the line much longer than most.

For Mennonite and Hutterite immigrants alike the last quarter of the nineteenth century brought religious ferment, with other groups successfully attracting members away. For Hutterites the main appeal was from the more evangelical and nearby Krimmer Mennonite Brethren. All but one of Paul Tschetter's children defected. The first General Conference Mennonite Church missionary, S. S. Haury, even considered the Hutterites as a potential mission field before choosing native American missions in what is now Oklahoma. Janzen provides a rather harsh assessment of Haury's critique of the Hutterites (144-146). Tschetter was not attracted to revivals, gospel hymns and the more "emotional" worship of the Mennonite Brethren or General Conference denominations.

One major theological difference between Mennonites and Hutterites relates to worship and the reading of seventeenth-century sermons, *Lehren*, by Hutterite ministers, who did not believe in either extemporaneous speaking or modern commentary from the pulpit. Some Mennonites, especially those of West Prussian background, read manuscript sermons multiple times, but not for generations, even centuries, as practiced by both communal and noncommunal Hutterites.

World War I provided a challenge to the pacifism and German culture of Hutterites and Mennonites alike, and Janzen ties this development nicely into the story of the last years of Tschetter's life and the increasing pressures on Hutterites to modify their historical beliefs and acculturate. Many of the communal Hutterites ended up migrating to Canada after the war. Just like many Mennonite descendants of the 1870s immigrants, noncommunal Hutterites experienced accelerated change in the 1920s and 1930s. Tschetter's death itself was a factor in the process of change for the Neu Hutterthaler community.

Janzen's extensive research included special access to both Tschetter family records and descendants. Janzen's account of Paul Tschetter's role among the noncommunal Hutterites is quite sympathetic although not entirely uncritical. He concludes that Tschetter was not unkind or uncaring, just intolerant and intransigent. Would the noncommunal Hutterite way of life and beliefs have survived more intact or longer if more evolutionary change had occurred

without Paul Tschetter's roadblocks? Obviously we will never know, but Rod Janzen has given us a readable and insightful account of this significant leader and his community.

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DAVID A. HAURY

Imagined Homes: Soviet German Immigrants in Two Cities. By Hans Werner. Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press. 2007. Pp. 297. \$29.95.

Immigration since World War II is one of the key factors shaping our contemporary world. We should thank historian Hans Werner for the care with which he has documented two small streams of this massive flow of people. Ethnic Germans from Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union who immigrated to Winnipeg, Manitoba, in the 1950s and to Bielefeld, West Germany, in the late 1960s to mid-1970s are of particular interest to readers of *Mennonite Quarterly Review* since both groups included Mennonites. Again Werner deserves note for placing Mennonites in the larger context of German population movements, of which they have so often been a part.

Werner defines ethnic Germans as people who self-identified as German but did not live in Germany as constituted in 1937 (241). He draws on immigration historiography and theory, and his work is also shaped by recent calls for comparative research. He encapsulates his study with historian Elliot Barkan's term *integration*, but refines it to mean a process of "adjustments made by both the host society and the immigrant group that reduce tensions of difference" until they are indistinguishable from negotiations endemic to the society at large (10, 223). His comparison yields insights from juxtaposing two distinct immigrant flows and host societies.

Werner argues that ethnic Germans who arrived in Winnipeg in the 1950s integrated more smoothly than did those who came to Bielefeld in the 1970s. He explains that ethnic Germans arriving in Winnipeg expected disjuncture as they entered an English-speaking society but relatively quickly joined the larger society; those settling in Bielefeld expected a homecoming but experienced cultural dissonance in German society. Diverging national immigration policies also helped to shape those experiences, as did marked differences between the 1950s and the 1970s.

Werner uses newspaper coverage, oral histories he conducted in Winnipeg and Bielefeld, census records and many secondary sources. The book includes numerous figures, maps and photographs in the text and appendices. His diverse sources provide complexities that enrich his general conclusions. The book first details the two streams of immigrants and their host cities and then turns to housing, work, family life, religious and cultural expression, and finally civic participation of the new citizens.

Werner's overview of the origins of ethnic Germans in Silesia, Ukraine and Russia acknowledges diverse historical experiences and social stratification but also posits a common identity by 1945, melded in the cauldron of twentieth-century upheaval and wars. The author also notes common urban strands. Both

cities welcomed new labor. Both were manufacturing cities (the strength of this sector lasted longer in Bielefeld), and both had expanding service sectors in the postwar decades. Werner's chapter on language demonstrates well how expectations and realities influenced the pace of integration. Both communities felt pressure to give up German dialects that had evolved and persisted over 200 years. In Winnipeg, the rapid decline of German flowed from immigrant acceptance of the demands of an English-speaking society. Despite internal community conflict over the use of German in church life, fluency in English served as a marker of integration. In contrast, immigrants to Bielefeld were shocked to discover that their dialects were unintelligible in their new home. State-funded language courses helped them learn a new language but also reminded them of the distance between their imagined homeland and a modern German society.

Chapters on work and housing show the centrality of two different immigration policies. Canada's welcome of ethnic Germans reflected humanitarian, Cold War and multicultural strands, as well as the need for workers in a booming economy. West Germany's "ethnocultural" policies denied citizenship to immigrants unless they could prove linguistic and ancestral ties to Germany, which Werner's ethnic Germans could. In Winnipeg, immigrants found work and then housing with relative ease by relying on family and friends. Those networks helped to produce ethnic German neighborhoods, often, as in the case of Mennonites, near to their churches. In 1970s Bielefeld, ethnic Germans also sought to live close to each other. But the state's extensive social welfare network for its new citizens provided temporary housing and then served as a placement agency in the private market, allowing the government to encourage residential dispersal. Although new immigrants in Bielefeld also clustered in ethnic neighborhoods, they did so in conflict with state policy. Similarly, the German government's commitment to finding work for new citizens did not always smoothly pair labor demands with job skills. For example, the gendered division of labor in the German workplace sometimes ignored job skills immigrant women had gained in the Soviet Union.

