

## BOOK REVIEWS

*A Companion to Anabaptism and Spiritualism, 1521-1700.* John D. Roth and James M. Stayer, eds. Leiden: Brill. 2007. Pp. 574. \$186.

I must confess that it was with a certain degree of skepticism that I initially approached this book, fearing that the constraints associated with producing a handbook would force editors and contributors to “dumb-down” their subject, resulting in yet another summary of summaries and yet another, perhaps even tedious, retelling of the familiar key narratives of the Anabaptist story. Reading the book from cover to cover, however, has thoroughly convinced me that I was diametrically wrong. Far from being a condensation of what we already know, this volume brings Anabaptist research a significant step forward, never failing to provide even the well-read student of Anabaptism with fresh insights, often at the most unexpected of places. Each of the thirteen chapters constitutes in its own right—despite the succinctness intrinsic to such a project—a substantial contribution to scholarship, besides making for captivating reading.

In the first chapter, *Hans-Jürgen Goertz* analyzes the “Reformation of the commoners” as the breeding ground of Anabaptism, with detailed discussions of Andreas Karlstadt, Thomas Müntzer and the movement known in Peter Blickle’s terminology as the “Communal Reformation.” While warning against a false distinction between a “moderate (genuine) Reformation and a ‘radical Reformation’” and reminding readers that the Reformation “in its very nature” was radical, he appears to take great pains to locate this radicalness not in the theology of the Reformation, but primarily in the anticlerical setting in which Reformation ideas were absorbed and put into practice. He does, however, emphasize Karlstadt’s notion of the “image of God in man,” particularly when the latter “is transformed into another person,” as a theological concept crucial to Karlstadt’s estrangement from Luther and which paved the way for the radical Reformation.

C. *Arnold Snyder’s* discussion of the beginnings of Swiss Anabaptism represents a helpful, up-to-date summary of research in a field that has undergone a considerable amount of revisions (as well as revisions of revisions!) in the past decade. Wisely overcoming the unnecessary dichotomy between exclusively social and exclusively theological approaches to Anabaptist history, Snyder takes issue with Andrea Strübind’s utter rejection of social history as well as with her claim that “the first Anabaptists were consciously motivated by a separatist ecclesiology.” He clearly embeds Anabaptism in the peasant uprisings of its time and posits an essential agreement between Balthasar Hubmaier, on the one side, and Conrad Grebel and the Zollikon Anabaptists, on the other. “Hubmaier’s broad understanding of the role of Christians working in and with government was not an anomaly in the early Swiss Anabaptism of 1525 . . . it was the majority position.” Thus, it was not until a “second phase,” after the Peasants’ War, that the Anabaptist nonresistant ecclesiology of a “persecuted, separate minority” was born.

*James Stayer* continues Snyder's account into the period spanning 1526 to 1540 and adds Germany to his focus. Covering phenomena as distinct as the central German apocalypticism of Hans Hut and Hans Römer, the Schleithem Confession and the growing separation of Swiss Anabaptism, the encounters between these two kinds of Anabaptism in imperial cities like Esslingen, Augsburg and Strasbourg, and, finally, the flourishing of Anabaptist communities of all stripes in Moravia, he succeeds in fusing all of these into a single, coherent narrative.

*R. Emmet McLaughlin* begins his discussion of the key Spiritualist figures Caspar Schwenckfeld and Sebastian Franck with the provocative reminder that "all of the Reformers were 'spiritualists' to one degree or another," thus moving the objects of his study, at least theoretically, from the margins of the Reformation to its center. After tracing the seeds of Spiritualist thinking back to Plato's notion of the immaterial mind, McLaughlin offers a detailed presentation of the life and works not only of the Silesian nobleman and the southwest German humanist to whom the chapter is devoted, but also of the less well-known Dutchman Dirck Volkertszoon Coornhert (1522-1590) and his German contemporary Valentin Weigel (1533-1588). Noting radical Spiritualism's link to modernity and the Enlightenment, he concludes with the provocative question: "how did a sixteenth-century religious theory based on an ancient philosophy become an integral part of the modern secular experience?"

In an extensive chapter on Anabaptism in Moravia and Silesia, *Martin Rothkegel* presents the fruits of his pathbreaking work in Central and Eastern European archives. His very detailed study, which fleshes out and extends Stayer's overview to the year 1756, provides fascinating insights into the variety of conflicts that ensued when Anabaptists of extremely different persuasions found refuge in Moravia. Among other things, Rothkegel discusses the rivalry between Hut and Hubmaier, analyzes the intriguing relationship between Pilgram Marpeck's "Brethren of the Covenant" and the other Moravian groups, and provides a helpful overview of the different categories of extant Hutterite texts. Establishing a link to the previous chapter, he also ascertains a symbiotic relationship to Spiritualism, for it was precisely in those regions of Silesia in which "Schwenckfeldian theologians exercised influence over local authorities" that Anabaptism could gain a foothold.

A further authoritative summary of the state of research on a topic still surrounded by controversy can be found in *Ralf Klötzer's* cogent chapter on the Anabaptist kingdom of Münster. Klötzer distances himself from explanations of the Münster events purely on the basis of the apocalyptic expectations of Christ's return, arguing instead that "the Anabaptist regime should be understood as a revolution, in the sense of a rapid, fundamental and extensive transformation of the socio-political structure." Apocalyptic expectations reinforced this "community-oriented radical Reformation," but were not its primary cause.

Picking up where McLaughlin left off, *Geoffrey Dipple* discusses the "spiritualist Anabaptists" in a chapter devoted to Hans Denck, Ludwig Hätzer, Jacob Kautz, Johannes Bunderlin, Christian Entfelder, Obbe Philips and David Joris. It is fascinating to see illuminating intersections with previous chapters—for example, when Dipple observes that the Strasbourg showdown between

Bünderlin and Entfelder, on the one hand, and Marpeck, on the other, also had a Moravian context that has yet to be taken into account sufficiently.

The Netherlands finally come into view in the eighth chapter, in which *Piet Visser* deliberately distinguishes between Mennonites and Doopsgezinden, using the former term to designate “those groups that sought to remain loyal to the heritage of Menno Simons,” and applying the latter “to the reform tradition that ensued beginning with the Waterlander division of 1557.” Visser makes a particular effort to take into account all the “religious, political, socio-economic, and cultural” factors that shaped the Mennonite/Doopsgezind identity between 1535 and 1700 and which eventually led “the Dutch Doopsgezind fellowship . . . to become the martyr of its own success.” Far from any form of hagiography, Visser attributes Menno Simons’s success to a peculiar combination of characteristics he embodied: “slowness, wavering, and stubbornness,” and to the fact that he, in contrast to previous, self-important Anabaptist prophets, was perceived as “a completely ordinary man of flesh and blood.”

The little-known territory of Swiss Anabaptism after 1540 is explored in a ninth chapter, which *John D. Roth* begins by carefully tracing the origins of the term “Schweizer Brüder” and by pondering the hard-to-define relationship between the Marpeck circle and the Swiss Brethren, a topic discussed repeatedly throughout the chapter. Encouraging us to think outside the box of doctrinal statements, Roth suggests we follow David Sabean’s approach to German village culture and define Swiss Brethren less around a written confession, but more in terms of the common “discourse” or “argument” in which they were engaged. Among the many interesting points Roth makes is the observation that theological disputations forced upon the Anabaptists by hostile authorities inadvertently “fostered a Swiss Brethren theological identity that was more coherent and focused than might have otherwise been the case.” Particularly illuminating is Roth’s observation of unresolved tensions in the Swiss Brethren identity concerning separation from the world and the role of the Spirit versus legalism, tensions that also help explain the Amish schism in 1693.

