Book Reviews

Täufer und Reformierte im Disput: Texte des 17. Jahrhunderts über Verfolgung und Toleranz aus Zürich und Amsterdam. Edited by Philipp Wälchli, Urs B. Leu, and Christian Scheidegger, assisted by John D. Roth. Zug: Achius Verlag. 2010. Pp. 88. € 32.05.

Täufer und Reformierte im Disput is a welcome addition to the growing number of primary sources for this era, long and mistakenly viewed as impoverished by a Swiss Anabaptist weakness in literary expression. The book reproduces five documents that arose out of the harsh suppression of Anabaptists in Zurich in the 1630s and 1640s by the Reformed government and church.

The two introductory essays by Philipp Wälchli of the Reformed Church and Urs Leu of the Free Church tradition provide excellent background for the source documents. Wälchli gives a clear overview of the purpose and contents of the book and points out the slippery and varied meanings of the German word *Mandat*. Leu recounts the historical events from the late sixteenth through the seventeenth centuries as an explanation for the issuance of each of the documents.

The book is a collection of texts reflecting the written controversy occasioned by the Zurich government's publication of its *Mandat* or *Täufermanifest,* called *Wahrhaffter Bericht* in 1639, which is reproduced on pages 85-128. This was a separate booklet, originally of 71 pages, discussing the basis for Reformed opposition to Anabaptism at length, but stating Anabaptist positions only briefly. The text provides an objective account of events, but the chronology becomes vaguer toward the end, perhaps to avoid the impression that the Anabaptists had simply been forgotten in prison. The propaganda and concluding harsh threats of the mandate reveal that previous prohibition and persecution of those dissenters had not been successful.

The Zurich Anabaptists responded with their own *Warhafftiger Bericht*, the printing of which was forbidden by the Zurich government. It appeared in print in Pennsylvania nearly a century later. Since this Anabaptist reply is now easily available (63) as an appendix to the *Ausbund* and as a text with full annotations and English translation in *Documents of Brotherly Love* by J. Lowry (2007), it is not reproduced here.

The second text (129-145) in the book is a Latin letter sent by Johann Jakob Breitinger, the superintendent of the Reformed Church in Zurich, to Godofroy Hotton, a minister of the French Reformed Church in Amsterdam, in 1642. As the letter quotes and summarizes the Zurich government's *Täufermanifest*, it contains little new material. The Latin letter is accompanied by a German translation. Although it was not published until later, when Johann Heinrich Ott included it

in his *Annales Anabaptistici*, the letter provides the link to the next printed document.

This third text is the rare booklet called *Noodigh Ondersoeck* (147-176), printed by Mennonites in Amsterdam in 1643 and reproduced in a very readable facsimile with a German paraphrase, which omits some points in the original Dutch. The *Noodigh Ondersoeck* by Dutch Mennonites is a refutation of Breitinger's Latin letter to Hotton, hence also a short refutation of the *Täufermanifest*. It compares the persecution of Zurich Anabaptists to the religious and political situation in the Netherlands, which was quite different, and which doubtless did not seem applicable to the Zurich Reformed. It also argues against the motivations behind the persecution, reasoning from biblical quotations and events, thus challenging the Reformed claim to being scriptural. An interesting example is the Reformed assertion that Anabaptists violated the sacredness of city walls when they escaped from prison. Hence, the *Noodigh Ondersoeck* asks, Did the early Christians do this when they let Paul down over the wall of Damascus in Acts 9?

The fourth and probably most valuable document in the book is the Zurich Anabaptist refutation (177-212) of the first document, which originally provoked all the writing on the subject. It is the Anabaptist "Antimanifest" of 1645, which possibly was done with some help from Dutch Mennonites, but also contains material that obviously could have been composed only in Zurich. This is actually the second Zurich Anabaptist response, which, like the first, or *Wahrhaffter Bericht*, in the back of the *Ausbund*, was not allowed to be printed in Zurich. It reproduces a range of Reformation and pre-Reformation quotations, evincing a breadth of knowledge usually considered lacking to the Swiss (but showing they had at least some access to such knowledge) and further, firsthand descriptions of the actions for which the Anabaptists were blamed, but seen from their own viewpoint and challenging the "facts" that the Reformed presented. Surprisingly, the Zurich Anabaptists were quite mild in their approach to the government in this document, placing the blame on the clergy and especially on Zwingli. They skillfully used the opportunity to enlist the sympathy of officials and make a significant statement of Anabaptist views in general. This Anabaptist "Antimanifest," drawing on Balthasar Hubmaier's *Der Uralten unnd gar neuen Leerern Urteil* and perhaps some other collection of statements (possibly even the *Martelaers Spiegel der werelos Christensen* of 1631), quotes Eusebius, Tertullian, Origen, Ambrose, Chrysostom, and, among writers of the Reformation era, Erasmus, Luther, Zwingli, Carlstadt, Bucer, Oecolampad, Hubmaier, and Franck (180-196). The "Antimanifest" also claims that accounts of events in the Reformed "Manifest" are inaccurate. For example, the Reformed say that the Anabaptists used strong drink and opium (123) to drug guards and secure a file so that they could escape prison. The "Antimanifest" says that the guards were already very drunk when they arrived for night duty and that the prisoners used only a rusty nail; and so, through prayer and with the help of God, they escaped (209-210). Christian Scheidegger is the editor and annotator of this writing, never before published, from the Swiss Anabaptists. He interestingly traces subsequent use of this material in later editions of the *Martyrs Mirror*.

The fifth and last text in the book is a refutation (213-261) of the Anabaptist "Antimanifest" by Johann Rudolph Stucki, a professor of theology in the Reformed school in Zurich, which survives in only one manuscript kept in Basel. As a teacher, he provided Reformed pastors with polemics against dissenters. Stucki quotes sections from the "Antimanifest," and then gives his counterstatements. He breaks off his refutation before coming to the end of the Anabaptist writing, at least in the only available manuscript.

An omission (mentioned on pages 13 and 61) from the book is a rare Dutch broadside, printed in Amsterdam, which was an initial Reformed abstract in Dutch of Johann Heinrich Ott's Latin letter (the second document), followed by the Mennonite response *Noodigh Ondersoeck,* (the third document). The omitted material, which, then, would have come between documents two and three, was only one page, and yet inclusion of this could have drawn in several other Dutch documents. This illustrates the problem in publishing original sources when an attempt is made to be inclusive and yet to produce a book of reasonable size and scope.

The book gives the source documents in the original German, or the Latin and the Dutch with modern German translations, all with explanatory footnotes. A six-page glossary of seventeenth-century German words and meanings, not found in current dictionaries, is an added philological bonus at the back of the book. Leu's discussion (pp. 70 ff) of the largely failed advance of religious toleration of the era, contrasting Philipp van Zesen with Jean Baptist Stouppe and others, puts the struggle between the Anabaptists and the Reformed church in Switzerland into a larger, European context.

Hagerstown, Md. JAMES W. LOWRY

Exploring Baptist Origins. Anthony R. Cross and Nicholas J. Wood, eds. Oxford, U.K.: Regent's Park College. 2010. Pp.163. £20.

This collection of essays examines the nature of the Baptist tradition. The work originated as a series of lectures by British Baptist historians and theologians delivered at Regent's Park College, University of Oxford, in 2009. The occasion was the 400th anniversary of the founding of the first Baptist church. As with all such collections, some essays are more significant than others.

Anthony R. Cross begins the book with a thorough and detailed recounting of the adoption of believer's baptism by a group of English Separatists in Amsterdam in 1609. It clarifies and corrects a good number of details in this well-studied story, though without adding any major new insights or interpretations.

Paul S. Fiddes next examines the question, based on the paradigm developed by Max Weber and Ernst Troeltsch, of whether Baptists are a church like medieval Roman Catholics or a sect like Anabaptists. Fiddes disputes the usual classification of Baptists as a sect and concludes that Baptists have always been a free church. That is, while they believe in the autonomy of the individual congregation (like a sect), they have made a point of associating with like-

minded congregations. (Keith A. Jones, later in the book, observes that this is truer of European than North American Baptists.) While they have opposed government interference in religion (like a sect), they have differed from sects in remaining active participants in society. They are less sacramental than Roman Catholics, but more sacramental than Anabaptists. Fiddes thus argues that Baptists avoid the subjectivism often associated with sects—he grounds Baptists' mediating position in the objective covenant between Christ and the universal church. More than anything, this essay demonstrates that the theory of two opposites, church and sect, finds few examples in the real world.

Brian Haymes analyzes Thomas Helwys's book *The Mystery of Iniquity* (1612), drawing out two concepts still relevant today: the believers church and freedom of conscience. Haymes points out that freedom of conscience comes from God, not from state policies of tolerance and declarations of human rights, and that the idea of individual responsibility before God is quite different from the indifference to religion that flows from modern concepts of tolerance. Among other things, this means that the church has a right and a duty to critique government policies from God's perspective.

Larry J. Kreitzer examines two petitions presented by Baptists to the British House of Lords in 1660 and 1661, pleading for protection of their freedom as religious minorities. This was the period when the British monarchy was being restored after a period of parliamentary rule, and the Baptists had good reason to be concerned—one Baptist meeting place had already been vandalized by pro-royalist mobs. Both petitions reveal that Baptists were still considered "Anabaptists" and hence revolutionaries. The petitioners denied the charge, but it is also clear that they were not pacifists—some had served as officers in the parliamentary militia. The article includes transcripts of the two petitions, as well as a letter forged by an enemy of the Baptists purporting to show that they were indeed plotting to overthrow King Charles II by military force.

Crawford Gribben surveys Baptist millennial views in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. He argues that, while views varied and millennial ideas were not stressed after the early years, Baptists continued to hold fast to the idea of the believers church, which has eschatological overtones. Gribben also shows that Baptists continued to struggle to escape the stigma of "Anabaptist" millennial views that had played a role in the Münster debacle of the 1530s and the Puritan Revolution of the 1640s.