Werner's chapters on family and religious life reflect historical divergence. In the 1950s, both communities sought to reconstruct devastated families and churches, but one community did so in Canada, the other, in the Soviet Union. In addition, Werner compares two immigrant flows, one before the sexual and gender upheavals of the 1960s and one after. Immigrants to Winnipeg apparently shared the larger society's emphasis on domesticity. In contrast, youthful challenges to authority—particularly patriarchal authority—open sexuality, and a secularized society alienated ethnic Germans arriving in Bielefeld. In his final chapter on civic participation, as expressed in associational life, Werner reiterates his argument. Both communities clung to their churches, finding it difficult to work in coalitions. But again, in Winnipeg, the low-key civic activity of ethnic Germans seemed acceptable to the larger society, while resistance to associational life, a key institution in modern German society, marked ethnic Germans there as outsiders.

Werner's comparative framework highlights the complex interactions of even privileged immigrants and their host societies on a path to integration. Indeed,

the complexities generated by the seemingly endless contingencies of including two historical periods sometimes seem to make generalizations difficult. For example, were expectations the key factor in integration, or was it the difference in decades? How might immigrants' responses have been different had they arrived in Winnipeg's sluggish 1970s economy and in a Canadian society also transformed by 1960s social change? In addition, arenas that Werner examines only briefly might on further analysis yield yet more complexity. More attention to the host societies would be in order since they are a key part of the conclusion. How, for example, did a divided Germany influence immigrant experiences? The significant contingent of Roman Catholic immigrants (table A-7) receives limited coverage in Werner's qualitative evidence, which is more focused on Lutherans, Baptists and Mennonites. How might including that significant minority change the portrait of integration? Finally, in a study that highlights expectations, I would have liked to have seen more from the rich oral sources Werner has collected. Knowing more about the meanings attached to personal experiences in these fascinating communities would add layers of complexity. Nonetheless, Werner has advanced a conversation well worth having.

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M. J. HEISEY

Peace to War: Shifting Allegiances in the Assemblies of God. By Paul Alexander. Telford, Pa.: Cascadia Publishing House. 2009. Pp. 429. \$26.95.

During the 1930s, as Mennonites, Brethren and Quakers strategized together and with officials in the U.S. government to create alternative forms of service in lieu of serving as soldiers in times of war, other Christians ostensibly opposed to war made few preparations for the next military crusade. In fact, as Paul Alexander makes clear in his groundbreaking account of the changing views of the Assemblies of God toward war, the Assemblies of God was—according to no less an authority than the Fellowship of Reconciliation's 1940 *Pacifist Handbook*—the third-largest pacifist denomination in the United States. (Interestingly, the largest was the Churches of Christ, followed by the Church of the Brethren; the Society of Friends was fourth.) In some ways, of course, Alexander's is far from being an unusual story, since many Christians have been abandoning nonresistance over the last 1,900 years. Don Durnbaugh's classic *Believer's Church* (1968) tells the story of the decline of nonresistance among Moravians and other restorationist renewal movements.

Published by Cascadia as part of its C. Henry Smith series, *Peace to War* is a cautionary warning for Mennonites, Brethren and Friends. Alexander builds on Jay Beaman's landmark 1989 study, *Pentecostal Pacifism*, to convincingly demonstrate that nonresistance was the normative Assemblies of God position until the 1940s and, amazingly, survived as a doctrinal statement until 1967. Alexander effectively builds on the positions of Beaman and R. G. Robins in responding to scholars, such as Grant Wacker, who have minimized nonresistance in early Pentecostalism.

Countering Wacker and other second-generation Assemblies of God historians, Alexander finds pacifism (or, as he prefers to say, advocates of crucifism—a term he likens to the Anabaptist concept of discipleship) at the heart of early Pentecostalism. Struggling to locate its source, Alexander explores the denominational backgrounds of important Pentecostal advocates of pacifism and, not surprisingly, finds that many were Quakers and even those without Quaker roots often justified their opposition to war by suggesting that it was similar to positions held by the Society of Friends. In fact, Pentecostalism's most prolific and articulate advocate of nonresistance, Arthur Booth-Clibborn, had been reared in the Society of Friends. Other early Pentecostals with backgrounds in Quakerism include Charles Parham, whose pacifism seems not to have survived the First World War, and the more consistently pacifist A. G. Tomlinson, founder of the Church of God (Cleveland, Tenn.). Among the other sources of Pentecostal pacifism that Alexander identifies are the Holiness Movement that spawned Pentecostalism; Methodism that spawned the Holiness movement; and the radical kingdom (now eschatological) vision of early Pentecostalism.