*John Rempel’s* chapter on “Anabaptist religious literature and hymnody” approaches its topic in a unique way: after enumerating three classical generalizations concerning Anabaptist piety (existential Christianity, human response to grace and spiritualist ambivalence toward inward/outward reality), Rempel systematically goes through sample religious works or hymns by twelve different Anabaptists as well from the *Ausbund* and from *Golden Apples in Silver Bowls* (1702) and describes their emphases, thus providing us with a geographically and historically diverse cross-section of Anabaptist piety. Among the persons represented, Leenaerdt Clock (fl. 1590-1625) sticks out in view of the astonishing popularity his works attained throughout the Mennonite world from the Netherlands to Switzerland to Russia. Rempel concludes with a critical reexamination and reformulation of the three generalizations with which he began his chapter.

*Sigrun Haude’s* chapter on gender roles constitutes a sober, clear-eyed assessment of the role of women in Anabaptism, presenting an enormous array of examples drawn from a variety of contexts, yet without succumbing to the temptation of overemphasizing the numerical importance of these roles. While

women could achieve prominence in charismatic positions or as martyrs during the early, more spiritualistic phase of Anabaptist groups, the later transition to biblical legalism curtailed their freedom. She also analyzes attitudes toward manhood in a movement whose men, as pacifists, could not fulfill the traditional roles of protectors of their wives and families.

*Brad Gregory* begins and ends his chapter on Anabaptist martyrdom with some thought-provoking observations on the *Martyrs Mirror*, reminding us that when Thieleman van Braght published it, the most intense persecution of Dutch Mennonites lay almost a century in the past. Indeed, “van Braght’s world seems closer to that of European and North American Mennonites today than to the world of the Anabaptist martyrs of the sixteenth century.” Looking back on the multifaceted and complex martyrological tradition that culminated in van Braght’s and Jan Luyken’s work, Gregory presents a compelling account that avoids any sensationalism or Mennonite self-pity, but in fact tries to understand why authorities persecuted these perceived radicals with such intensity. Of particular interest is the detailed section on the “memorialization” of Anabaptist martyrs through songs and the compilation of prison writings and letters.

The final chapter of the book, by *Michael Driedger*, offers us an unusual “long-term view” of Anabaptist attitudes toward the modern state. Reminding us that the violent persecution of Anabaptists had turned “sporadic” by the seventeenth century and become a “rarity” by the eighteenth, Driedger describes the various patterns of peaceful coexistence with the state that Anabaptists practiced in the course of their history. The religious nonconformity of Anabaptists paradoxically implied a tendency toward ever greater political conformity, especially in the Netherlands and in northern Germany. He concludes with a fascinating account of open participation of Dutch Mennonites in revolutionary activity in the Netherlands in the final years of the eighteenth century.

The greatest challenge facing this volume—to represent an organic unity in spite of the thirteen different contributions that constitute it—is overcome with resounding success. The necessary overlapping of subjects that is inevitable in a book of this kind at no time leads to clumsy or tiresome repetition. In fact, time and again the reader is fascinated to reencounter an old topic from an entirely different perspective. Haude’s discussion of women martyrs in her chapter on gender and Gregory’s remarks on women in his chapter on martyrdom complement each other elegantly. The same is true for the numerous mentions of Schwenckfeld and Franck throughout the volume, not to mention a figure as ubiquitous as Pilgram Marpeck. When read as a unit, the book conveys an authentic feel for the gradual emergence of Anabaptist groups throughout Europe with their own distinct identities, yet interdependent and interrelated. Particularly helpful are the diverse authors’ efforts to point out areas in which research still needs to be done.

One last point of critique may sound specious, for it is beyond the influence of the editors, but rather reflects the hermeneutic blinders characterizing the field of Reformation studies as a whole. By having the beginning of its narrative focus on Karlstadt and Müntzer, this volume unwittingly perpetuates the unquestioned theological divide between magisterial and radical Reformation, making us blind to possible fundamental connecting points between the two. It would have been

helpful, for example, to inform the uninitiated reader that it was Luther who initially proclaimed the priesthood of all believers, a concept without which Anabaptism is unthinkable. It would have been even more interesting to call attention to the overseen fact that it was also Luther, in his *De votis monasticis* of 1521, who first explicitly declared the pacifist ethics of the Sermon on the Mount as binding for all Christians. Can a narrative of the origins Anabaptism entirely disregard these facts? It is not a matter of Anabaptist scholars "giving more credit" to Luther, but rather pursuing a dispassionate rereading of the earliest sources of the Reformation in order to understand more clearly the Anabaptist movement as an integral component of this early Reformation. Scholarship has yet to catch up with the implications of Thomas A. Brady's 1993 dictum: "The radical Reformation was not the Reformation radicalized. Protestantism was the Reformation deradicalized."

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*Quellen zur Geschichte der Täufer in der Schweiz*, vol. 3: *Aargau, Bern, Solothurn: Quellen bis 1560*. Edited by Martin Haas, in cooperation with Hans Rudolf Lavater. Zürich: Theologischer Verlag Zürich. 2008. pp. 669.

With great interest and anticipation the academic world has awaited the appearance of volume 3 of *Quellen zur Geschichte der Täufer in der Schweiz* (QGTS). Volume 1 of the series, focused on Zurich, appeared already in 1951 following an equally prolonged production process. The subsequent volumes envisioned for the publication series—volume 2 on eastern Switzerland and volume 3 on Bern and the Aargau—were also announced at that time. Volume 2, however, edited by Heinold Fast, did not appear in print until 1973, followed a year later by the publication of volume 4 under the direction of Martin Haas. Volume 4 covered three lengthy Anabaptist disputations from the territories of Aargau and Bern in the 1530s. Originally envisioned as being incorporated into volume 3, these historically and theologically significant documents were now pulled out and published separately. Already in the foreword to volume 4, which appeared in 1974, editor Martin Haas noted that the long anticipated missing volume 3, containing sources from Bern, Aargau and Solothurn, would be published "in two years at the most."

For decades, however, other occupational obligations prevented Haas from preparing the manuscript definitively for publication, despite the fact that it was basically finished already in the mid-1970s. Thus, it is all the more gratifying that following his retirement, Haas could now again pick up the project that had been set aside for so many years and spend considerable effort to rework, expand and prepare it for publication.

The difficulties that needed to be overcome were enormous. Since scholarship did not remain static in the years since the 1970s, Haas needed to reckon with updating an older manuscript. While a completely new revision was not

necessary, he nonetheless had to find a reasonable way of integrating at least the most essential scholarly findings from the last decades into the source book. That Haas was still able to muster the motivation and energy for this weighty effort—filled, no doubt, with many frustrations—is a considerable accomplishment. That he was able to draw Hans Rudolf Lavater—a very knowledgeable expert not only of Swiss Anabaptism but also a gifted editor of early modern European sources—into the publication project for counsel, was an extraordinary stroke of good fortune.

The editors integrated scholarship published since the 1970s only in several significant instances, but this effort can be characterized nonetheless as representative and sufficient. This approach actually is consistent with the pattern and practice evident already in volume 1, which tended largely toward restrained commentary on the edited sources, and which Haas has continued in volume 4. In this sense, volume 3 differs from the approach that editor Heinold Fast adopted in volume 2. There Fast pursued a much more detailed commentary of the sources, which, on the basis of a broad and detailed prosopographical summary of every person noted in the text, opened the possibility for fascinating cross references and offered an impressive depth-of-field perspective. Some may lament the fact that Haas, as in his volume 4 publication of 1974, does not provide this richness of detail in volume 3. But this should not be understood as a criticism since his approach—in contrast to that of Heinold Fast—is fully consistent with the specifications of the larger series.

The geographical context of the featured region was also shaped by the framework of these specifications: namely, the region to the west-southwest of Zurich, which now comprises the cantons of Aargau, Solothurn and Bern. In looking over the sources it is important to keep in mind that they include regions that in the sixteenth century were part of political entities whose centers were located outside of the featured area. This was true specifically for the Frick valley (Fricktal), now in the Aargau, which then belonged to Habsburg lower Austria (Vorderösterreich) or the southern portion of the prince-bishopric of Basel that now belongs to Bern.