In perhaps the most thought-provoking essay, Stephen R. Holmes wrestles with the question of why General Baptists (the group closest to Mennonites) succumbed to "Arian" views, denying the divinity of Christ, over the course of the eighteenth century. This occurred even though General Baptists insisted on following Scripture alone (rather than confessions of faith) and on being an "enclosed garden," a counterculture separate from the wider society. Holmes concludes that the problem was General Baptists' lack of education and their disengagement from the wider society. These factors led them to focus on maintaining their distinctives on minor issues, but left them with few defenses to resist the main assumptions of the age of the Enlightenment. There may be some useful lessons for modern Mennonites in that history.

Keith G. Jones concludes the book with some reflections on issues facing modern Baptists, drawn from the experience of a twentieth-century Lithuanian Baptist, Jonas Inkenas, and his descendants. Ironically, this is the least conclusive of the essays and in need of some clarifying editing.

As John H. Y. Briggs suggests in his foreword, this volume focuses not so much on Baptist history as on the meaning of the Baptist tradition. Indeed, Baptists are somewhat uncomfortable with the whole idea of a Baptist tradition. Like Mennonites, they are suspicious of "succession," of any notion of a tradition handed down immaculately from one generation to another. Rather, they focus on "certain recoveries of apostolic insight and practice which did not all happen at the same time" (xii).

Abbotsford, B.C. JAMES R. COGGINS

Mennonite German Soldiers: Nation, Religion, and Family in the Prussian East, 1772-1880. By Mark Jantzen. Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press. 2010. Pp. 370. $38.

This is the first full-length study of a problem peculiar to Mennonites, but with implications for other minority religious groups and mainline churches: the issue of full political participation and enthusiastic military service in defense of shared national values. Jantzen considers his subject in complex social, military, political, and national contexts over more than a full century of development. As such, this penetrating study moves Mennonite history out of the relatively narrow field of sectarian mini-history into the broader spectrum of the Prussian and German "Ancient Regime," to use a term the author typically employs with arresting effect.

The central theme of this book, which is based on Jantzen's University of Notre Dame dissertation, is the long struggle of a pacifist religious minority to maintain its core belief in nonresistance and nonviolence, while acquiring the rights and privileges of full citizenship. With an astute balance between sharp analysis and engaging narration, Jantzen gives the reader a clear view "from below." He guides us through the welter of detail and facts of this dramatic encounter between religious freedom and minority rights, all amid the overwhelming power of autocratic government and the sweeping force of nationalism. This unique story involving little more than 20,000 people concentrated in the Vistula-Nogat Delta between Danzig and Elbing, hardly worthy of notice in most histories of the period, is so smoothly integrated into the regional and national story that the book's importance goes far beyond the parochial destiny of a few thousand families and acquires significance in the larger historiography of Prussia and modern Germany. A cogent example of this achievement would be Janzen's relentless and effective challenge to a popular school of interpretation that argues for a German *Sonderweg*, or unique historical development in contrast to other Western European countries. Certainly there are few if any other Mennonite studies so well integrated or contextualized in broader social, economic, political, and religious histories.

The comparative element of the book's approach is particularly evident as Jantzen systematically analyzes the similarity and dissimilarity to Mennonites of the other significant minority religious group in Prussian/German society—namely, the Jewish experience in the pre-Holocaust century. One startling example of this is a little-known fact that Jantzen extracted from primary sources. After the first partition in 1772, Russia, Austria, and Prussia expelled 40 percent of Jews from the Vistula-Nogat *Werder* Mennonite territory, transferring them to Poland, while Mennonites remained in place. Frederick the Great had initially ordered that all lower-class Jews be expelled, but economic interests intervened, and the Jewish communities in the suburbs of Danzig were given a Charter of Privileges in exchange for an annual fee of 1600 *Reichsthaler*. Mennonites, meanwhile, much smaller in number but economically equally useful, were exempted from military service on condition of their paying an annual fee to support a new military academy (42).

It would be easy to get lost in this complex mosaic if the author had not warned at the beginning that he would pursue his goal by weaving together five strands in the drama: the impact of state-formulated and state-sponsored nationalism; the inherent connection between universal conscripting and the modern nation-state; the enormous popular nationalistic pressure put on the state and its nonconforming minorities; the interesting way in which Mennonite theological views determined the acceptance or rejection of national identity; and, finally, the astonishing reach of official and popular nationalism into the normally private world of the family. (The autocratic Prussian government not only restricted Mennonite property rights but even sought to manipulate population growth to prevent expansion). This complex analysis is carried out in a clearly delineated chronological fashion, which will help the general reader as well as the scholar to understand and grasp the significance of the work.

Beginning in chapter 2 Jantzen examines how Mennonite life in the region changed as a consequence of the first Polish partition. Mennonites living in West Prussia found themselves no longer under the Polish monarch's benevolent indifference but dealing instead with the more restricted and controlling policies of Prussian bureaucrats and Hohenzollern autocrats who sought to contain and exploit Mennonite growth and expansion. This chapter, and the two that follow, deal with the Napoleonic period in three distinct segments, each with its unique pressures on Mennonites to conform. This was a relatively stable era after Napoleon's defeat and opened for the Mennonites several new paths toward full participation in Prussian society by interacting with Protestantism and other neighbors, the focus of chapter 5. The next chapter concentrates on the revolutionary upheavals of 1848 that taught Mennonites that national priorities, such as conscription, take precedence over religious freedom. Mennonites had two representatives in the 1848 Frankfurt National Assembly, and one of them, Hermann von Beckerath of Prussian Krefeld, took a strong position in favor of Mennonites giving up nonresistance and opting for regular military service. Beckerath was a well-known liberal and early defender of full emancipation for Jews in the province. A municipal ceremony in the Krefeld Mennonite Church

recently memorialized him with voluble praise from the Jewish community, but with no note of his pro-military stance.[1]

After 1848, the German public began paying attention as German national politics underwent a conservative reaction (chapter 6). In the next chapter Jantzen depicts a renewed "focus of the struggle over Mennonite and German national identity" (14). Mennonites now participated in the Prussian educational system and intermarried with members of other confessions, thus defying natal law and church rules. Chapter 8 is devoted to the main turning point on the central issue of this book—the wars of unification with widespread Mennonite participation, the achievement of full civil rights, and full military service. This abandonment of nonresistance divided the Mennonite community into several factions who engaged in nearly permanent squabbling. In the final chapter the author connects the Mennonite story to the wider new German Empire, especially by tracing the reverberations of the anti-Catholic *Kulturkampf* in Mennonite ranks. Mennonite traditionalists were even brought before the courts, as were conservative Catholics. The choices were now reduced to assimilation or escape by emigration. The pathos of these events was well portrayed by two popular dramas authored by Ernst von Wildenbruch (*Der Menonit*) and Theodor Fontane (*Quitt*, a novel), both sources on which Jantzen draws. It is ironic that two of Germany's major literary figures would be mesmerized by a small group of nonconforming pacifists in a context where militarism was universally condoned.

This is a thoroughly researched work, graced by a broad view and written with a clear persuasive style that exhibits frequent poetic touches. Jantzen exploited all the major archives in Poland (Gdansk and Elblag) and Germany (state and religious as well as Mennonite repositories), as well as the main Mennonite archive at Newton, Kansas. The author's list of secondary sources misses only one significant book, Peter J. Klassen's *Mennonites in Early Modern Poland and Prussia* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009),[2] which was not yet published as Jantzen's book went to press.

Western New England College GERHARD REMPEL

Roots and Branches: A Narrative History of the Amish and Mennonites in Southeast United States, 1892-1992. Volume 1: Roots, 1892-1969. By Martin W. Lehman. Telford, Pa.: Cascadia Publishing House. 2010. Pp. 307. $23.95.

The engagement of Anabaptists in the Southeast United States during the last century is relatively new compared with the Anabaptist presence elsewhere in the United States over the past three hundred years. In the first volume of *Roots*

1. Christoph Wiebe, "'Solange die Juden nicht frei sind, sind wir selbst nicht frei'—Festakt der Stadt Krefeld zu Ehren Hermann von Beckeraths," *Mennonitische Geschichtsblätter* 67 (2010), 214-16.

2. See review by Daniel Riches in *MQR* 84 (Oct. 2010), 613-615.

and Branches: A Narrative History of the Amish and Mennonites in Southeast United States, 1892-1992, Martin W. Lehman, a retired minister and bishop, uses stories of people, congregations, and conferences to suggest that the "roots" of the emerging Anabaptists in Alabama, Florida, Georgia, and South Carolina were grounded not only in the experience of people with a white European heritage, but also in a radical evangelical faith that at times called on them to break the walls of racial segregation.

Lehman introduces *Volume I: Roots* with a brief overview of Anabaptism. This is followed by seventeen chapters organized into three parts. "Part I – Seed Sowing in the Southeast" includes stories from the first sixty years of Amish and Mennonite involvement in rural, urban, and suburban communities in the Southeast. Evangelism led to some inroads, like the tour across Florida undertaken by the well-known churchman John S. Coffman in 1895 (31-33). Other developments were based on strong missionary urges, as when the Charles and Anna Byer family were led in 1926 and 1927 to Tampa, Florida (44-45). And yet others engaged in economic ventures such as construction and celery farming. This was the case of the Amish settling Sarasota County in the 1920s (50-51).

In "Part II – Roots in the Fifties," Lehman describes the increasing activities of Amish, Amish Mennonites, and Mennonites during the 1950s in four geographical areas: South Florida (Miami, Homestead, and Immokalee); Sarasota, Tampa Bay, and Northwest Florida; Georgia; and South Carolina. A favorite example was LeRoy and Irene Bechler's bold move in 1957 to Atlanta (160-161), which set the tone for a witness to racial justice that would expand in later years.