In the course of his discussion Alexander overstates the pacifism of the Methodist founder John Wesley. In fairness, Wesley did write eloquently on the evils of war but certainly never urged his followers to refuse military service in time of war. Further, Alexander suggests that the important early Pentecostal leader Frank Bartleman, an articulate opponent of Christian participation in war, may have drawn his antiwar critique from his roots in the Wesleyan Methodist Church, a Holiness denomination with a strong peace tradition. In fact, as a denomination founded by Methodists opposed to slavery in 1843, the Wesleyan Methodists' early peace testimony, along with the peace witnesses of many abolitionist Quakers, rapidly evaporated during the early days of the Civil War. As Donald W. Dayton demonstrated thirty years ago in an influential essay, published in the aptly titled *Perfect Love and War*, the Holiness movement does have a significant pacifist strain, but it is at best a minority position. In the Holiness movement refusal to take part in war was most common among its radical premillennial wing, precisely the Holiness folks who tended to become Pentecostal. This would be true of the early African-American Pentecostal Holiness leader Charles H. Mason, founder of the Church of God in Christ, and Edgar O. Jolley, a Free Methodist pastor imprisoned for refusing to register for the draft during World War I. It is probably not too much to say that the sources of Pentecostal pacifism are as diverse as the theologies of the early Pentecostal movement.

In my mind Alexander makes five particularly important contributions for peace church Christians. First, through an extensive reading of early Pentecostal and especially Assemblies of God periodicals, Alexander has located a significant body of important Pentecostal antiwar writings. This greatly enriches and expands the corpus of Christian pacifist writings. Second, drawing on the important work of D. William Faupel, Alexander clearly points to the importance of Pentecostalism's eschatology for its peace theology. In a quotation from the important early English Pentecostal leader Stanley H. Frodsham, aptly entitled "Our Heavenly Citizenship," Alexander shows that Pentecostal pacifists clearly

viewed earthly loyalty as of decidedly secondary importance. Like early Christians, as Pentecostals became more comfortable in their earthly Zion, the recourse to warfare came easier.

Third, Alexander shows that the acceptance of military chaplaincy greatly facilitated the militarizing of the denomination. As some Anabaptist groups grapple with military chaplaincy the experience of the Assemblies of God should serve as an important cautionary tale. Fourth, drawing on John Howard Yoder, Alexander suggests that the Assemblies of God and other Pentecostal groups failed to develop a peace theology that could counter the lure of respectability that accompanied the patriot frenzy of the “good war” (World War II) and even more the subsequent Cold War, with its demonized but often ruthless enemy. One does come away from this book with renewed respect for peace church leaders who courageously defended historic positions when many denominational leaders were choosing an easier way.

Finally, in a particularly chilling chapter (at least to this reviewer), Alexander recounts the “Victory of Nationalism” in the Assemblies of God during the last four decades. Especially telling is the story of Dave Roeber, an injured Vietnam War vet and popular Assemblies of God speaker who has shared his life story with millions of school children and older members of Assemblies of God congregations. In an afterword, Alexander shares the story of how his own contract was not renewed at Southwest Assemblies of God University in 2006. It should be noted that he was offered a position at another Assembly of God school but chose to continue his teaching career at an interdenominational, Wesleyan-oriented university, Azusa Pacific.

As a historian, I do dispute Alexander’s privileging of theology over history. Tellingly, as he writes in his important concluding chapter: “My historical arguments are simply historical—my theological arguments are much more important—they call us to a faithful way of living regardless of what our ancestors did” (329). While this is consistent with the logic of many restorationist movements, it was precisely the recovery of the early history of the Anabaptist movement—albeit somewhat selectively, by John Horsch, Harold Bender and others—that served as the basis for defending nonresistance among Mennonites. Among Brethren the work of Floyd Mallott, Dale Brown and Don Durnbaugh played a similar role. The same may be true of Alexander’s work. In demonstrating that during its formative period the Assemblies of God embraced pacifism, he has gone a long way in establishing nonresistance as a Pentecostal norm.

Tabor College

WILLIAM KOSTLEVY

I Am Not a Social Activist: Making Jesus the Agenda. By Ronald J. Sider. Scottsdale, Pa.: Herald Press. 2008. Pp. 213. \$16.99.

This most recent offering by the prolific Ron Sider adds little to his impressive corpus of writing and work as the longtime president of Evangelicals for Social Action. A compilation of forty-four essays, published in the evangelical

network's *Prism* magazine in the past decade, this book does, however, offer a glimpse into Sider's eclectic career.

The title of the book—extracted from a three-page meditation on “keeping the full, biblical Christ at the center of my theology and work”—is more than a little misleading. The bulk of *I Am Not a Social Activist*, after all, propounds the virtues of progressive politics and evangelical activism. Politics, Sider writes, while not “the only way to save the world,” offers a legitimate form of implementing justice, particularly if it focuses on government intervention on behalf of women's rights, poverty, minorities and global economic equality. In “Needed: A Progressive Evangelical Network” Sider urges the development of sophisticated social analyses on issues such as poverty and racism and the implementation of biblical policies in the political realm.

Sider's career also belies this volume's title. In 1972 Sider single-handedly launched Evangelicals for McGovern, the first partisan political organization of the twentieth century formed by evangelicals to elect a president. A year later he organized a series of “Thanksgiving Workshops” out of which the Chicago Declaration, the landmark document of the postwar evangelical left, emerged. Global economic injustices, Sider points out in his 1977 *Rich Christians in an Age of Hunger* and again in this volume, cannot be addressed simply through an individual social ethics. They must be ameliorated structurally through such actions as lobbying Congress to reduce military spending and to drop barriers to imports from developing nations. In the 1980s Sider suggested that confronting despotic regimes demands more than passive nonresistance. At the 1984 Mennonite World Conference in Strasbourg, France, Sider exhorted listeners to be willing to “die by the thousands in dramatic vigorous new exploits for peace and justice,” words that resulted in Christian Peacemaker Teams, an organization devoted to nonviolent direct action around the globe. In the decades since, Sider's progressive vision has persisted. With the exception of a vote for George W. Bush's “compassionate conservatism” in 2000 that he now regrets, Sider has routinely embraced and stumped on behalf of many liberal Democratic policies.