Volume 3 differs from the approach of volume 1 in one crucial point and follows instead the path charted by Heinold Fast in volume 4: namely, its chronological time frame extends beyond 1560, even pressing forward as far as 1667 in a few scattered instances. This is to be welcomed, insofar as scholarship today definitely no longer shares the judgment of the volume 1 editors, Leonhard von Muralt and Walter Schmid, who claimed that Anabaptist history after 1533 entered “a certain stagnation” and that the sources have nothing “essentially new” to offer.

The editor’s goal that the current volume should offer “a comprehensive perspective into the extant material . . . regardless of whether it has not yet been published or if it is already available in a published edition” is helpful. QGST 3 therefore also offers a foundation for those researchers for whom this “scattered printed material is not accessible in a complete form” (xii). It is also noteworthy that references are included in this source collection from other, more distant, archives that nonetheless touch on information about Anabaptism from the geographical area included in this study. Thus, for example, the volume includes

numerous archival materials from Basel and Strasbourg to illustrate the connections of Bernese Anabaptism to these territories.

Beyond the establishment of a chronological and geographical framework every source volume on early Anabaptist history must make another important foundational decision, each according to criteria of its content. Of central significance in each case is defining the boundaries with the general context of the Reformation. Here QGTS 3 opted to include only those sources in which there is "a direct relationship with Anabaptism." For the editors, this includes a series of proto-Anabaptist documents from the milieu of "breaking fasts, tax resistance, and anticlerical insults," especially from those regions that later became "strongholds of the Anabaptist movement" (xi). In addition, sources from a later period testify to the phenomenon of local, neighborhood or village solidarity and sympathy with Anabaptist circles (xii). Particularly in these border regions a selection of sources needed to be made according to the principle of "as many as necessary; as few as possible" to keep the scope of the volume manageable.

Even so, QGTS 3 consists of an impressive 669 pages, not counting a 47-page introduction! The first 130 pages are devoted to the Aargau (documents 1-301). The following 390 pages illustrate Bernese Anabaptist history (documents 302-1072); and nearly 100 pages focus on Solothurn (documents 1073-1266). An extensive index of name, place, scriptural and subject references complete the volume. This material, together with the maps in the introduction and a short lexicographical paragraph listing the most important keywords related to the history of Bern, Solothurn and the Aargau, greatly facilitate access to the sources offered here.

As with every source collection, QGTS 3 naturally raises the question as to how completely the relevant documents have been tracked down. On the basis of the listed manuscript source headings from individual archives and libraries (xlii-xlvii) as well as the register of printed sources (xxxiv-xxxix) one can get a good insight into the collections consulted. On the basis of their well-known and deep understanding of the sources and the exceedingly careful manner in which Martin Haas and Hans Rudolf Lavater work, we can assume that not much from the source material that they consulted has escaped them or still awaits discovery. The situation is naturally different regarding those types of sources that, for whatever reason, they did not account for in their collection.

The following references are not intended to be exhaustive, nor could they be. However, they may call attention to paths which—depending on the question posed—still need to be considered in an Anabaptist historical study of Bern, Aargau and Solothurn. Here I must limit myself to two short observations.

One category of sources that QGTS 3 includes only seldom, if ever, are the interest and bankruptcy registers, private land records, bonds, rental agreements and contract books central to the field of social and economic history. Contained within these records created for economic, administrative or legal purposes—for example, registers of real estate, tributes and feudal obligations, or documentation related to individual monetary and property transactions—are often important hints of an Anabaptist presence. Frequently they are the only evidence we have of specific Anabaptist individuals. It is therefore all the more

important that these sources not be overlooked, as unfortunately occasionally happens.

A second category of sources that QGTS 3 scarcely considers consists of records that come from specific individual church parishes: baptism, marriage and death registers along with the minutes from the morals courts (*Chorgerichtsmanuale*) in Reformed regions, which offer exceedingly important documents for Anabaptist history, especially in Bern and in those parts of the Aargau that Bern controlled.

In defense of the editors it must be acknowledged that both categories of sources often became considerably more numerous only toward the end of the time period considered here (that is, after 1550). But for those who wish to dig deeply into Anabaptist history—particularly after 1550—these sources must definitely be taken into consideration.

These observations in no way diminish the merits of the source volume under review here. They merely point to certain limitations that every editor of a source volume recognizes as unavoidable. Yet mindful of future research, it would have indeed been helpful if the editors had called attention to these limitations and gaps. And who is better suited or more competent for such a task than the editor of the collection itself?

In connection with these observations I would add a concluding hope that future scholarship will accord this volume the attention that it certainly merits. And furthermore, that this recognition will also spill over to volumes 2 and 4, which have not yet received the attention that they deserve, despite their enormous significance for the history and theology of Anabaptism.

The current volume does indeed fulfill a wish long expressed by the experts and should finally fill a gap that some have sensed painfully for decades. Martin Haas, Hans Rudolf Lavater and the Theologischer Verlag Zürich deserve a warm thanks for the precision and care clearly evident in the transcription of the text as well as in the editing, layout and printing process. Although the book, as a consequence of its limited press run, is not cheap, the Swiss National Science Foundation should also be thanked for its noteworthy subsidy of the printing costs that made it possible to bring this publication project, which they have long supported, to a successful conclusion. It remains to be seen, of course, whether this “conclusion” is only temporary, since there are obviously still many important sources for the early years of Anabaptism in Switzerland whose publication is equally desirable. Here one could name the numerous significant records related to the history of Anabaptism in Zurich after 1533; documents regarding Anabaptism in Lucerne; and additional sources on the history of Anabaptism in French-speaking Switzerland. Finally, one should ask whether an integrated publication of sources related to Anabaptism in Basel should be considered, which on the basis of our current understanding would contain substantially more material than that already published in the *Aktensammlung zur Geschichte der Basler Reformation* (1921-1950) by Emil Dürr and Paul Roth.

(trans. John D. Roth)

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Hanspeter Jecker

*What We Believe Together: Exploring the "Shared Convictions" of Anabaptist-Related Church.* By Alfred Neufeld. Intercourse, Pa.: Good Books. 2007. Pp. 150. \$9.95.

*What We Believe Together* is part of the Global Anabaptist-Mennonite Shelf of Literature of the Mennonite World Conference. It was commissioned to serve as a commentary on the document "Shared Convictions of Global Anabaptists," a 325-word statement adopted by the ninety-seven national denominations that belong to the Mennonite World Conference. Alfred Neufeld, of Paraguay, was commissioned to explore the "Shared Convictions" and to write this commentary.

The book's nine chapters are directly linked to the "Shared Convictions" document, commenting on the statement's introduction, the seven shared convictions and the conclusion. The book presents a clear biblical and theological foundation for each section and illustrates what the author is describing with many biblical, historical and current examples. Each of the chapters ends with study questions for group discussion prepared by Phyllis Pellman Good, senior editor at Good Books.

The seven "Shared Convictions" begins with an introductory statement that affirms the commitment to proclaim the good news of the Gospel. It is followed by seven affirmations about: who is God and how are we to respond to God; the person, teaching and work of Jesus Christ; the church as the community of people who acknowledge Jesus as Lord, are baptized and are committed to following him; the Bible as authority for faith and life, interpreted in community through the Spirit; a commitment to peacemaking and to sharing our possessions in the power of the Spirit; the importance of regular communal worship, which includes the Lord's Supper and the proclamation of the Word; and a commitment to be a transnational community that lives and proclaims the Gospel and invites all people to know Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. The conclusion acknowledges the importance of our Anabaptist heritage, the commitment to discipleship in the power of the Spirit, and the hope of Christ's return and the fulfillment of God's kingdom.

The book is reminiscent of the early volumes in the Mennonite Faith Series, particularly those written by J.C. Wenger. *What We Believe Together* succinctly describes what Anabaptist-Mennonites believe in a straightforward readable style. It was written in a way that can be easily translated into several of the languages that Anabaptist-Mennonites use in worship and mission today.