"Part III – Roots in the Sixties" provides an overview of the maturing activities of congregations in six Anabaptist bodies during the 1960s in the Southeast: Amish, Ohio Mennonite Conference, Virginia Mennonite Conference, Conservative Mennonite Conference, Indiana Michigan Conference, and Lancaster Mennonite Conference. Lehman devotes 74 of the 114 pages in this section to stories about Lancaster Mennonite Conference churches because they represented the largest cluster of congregations. He concludes the section with the formation of the Southeast Mennonite Convention, forerunner to the current Southeast Mennonite Conference.

Throughout the book, Lehman intersperses rich stories of individual Mennonites and their churches dealing with racial justice during times of segregation, and later during the civil rights movement. He tells the stories openly and honestly. Some of them are inspiring and others show a lack of resolve to address racial injustice directly. Lehman includes an inspirational account of Vincent Harding, an African-American Mennonite serving in Atlanta who was also a close associate of Martin Luther King Jr. (217-218). King asked Harding to go to Albany, Georgia, at a time when racial disturbances were threatening to break into violence. Harding went to Albany and led peaceful prayers and marches. He was eventually jailed and later freed in time to attend Mennonite World Conference. At the conference, he admonished Mennonites for

their lukewarmness, comparing them to the church in Laodicea—the message was repent, or die.

There is a degree of strength in the nonjudgmental, direct, and honest way in which Lehman narrates these and many other stories involving white Mennonites engaging with both white and African-American Southern communities. Yet, critical questions about such engagement will need to be answered elsewhere. For example, to what extent did the inspirational stories of racial justice emerging from the Mennonite experience among Southeast congregations help change beliefs and practices in parent conferences in the Midwest and Northeast? What might have been opportunities to develop indigenous African-American pastoral leadership in mission points in African-American communities?

In the preface, Lehman indicates that he is "biased toward the church" (11). He tells stories about the church with care. During his Civilian Public Service days in the 1940s, Lehman was exposed to Anabaptists from many different groups. This helped shape his own ministry and his positive relationship with members of diverse Amish, Amish Mennonite, and Mennonite congregations. It gave him a strong moral platform on which to write a history that is inter-Mennonite in nature, a gift to the worldwide Anabaptist community.

Lehman's stories of Mennonite agency involvement in supporting the Southeast churches are essential to the history. Yet, others will need to analyze the impact that agencies such as the Eastern Mennonite Board of Missions and Charities had on the Southeast Mennonite churches, especially through Voluntary Service programs. The story of Mennonite Central Committee's inter-Mennonite conference on race relations in 1964 appeared to be a watershed in gathering many Anabaptist groups across the South. One might ask: How could the church itself duplicate this type of event more often?

Lehman acknowledges that he is most comfortable sharing stories rather than conducting historical analysis. However, there are glimpses of his ability to do so. One such instance occurs when he interprets the vigor of the Conservative Mennonite Conference after fifty years of existence (186). “The strength of the conference,” he writes, “lay in the autonomy of its congregations *and* the vitality of its several conference sessions."

In *Volume II: Branches, 1970-1992,* Lehman promises to document the surprising growth in diversity of Southeast Mennonite Conference as it continued to plant congregations together with people of Haitian, Hispanic, Garifuna, and other cultural backgrounds.

Lancaster Mennonite Historical Society ROLANDO L. SANTIAGO

At the Forks: Mennonites in Winnipeg. By Leo Driedger. Kitchener, Ont.: Pandora Press. 2010. Pp. 473. $29.95, Can.

More than a million Mennonites are dispersed around the globe. The third-largest national group is in Canada. Within Canada, Manitoba has more Mennonites than any other province, and its capital, Winnipeg, has the highest

urban concentration of Mennonites in the world. What is it about this city that makes it so attractive to Mennonites? It is this question and statistical phenomenon that a Winnipeg sociologist, Leo Driedger, attempts to address.

At the Forks begins with a chapter that provides a historical outline of Mennonites' Anabaptist origins and the migration of Russian Mennonites to Manitoba in the 1870s. Driedger refers to E. K. Francis's *In Search of Utopia* (1955), Royden Loewen's *Family, Church, and Market* (1993), and John J. Friesen's *Building Communities* (2007) when describing the settlement process of Mennonites in southern Manitoba.

Chapter 2 describes urbanization and its effects on Mennonites, considering both the collective efforts of Winnipeg Mennonites to build institutions and the personal values of individual Mennonites. The data studied in this chapter include the familiar Church Membership Profile surveys by J. Howard Kauffman, Leland Harder, and Driedger from 1972 and 1989, but Driedger also incorporates a 1962 article by John Sawatzky from *Mennonite Life*, Harder's 1971 *Fact Book* for the General Conference Mennonites, and Driedger and Abe Bergen's study of Mennonite teenagers from the 1995 *Journal of Mennonite Studies*.

Chapter 3 describes Mennonite migrations to Winnipeg from both inside and outside the province of Manitoba, and the establishment of ethnic enclaves within various Winnipeg neighborhoods. Chapter 4 provides good detail on the Winnipeg Mennonite church origins and reasons for church growth. Christian Schwarz's church growth model is applied productively here to explain the expansion of various Mennonite congregations in the city.

The formation of Mennonite schools, colleges, seminaries, and universities both in Canada and in the United States is the subject of chapter 5. . Chapter 6, on media, opens with a discussion of Marshall McLuhan before providing short sketches of media enterprises (newspapers, journals, radio, and television) established by Winnipeg Mennonites. Driedger again draws on the 1972 and 1989 Church Membership Profiles in a brief discussion of Mennonite use of media. Like many of the earlier chapters, the chapter unfolds as an inventory; readers would have benefited from a discussion of the role of media in the creation of ethnic identity, and engagement with the extensive literature on symbolic ethnicity.

Chapter 7 is an uncritical account of the origins of Mennonite-owned businesses in Winnipeg, with no mention of the primarily Mennonite work force on which the initial success of many of them was at least partly dependent. The section on Buhler Industries reduces John Buhler's well-publicized battle with the Canadian Auto Workers to a single sentence that says only that Local 2224 went on strike for nine months in 2000, but neither explains why nor states how Buhler himself responded.

Other occupations of Winnipeg Mennonites are addressed by the next two chapters. Chapter 8 reviews the professions, both the ''helping'' ones (teaching, healing, ministering) and those that were, historically, somewhat ''taboo'' (law, politics, social work). Chapter 9, on service work, outlines the origins of the Mennonite Girls' Homes, Winnipeg Mennonite hospitals and senior housing,

Mennonite Central Committee Manitoba, and various Mennonite church conference offices situated in the city.

The final three chapters—on music (10), on creative writing (11), and on artists (12)—are the strongest in the book. In them, comparative analysis triumphs over simple description. The author draws on numerous interviews with Winnipeg Mennonite musicians, authors, and artists about the intersection of their work with their ethnic and religious identity (or identities). Interviews like these would have been helpful for the earlier chapters on Winnipeg Mennonite entrepreneurs and professionals. Though separate chapters are afforded to entrepreneurs, professionals, musicians, authors, and artists, no chapter addresses the Winnipeg Mennonite working class—a problematic omission, given that surveys show that they constituted anywhere from 23 to 27 percent of Winnipeg's Mennonite population in the 1970s and 1980s.

A sixteen-page photo insert consists solely of exterior shots of the buildings that house various Mennonite institutions; no people or activities are depicted. The only exception to this sequence of buildings is a single photo of a lineup of tractors, with the caption "Buhler Industries Inc." Reproductions of the works of the artists mentioned in chapter 12 would have been a welcome addition here.

At the Forks suffers from some unfortunate and avoidable problems. Typographical errors and copy-editing problems abound: tables are numbered the same (table 2-3); Royden Loewen appears twice in the index (once as Royden and once as Roy, with different page references in each instance). The author's use of the first-person plural is somewhat off-putting, as is the excessive reliance on two of his own previously published works: *Mennonites in the Global Village* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000) and *Mennonites in Winnipeg* (Winnipeg, Man.: Kindred Press, 1990).

At the Forks is somewhat derivative, but readers desiring a compilation of Mennonite achievements in church institutions and businesses in Winnipeg will find the first several chapters useful. More interesting are the last few chapters that offer some insights into the creative Mennonite community of Winnipeg. Those seeking more in-depth analysis are advised to turn instead to Driedger's two previous works mentioned above.

University of Winnipeg and Westgate Mennonite Collegiate JANIS THIESSEN

Concise Encyclopedia of Amish, Brethren, Hutterites, and Mennonites. By Donald B. Kraybill. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press. 2010. $35.

Donald B. Kraybill is a fine scholar and writer who in recent decades has surely been the world's leading purveyor of information on the Old Order Amish to the media and thence to the world's publics. Nor are his contributions only about the Amish. He practically created the Young Center for Anabaptist and Pietist Studies, located on the campus of Elizabethtown College in Pennsylvania, a school affiliated with the Church of the Brethren; for years he

served as the center's director. Thus situated, he is an expert practically without peer on the four religious groups named in his title, considered separately or together. (By way of disclosure I gladly acknowledge him as a benefactor, since I was a senior fellow at the center during 1995-1997. And I claim him as a friend.)

In preparing the encyclopedia, Kraybill worked with a seventeen-member Editorial Advisory Council, all well-recognized scholars; but he was the main author, listed on the title page as such, not as editor. Perhaps because he did all or most of the final writing, articles do not end with signatures or initials to show whose work they were. However, in the acknowledgments, Kraybill gave credit to others who helped gather material and in some cases wrote an entry's draft. For such drafting he specifically mentioned Royden Loewen, David Rempel Smucker, Sam Steiner, and Daryl Yoder-Bontrager. But only a few entries, such as one on "Russia," read as if written by someone other than Kraybill.