If social action has defined Sider's career, it has been grounded in an explicitly evangelical spirit. In “Naturalism versus Theism” Sider affirms the uniqueness, deity and resurrection of Christ, the authority of Scripture, and “absolute truth.” In a reprise of his apologetics work for InterVarsity in the 1960s and 1970s, Sider offers historical and philosophical evidence for theism. In “Devotional Snuggling” Sider tells of starting and ending days praying together with his wife in each other's arms. In half a dozen essays, Sider extends his 2006 jeremiad *The Scandal of the Evangelical Conscience*, criticizing evangelicals for rates of sexual promiscuity and divorce that surpass those of nonevangelicals. “Could we behave the way we often do in our families and with our dates if we made those decisions with our eyes fixed intently on the Lord?” he asks in “Reflecting the Whole Christ.” In “Combining Evangelism and Social Action” Sider emphasizes the evangelical mandate to lead people “to accept Jesus Christ as personal Lord and Savior.”

If this volume's attempt to fuse evangelism and progressive social action underlines Sider's agenda over the past thirty years, it also underscores his

inability to build a large coalition. Sider's explicit critique of evangelical political conservatism—articulated in his essay "Are Evangelical Leaders on their Way to Hell?"—alienates rightist evangelicals. His Anabaptist theology of peace, while admired, has not been taken seriously by most conservative and moderate evangelicals. His straightforwardly evangelical language and unrelenting opposition to gay marriage and abortion alienates mainliner activists on the left. His rigorous ethic of stewardship, especially his suggestions of a "theology of enough" and a graduated tithe (raising giving percentage as income increases) is off-putting to wealthy constituencies from all traditions. Sider's pro-life, pro-peace activism, pro-poor, pro-racial justice, pro-sexual integrity, pro-family and pro-environment politics—appropriated from the Catholic "seamless garment" arguments of the 1970s and articulated in Sider's 1987 book *Completely Pro-Life*—fail to conform to platforms of either political party. This mix of ideals, clearly idiosyncratic in the postwar political and cultural climate, has attracted an eclectic, but not an ecclesiastically or politically coherent, following.

Despite these constraints, however, Sider's wide reach—he has now sold 400,000 copies of *Rich Christians*—seems more significant than his failures. This is due in part to Sider's winsome style, seen in this volume in compelling meditations on humility, celebrity, family, death and growing old. But to a remarkable extent, the religious and political landscape is changing, and Sider seems to have anticipated contemporary evangelical concerns. Laboring for decades with little help on issues of poverty, women's rights and inequities in the global economy, Sider's views are rapidly becoming standard among moderate evangelicals such as Richard Cizik, Bill Hybels, Rick Warren and editors at *Christianity Today*. Fellow progressives at *Sojourners* are suddenly flush with money. The National Association of Evangelicals has been developing a more rigorous philosophy of social ethics, and evangelicals and Catholics have been working more closely together. Sider is clearly pleased by the improving climate. And yet this volume—not to mention Sider's career and clear Anabaptist sensibilities—suggests that success is almost beside the point. Following Christ, he suggests in his essay "Jesus, Be the Center," is inherently "an outrageous failure."

University of Notre Dame

DAVID R. SWARTZ

York, Tripp. *Living on Hope While Living in Babylon: The Christian Anarchists of the Twentieth Century*. Eugene, Ore.: Wipf & Stock. 2009.

With engaging prose and good-natured wit, Tripp York tells the life stories of Dorothy Day and Peter Maurin, Clarence Jordan, and the Berrigan brothers in his book *Living on Hope While Living in Babylon: The Christian Anarchists of the Twentieth Century*. With these brief biographical accounts, York has churned out a highly engaging Christian political theology that he calls "Christian anarchism," which opposes "the triple axis of evil"—materialism, racism and militarism (xvi). The book began as York's master's thesis and morphed to less theory and more biography as his students challenged him for examples. The

people he has chosen to examine saw the interconnections between materialism, racism and militarism.

After two introductory chapters, York begins "Catholic Workers Unite!" by reviewing classical anarchist critiques of capitalism and recounting how Dorothy Day and Peter Maurin implemented an anarchist vision within Catholicism as a challenge to the church. In the Catholic Worker model, houses of hospitality provide for the destitute and give the well-off opportunities to share, while roundtable discussions sharpen people's theoretical understanding and farms help them unlearn "the notion of work as a practice of turning a profit" which "turned it into a job" and to see work instead as a part of a common good (47). In this chapter, York skillfully portrays the longest-standing "Christian anarchist" movement, which has over 200 hospitality houses in the United States alone.

For his example of resistance to racism, York examines Clarence Jordan, who founded a nonviolent multiracial community of goods on a Georgian farm in the midst of Cold War tensions and white hostilities. This community attracted considerable opposition, including death threats and boycotts of the farm. Although Jordan did not self-identify as an "anarchist," York includes him in the book for the ways he attempted "to create a culture that out-narrated [the dominant culture] by its own way of life."

Finally, York tells Phil and Dan Berrigan's stories as examples of Christian anarchist response to U.S. militarism. Draft card burnings and hammering on nuclear warheads put these two Catholics in jail for long stretches of time. But like Peter who escaped from prison in Acts, they did not always submit without a flight!