Mennonite World Conference chose an excellent person for the task. Alfred Neufeld has lived a significant part of the modern Mennonite history and is a committed Anabaptist theologian. He is a descendant of the ethnic German Mennonites who fled the old Soviet Union and settled in Paraguay. He studied at Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary in Fresno, California, and is a key leader among Mennonites in Paraguay and an important theologian among Latin American Anabaptists. A personal lament is that because Neufeld was given the task of writing a commentary on the "Shared Convictions" statement, his voice does not come through clearly enough. He has made several important contributions to Anabaptist theology, including his systematic theology in Spanish, *Vivir desde el futuro de Dios: Introducción a la teología cristiana* (Kairós,

2006). Neufeld has an important contribution to make to the larger Anabaptist community, but since he writes mostly in Spanish or in German, many Anabaptists in the global community have not been exposed to his rich theological reflection.

As I read through the book and the “Shared Convictions” statement I kept asking myself how much of the book is truly descriptive of what the churches and members of the ninety-seven national conferences confess and teach. At times the book felt more prescriptive than descriptive. To what extent is this what Anabaptists believe together and want to share with others and to what extent is this what committed Anabaptists wish we believed together and want to convince all who are part of Anabaptist-Mennonite churches to adopt? It is clear that the book needs to serve both functions. Nonetheless, the challenge for the national conferences that adopted it will be to have a solid core of people in the churches confessing and living it out so that it can also serve as an evangelistic tool.

What does it mean to be an Anabaptist at the beginning of the twenty-first century in our globalized world? Who are we and what do we want to contribute to the global church and to our world? How do we share who we are and what we believe with others and invite them to follow in the way of Jesus with us? *What We Believe Together* is a useful tool in answering both the identity and the missiological questions. We have the member conferences of the Mennonite World Conference and Alfred Neufeld to thank for that.

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*The Formation of Christian Doctrine.* By Malcolm B. Yarnell III. Nashville: B&H Academic. 2007. Pp. 218. \$19.99.

Believers church theologies, which scarcely existed thirty-five to forty years ago, have proliferated since then. They normally relate their own tradition(s) to other historical theologies. Malcolm Yarnell III takes a further step. He attempts to formulate a believers church perspective on the overall development, and also on the appropriate foundation, of Christian doctrine.

One might suppose that the first task is descriptive and historical, while the second is normative and theological. But Yarnell “seeks to understand how . . . true Christian doctrine develops from a proper theological foundation” (1). This book’s basic task is normative. The author devotes chapters 2 and 3 to doctrine’s foundation and chapters 4 and 5 to its development. Then the sixth and last chapter informs us, though without much notice, that his overall goal has been “A Free-Church History of Theology” (181), which he subsequently sketches.

Yarnell stresses the importance of broad ecumenical conversation. He devotes much of chapter 2 to the doctrinal foundation views of Joseph Ratzinger (Pope Benedict XVI), Maurice Wiles and Herman Bavinck; and much of chapter 4 to Vincent of Lerin’s and John Henry Newman’s notions of doctrinal development. These descriptions are thorough and informative. However, Yarnell states many of his own positions beforehand, in chapter 1.

Yarnell identifies four main emphases of believers church theologies: “Christocentrism, Biblicism, pneumatic hermeneutics and congregationalism” (5). To find the “fundamental contribution” of these churches (11) he turns chiefly to sixteenth-century Anabaptism. Like Harold Bender, Yarnell identifies “the essence of the Anabaptist genius” as “discipleship” (more precisely, as *Nachfolge* characterized by *Gelassenheit* [12]). For believers churches, discipleship provides the primary soteriological – not only ethical – concept.

Chapter 1 then traces discipleship’s importance through Baptist history, with its stronger accent on “freedom” and on “covenant” as the basis of churches. Turning to his own Southern Baptist Convention, Yarnell introduces perhaps his most important principle: “the Sufficiency of Scripture” to provide theology’s basic norms and content (25). The author also defends biblical inerrancy. He sometimes equates the “the Word of God” with the Bible and calls this book “a living, active subject that addresses” us (24). Yarnell denies, however, that inerrancy provides a *foundation* for theology.

Readers who associate Southern Baptists with evangelicals will be surprised that Yarnell sharply distinguishes the latter from believers churches (or “free churches”; he uses these names interchangeably). Yarnell identifies evangelicals primarily with conservative Reformed theologians who, as he sees it, erect much of their theology on speculative, nonbiblical foundations (e.g., predestination) and minimize the Spirit’s role in hermeneutics and Christian life.

Since much of Yarnell’s theology appears in chapter 1, it might seem that he discusses other theologies at length mainly to identify their errors. But while he often criticizes these theologies, his primary purpose is to position believers churches within a very long discussion that they have seldom entered. He also adapts some themes from these theologies, such as doctrinal development, chiefly from Newman. For Yarnell, however, development occurs not when traditions or new revelations supplement Scripture, but when “more truth and light” breaks forth from God’s “holy word” (152). This happens through the Holy Spirit, or pneumatic hermeneutics.

Yarnell devotes his third chapter – on the foundation, or ground principles, of believers church theology – to Pilgram Marpeck. Since “discipleship is inseparable from the One” to whom we submit (80), Yarnell first considers Christology. Marpeck not only emphasized Jesus’ humanity, but related it to his deity, and further, to his “essential participation . . . in the Trinity. . . (80). Marpeck, according to Yarnell, was deeply familiar “with the classical doctrines of the Trinity and Christology” (73). Yarnell’s free church exposition of these themes has a classical ring. Yarnell then praises the Word-Spirit interaction in Marpeck’s hermeneutic, who grounded this too in the Trinity, and also considered Scripture “innocent of errors” (106). Yarnell attributes the written Word’s dynamism more to the Spirit than, as earlier, to the Bible itself (24).

Yarnell next lauds Marpeck for deriving his theology from “Biblical,” or narrative, “Order” (90), which subordinates the Old Covenant to the New, rather than from “Human Invention,” like the Reformed who speculate about predestination and confuse the covenants, and thereby proper church-state relations. Finally, Yarnell approvingly describes many features of Marpeck’s

ecclesiology, but claims, erroneously in my view, that they “point toward a thoroughgoing congregationalism” (101).

In Yarnell’s free church view of doctrinal development (chapter 5) and of church history (chapter 6), several themes appear. Matthew 28:18-20 emerges to emphasize mission and serve as the major source of trinitarianism. Christ and his cross, often called the “atoning cross,” provide the source of salvation and the pattern for history. Especially in chapter 6, this cross becomes “an intimately personal and life-changing event. . .” (182). Its call for decision fosters “a heightened conception of personality” (185). This increases the importance of conscience, individual dignity, egalitarianism and, especially, personal freedom, overshadowing obedience.

Yarnell observes a “close correlation of free-church values with the development of American values” and apparently believes “that God was providentially active in establishing American freedom” (198). Moreover, congregationalism likely provided “a basis for capitalist democracy” (105). Yarnell does not associate pacifism with free churches, but asserts that “God demanded” that the American colonies revolt “to preserve ‘freedom from the domination of arbitrary power’” (199). However, these themes emerge when Yarnell moves beyond doctrine’s foundation and development (chapters 2-5) to his free church history of theology (chapter 6).

Malcolm Yarnell, in this first extensive believers church account of doctrinal formation, renders a valuable service. He describes numerous issues and thinkers little known to this tradition in careful detail. To represent this tradition, though, he draws mostly on early Anabaptism and on Baptist history. Perhaps more should not be expected in this wide-ranging volume. Yet the question of which churches fit this category remains unanswered. And although this category has made a third stream, besides Protestantism and Catholicism, visible in Western theology, can it become precise enough to continue to be useful? Further, if it can, how similar might its members be? Might each one perhaps affirm not the same few “ground principles,” but a majority of beliefs in a longer list? Might these beliefs provide not so much clear-cut criteria for evaluating other traditions, as an overall perspective, or angle of vision, for interacting with them?