Whatever the collaboration, Kraybill surely gave the *Concise Encyclopedia of Amish, Brethren, Hutterites, and Mennonites* his own imprint. In keeping with his field, the book turns on concepts more sociological than, say, theological, ecclesiological, or historical. For instance, it has an entry "Adolescence" but none on "millennialism," a topic prominent in Mennonite and Brethren history. All throughout the book often uses a typology that contrasts "traditional" and "assimilated" groups, instead of organizing information by the four categories Amish, Brethren, Hutterite, and Mennonite. The typology is usually helpful, but it can also obscure cases where the dichotomy is not so clear—for instance, the more progressive kinds of Amish. In a choice that a historian might have made differently, the volume lacks any entry labeled "Amish Mennonite"—even though the number of the relatively progressive Amish who chose that name after breaking with traditionalists in 1860 was about double that of the traditionalists we now label Old Order Amish, and even though in the twentieth century, as they merged into Mennonite denominations, the Amish Mennonites were strong in both Mennonite Church and General Conference Mennonite development. The group that now uses the Amish Mennonite name, the "Beachy Amish Mennonite Church," emerged in 1927 from the Old Order Amish, not from those progressive Amish or from a Mennonite church; nonetheless, using typology more than history, the encyclopedia persistently associates that group with the Mennonites but not much with the Amish.

Just who will find Kraybill's encyclopedia most useful remains to be seen. Most of it seems designed for quick inquiries and introductory investigations more than for delivering specifics. At the outset, the book's "Overview" promises "short entries," "synopsis," and "snapshots" (xi). Although a few entries are longer, most cover no more than a half column to one and a half columns. A given article invariably offers insights into a topic and guides the reader to several other sources—most often a book or two, the *Mennonite Encyclopedia*, the *Brethren Encyclopedia,* or the Global Anabaptist Mennonite Encyclopedia Online; but typically, the article's own text is sparse with basic facts. Articles on specific persons are very few; as the overview states, "in general, entries focus on topics rather than people" (xi). And even for topics, one finds noticeable gaps in information. An example is the material on education.

The entry "Education" tells us that in North America "some Anabaptist groups began to create church-related educational INSTITUTIONS in the late 1800s" (73), but it does not name those institutions or give the dates of their founding. The entry "Higher Education" and several on "Schools" ("Bible," "Elementary," and "Secondary") are likewise of little help for hard facts and data. Being concise, the encyclopedia does not have entries on specific high schools, colleges, or seminaries. However, in the end it does provide an extensive directory of the groups covered and a thorough table with statistics on the number of each group's congregations and its total membership. For those classes of data, it is admirably complete.

With the rather short entries, a further pattern is to treat topics separately instead of bringing closely related information together into longer articles, perhaps using subheadings. For example, the volume has a separate article "*Rumspringa*" instead of incorporating that subject into the "Adolescence" entry. Of course *Rumspringa*, which literally means "running around," designates a phenomenon in which some Amish and Old Order Mennonite youths probe the boundaries of their freedom and try new behaviors; and in some rowdy cases, the behaviors have drawn wide attention in the media. (See especially Richard A. Stevick's 2007 book *Growing up Amish: The Teenage Years*, which the *Rumspringa* entry cites, and the Emmy Award-nominated, eye-catching documentary film *Devil's Playground* [2002], which it does not.) In light of all the attention, the decision for the separate *Rumspringa* article is understandable. More generally, one may well suspect that an explanation for the encyclopedia's shape and character, perhaps indeed for its existence, may be found in the many hours Kraybill has spent fielding questions from journalists, filmmakers, and other media people. In any case, the encyclopedia tends to offer shorter, separate articles rather than longer, more integrated ones. On balance that choice may be wise, but the alternative might have done more to bring similar material together and avoid some repetition.

The treatment of how Anabaptist groups have approached politics also comes in separate entries. There are four: "Church and State," "Government," "Political Participation," and "Two-Kingdom Theology." (Some other entries, e.g., "Religious Liberty," also have political overtones.) There are no entries specifically on political "attitudes," "outlook," or "theory," and the political entries that exist are not notably strong. Especially weak, in this reviewer's judgment, is the handling of the "Two Kingdoms," a term referring to an outlook widespread in Anabaptist (and other) history that emphasizes the differences between New Testament ethics and the de facto ethics of the world's managers and governors. With that emphasis, Anabaptist groups have often prohibited or at least strongly discouraged their members from directly holding political office and perhaps also from civic voting. Some of their voices have been loud even against sending remonstrances to rulers. The main problem with the encyclopedia's political entries is a tendency to define "Two-Kingdom" in the way that absolutists far at the end of a spectrum have defined it (e.g., certain outspoken mid-twentieth-century Mennonite Fundamentalists). The focus on the absolute version ignores the nuances and shadings among those who maintain Two-Kingdom ideas, some of whom approve of selective participation or call at

least for considerable "witness to the powers." In fact, the problem of stereotyping the Two-Kingdom position is common in current Mennonite thought.

Whatever such examples illustrate, this fairly slim volume provides much valuable information and insight, as one expects from Donald Kraybill. The work is what its title says: "concise." Kraybill and his life work bring us great gifts of information on Amish, Brethren, Hutterites, and Mennonites, information both scholarly and popular. The encyclopedia is another of those gifts.

Goshen College THERON F. SCHLABACH

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1 & 2 Timothy, Titus. Believers Church Bible Commentary. By Paul M. Zehr. Scottsdale, Pa.: Herald Press. 2010. Pp. 406. $29.99.

Paul Zehr has given us a commentary that is accessible and in conversation with current New Testament scholarship, Anabaptist theology, and today's church. His treatment of the text manifests a broad engagement with recent discussions of issues raised in and about the pastoral epistles. But this depth of engagement is presented in such a way that it never impedes accessibility. So he brings the debates of the field into the purview of the nonspecialist, opening possibilities for ways of thinking about the meanings of these texts that will help less experienced interpreters develop skills they can use with other biblical texts.

The commentary follows the format of the series. It provides an introduction to each book and then a discussion of each division of the text. The explication of each textual unit is followed by a short essay that sets the passage's teaching in a biblical context. That is followed by a second essay, entitled "The Text In the Life of the Church." Here Zehr often gives a brief overview of early understandings, and then presents Reformation views to set the context for the emergence of distinctive Anabaptist contributions. He also points out the theological value of those discussions for Anabaptist thought and practice today. The volume concludes with a series of more than twenty-five short essays on topics that arise from a study of the pastorals. The topics include the Christology and ecclesiology of the pastorals, the place of women in leadership, and the evidence for different views on the authorship of these letters.

Zehr gives careful consideration to the authorship of these letters, placing most of his discussion among the essays at the end of the book. He concludes that these letters were a cooperative effort between Paul and Luke. Luke contributed less content and wording to 2 Timothy than to the other two. For both Titus and 1 Timothy, Zehr asserts that Paul discussed with Luke the theological matters addressed in the letters, but then Luke wrote the letters—perhaps, even probably, after Paul's death. Still, this contact with Paul keeps the letters from being misrepresentations because they contain the thought of Paul; it is just mediated through Luke.

While the occasions of these letters may differ, Zehr thinks they address a single type of false teaching. That teaching may well have been evolving, but it

included commands from Judaism, a realized eschatology, and ascetic regulations. The rejection of this teaching becomes an important part of the context as Zehr interprets some difficult texts, particularly those that deal with women and leadership.

Zehr also gives attention to the rhetorical genre of each letter, respecting their different occasions, even as he posits continuity among them. His exegesis of the texts is judicious. He draws on various types of historical information and critical methods as appropriate. He identifies proper historical contexts (whether it is discussions among philosophers or within Judaism, for example) and uses those well to illumine the text. As with all commentaries of this sort, the author must often simply assert conclusions without supplying the reader with the support required to substantiate them. Still, Zehr's interpretations clearly rest on solid engagement with scholarship on the passage. In some places, usually those that are particularly important theologically, Zehr draws on the ancient context more extensively—often to emphasize a theological point that he finds to be important.

On occasion, Zehr inserts pastoral wisdom that goes beyond the point of the text at hand. For example, commenting on 2 Timothy 1:6-18, he inserts a comment about the value of love over condemnation when inviting sinners (159). While perhaps true, this point is not part of the text. Such insertions are not uncommon in this type of commentary, but readers should be aware of their presence.

Given that the pastorals contain so many difficult passages, there are places where some readers will be disappointed at the positions Zehr reaches. His treatment of 1 Timothy 2:9-15 is an example. Zehr sets the command for women to be quiet and the assertion that they are saved by childbirth in the context of the "new woman" of Rome and a claim from the Artimus cult that women are superior. He goes on to justify the command to quietness (not silence) by noting that women were less educated. Finally, he asserts that this is only a command about authoritarian teaching, not all teaching. His analyses fall within the range of standard interpretations. But most scholars doubt that these statements have meanings that are as palatable for modern readers as those Zehr finds. At the same time, Zehr rejects a literalist application of these instructions and provides a helpful discussion of hermeneutics that is particularly intended for members of believers churches.

More problematic is his benign portrayal of the Greco-Roman household in connection with the household codes. While he may well be correct about the reasons the pastorals do not challenge the social structures, he underestimates the problems this imposes on slaves and women. Zehr contends that this stance is required if the church is to attract new members. But when he asserts that female slaves who became Christian could decide not to be used for sex by their masters (355), he underestimates the control that masters had over slaves. He also seems to underestimate the place of women as managers of the business activities of households in his comments about Titus 2:4-5.