Although York fruitfully mixes biography with editorial comments throughout, the book falters in three areas. First, the way he employs secular anarchist thought throughout the book conveys a disquieting triumphalism. Though he cites classical secular anarchists like Bakunin, Proudhon, and Kropotkin, he does so merely as a prop for "Christian anarchism" (xiii). There is little dialogue with or learning from non-Christian anarchists, thereby perpetuating the myth that anarchism is only Christian and that Christians have nothing to gain from other parts of this movement. For this reason, the term "Christian anarchism" is problematic because it melds Christianity and anarchism together in a way that allows Christians to claim to be "true" anarchists. That is why the philosopher Jacques Ellul purposely distinguished between the two by calling his book *Anarchy and Christianity*.

Second, though well-versed in classical anarchism, York does not pick up on the ways anarchism has dramatically changed since its inception and how that shift might help Christians theologize and live in new ways. Today, there are several anarchisms, including anarcho-feminism, green anarchism (anarcho-primitivism) and the anarchist people of color movement that could have added depth and challenge to some of his points. For example, York argues that seeking the welfare of the city (Jer. 29:7) "is a staple requirement of Christian discipleship" (34) based on a classical anarchist framework that values the Industrial Revolution and primarily vilifies the capitalist state. However, anarcho-primitivism provides a window into another biblical tradition that critiques and subverts the city: fratricidal Cain built the first city and from there

proceeds war, patriarchy and division of labor that have haunted every civilization (civilization is a network of life built around cities). Babel, Sodom, Gomorrah, Babylon and Jerusalem multiply the violence and injustice. Jesus almost completely avoids the city, and when he enters Jerusalem and confronts the powers of evil, the city kills him. Anarcho-primitivists draw from modern anthropology, which strikingly supports the Genesis myth on the origins of war, patriarchy and the division of labor that York examines. In light of this reading, the church-as-polis cliché (35) inscribes Western violent civilization into ecclesiology; fresh ecclesiological images should be sought.

Third and finally, the subtitle—“Christian Anarchists of the 20th Century”—led me to think that the book would include a broader group of people. The title might not have been York’s choice, but anyone who is remotely familiar with Christianity and anarchism before reading the book will be surprised that Jacques Ellul, Leo Tolstoy and others are not included. York’s explanation for this—so that he would not err in his claims about non-Americans—is unsatisfactory. Like the other stories he told, their stories are widely available, and Ellul’s own life and thought in particular would have significantly challenged York’s classical anarchist presuppositions that our civilized, technologized life is just the way things have to be.

To summarize, York is an artful writer and each of his biographical chapters skillfully introduces faithful Christians who have practiced classical anarchist politics. These stories are available in more depth elsewhere, but these are good introductions. Still, York could have written this book without any reference to secular anarchists or anarchist thought and it would not have made much difference. As an anarchist myself, the lack of serious engagement with past and present secular anarchist thought is disappointing. In short, *Living on Hope While Living in Babylon: The Christian Anarchists of the Twentieth Century* is best when supplemented with works by Jacques Ellul and other anarchists.

Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary

Andy Alexis-Baker

Christ, History, and Apocalyptic: The Politics of Christian Mission. By Nathan R. Kerr. Eugene, Ore.: Cascade Books. 2008. Pp. 222. \$28.

How can Christians articulate the Lordship of Christ, given the extent to which historical consciousness shapes our worldview? According to Nathan Kerr, the answer to this question is found not by avoiding historicism, but by articulating a particularly Christian vision of history. Such a vision will be dependent upon God’s apocalyptic interruption of history in the person of Jesus Christ, engendering a thoroughly missional definition of the church’s ongoing historical work. Kerr articulates his own theological politics of mission by critically examining the works of Ernst Troeltsch, Karl Barth, Stanley Hauerwas and John Howard Yoder to see how their respective eschatologies and Christologies influence their understandings of the church and its work within history.

Kerr begins his survey with Troeltsch because he represents a consistent theological historicism. Despite agreeing with Troeltsch's historicism, Kerr argues that Troeltsch's theology has no place for God's active hand in interrupting history through Jesus. Precisely because of this eschatological failure, Troeltsch was unable to describe the church's mission as a distinctively Christian politics. And it is because of these twin theological errors, Kerr argues, that Troeltsch was unable to articulate the mission of the church in any other mode than thinly veiled cultural imperialism. Thus, Troeltsch's effort to take history seriously ended up thoroughly Constantinian. Because neither Jesus nor the church can be political entities the social order abrogates to itself all the possibilities of historical action. And because God cannot disrupt the laws of history and fill it in Christ, it is the responsibility of the state to control history's outcome and preserve the social order. Given the Constantinian and ideological nature of Troeltsch's vision, Kerr finds it necessary to seek an altogether different theological basis for his apocalyptic historicism.

Karl Barth is the turning point in Kerr's genealogy. Barth's "cosmic-historical" Christology is thoroughly apocalyptic and thus runs counter to Troeltsch's metaphysical eschatology. Barth consistently formulates a theological vision affirming the central significance of the man Jesus as God's apocalyptic action in the fullness of historical time. But unlike Troeltsch, Barth reads all of history through the life act of Jesus himself. In this way Barth turns Troeltsch on his head—that is, Barth finds a way to re-narrate each historical account and the full sweep of history itself, not in terms of an obscure metaphysical quantum, but in relation to the particular history of Jesus Christ. At least this is what Barth intended to do. In fact, Kerr doubts the extent to which Barth succeeded in upholding Jesus' particularity. Kerr argues that Barth used an abstract and metaphysical contrast between "time" and "eternity" to describe Jesus' universal significance—a contrast not drawn from Jesus' singular history. Here Kerr interrogates Barth's apocalyptic Christology, suggesting that Barth's formal categories function to shift the focus away from the manner in which history is fulfilled in the work of Jesus' life and death. Thus, although Kerr can appropriate Barth's apocalyptic Christology, he borrows in a way that drops distracting abstractions.