Yarnell considers his effort “a preliminary exercise” (1) and greatly values interconfessional conversation. But when he enunciates many of his positions so early on, the sense of exploration, openness and tentativeness, for this reviewer at least, is largely lost. Perhaps my difference from Yarnell appears in how we approach Marpeck. For Yarnell, Marpeck was deeply familiar with classical doctrine and operated within that framework. In my view, Marpeck did not fully understand that vocabulary. Still, Marpeck often tried to use it to express his unusual views. This resulted in many brilliant, but also many inconsistent and sometimes unorthodox, formulations. As Walter Klaassen and William Klassen conclude, Marpeck “tried again and again to . . . capture just the right nuance—but he never quite succeeded.”<sup>1</sup> For me, Marpeck’s main, and very great,

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1. Walter Klaassen and William Klassen, *Marpeck: A Life of Dissent and Conformity* (Scottsdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 2008), 236.

contribution to believers church theology is not “foundational principles,” but a creative, dialogical and oft-renewed way of pursuing something like them.

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*Creed and Conscience: Essays in Honour of A. James Reimer.* Jeremy M. Bergen, Paul G. Doerksen and Karl Koop, eds. Kitchener, Ont.: Pandora Press. 2007. Pp. 306. \$32.

The cover of this anthology is beautiful. Its shiny blackness opens in a circle to reveal the Queen of the Sciences in richest hues of burgundy, green and gold, flanked by two cherubs holding the words “Knowledge of Divine Things.” It sets a high tone, and I am happy to say that I was not disappointed. The range of topics is wide as authors from different countries, denominations and stages of life “engage and advance Reimer’s theological agenda and interests” (11).

Gregory Baum’s foreword provides a fine outline of Reimer’s endeavor to show the relevance of creeds for ethics and the importance of the broader Christian tradition for the Mennonite Church; what the Mennonite contribution to the broader church might be; what the Christian faith might offer a society through his critique of modernity; and finally, the importance of interfaith dialogue. The preface explains why not all of Reimer’s interests are reflected in the volume, since there is not much direct discussion of Paul Tillich, George Grant or the dialogue with Muslim theology. There are simply too many friends and interests. John Rempel’s helpful “Spiritual and Intellectual Biography” suggests the roots of Reimer’s thought and project.

The rest of the book is divided into five categories of engagement: with Scripture; with the Anabaptist tradition; with modernity; with the ecumenical tradition; and with political theology. The struggle of the Mennonite Church to address same-sex marriage is the context for the rigorous encounter with Scripture. Thomas R. Yoder Neufeld explains the biblical notion of forbearance, which Reimer had proposed as the Christian alternative to either premature exclusion or a “live-and-let-live” tolerance. Neufeld’s description of forbearance as “the practice of vulnerable love amidst failure, sin, sorrow, and conflict” (43) sounds very compatible with where Lydia Neufeld Harder ends up exercising her deliberate hermeneutic that “moves beyond the biblical text but seeks to be in continuity with it” (46). She signals multiple witnesses to God in both the Bible and the worshipping community, all of which need to be heard, with the help of the Holy Spirit, in the midst of the congregation gathered in love and prayer.

The problem of disagreement in the church is taken to a different level in the next section where Karl Koop deals with “Holiness, Catholicity, and the Unity of all Christians.” In response to the fragmented state of Christianity Koop engages Anabaptist history, reviewing its emphasis on holiness and the movement toward increasing interest in catholicity. He compares the views of Reimer, John Howard Yoder and Fernando Enns, suggesting that time will tell whose account will endure. Brian Cooper offers the other study in the Anabaptist tradition, explaining Pilgram Marpeck’s thoughts on natural law, church and state. He

makes quite clear what Marpeck was trying to avoid: namely, the Constantinian mixing of temporal authority in the spiritual realm, the legalism of the Swiss Brethren and the spiritualism of the Schwenckfelders. It is less clear just what happens when the “faithfulness of Christians bears witness alongside the truth of God visible in nature” (96). We will wait for that.

The first essay in the modernity section also engages Anabaptist tradition and political theology, in the radical, revolutionary figure of Thomas Müntzer. Rudolf J. Siebert’s account of his friendship with Reimer brings to the fore Reimer’s interest in religion that is explosive—“that preserves uncompromised aspirations for justice, peace, and happiness” (110). The other essay in this section is a fascinating one by Christina Reimer, combining her psychology of religion perspective with that of a daughter. She argues for a compatibility between her father’s project and that of Karl Jung: “they can enrich each other in their respective quests to decipher the word of God to humanity in its universal language of symbolism, whether doctrinal or archetypal” (117). For Reimer senior, theology must not be reduced to ethics, but should “reflect a symbolic, doctrinal, and Trinitarian understanding of God’s presence in this world and God’s simultaneous transcendence of this world” (131).

The engagement with the ecumenical tradition contains two essays dealing with Bonhoeffer, one of Reimer’s early interests. Peter Frick uses Bonhoeffer’s theological anthropology to identify racism as a sin. The thesis is not particularly daring, even if the struggle against racism is always needed in the church. Fernando Enns reflects on Bonhoeffer’s life, taking up the questions of whether he was a saint and a pacifist, while affirming that he was certainly an ecumenist. More provocative in this section is the piece by John Seiling dealing with Origen’s Christology and the early creeds. Seiling proposes that although the terms “incarnation” and “in-humanization” are both essential, they serve different purposes: the former being *unhelpful* for ethics, while the latter, along with the notion of deification, provides a fruitful basis for ethics. Along the way, Seiling seems to favor the language of in-humanization because that of incarnation is offensive to reason. But at the end he admits they are both essential.

Peter Erb brings his experience of liturgical, eucharistic worship in the Catholic Church to reflect on Reimer’s theology, pushing for real ecumenical engagement. Erb acknowledges Reimer’s commitment to the creeds, classical theology and the broader church. He suggests, however, that the Mennonite ecclesial community would benefit from a deeper understanding of and experience with the creed as communal prayer, rather than simply as a list of things to believe. He maintains that “creedal, ‘classical theology,’ rooted in worship” might provide for “the Mennonite ecclesial community the firmest ‘dogmatic foundations for (its) Christian ethics’” (196). In a related way, Joan Lockwood O’Donovan highlights how the “liturgical worship combines the immediacy of moral practice with theological reflection” so that it “can play a paradigmatic role for Christian moral agency and action” (199). She explores the English liturgies for their trinitarian structure, highlighting the “ethical insight that the Holy Spirit’s gift of renewed moral agency is not to the individual but to the community of persons” (206).

Jeremy Bergen takes Reimer's concern for a trinitarian theology to a consideration of pneumatology. Two contemporary attempts, one that emphasizes the Holy Spirit at work inside the church and the other outside, are problematic. Bergen prefers a third view, which draws on the Eastern Orthodox tradition and, turning to the immanent Trinity, presents the Holy Spirit primarily within the Trinity, incorporating us into the "roominess" of God by gratuitousness and superfluity. The Spirit is "radically *gift*" (234).

In the section of political theology, Denis Janz presents a survey of Martin Luther's struggle with the two kingdoms and war, drawing some safe conclusions. First, it would be too simplistic to see the subservience of the German churches to the secular authorities as following directly from Luther's two kingdom theology, since "it is complex—if not murky." Second, Luther did not much modify the just war theory, and although he "tried to transcend" the holy war ideology, "he ultimately failed to do so" (254-255).

Harry Huebner attempts a real political theology, challenging political givens (like the autonomy of the state with its inalienable rights) and not being content to "sprinkle faith onto the secular imagination" to give politics a Christian "flavour" (258). Drawing especially on Jacob Taubes's interpretation of Paul, John Milbank's counterontology and John Howard Yoder's legacy, he offers not a "tidy Christian theory of the state" but "a call to the particularity of the person-event in whom our security resides" (278). As a theologian, I find it very compelling—though perhaps Christian ethicists or politicians/policy-makers might ask for more practical implications from this (tidy?) *theology*. I would love to hear such a conversation.