While these are important issues, they do not diminish the overall value of this commentary. Zehr has done the church a great service with his careful reading of the text. More than that, he provides clear discussions of historical,

critical, and theological issues that are important for the life of the church. Apart from the historical background by which readers can understand what the text meant then, the commentary also guides thinking about how to be Christian today. Zehr's discussions of hermeneutics are of significant value, but readers should note that these discussions are scattered throughout the commentary and one must be diligent in locating and connecting them for a fuller discussion of hermeneutics.

This commentary displays an open-mindedness—really, an openness of spirit—that expresses itself less in the conclusions reached than in the manner in which they are discussed. Zehr often reaches conclusions that are fairly traditional and close to evangelical positions. But he discusses alternatives and leaves them open as possibilities. His brief but sensitive discussion of homosexuality (43) is an excellent example. He sets out alternative ways to understand the reference to homoerotic acts in 1 Timothy 1:8-11, and then lets the reader know what his own view is, without demanding that other views are taken as wholly mistaken or disingenuous. Zehr's treatment of controversial issues avoids the polemical accusations and implications that often infect discussions. Even if it were not the fine treatment of the text that it is, this commentary is worth reading just for instruction in civil discourse and Christian generosity.

Lexington Theological Seminary JERRY L. SUMNEY

Day by Day These Things We Pray: Uncovering the Ancient Rhythms of Prayer. By Arthur Boers. Scottdale, Pa.: Herald Press. 2010. Pp. 235. $15.99.

Morning and evening prayers sustain us, particularly in troubling and uncertain times. "Common prayers," Arthur Boers writes, "keep reminding me that God is present, at work, and reliable" (17). Reading about the life of Daniel Berrigan (24), Boers was deeply impressed with this man's discipline of daily reading and prayer, something young Boers and his friends lacked at that time in their lives. Since then the author has become a Benedictine oblate and has "vowed to pray a version of the daily office for the rest of [his] life" (25), meaning twice-daily prayer. Prayer is significant; it is about "our bond with God and involves all that we are and do" (27). Practicing regular times of prayer, of being present to God, encourages us as we walk the journey of faith.

An Ashland Theological Seminary professor, Jerry Flora, once said that little books are the best kind of books. This little book, *Day by Day These Things We Pray,* is one of those books. It uncovers a "lost treasure" (188) of the church, inviting believers to practice the rhythm of twice-daily prayer. The movements of morning (lauds) and evening (vespers) prayers are: 1) praising God; 2) listening to God; and finally 3) responding to God (31). As many people find that older models of formation are no longer adequate, the treasure to be discovered is ancient wisdom (35). What will replace the weeks of summer Bible school, Sunday school hours, winter Bible school, and the correspondence courses

available when I was growing up that taught us God's story? Practicing the daily office may be the answer, one that will nurture our souls.

In chapter 2, Boers shares the stories of his pilgrimages to "uncommon communities" that practice the daily office. It was in Northumbria, a community in northern England, that something clicked for him. There, praying the common psalms, canticles, and hymns and connecting with those present and past, prayer became rich and deep (51). A companion book that Boers helped to compile, *Take Our Moments and Our Days: An Anabaptist Prayer Book*, provides a rich collection of prayers and a structure for morning and evening prayers. However, set times of prayer are still foreign to many who profess to be Christian. In fact, they are suspicious of them. The author assures us that this model for prayer is intentional, a pattern that puts God squarely within the pace of the day. We do not have to rely on our own words or have to create something that appeals. Simply paying attention in order to notice the Presence of God is essential.

Eugene Peterson in *The Message* (Matthew 11) speaks of "the unforced rhythms of grace." Jesus modeled regular times of prayer. His followers observed this pattern, too, of slipping away to pray. Buried in the rational, dutiful, religious world, this invitation is like a drink of cold water on a hot day. We need to incorporate into our busy lifestyles set times of prayer that will slow us down, help us breathe, and remind us of God's faithfulness. Given the mandate of Mennonite Church USA at the 2011 biennial assembly to bring Mennonites to the once-familiar scriptural texts of the Bible, praying the daily office may be a critical tool to form us into the mind of Christ.

In chapter 5, Boers sets forth the theology of prayer. The office, he says, "keeps drawing and reorienting us to God's perspective" (100). Early Christians met together to pray and reflect on the life of Jesus on a daily basis (Acts 2). It was in these times when God's Spirit was poured out on many people. In regular times of praying and listening to the Word, Boers says, it is the office, or morning and evening prayer, that is "a school of prayer" (164). A prayer Jesus taught and one that continues to sustain communities of people around the world is the Lord's Prayer. It was from this prayer that the Amish responded with forgiveness in the face of losing their little girls in 2006 to a gunman in a rural schoolhouse, which Boers says, "rewrote predictable scenarios" (90) of other tragic events in history.

"Hours provide regularity and constancy in prayer" (144). Boers says that for those in dryness or depression, or both, praying the office is like "being winched slowly out of a pit" (161). Otherwise, we stay stuck. Daily prayers offer the capacity to let go of the heavy demands placed on us from the systems in which we live and work in order to trust God. When communities of believers gather to pray, our sense of God's magnitude and the world's great needs expand. Boers says, "the primary gift . . . is quite simple: it provides words to pray" (158) when we have none. The challenge is to take time to pray. Being intentional and making space for morning and evening prayer are marvelous ways of building a relationship with God. Being a part of a small group will help to recover the blessed hours of praying the daily office.

I am grateful for Arthur Boers's examples in his little book of praying the daily office that constantly remind us that God is present, at work, and reliable. Through prayer, we are bonded with God in love.

Kairos School of Spiritual Formation MARY ETTA KING

Peace Be With You: Christ's Benediction Amid Violent Empires. Ed. Sharon L. Baker and Michael Hardin. Telford, Pa: Cascadia Publishing House. 2010. Pp. 297. $23.95.

Sharon Baker and Michael Hardin have undertaken the challenging task of creating a book from conference essays. In 2007 Messiah College hosted a conference sponsored by Preaching Peace. The purpose of the conference was to discuss what a contemporary Christian peace witness might look like in the midst of violent empires. The conference attempted to represent a variety of theological and philosophical traditions and perspectives while engaging issues of violence and peacemaking. *Peace Be With You* emerged from this gathering. The result is a series of essays that take a measure of Christian approaches to living peaceably within and among empires.

A close reading of the text reveals two types of tension within the heavily Mennonite group of writers: The first tension can be seen in the longstanding and complex assimilation debate between those who want to be faithful to the historic nonresistant "quiet of the land" position and those who want to be fully and faithfully engaged in the justice issues of the day. An example of this can be seen in Andy Alexis-Baker's "Just Policing: A New Face on an Old Challenge" (80-99). Alexis-Baker takes to task the idea that war has changed over recent decades and therefore, according to David Cortright, needs a more "pragmatic pacifist" approach. Cortright, among others, has argued for a pacifism that combines pacifist and just war theories and applies them to humanitarian intervention (81). Cortright argues that there is a need for Christians to respond to human crises.

Alexis-Baker identifies this set of theories as "just policing" and argues that any form of intervention, regardless of humanitarian intent, is violent and therefore violates a Christian commitment to nonviolence (100). Alexis-Baker's article offers a critique of "pragmatic pacifism" and "just policing" that challenges Christians to question how much they are willing to assimilate in "deeper systems of domination and oppression" (95). In addition to Alexis-Baker's essay, tensions around assimilation can also be found in Craig Carter's "Liberalism: The New Constantinianism" (28-54), Anthony Siegrist's "Is Voluntary Baptism the Answer to the Constantinian Question?" (201-217), Reta Halteman Finger's "Matthew's Postwar Lament: 'We Made the Wrong Choice'" (243-262), and Jonathan Sauder's "Must There Be Shunning? Tradition, Mimesis, and Resacralization in Historic Peace Church Orthopraxy" (263-288).

The second tension found in the text is between peace scholarship and just peacemaking in practice. Said differently, the book presents writers whose focus is intellectually theological as well as those who are more theologically

pragmatic. Examples on the more intellectually focused side are: Carter's "Liberalism" (28-54), B. Keith Putt's "Depravatio Crucis: The Non-Sovereignty of God in John Caputo's Poetics of the Kingdom" (148-182), and Jean Risley's "Using Girard to Address Factions in a Christian Community" (218-233).

Any reader who is aware of the longstanding debates within Mennonite scholarship about the work of John Howard Yoder (Mennonite), Stanley Hauerwas (Methodist), and Rene Girard (Catholic) will quickly find evidence of those debates here. Many of the arguments in the book directly address, or make reference to, their work. On the other hand, the book contains several articles that are theologically pragmatic, in which an author seeks to explain practices and actions that have been or should be taken, including "Preemptive Peacemaking: Subverting Constantine Through a Better Story" (17-27) by Brian McLaren and "Why the World Needs Christian Leaders Committed to Peacemaking" (138-147) by Richard Hughes.

Very few of the authors offered a balanced theologically intellectual and pragmatic approach, but among those who did were Sharon L. Baker, "Keynoting the Keys: Unlocking the Gates to the Kingdom of God" (55-79); and James F. S. Amstutz, "A View From the Porch: A Case Study in Liminality and Local Theology" (183-200). Derek Alan Woodard-Lehman's "After Whiteness: Tradition, Virtue, And Theolopolitical Nonviolence in a (Post)Colonial Constantinian Age" (100-119) offers the best example of intellectual and pragmatic balance. Woodard-Lehman is concerned with the lack of conversations taking place in predominantly white congregations about their passive role in American societies, with "civil religion implicitly providing theological justification for the racialized social antagonisms and political violences" (103). Woodard-Lehman argues that there have been problems with some of the prominent ethical theories and scholars of the past, such as Aristotle, Alasdair MacIntyre, and Stanley Hauerwas (104-106), and he provides a way for whites to move away from color-blindness (109-111). Quoting Paul Gilroy, he encourages whites to become "estranged from the cultural habits one is born to" (111).