After examining Barth, Kerr turns his attention to Stanley Hauerwas. Hauerwas, like Kerr, finds in Barth someone who is rightly Christocentric, but who unfortunately abstracts from ongoing history, and whose resulting ecclesiology is inadequately shaped by Jesus' history. More specifically, Hauerwas seeks to go "beyond" Barth by fully attending to the way the church's narrative identity draws upon Jesus' narrative history. It is here that Kerr's critique of Barth's abstracting Christology parallels Hauerwas's critique of Barth's abstract ecclesiology. Nevertheless, Kerr accuses Hauerwas of overcorrecting for Barth's abstractions by substituting some of his own in their place. Kerr argues that Hauerwas interpolates the singularity of Christ solely in terms of ecclesiology, such that the church's mission fails to reach beyond attention to its own internal good order. This ecclesiological navel-gazing is perpetuated by Hauerwas's meta-historical affirmations of narration. Because he sees "narrative" as epistemologically and ontologically basic, Hauerwas is

compelled to describe Jesus not as an apocalyptic interruption of real history, but as a particular expression of narration, such that it floats above history even as it is the means by which history is shaped. Hauerwas's appeal to narrative functions ideologically to supplant Jesus' own particularity, Kerr argues, interpreting it in the light of the church's own identity rather than vice versa. This "ontologization" of the church is itself a form of Constantinianism insofar as it presumes to find a tool (e.g., narrative identity) by which history is formed and by which it can be controlled.

Kerr turns next to the work of John Howard Yoder. Like Troeltsch, Yoder takes historical contingency and particularity seriously. Like Barth, Yoder's apocalyptic sees in Jesus the cosmic-historical center and fulfillment of history as God's interruption of history. But improving upon Barth, Yoder's Christocentrism is impossible to articulate without the concrete actions and decisions of Jesus. And so Yoder, unlike Troeltsch, can articulate the politics of Jesus in their utter facticity and particularity as a threat to the powers, demonstrating a new way to be particular within history. But unlike Hauerwas, Yoder's ecclesiology focuses upon the church's action through time without undermining Jesus' own independent singularity. By focusing upon the particular identity of Jesus Christ, Yoder supplants all ideological appeals to absolutes not connected with history, without thereby reducing Jesus to a product of history itself. And because this is the case, Kerr sees Yoder as foundational to his own apocalyptic politics of Christian mission.

In the final chapter of his book Kerr fleshes out a distinctive missional ecclesiology impossible to conceive without God's apocalyptic intervention in and fulfillment of history in Jesus of Nazareth. In a manner that is both lyrical and insightful Kerr focuses upon how Jesus' release of himself to the future of God's kingdom is itself the event of God's apocalyptic action. Jesus' gave up all control of his own history, his own future, and precisely in so doing filled history to its fullest extent, and fixed his history as the most particular and contingent event. In relationship to Christ, all histories are freed to be the particular and contingent acts they are, not curtailed or supplanted in relation to false absolutes or necessities. Just as Christ gave up control, gave up his own life, so also the church is encouraged to live without self-regard in a way that is truly "diasporic." In this way Kerr's apocalyptic Christology moves beyond "church as polis" toward an ecclesiology where missional dispersion constitutes the church.

Kerr's book is theologically dense and rich, and he manages to pursue his task with a logical rigor, systematic balance and intuitive insight that is not always found in such a successful combination. Not only does he conduct a concise tour through the works of four important Protestant theologians of the past century, he does so in a way that focuses on praxis. Yet Kerr's essay is not without its problems. Most problematic is Kerr's appeal to frequent generalizations. How difficult is it to convince less than careful readers that Barth focuses more upon God's completed action than upon historical contingency, for instance, or that Hauerwas "ontologizes" the church? Kerr's accusations seem to gain their credibility more from appeal to common misreadings than from Kerr's ability to convince through hard exegetical evidence. This is not to say that Kerr is not "on

to something" in his criticisms, only that one wonders if he has taken the time and care necessary to fully and accurately explore them. Despite this qualification, Kerr's book is well worth reading, and well worth the effort that putting its ecclesiology into practice will require.

[Editor's Note: As this review was going to press we received word that subsequent printings of Kerr's book include an important errata note giving credit to specific works by J. Alexander Sider and Daniel Barber that had not been adequately cited in the first printing].

Harrisonburg, Va.

DANIEL P. UMBEL

Good Punishment? Christian Moral Practice and U.S. Imprisonment. By James Samuel Logan. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans. 2008. Pp. 261. \$20.