Paul Doerksen gets even closer to some of the tough questions of the church and world relations in his steps toward an Anabaptist political theology. It sounds as though he is rejecting John Howard Yoder's position, which collapses Christendom into Constantinianism, and supporting Oliver O'Donovan's commitment to learn from Christendom. However, at the end he is more reticent and admits what a challenge it is for Anabaptists to navigate between, on the one hand, settling for "suspicion and critique" in order to avoid "arrogant control," and on the other, "accommodation, the embrace of liberal pluralism, or some version of agreement on so-called minimal common morality" (301). He charges Reimer with the necessary task of sorting out the role and practices of the church in "law, order and public life" (301). This *festschrift* not only celebrates and extends Reimer's past work but also keeps us eager for his future contributions.

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*Practicing the Politics of Jesus: The Origin and Significance of John Howard Yoder's Social Ethics.* By Earl Zimmerman. Telford, Pa.: Cascadia Publishing House. 2007. Pp. 273. \$22.95.

Earl Zimmerman's *Practicing the Politics of Jesus* is an important book for Christian theology and ethics because it is the first book to treat John Howard Yoder as history. Rather than looking to Yoder as the obvious representation of contemporary Anabaptist-Mennonite theology, Zimmerman endeavors to set Yoder within his context and offer an interpretation of how that context shaped Yoder's thought, life and concerns. In particular, Zimmerman examines the context that drove Yoder toward a conception of "the politics of Jesus" "as an exercise in hermeneutics . . . which . . . seeks to put the social and political meaning of Jesus' life and ministry, as seen in the gospel narratives, into conversation with contemporary theological ethics" (29).

While much of the history contained in this book has been recounted in briefer fashion elsewhere, it is nonetheless deeply instructive to have it compiled in one volume and given an argumentative vector. *Practicing the Politics of Jesus* is divided into seven chapters, the first six of which recount salient features of Yoder's intellectual career and the last of which develops "the politics of Jesus" as it might be socially embodied in just-peacebuilding efforts. Zimmerman's first chapter, "Yoder Rearranges the Theological Landscape," introduces the overall outline of the book and shows how Yoder's development of the politics of Jesus challenged dominant conceptions of Christian theology and ethics in the second half of the twentieth century, a challenge that has had to be accounted for by scholars as different in theological orientation as Stanley Hauerwas and James Gustafson.

Chapter 2 tells the story of Yoder's early interaction with North American Mennonites, including the Concern Group and his mentors at Goshen College, particularly Harold Bender, Guy Hershberger and J. Lawrence Burkholder. Zimmerman not only recounts Yoder's frustration over the lingering Niebuhrism in Hershberger's and Burkholder's accounts of Mennonite theology and the way this affected Mennonite views of nonviolence, but also, and perhaps more important, he displays Yoder's struggle for mutual understanding with Bender concerning issues of church polity and the "Anabaptist vision." Zimmerman is right, it seems to me, to point to this as a decisive factor in shaping Yoder's conception of the politics of Jesus, for, far from being a simple recommendation that Christians "follow Jesus" in situations of overt conflict, the politics of Jesus as Yoder conceived it recommends a pattern of sociality in which structural issues like group organization and authority are the conditions of possibility for peaceably negotiating difference.

In the next chapter, "European Experience and the Debate About War," Zimmerman argues that Yoder first articulated and honed his conception of the politics of Jesus in three arenas during the latter half of the 1940s: his work in post-war Europe with European Mennonites; his ecumenical engagements with European Protestants; and the World Council of Churches discussion of the ethics and theology of war. In many respects, chapter 3 illustrates the arguments of chapter 2. It shows Yoder crafting enduring yet malleable ecumenical relationships and church structures that could enable meaningful discussion of

interchurch and intrachurch conflict without simply sweeping substantive differences under the carpet (88).

Chapters 4 and 5 discuss Yoder's graduate studies at the University of Basel. Zimmerman helpfully illuminates the ways in which the politics of Jesus that Yoder developed were influenced by people like Oscar Cullmann, Karl Barth, Jean Laserre, André Trocmé and Hendrik Berkhof, information that heretofore has been largely ascertainable only on the basis of suggestive footnotes in Yoder's own writing. Zimmerman also focuses an entire chapter on Yoder's dissertation, "Täuferium und Reformation in der Schweiz," and it is arguably here that Zimmerman makes his deepest contribution to understanding Yoder. He argues that one must understand Bender's efforts to craft for Mennonites what Paul Toews called a "usable past" and see Yoder's dissertation as a continuation of that mission if one is to understand the full implications of the politics of Jesus. In this respect, Zimmerman touches on one of the most intriguing avenues for reflection on Yoder's thought—namely, the relationship between history and theology in his work. Zimmerman quotes Mark Thiessen Nation in this regard: "One could argue . . . that John Howard Yoder's whole academic career was committed to communicating in ecumenical terms what he learned through his studies of sixteenth-century Anabaptism in the early to mid-1950s in Europe." This is fair enough; however, Zimmerman suggests, one needs to recognize that the "basic theological orientation" of Yoder's work "was already formed before his doctoral research" (143). Yoder, in good Benderian fashion, was intensely interested in crafting an Anabaptist *Vergegenwärtigung*, or updated theology, and this should raise questions for contemporary studies of Yoder and Anabaptism of the kind that Nietzsche himself raised in "On the Use and Abuse of History for Life." What is, or ought to be, the normative value of historiography? To what extent do our own virtues amplify our faults? How do our attempts to produce edifying histories blind us to the deleterious effects of our own interpretive activities? It is to his credit that Zimmerman elicits these and other questions clearly enough to provide much food for further thought.

In the final chapter of *Practicing the Politics of Jesus*, Zimmerman puts Yoder into conversation with contemporary theories for building a "just peace," including those of the Catholic peace tradition and Glen Stassen's transforming initiatives. This is a herculean task, largely owing to the contextually relative and occasional nature of Yoder's work, and Zimmerman generally handles it well. In one respect, however, I find this chapter problematic. In order to elucidate Yoder's theology as lived practice, Zimmerman seeks a handle on his thought by listing ten "basic principles" of the politics of Jesus. While these ten principles are perhaps a useful heuristic device for summarizing Yoder's thought, it seems to me that such a distillation of Yoder's work militates against an understanding of the politics of Jesus as a deeply embodied set of social practices. For that kind of work to be persuasive, we need thick descriptions and histories of actual groups and their negotiations, conflicts, cooperations and agreements, as they seek to live the politics of Jesus. Otherwise, an underexamined distinction between theory and practice remains entrenched in theological reflections on peace, and Yoder's theology will continue to be viewed as a theoretical offering that needs to be applied.

My deepest concerns with *Practicing the Politics of Jesus* are occasioned by a comment John Paul Lederach made in his foreword. Lederach wrote, "For those of us born during or after the time when Yoder was working through his European postwar experience and embarking on his Ph.D. work . . . *Practicing the Politics of Jesus* reads like a novel" (11). Lederach's comparison is apt not least because it contains a caution, or the seed of caution, for readers of the book. If *Practicing the Politics of Jesus* reads like a novel, then Yoder quickly emerges not simply as the novel's main character but also as its clear hero. The caution that needs to be voiced, therefore, is this: insofar as *Practicing the Politics of Jesus* portrays Yoder as a hero of contemporary Anabaptist-Mennonite theology, it runs the real risk of transmuting intellectual biography into vicarious autobiography or perhaps apologetics. I will not endeavor to speak for others here except by invitation, but I find the story of a smart-but-socially-awkward-Mennonite-boy-who-made-it-good-on-the-scene-of-ecumenical-theology deeply appealing and comforting. Yet that very effect tends to blind me to the more deleterious and authoritarian effects of Yoder's theology. It tends to help me obscure the extent to which the betrayals and heartbreaks of Yoder's biography are of a piece with facets of his theology, especially with its posture of humility and respect for the other. Those are also aspects of John Howard Yoder's theological legacy that his inheritors need to examine thoroughly and searchingly if in the coming decade we are indeed to cultivate a healthy and robust picture of the politics of Jesus.