A book with such vast approaches to the topics of peace, violence, and empire is bound to encounter a problem with audience. The audience for the text could simply be the relatively small group of theologically grounded yet intellectually engaged Christian activists. However, it is not clear from reading the book whom the editors are writing for. Is the book intended as a witness to the larger body of Christ? If so, it is missing a great deal of input from historic peace churches beyond the Mennonite fold, as well as the larger ecumenical peace and justice conversations taking place. Is the book intended for congregational use? The complexity of some of the arguments will likely dissuade the general reader from staying with the text. Is it a book for a college or university classroom? There are very few courses that might use this entire text as a resource. Overall, there are selections of this text that would be very useful in a variety of settings; however, justifying a complete reading of the text in any one context may prove to be difficult.

Setting aside questions about the audience, *Peace Be With You* is an excellent example of the rich conversations that can be encountered at conferences. The

book offers a snapshot in time of the presentations from the Preaching Peace Conference in 2007. It also offers a decidedly Mennonite perspective on what it means to be a peace church in the midst of the problems of the twenty-first century. The types of tensions found among the writings in this text are akin to those found among twenty-first- century Christians who take seriously the biblical mandates of seeking the just peace of the city.

Defiance College DEAN J. JOHNSON

Prophetic Peacemaking: Selected Writings of J. R. Burkholder. Keith Graber Miller, ed. Scottdale, Pa.: Herald Press. 2010. Pp. 443. $ 27.99, U.S.; $32, Can.

If there is a shelf of recommended writings on Anabaptist and Mennonite themes that is especially suitable for pastors, undergraduate students, and adult Sunday school class teachers, J. R. Burkholder's *Prophetic Peacemaking* should be added to it. In the introduction, editor Keith Graber Miller writes that he hopes this collection of Burkholder's writings will serve not as "period pieces," but as a useful guide for Christian discipleship today. The collection indeed meets this goal, tackling a broad range of issues: war and peace; the relationship of Christians to the state; social debates about prayer in school, abortion, and fertility treatment; and financial investment.

Burkholder, who taught religion and peace studies for many years at Goshen College and Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, works effectively across the complementary fields of ethics, history, theology, political science, and sociology. These selected writings are a tribute to the nature of the professorial life at a small college and seminary where teachers need to think and teach broadly and are not as easily cloistered in one discipline. Burkholder's collection of essays are also a tribute to how the Mennonite Church has asked its academicians to serve not just in the classroom, but also within the denomination, sharing their wisdom and insight.

Prophetic Peacemaking brings together Burkholder's essays, lectures, and sermons over the course of his professional life. He leads us as a teacher to understand how to both conceptualize peacemaking and live it out in practical ways. As we read, we feel like we are in one of his classes. We are guided through the steps necessary for ethical thinking and then shown a Mennonite perspective on ethics. With fluidity Burkholder draws into his teaching multiple academic disciplines as he leads what feels like a seminary course that explores peacemaking, history, and ethics

Burkholder takes us through the trajectory of changes in Mennonite thinking, particularly as it relates to pacifism. He rejects Reinhold Niebuhr's view that responsible living and pacifism are mutually exclusive. This is perhaps true of pacifism based on a two-kingdom theology, where one accepts that many of the world's problems must be solved through force, but that pacifists are called to a separate existence, withdrawn from the injustices of the day. Yet, as Burkholder

repeatedly points out, there are more than two options. It is not a matter of compromised engagement versus pacifist purity. In fact, withdrawal, as he argues, can be a way of taking sides, tacitly supporting the status quo, and nonviolence can be a way of creatively responding to the world's problems. Pacifism involves not only working for justice but also for the "creation of a different kind of community" (124) where we see ourselves as inextricably linked with all people in the world, rather than just members of one nation. Pacifism in Burkholder's view is a conscious choice that we make throughout our lives. It is countercultural, and thus best maintained by making common cause with others, guided not so much by a perfect theology as by lived experience and discussion within community.

In the same way that his peace theology avoids the dualism of responsibility versus purity, Burkholder also emphasizes a third way in how Christians interact with the state. He finds both the model of a minority sect, dissenting from the state only when pushed, and the model of a powerfully engaged church, hoping to shape the state in its own image, to be inadequate. Instead, Burkholder proposes that Mennonites speak to the state as a prophetic voice, and not to augment their own power. They must speak out on issues of which they have firsthand knowledge and be ahead of the state by living out better examples of a compassionate life.

For those Mennonites raised after this turn in theology, these ideas may initially seem obvious. But it is perhaps a perspective many Mennonites have adopted without careful thought. This is precisely why this book is so timely. Mennonites live increasingly in broad worlds, in contact more often than not with non-Mennonites, non-Christians, and definitely nonpacifists who inevitably ask tough questions. We do not mean to suggest Burkholder's book can stand in as a kind of canon that Mennonites can use to brush up on doctrine. His style is not to provide quick answers or an entirely settled theology. Instead, he walks the reader through several ways of approaching the issues, masterfully summing up and making accessible a wide variety of both Mennonite and non-Mennonite theologians. His conclusions invite the reader to ponder the questions further, and it is this process that is so valuable.

Also key for today's church is Burkholder's attention to the balance of individualism and community. As he rightly states, Mennonites tend to associate church ethics with "petty rules," to the point where too often they have tended toward an "individualistic, situational ethic" (220). Whether it be matters of financial investment or health care, or defining exactly what is meant by acting "for conscience' sake," Burkholder calls the church to consider the question to whom we belong and how we can allow our relationships—to family, church, and God—to guide us in ethical living.

Finally, these essays remind us of the broader peace movement context. In charting his own journey toward pacifism, Burkholder recounts the influence of figures such as A. J. Muste and Daniel and Philip Berrigan, and the work of ecumenical peace groups. The introductory comments before each chapter give an excellent sense of the times in which Burkholder wrote and the issues that inspired his questions, from nuclear weapons and the Cold War, to Vietnam,

Latin America, and the Gulf War. Mennonites have certainly not developed a theology of peace in isolation and, in many respects, have come late to some of the questions that Burkholder considers. In this sense, the book is an excellent introduction to how Mennonites fit in a larger national context and pacifist world.

We would have appreciated a fuller account and more extended reflections on Burkholder's growing-up years in the Lancaster Mennonite Conference and his home congregation. Burkholder's writings chart the evolution of the church's peace theology, but we are intrigued to know more about how his own theology persisted and evolved. What a fascinating and enlightening story it would be to hear how the "quiet in the land" and biblically practical people of his childhood shaped his own adult prophetic teaching and praxis. It would be a delight to hear how his youthful experiences in rural East Lampeter Township, Pennsylvania, were preparation for doctoral work at Harvard University, teaching at Goshen College, and church leadership. Could it be that Burkholder's core commitments to ethical thinking and praxis are in fact profoundly rooted in the salt-of-the-earth farming community of his childhood?

Finally, we are grateful that *Prophetic Peacemaking* shows that Burkholder is not an angry peace person. That may seem like a strange commendation to make on behalf of a Christian pacifist, but sadly there are disaffected and dispirited people in the Christian peace movement. Burkholder reveals in his writings a person who seeks to be in respectful and gentle conversation with others. The reader has the sense that Burkholder has worked hard to listen and understand and then articulate other, contrary positions. He never employs the games of characterizing the other's positions mockingly or as straw figures to be knocked down. In that sense, *Prophetic Peacemaking* is nonviolent writing about peacemaking—it is ethical writing about ethics that Burkholder offers his readers.

The American University HOLLY SCOTT
Mellinger Mennonite Church, Lancaster, Pa. JOSEPH S. MILLER

Tongue Screws and Testimonies. Poems, Stories, and Essays Inspired by the Martyrs Mirror. Kirsten E. Beachy, ed. Scottdale, Pa.: Herald Press. 2010. Pp. 311. $16.99, U.S.; $19.99, Can.

Read closely for multiple meanings. Don't be too quick to dismiss the writers' narratives. Believe that sacred stories are strong enough to welcome examination (27-28). Few anthologies begin with such explicit directives for their readers, but these are precisely the instructions that the editor, Kirsten Eve Beachy, gives readers of *Tongue Screws and Testimonies*, an anthology of creative writing inspired by the seventeenth-century Anabaptist martyrology, *Martyrs Mirror*.

Beachy is well aware of the challenge that she and her contributors face. Many people in the Amish-Mennonite world cherish the *Martyrs Mirror*, not because it is intellectually absorbing or emotionally engaging, but because it extends the

record of faithful Christianity beyond the New Testament into the Anabaptist-Mennonite age. Even if these *Martyrs Mirror* devotees rarely crack open its cover, the martyrology functions for them in the way that Thieleman van Braght hoped it would: as a literary mirror by which to measure their own faithfulness vis-à-vis the sixteenth-century martyrs, whose approach to the Christian life is assumed to be spiritually vital and psychologically healthy, and thus worthy of respect and imitation. To be sure, some contributors to *Tongue Screws and Testimonies* exhibit this sort of reverence for the *Martyrs Mirror* and its cast of characters, but many do not. As Beachy observes in her introduction, many of her contributors question the book and its cascading effects and even "make light" of its contents (23). Little wonder that Beachy takes time to thank her editor at Herald Press, the church-related publisher of the *Martyrs Mirror*, for "believing in" an anthology that so thoroughly interrogates the martyrology's contents and assumptions (19).