James Logan reflects on the way Christian social ethics might address the American practice of punitive mass incarceration. His work makes an important contribution to the woefully small collection of ethical reflections on a criminal justice system that incarcerates more citizens per capita than any other in the world. Both in his analysis of the prison system's wide-ranging effects and his review of ethical writing about punishment, Logan insists on the communal nature of human experience, a reality predicated on God's gracious act of creation. With this focus on what he calls "ontological intimacy," or the "primordial interrelated human community," Logan argues that we cannot see lawbreakers as isolated individuals making bad choices and paying the consequences for them (189). Instead, he asks us to recognize the ways in which communities create situations that foster criminality (in the creation of legal codes and the neglect of citizens on the margins) and receive the effects of mass incarceration (depleted family and communal life in the most affected areas and a general dread of encroaching crime experienced by all). Human connectedness, Logan insists, offers a way for understanding criminality as our common problem and the resources for identifying potential solutions.

Logan reflects at length on the sheer scale and retributive spirit of American incarceration. More than two million citizens live behind bars. Powerful corporate, political and social interests drive the system's expansion and intensification. This "prison-industrial complex" benefits from the continued growth of criminal populations. Within our bursting institutions, inmates experience punitive practices of social vengeance and status humiliation unknown among our Western neighbors. Logan insists that this system does not help lower crime rates, but rather, reproduces and reinforces criminality. Further, Logan does not limit his examination of America's punitive practices to the prison itself. He also explores the social collateral damage of mass incarceration. He details the effects on families and communities, particularly felt in cases where parents are behind bars, and experienced more generally in the erosion of fellow feeling and support. Logan explains Americans' acceptance, if not need, for vengeful, socially destructive mass incarceration in a chapter dedicated to

exploring forms of social alienation that grip this nation. While "atomized" views of human separateness and "vulgar individualism" play a significant role, Logan focuses on the effects of racism in the creation and sustaining of the nation's massive prison network. Indeed, he argues, anti-black white racism contributes to the widespread association of blackness with criminality and Americans' disengagement with the prisons as a common problem because they are filled inordinately with African-American citizens. In sum, the prisons present problems for both the idealist and the pragmatist. They host shocking treatment of other human beings and they fail to make us any safer.

Logan's exploration of the brutality of American mass incarceration and the social alienations that contribute to it lead him to ask what Christian ethicists have had to say about the matter. But as Logan observes, there has been a "general lack of systematic and constructive critical investigation on the parts of Christian theologians and ethicists with regard to the social costs of imprisonment on such a large scale" (7). Logan looks to Stanley Hauerwas, as one scholar with a considerable public audience who has dedicated some of his work to exploring practices of punishment. Logan sets to work to "mine" several Hauerwas essays for their contribution to a Christian engagement with American prisons. The process is a fruitful one. Logan moves between Hauerwas essays focused on murder mysteries and Christian discipline, to historical memory and Martin Luther King Jr., to "construct" an ethic of punishment. Logan begins, as any reader of Hauerwas should, with the ethicist's firm grounding in the life of the church realized in a peaceable politics and the ontological intimacy implied by creation. For Hauerwas, the church lives out its witness in a world that forgets who God is and what God has done. Logan explores Hauerwas's affirmation that God forgives all sin and that Christians are equipped with nonviolent practices of penance and reconciliation to deal with offenses. Because God forgives us all, Christians have a means of identifying sin and calling sinners to re-connection with the community, while not requiring that offenses be forgotten by those who have been the harmed. Hauerwas calls this the work of "healing memories," the process by which Christians bind up communities broken by sin in a way that mirrors God's action in forgiveness and reconciliation with humanity. In Hauerwas, Logan finds rich resources for affirming human connection and dealing well with the ways in which humans hurt each other.

While Logan finds much to admire in Hauerwas's work, he argues that it has its limits. Indeed, he worries that Hauerwas's concern about creating good Christians who punish each other well overshadows any call to take this ethic into the wider world. Logan writes, "The salient challenge, then, is to begin to imagine the possible attitudinal, institutional, public policy, and social advocacy reforms that could emerge from Hauerwas's ethic of punishment were it brought to bear on the problem of imprisonment and its collateral social consequences" (203). Logan's impulse has surely been voiced by myriad others, usually in more shrill tones. But note the carefulness of his language. Logan asks us to "begin to imagine." He desires an ethic "brought to bear on the problem." To be sure, Logan expresses impatience with Hauerwas's reluctance to have Christians defined by the terms of liberal society. Yet Logan appears to sympathize with most of Hauerwas's basic claims about the graciousness of creation, God's

forgiveness of sin and the importance of the church to be Christ's body in the world. The problem, then, is not one of substance but of degree. Logan calls Hauerwas to see that the Gospel is both against the world's evils, but also for the world's salvation. Hauerwas's ethic of punishment, then, is not to be hid under a bushel, but practiced in a way to bring God's restoring love to the world. Hauerwas, it seems, appreciates Logan's point. Responding to the book, Hauerwas writes, "Logan has done nothing less than provide an imaginative, constructive theological account of an alternate way to punish." We have, it appears, a dialogue in which the writers have listened to and learned from each other.

Finally, Logan offers concrete examples of what Christian ethical engagement with the prisons might look like. He points to work in restorative justice by a Mennonite, Howard Zehr, and to the radical activist Angela Davis's call for a decarceration movement. In both restorative justice practices and decarceration activism, Logan writes, citizens have imagined concrete alternatives—ones based in a politics of ontological intimacy—that resist mass incarceration and all its social consequences. In the end, I think, Hauerwas would support these alternatives. Nevertheless, he would also insist that until Christians begin dealing with their own offenses in a way that reflects God's forgiving love and call to redemption, they will prove unlikely candidates for participation in any broader movement to resist the prison and its evils.