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*States of Exile: Visions of Diaspora, Witness, and Return.* By Alain Epp Weaver. Scottdale, Pa.: Herald Press. 2008. Pp. 215. \$18.99.

In this book Alain Epp Weaver brings together ten lucid and finely-crafted essays that he published between 1998 and 2007. While these essays are diverse, they share ties to a dialogical engagement between John Howard Yoder's missionary theology of Jeremian exile and the political challenges posed by the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Epp Weaver's reflection is well grounded in more than a decade spent working with the Mennonite Central Committee in the Middle East.

In accord with the book's subtitle Epp Weaver groups his essays under three headings. Chapters 1-3 fall under the heading "Diaspora," chapters 4-6 under "Witness" and chapters 7-10 under "Return." For the purposes of this review, however, I find it more convenient to divide the essays into the six that deal directly with Israeli-Palestinian reconciliation and the four theological pieces that do not. I will survey the latter four first.

Three of these may be mentioned quickly. Chapter 4 provides a sensible defense of John Howard Yoder's trinitarian theology and the functions of creedal orthodoxy in mission. Chapter 5, on "The Body Politics of the Church in Exile," examines the political import of the Christian church's life and includes a discussion of Yoder's notion of "middle axioms" in witness to the state. Chapter

6 elaborates on Karl Barth's idea that Christians can discern "parables of the kingdom" outside the church in secular affairs.

The fourth of Epp Weaver's more general theological essays—chapter 1—makes an apt critique of John Howard Yoder's *The Jewish-Christian Schism Revisited*. Yoder has well articulated the virtue of Christians living as Jeremian exiles who are "not-in-charge" but are nonetheless missionary in seeking the good of their exilic home. However, Yoder falls into the trap of "taking charge" of the Jewish-Christian theological relationship by identifying a specific kind of Judaism—one sociologically similar to free-church Christianity—as normative. Epp Weaver proposes instead a "not-in-charge" Christian approach to Jews that is more dynamic and open to difference.

This brings us to the remaining six chapters, which creatively employ the theological convictions articulated in the essays reviewed above to address the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. In this regard, chapter 2 is the crux of the book. Here Epp Weaver brings the secular exilic theory of the Palestinian-American literary critic Edward Said (d. 2003) into conversation with Yoder's Jeremian exile theology. Said's basic idea—elaborating upon the Jewish scholar Theodor Adorno—is that we cannot be truly and morally "at home" when our "home" is built on injustice and the exclusion of others. Since Zionism insists on exclusion of Palestinians, the only place for the Palestinian intellectual is exile. Yet, Said does ponder a return to Palestine, and he advocates a secular and non-Zionist binational state in which Jews and Palestinians stand on equal footing and "home" includes rather than excludes the other.

Epp Weaver finds Said's stance analogous to Yoder's vision of the church as a Jeremian exilic community even though Yoder's horizon is theological and missionary while Said's is secular. Epp Weaver goes on to suggest that Jeremiah's exhortation to seek the peace of one's exilic city should function as a *modus vivendi* even when at home: "An exilic consciousness of not being fully at home in one's home so long as injustice endures can contribute to a theology of living rightly and justly in the land" (42-43).

Epp Weaver observes that Yoder may not have been too enthusiastic about Said's binational state proposal, apparently because of its secular foundations. Nonetheless, Epp Weaver contends that Yoder did not hesitate to engage the state on an *ad hoc* basis and that Said's "exilic politics of land and return" is compatible with "Yoder's understanding of the people of God as a political body living nonviolently amidst empires while seeking their peace and welfare" (53). On this basis, Epp Weaver concludes, Christians should work nonviolently for justice among Palestinians and Israelis with a binational state as the most desirable outcome.

In chapter 3, Epp Weaver discusses the binational state in a different key by elaborating on the Jewish intellectual Daniel Boyarin's vision of a "disaporized state." According to Boyarin, Jews should live in the land in the same mode as they live in the diaspora (i.e., in exile), leaving room for others and renouncing claims to Jewish hegemony and exclusiveness. Two other chapters defend a binational state against competing visions. Chapter 7 criticizes not only premillennial dispensationalist Christian Zionism but also the Christian Zionism of Western liberal Christians. Epp Weaver explains that the latter tend to support

a two-state Israel-Palestine solution, not adequately recognizing that this grants too much legitimacy to the exclusivist Zionist project. A binational state offers a better way to grant Palestinian refugees their rights and enable Israeli-Palestinian reconciliation. Chapter 8 explains how the wall Israel is building through the West Bank is meant to maximize the ratio of Jews to Palestinians on the Israeli side and abdicate responsibility for the dispossessed Palestinians on the other side. Against this, Epp Weaver marshals the Ephesians 2:14 vision of Christ breaking down the dividing wall separating Jew and Gentile to support an equalitarian binational state.

Epp Weaver's ninth chapter challenges pacifist Christians to distinguish morally between different kinds of violence. Epp Weaver is particularly concerned to draw attention to how Israeli discourses on "terrorism" paint any Palestinian resistance as violent while conveniently ignoring the violence that the Israeli state employs to subjugate the Palestinian people. Drawing on Yoder's notion of "middle axioms," Epp Weaver calls on pacifists to use accepted international conventions on war more courageously to criticize Israel's actions.

Chapter 10 recounts the activities of the Israeli Zochrot Association. This organization seeks creative ways to reintroduce memory of the *Nakba*, the 1948 dispossession of Palestinians, back into Israeli society. This includes arranging for Palestinians to visit the sites of their villages destroyed in 1948 and erecting signs giving the former Arabic names to village streets. These acts of memory, Epp Weaver remarks, embody hope for Jewish-Palestinian reconciliation in a binational future.

Epp Weaver has done a superb job employing Christian theological imagery to nurture a vision for a secular Israeli-Palestinian binational state in which all are treated as equal citizens. He is under no illusion that such a state would be heaven on earth, but he does hold out hope that it would be a great deal more just and peaceful than present arrangements allow. Perhaps it could even be one of Karl Barth's secular parables of the kingdom. May it be so!

I worry, however, that too little attention has been given in this vision to the role of the Christian churches on the ground in Israel-Palestine, especially when Yoder himself so emphasized the political import of the church simply being the church. It is unfortunate that diverse forces in Israel-Palestine militate so strongly against these churches providing a visible foretaste of the Ephesians 2:14 reconciliation of Jew and Gentile—that is, a harbinger of the binational reality that Epp Weaver envisions. Yet, I would have welcomed reflection on why this is so difficult and what that might mean for a specifically Yoderian exilic witness in that context.

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JON HOOVER

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*The Ben Horch Story.* By Peter Letkemann. Winnipeg, Man.: Old Oak Publishing, 2007. Pp. 490. \$37, Can.

The name Ben Horch is known to most western Canadian Mennonites of my generation, especially any who have been interested in music. The child of

German Lutheran immigrants from Ukraine, Horch was brought to Winnipeg, Manitoba, in 1909 at the age of 2. The family eventually settled among many immigrants in North Winnipeg, where they were drawn into and joined a Mennonite Brethren mission church. Though becoming Mennonite, the Horch family retained its Lutheran appreciation of instrumental music, and all the Horch brothers played the cello, violin or flute. Ben himself learned to play both violin and piano passably and later helped organize the Mennonite Symphony Orchestra in Winnipeg.

Horch was a mediocre student through elementary and high school, but showed an interest in art, drama, architecture and, especially, voice. Following high school he studied under one of Winnipeg's most recognized voice teachers and joined Winnipeg's premier male chorus, where he got the opportunity to observe good conducting techniques firsthand. Soon he was directing the choir of one of Winnipeg's Mennonite Brethren churches.