Tongue Screws and Testimonies comprises seventy-one entries, about two-thirds of them poems and the other one-third stories and essays. In her introduction, Beachy identifies four overlapping approaches from which the volume's writers "take on" the *Martyrs Mirror*: (1) *retellings*, which endeavor to make the martryological accounts more accessible; (2) *aesthetic approaches*, which seek to create sensory experiences in readers; (3) casting the *Martyrs Mirror* as a *cultural icon,* wherein the martyrology serves "as a vessel for cultural foibles and failings as well as theological and ethical commitments"; and (4) using specific stories in the *Martyrs Mirror* as tools for *seeking meaning*, sometimes as negative referents, sometimes as positive referents, and almost always as disquieting ones (25-26).

In addition to identifying these four literary approaches to the *Martyrs Mirror*, Beachy divides the entries into eight sections, each titled with a one-word heading (book, fire, water, wounds, tongue, memory, enemies, and heirs) and launched with a visual rendering of the martyr Dirk Willems. Ordering anthologies can be a difficult task, but Beachy's scheme, which gathers disparate genres into imagistic segments, brings a creative coherence to the volume. One could imagine less interesting or more obtrusive ways to organize the material, but Beachy avoids both. In addition to making the volume more reader-friendly, Beachy's organizational structure reminds readers that the interpretive process doesn't end with the contributors, or even with the volume editor, but rather continues in the readers themselves.

Of course, the more obvious point in *Tongue Screws and Testimonies* is that van Braght's text takes on new life when it is consumed and interpreted by those who refuse to be bound by traditional readings of the text. Unlike Old Order and conservative *Martyrs Mirror* readers, the bulk of contributors to this volume have been trained to critique inherited traditions, not simply imbibe them. Moreover, most of the volume's contributors have cast their lots with multiple communities—social, civic, educational, and professional—many of which promote values quite at odds with van Braght's moral imagination. Few Old Order readers would flinch at van Braght's introduction to the *Martyrs Mirror* that castigates luxury and material abundance as Satanic snares, but many progressive Mennonites and post-Mennonites would find his warnings overwrought and perhaps even pathological. Unconvinced that van Braght had it

right, Joanne Epp concludes her poem, "Greater Danger," with the wistful lament, "O, that Satan would show himself, as he really is" (46).

Some contributors echo Epp's skepticism of van Braght's assumptions, though others raise different questions. More effectively than Mennonite theologians and historians have ever done, these writers expose the central problem of reading the *Martyrs Mirror* in contemporary North America: the sixteenth-century martyrs, deemed by van Braght to be worthy of imitation, are themselves inimitable, not just in the sense of being matchless in their conviction, but also in the sense of living their days in an intensely hostile environment (e.g., Jean Janzen's poem, "After the Martyrs Exhibit"). What is one to make of such stories in twenty-first century North America, where religious persecution is practically nonexistent, and where claims of persecution are sometimes invoked by privileged people in an effort to maintain their standing? For this reason, one wishes that *Tongue Screws and Testimonies* would have included voices from Anabaptist-Mennonite communities in more perilous circumstances, either from North American minority communities or from the larger global community. Beachy's preface alludes to the existence of such voices but remains unclear on why none were included in the volume.

Still, the white North American contributors to *Tongue Screws and Testimonies* offer a variety of perspectives on *Martyrs Mirror*. They are unafraid to ponder questions that typically go unasked, and they often do so in compelling ways. As can be expected in an anthology like this one, some of the entries are more mature than others, both emotionally and aesthetically, but the overall tone of the book is thoughtful, measured, and provocative. Women writers in particular probe the unseemly effects of canonizing victims and lauding their willingness to be victimized (e.g., Stephanie Krehbiel's essay, "Staying Alive: How Martyrdom Made Me a Warrior"). Other writers cannot help but note the irony of ecumenically-inclined moderns esteeming a book rife with antiecumenical sentiments (e.g., Esther Stenson's poem, "No Apologies").

Surely not every reader will enjoy *Tongue Screws and Testimonies* and its sometimes irreverent content (e.g., Chad Gusler's story, "OMG!! Geleihn Cornelus Is Hot!!"). But even more than its occasional cheekiness, it's the questions the volume poses that will lead some readers to dislike the book, for the questions are often disconcerting and are frequently left unresolved. Nonetheless, for those who believe that van Braght's sacred stories "are strong enough to welcome examination," and who also believe that it's quite all right to "take on" van Braght's moral assumptions, *Tongue Screws and Testimonies* is a book to read, to ponder, and to appreciate.

Messiah College DAVID WEAVER-ZERCHER

Rudy Wiebe: Collected Stories, 1955-2010. By Rudy Wiebe. Edmonton: University of Alberta Press. 2010. Pp. 529. $39.95.

Rudy Wiebe's writing began on the Canadian prairie where the author, as a young boy, listened and "Everything spoke, and it spoke Low German" (231).

But although rocks, birds, trees, and even light spoke the language of his mother, and the church spoke High German, it was his third language, English, that he tapped for its storytelling potential.

In this latest publication, Wiebe has gathered together every short story he has ever written—most of them published, many reprinted, and some translated. And what a formidable collection it is: more than 500 pages, composed over more than half a century of story-making. In the wake of oral culture and on the cusp of e-book culture, what better repository for this literary outpouring than a real book? The process of compiling the material must have been as satisfying as bringing home a prairie harvest and seeing it safely stored. "The only safe place," Athol Fugard wrote, "is inside a story."

Wiebe's acclaimed "Where is the Voice Coming From?" appears early in the collection and demonstrates the eloquence of which he is capable:

> . . . a voice rises over the exploding smoke and thunder of guns that reel back in their positions, worked over, serviced by the grimed motionless men in bright coats and glinting buttons, a voice so high and clear, so unbelievably high and strong in its unending cry (31).

This piece is not so much a story as it is a description of the arduous search for the story, in this case the true facts about the Cree chief Almighty Voice. "Presumably all the parts of the story are themselves available. A difficulty is that they are, as always, available only in bits and pieces" (22). Wiebe has spent a lifetime searching for, imagining, and fitting together the bits and pieces needed to complete a story. He is, besides a writer, also a historian and a meticulous researcher, and all three are clearly at work shaping the narratives.

In the anthology *The Story-Makers,* edited by Wiebe in 1970, he offers reasons for such work: "dreaming how we wish things were; recounting what happened; explaining why things are as they are; instructing ourselves and our children; making an imitation" (xi). All of these motives can be traced in this current collection, which is divided into four parts. The first focuses on the encounter between British traders and officers and the indigenous prairie population—Cree and Blackfoot—a subject that has intrigued the author from the start and has resulted in his best writing.

In "Oolulik" the white protagonist/narrator battles blizzard and deadly cold on his mission to rescue the starving "people of the deer" stranded at Dubawnt Lake. Caught in a classic struggle for survival, he and Oolulik, a woman stumbling toward him through the storm, are saved by clinging to each other for warmth, for dear life, in a shared buffalo robe. In this gripping narrative, tragedy is made more poignant as Oolulik sings, "Where have gone the deer, / and the people of the deer?" (130) In both novels and short fiction, Wiebe is at his best when writing about the people who first inhabited the American northwest, hunting, fishing, surviving, and navigating encounters with the European newcomers.

The second section recalls homesteading during pioneer days in the Canadian west and includes several stories written to celebrate Alberta's history. Again, the brute forces of nature and the complications of cross-cultural encounters come into play. In "All on Their Knees," Hermann, alienated from his Mennonite

church, finds a frozen, wounded Chipewyan man, brings him home, sews him up and feeds him, becoming both the Good Samaritan and the Gospel father who kills the fatted calf for his prodigal son. While extending hospitality to the stranger, who is also a fugitive from the law, Hermann reflects on Thomas Hardy's poem: "If someone said on Christmas Eve / 'Come see the oxen kneel'" Then, when his visitor is gone, "he pulled on his barn coat . . . and stepped into the silver, frozen world. The northern lights flamed a path down the endless sky" (190). A protagonist's spiritual yearning and moral conflict, strong description, and Mennonite and aboriginal characters are the elements that compose Wiebe's preferred literary territory. This section ends with "Chinook Christmas," a nostalgic and well-loved Mennonite story that, with its child's point of view, importance of family, seasonal traditions, humor, and weather, echoes Dylan Thomas's classic *A Child's Christmas in Wales.*

In the third and fourth parts, in which the stories are more contemporary and sometimes experimental, a central focus is difficult to pin down. "Angel of the Tar Sands" is a playful foray into magic realism. Decidedly more chilling are two stories placed back to back: "Millstones for the Sun's Day," modeled after Shirley Jackson's famous "The Lottery," sees a young boy nudged into an act of horrible cruelty involving his teacher; "Did Jesus Ever Laugh" is told in the voice of a predator who describes step by step his obsessively timed and deadly stalking of an innocent woman whose home he has invaded. These stories demonstrate the diverse ways in which the author's moral vision undergirds the narrative.

Experimentation with form is evident in stories like "Seeing is Believing" (252) and "Believing is Not Seeing'' (292), where the text is broken up in postmodern fashion. "The Blindman River Contradictions" (346) employs a seriously tongue-in-cheek interview in which Wiebe invents an alternate, British persona for himself. Some of the brief, underdeveloped vignettes and the pieces celebrating Alberta history may enjoy limited appeal.

"In the Ear of the Beholder" (330) finds "Adam" in a Toronto hotel room reading excerpts from books he bought at a church sale—about the sordid end of the Nazi regime, reminiscences of Norman Bethune in China, and Graham Greene's *A Gun for Sale.* The quoted texts, added to a TV rehash of the J. F. Kennedy assassination Adam is watching, his introspection and sexual fantasies, and the claustrophobic setting make for an overburdened story with the action stuck in the protagonist's head. Readers may be left wanting more drama and momentum. In "Seeing is Believing" the tension is restricted to lengthy dialogue interrupted by a parallel narrative. Both stories, like several others in the collection, were subsequently adapted to become chapters in Wiebe's *Sweeter Than All the World*.