Reading Logan's book might convince Christians of the gift they can live out within their own communities and then offer to a nation with a criminal justice system desperately in need of transformation. With this meditation on the state of American punishment, the continued power of racism to shape our collective life, and the possibilities inherent within a theology that affirms God's forgiving love, Logan has offered a wake-up call to the churches to reconsider their internal life and their witness to the society around them.

College of Wooster

JENNIFER GRABER

The Mill Grinds Fine: Collected Poems. By Helen Wade Alderfer. Telford, Pa.: Cascadia Publishing House. Co-published with Herald Press. 2008. 135 pp. \$12.95.

Born to a Mennonite farm family in Sterling, Illinois, Helen Wade Alderfer attended Goshen College and became a teacher, writer and editor who had a significant shaping presence in Mennonite publishing. Throughout these many transitions in her life, Alderfer also wrote poetry. *The Mill Grinds Fine* is the harvest of this gift. As Alderfer says in her succinct introduction to the volume, "Whatever life brought to me, I put between the stones, not knowing how fine the mill would grind."

Some of the volume's most memorable poems appear in the first two sections—"Childhood" and "Parents." The images of farm life, communion with nature, strict teachings, loving family, early loss and the power of survival will

strike a chord of recognition in readers from several generations, and provoke wonder in a generation that never experienced visits from tramps and gypsies and "The Watkins Man." Alderfer's keen wit keeps these scenes from lapsing into sentimentality. Her poem "We Had Dick" is a wonderful example of her gift for choosing specific, evocative imagery. Her spare, straightforward voice accurately captures the speech and thought of rural Mennonite life, but her presentation of the story reflects a dry wit distinctly her own:

Dick was old and slow and bony but he was what we had.
We begged Mother for a pony but she said, "You have Dick."

Dick, she tells us, is a horse with a history. He "pulled the buggy when father courted mother" and "brought Father seven miles to town to the lawyer's house/ where Mother kept house and cared for the invalid wife." But it is the fruit of such devoted love, finally, that thwarts the desire of Helen and her siblings for a lively pony:

One November morning Aunt Lena called us for school.
"Hurry," she said, "there is a surprise downstairs."
Please God, I begged, let it be the pony.
Dashing downstairs we found Grandmother
Sitting on her low chair at the kitchen stove
Holding a new baby – our brother.
At that moment we knew we would never get a pony.

The enduring love of Mary Conrad and Clark Wade, Helen's parents, is woven into the texture of these poems about her childhood, making the abrupt loss of her father due to a farm accident all the more poignant. But it is Helen's mother, the young widow, who emerges as the heroine. In the manner of Julia Kasdorf's Aunt Bertha, whose presence permeates *Sleeping Preacher*, Alderfer's mother takes on the role of the writer's "foremother" in numerous poems. In "Our Mother the Writer" she honors her mother's Sunday afternoons of letter writing as a model of the writer's dedication and sacred time.

Although Alderfer's poems are permeated with an awareness of history, her homage to her ancestors is tempered with a seasoned awareness of the necessity of letting go. For instance, in "The Bird Nest" she asks, parenthetically, "Do daughters want to please their mothers as long as they live?" The poem is about anticipating her mother's arrival and making sure the children are in order; when they show up with a mud-covered bird nest, hoping to share their delight with her, she is dumbfounded. The poem ends, "I stood struck speechless/ Knowing I was about to fail a test." Alderfer wisely allows the reader to surmise which test she will fail – that of her mother's approval, or that of affirming her children's curiosity and delight in the natural world. On another level, her poem "Transformation Mennonites USA" is a generous letting go of the quarrels on points of doctrine that have splintered and weakened Mennonites as a denomination over the years.

What will history write of this disparate people
 who lived through centuries of change
 sometimes displaced and sometimes martyred?
 That we became a people known for unity
 despite the differences that tugged
 and sometimes tore us apart?
 That we forged new patterns of justice and peace?
 That we lived with amazing grace?

In Alderfer's view, finally, the only choice is the positive one, even though she does not sugarcoat or minimize the pain of loss that change can bring.

Although Alderfer did not adopt a rural lifestyle as an adult, nature is of central importance to her poems, and creates a thematic connection between the different phases of the life cycle addressed in her collection. The final section of the book, "Mortality," offers a reflection on the first garden in "Instructions to Adam and Eve." "Above all, tend well your inner garden./ This is where the true riches are," the poet's voice declares. As evidenced by her poetry, Alderfer has followed this instruction.

Alderfer's attitude towards suffering is an embrace of the whole of life in all of its complexity. "A Bitter End" is an elegy for a nest of baby robins torn apart by a hungry raccoon. A naturalist friend tells the poet, "Take your place in the rhythm of life and do not be bitter." This appears to be the poet's instructions to the reader, but not without acknowledging the pain: "I was not bitter, but I was very sad./ Now, remembering, I am still sad." But in another poem, "The Two-Cent Copper Coin," the poet fails to fall asleep by reciting the losses of her life. "Try remembering things you found," she instructs herself, and a poem is born.

The penultimate section of the book is devoted to a celebration of and eulogy for her long partnership with her husband, Edwin Stover Alderfer, echoing the happy portrait of marriage evoked by her description of her parents' briefer relationship. Even in the extremity of this loss, the poet is not without solace. In the introduction she remarks, "When my husband died, people offered many kind words. One person said, 'You still have poetry.' I thought it was a strange thing to say when I was not sure anything would help. But poetry was still there." Poetry also enables this strong, clear-eyed writer to articulate her thoughts on the final loss, that of aging, in such a way that we can enter the elegant and still joyful winter garden of her late years and find a companion.

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