Not so incidentally, it was in high school that Ben met and fell in love with Esther Hiebert, daughter of the Mennonite Brethren mission church pastor C. N. Hiebert. Esther and Ben were married several years later in 1932. Esther herself was a gifted teacher, first in the Manitoba public school system, later as professor of hymnology at the Mennonite Brethren Bible College. She also studied voice, performed solos in choirs that her husband directed, and supported his career. Important for author Letkemann is the fact that Esther saved letters, programs, newspaper clippings and photos of her family's activities, organizing them in binders that proved immensely helpful in the writing of this book.

Horch's music career turned out to be somewhat disjointed. He first taught voice at the non-Mennonite Winnipeg Bible College from 1932 to 1939 and directed a choir there, while at the same time continuing to lead a Mennonite church choir. Then he spent four years studying at the Bible Institute of Los Angeles, although never earning a degree there. Following that he taught and did choral work at the Winkler Bible School in southern Manitoba and directed instrumental music at the nearby Morden public school, in addition to commuting to Winnipeg to direct the Mennonite Orchestra. From 1944 to 1955 he taught at the newly established Mennonite Brethren Bible College in Winnipeg, taking a one-year leave in 1951-1952 to study at the Nordwestdeutsche Musikakademie in Detmold, Germany. During this period Horch was on the committee that produced the Mennonite Brethren German hymnal (the *Gesangbuch*) in 1952, an English version of which was published in 1960.

All through the late 1930s, and while at Mennonite Brethren Bible College, Horch may have made his greatest impact on Canadian Mennonite music through the highly popular choral workshops he conducted most summers in the prairie provinces, sometimes also in the Fraser Valley of British Columbia, and in Ontario. Most of these workshops culminated in a *Sängerfest* (choral festival). It was here that Canadian Mennonites had their sights raised to a higher quality of music—cantatas and chorales—and received coaching in excellent conducting skills and the production of choral music.

Then in 1955, in part because of tensions over the relative importance and popularity of music courses at the Mennonite Brethren Bible College over against theological studies, Horch left the college to take a music teaching position at

Immanuel Academy, the Mennonite high school in Reedley, California. That job turned out not to satisfy Horch, so within only one year he accepted an invitation to host a classical music program on radio station KWSO in Shafter, California, a station just founded by wealthy potato grower Edward Peters. Horch remained there only two years until—again partly because of personality tensions—he took up a position as classical music host with the new CFAM radio station that had just been established in Altona, Manitoba. After two years Horch left this station because of conflict between his choice of music and the station’s interest in commercial success. He was then invited to apply for a job as a producer with the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation in Winnipeg. Horch stayed there until his retirement fourteen years later, the longest position he held in the course of his life, and the best paying, fortunately, since many of his earlier positions had offered meager salaries and living conditions.

Horch retired in 1973 and died of a stroke in 1992. The memorial service for him included much choral music offered by many devoted singers who had studied with him or had sung under his direction in years past, who came together as a mass choir to pay their respects. His wife, Esther, died of a heart attack in early 1994.

This biography is lucidly organized and well written. The author, Dr. Peter Letkemann, an organist, became a friend of the Horch family while studying radio production with Ben at the University of Manitoba, and he proposed the biography in 1987. Ben and Esther agreed to the project, and Esther’s many organized scrapbooks, binders and notes were made available to Letkemann. In addition, the author took pains to interview many of the persons who had worked with or studied under Horch over the years. He quotes these people extensively but judiciously, letting Horch’s record speak for itself as much as possible. Also, Letkemann had access to the archives of the Mennonite Brethren Church and the Heritage Center at Canadian Mennonite Bible College, as well as other Winnipeg resources. Letkemann conscientiously worked through these materials, scheduling the publication of the biography for 2007, twenty years after beginning it and on the hundredth anniversary of Horch’s birth.

This biography fulfills a broader purpose than chronicling the life of an important Mennonite choral and orchestra director, teacher of music theory and instructor at choral workshops. It records what happened in Canadian Mennonite music making during an era of Russian Mennonite immigration and Mennonite acculturation in Canadian society. Horch helped Mennonites negotiate this transition, coaching them to retain a love of their heritage of Kernlieder while nudging them away from gospel songs. With the rise of “praise songs” and bands in many Mennonite churches in recent years, this book is most timely, although too few of those who need it most will read it. What Mennonite churches need today is another Ben Horch. Certainly, anyone interested in the history of Mennonite music in Canada will need to look into this biography.

## BOOK NOTES

*Making Sense of the Journey: The Geography of our Faith.* Edited by Robert Lee and Nancy V. Lee. Eastern Mennonite University: Anabaptist Center for Religion and Society. 2007. Pp. 336

This collection of autobiographical reflections is the first volume published by the Anabaptist Center for Religion, an association of retired professors and church workers in Harrisonburg, Virginia. Sixteen personal memoirs—13 men and 3 women—form the core of the collection, each focusing on formative intellectual and spiritual experiences, cast within a larger historical context. Virtually of the accounts reflect note the formative nature of their encounter with the Anabaptist Vision, and the way these convictions found expression in the course of their careers, frequently defined in terms of a professional discipline and engagement with the wider Mennonite church. Sociologist Calvin W. Redekop concludes with an appendix describing the history of the Anabaptist Center for Religion and Society.

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*The Danzig Mennonite Church: Its Origin and History from 1569-1919.* H. G. Mannhardt. Translated by Victor G. Doerksen, edited and annotated by Mark Jantzen and John D. Thiesen. North Newton, Kans.: Bethel College. 2007. Kitchener, Ont.: Pandora Press. 2007. Pp. 286.

This book first appeared in 1919 as part of a 350<sup>th</sup> year anniversary of the Danzig Mennonite Church. Its author, Hermann Gottlieb Mannhardt, served as pastor of the congregation from 1878 to 1927 and was an important leader in the Danzig congregation, founded in 1569 by Dirk Philips. Now made available to an English-speaking readership, the book highlights the story of Mennonites in Vistula Delta region (now Poland), one that is often overlooked in standard accounts of Anabaptist-Mennonite history. Editors Jantzen and Thiesen have added an introduction, annotations, illustrations and maps. An epilogue by Tomasz Ropiejko, pastor of a local Pentecostal congregation, relates the history of the church building in the years following World War II. The translation is volume 14 in the Cornelius H. Wedel Historical Series.

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*Burning Zeal: The Rhetoric of Martyrdom and the Protestant Community in Reformation France, 1520-1570.* By Nikki Shepardson. Bethelhem: Lehigh University Press. 2007. Pp. 206. \$44.50.

This study draws on Reformation-era sources—including the martyrologies of Jean Crespin and Antoine la Roche Chandieu—to trace the rhetoric of martyrdom that came to define the French Calvinist church in the middle decades of the sixteenth century. As with several other recent studies, the book

focuses on the way in which the language of martyrdom provided a means of resisting persecution, strengthened the faith of followers, combated tendencies toward Nicodemism, and assisted in the recruitment of new members. Shepardson's book gives particular attention to the role of gender, noting especially how female martyrs challenged preserved roles and behavior for women, while opening up new forms of community expression based on the language of suffering and sacrifice.

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*Overcoming Evil God's Way: The Biblical and Historical Case for Nonresistance.* By Stephen Russell. Guy Mills, Pa.: Faith Builders Resource Group. 2008. Pp. 320.

Adding to the rich collection of books on the gospel of peace, this volume traces the classic Anabaptist-Mennonite theology of nonresistance, beginning with Old Testament texts and moving through the New Testament and early church history before concluding with an argument regarding the "modern need for this witness." The book concludes with an annotated bibliography and a series of study guides designed to facilitate discussion. Stephen Russell, the author, is an instructor at Faith Builders Educational Programs, a two-year biblical training institute in the Anabaptist heritage that prepares teachers for conservative Mennonite schools.