The last story in the collection, "Finally, the Frozen Ocean," is a curious revisiting of Wiebe's novel *The Blue Mountains of China*. The author imagines three of the novel's characters traveling, each to a place they did not visit in the novel: Yalta, Berlin, Ellesmere Island. Story, we are reminded, is organic, growing and gaining substance, changing over time, but held together by the author's artistic imagination, skill, and distinctive voice.

The appendix offers scholars a convenient chronology and publication history of the stories. It also contains one more story, "Predestined," written when Wiebe was in high school and for which he received the first of many literary prizes.

Although this unculled collection may be less powerful than Wiebe's novels, it will be welcomed by those who have followed his writing over the decades and appreciated by those who still need to be introduced to this important author. With its handsome cover—a striking image of a bird skull on a post—this is not a book to be left on a shelf, but is best displayed on a table where it can be tasted and savored in small or large portions.

Winnipeg, Man. SARAH KLASSEN

Mill Creek: A Novel. By Omar Eby. [n.p.]: Xlibris. 2010. Pp. 283. $19.99.

The setting is Mill Creek Academy, a fictionalized version of Lancaster Mennonite High School, whose Millstream becomes Mill Creek, a menacing river in this novel. The year is 1952-1953, a time of Eisenhower, the Korean War, the Cold War, the Revised Standard Version, and *The Old Man and the Sea.* It is also the "golden era" (cover blurb) of Lancaster Conference Mennonite "plain" culture, of black bonnets for teenage girls, black stockings for all, Brunk revivals, Franconia Cowboys, Matthew Henry commentaries, and Daniel Kauffman's *Doctrines of the Bible.* One sign of the coming end of this culture is that, for the first time, girls at Mill Creek Academy no longer need to have strings on their coverings. The Mennonite proverb holds: "When the strings go, everything goes." Peter Martin's experience becomes a harbinger of more substantial changes to come in that culture.

Peter, who is beginning his senior year, comes from the Cearfoss (Hagerstown) Mennonite community, which is so conservative, so separatist, that he wears a frock coat for dress-up occasions. Facing graduation and the draft, he considers three alternatives: returning home to work for his family with a farming deferment; embracing the overtly pious, evangelical, self-righteous Mennonitism of Marvin Kauffman and entering 1-W alternate service; or following the urging of Arthur Nyce, his liberal Franconia roommate, and choosing Pax service in Europe.

Peter, a model student, has been asked to room with Arthur in hopes that he will convert Arthur, a free spirit, to conventional Mennonite thought and behavior. He is initially surprised when Arthur enters the dorm room and strips naked, which becomes his usual condition through late afternoon and into bed at night. On occasion, Peter joins Arthur in a full-body naked embrace, naked wrestling, and naked plunges in Mill Creek. Twice Arthur creeps into Peter's bed, embraces him, and kisses him. Others think Arthur must be queer. Arthur sometimes fears he is. Martin is baffled by his increasing attraction to Arthur, which is "almost amorous" (cover blurb). However, the sex talk is all about women, and Arthur and his girlfriend exchange locks of pubic hair.

No, Arthur is Eby's version of "The Naked Anabaptist," a good-hearted Mennonite who is liberated from cultural constraints and characterized by

"playful irreverence, his happy acceptance of his own clean flesh, of God's forgiving grace, his impatience with piety" (270). Arthur is an innocent who embodies a lost, or restored, "Eden" (144). Arthur also becomes a Christ-figure when his drowned body is observed to bear a "crown" (241) of weeds and his wounded side is visible. He saves Peter.

In literary and psychoanalytic terms, Arthur is Peter's *doppelganger*, his "double," an image of Peter's divided and alternative self, to which Peter is irresistibly drawn. (Think Hesse's *Steppenwolf,* and Stevenson's *Dr. Jekyl and Mr. Hyde.*) An early turning point occurs in the middle of the book, when Peter, a nonswimmer, jumps into Mill Creek with Arthur, in a self-baptism that replicates Arthur's earlier one. Peter's climactic choice occurs after Arthur's death, when, having learned to swim, he jumps into Mill Creek for a more deliberate self-baptism. He strips naked in his dorm room and dons Arthur's blue boxer shorts, argyle socks, and red bowtie. In the final scene, he wears these symbolic clothes as he drives away from his Cearfoss home toward Southern Mennonite University (Eastern Mennonite University).

This coming-of-age story is also a "portrait of the artist as a young man." Peter's future will apparently be a blend of the best of traditional Mennonite ways with a liberal, but critical, acceptance of the world—the Christian humanist option. Peter sublimates Arthur's fleshly impulses through a love of literature and art, acquired mainly through the mentoring of Sister Wenger at Mill Creek Academy. However, Peter stops short of embracing "aesthetics for ascetics" (122), or art as a substitute religion. Here one suspects a fictionalized version of the author's own formative experiences.

The death of Arthur, which has been foreshadowed from the first page, is virtually essential in the doppelganger archetype, since the death of the "other" forces or enables the hero to attain an integrated personhood. Aside from its symbolism, Arthur's death embodies complex, ambiguous possibilities. Was it only an accident, prompted by a dare from Arthur's peers? Was it suicide, as suggested by Arthur's last words, asking Peter to forgive him? Was it prompted by Arthur's sexual sin? Or because Mennonite bureaucrats had rejected his application for Pax? Was it "God-wrought" (275)?

The novel excels in reconstructing plain Lancaster Conference culture at its peak of success. The boarding school setting shows conference-approved adult mentors giving their impressionable teenage students instruction in the doctrines and conduct that plain culture requires. Perhaps we learn more about teenage male dorm culture than we want to know, but the boys and their girlfriends illustrate both the acceptance and the testing of the religious culture imposed on them. There is plenty of sex talk, but, oddly, no smoking, drinking, or swearing. Sometimes the discussion of doctrines and discipline becomes a bit tedious, as do the details of the obligatory senior trip to Washington, D.C. But the discussions of the head covering and masturbation end in hilarious bawdry, similar to the condom business in the men's rest room on the way to Washington. Too often characters at the school are names, not faces or presences, some exceptions being Arthur Nyce, his mother, and Brother Zimmerman, the hapless evangelist. All things work together, though, to create a strangely moving reading experience.

A good novel to read in tandem with *Mill Creek* is Sara Stambaugh's *I Hear the Reaper's Song* (1987), which chronicles the fatal accident in Lancaster County in 1896 that prompted the embrace of plain culture in eastern Pennsylvania. A second related novel is Omar Eby's first, *A Long, Dry Season* (1988), inspired by his six years of teaching in Africa. Perhaps as Peter Martin heads for Southern Mennonite University in the final page of *Mill Creek,* he also is Eby's Thomas Martin (Thomas) on his way to the Africa of *A Long, Dry Season*. In these three books, along with Ken Reed's *Mennonite Soldier* (1974) and *He Flew Too High* (2009) and Merle Good's film *Hazel's People* (1973), the rich historical experience of eastern Pennsylvania Mennonites is receiving the artistic representation it deserves.

Goshen College ERVIN BECK

Woldemar Neufeld's Canada: A Mennonite Artist in the Canadian Landscape, 1925-1995. Laurence Neufeld and Monika McKillen, eds. Text by Hildi Froese Tiessen and Paul Gerard Tiessen. Waterloo, Ont.: Wilfrid Laurier University Press. 2010. Pp. 146. $50.

This volume on the work of landscape painter Woldemar Neufeld is a welcome addition to the short list of books on Mennonite art. The monograph includes five illustrated biographical chapters by Hildi Froese Tiessen and Paul Gerard Tiessen, followed by ninety-one pages of beautifully reproduced drawings, paintings, and prints that are interspersed with biographical notes by the editors, Laurence Neufeld (Woldemar Neufeld's son) and Monika McKillen. The authors take on a challenge of weaving a narrative from Neufeld's childhood in a Mennonite community in Ukraine, through his family's emigration to Canada and his early experiences with its regional art, to his departure for the United States and involvement with the international Modern art scene. The unfortunate aspect of this traditional chronological approach to storytelling is that Neufeld's life was most tumultuous during his childhood. So even though his artistic production was prolific during his mature career in New York City and New Milford, Connecticut, the narrative suffers from something of an early climax.

Neufeld's beginnings were hardly humble. Born into a wealthy family of German-speaking Mennonites in southern Ukraine in 1909, Neufeld was an artistic prodigy. His father encouraged his studies in drafting with the hope that he would become an engineer or an architect. The family's privileged situation changed radically, however, with the violent events surrounding the Russian Revolution. In 1920 Neufeld's father was taken into custody and executed, but his mother soon remarried a prominent preacher and poet whom the authors call "unusually cosmopolitan." Fortunately, his new stepfather also supported Neufeld's nascent talents, enrolling him in art lessons with a nephew who was a Mennonite artist. By 1924, however, the family learned that Neufeld's stepfather was under surveillance by the Soviets, and the family used "high-level connections" to immigrate to Waterloo, Ontario (3-4).

In 1935, Neufeld left his Mennonite community in Waterloo to attend the Cleveland School of Art (now the Cleveland Institute of Art) in the United States. Throughout his career as a realist artist, however, his subject matter was continually influenced by Canada and by his Mennonite heritage. Indeed, Neufeld attributed his avoidance of artistic abstraction to the "influence of the Mennonite religion." As he told a reporter in 1982, "There is a pacifism in the Mennonites, a great belief in 'Thou shalt not kill'" (4). The authors locate the development of Neufeld's idiosyncratic work within a unique web of cultural influences. They contextualize the paradox faced by a Mennonite artist whose childhood advantages were often offset by difficulties as an adult. Neufeld's departure for art school, for example, surprised his friends and family in Waterloo, who "regarded with suspicion the very idea that he would actually plan to make art a vocation rather than a sentimental pastime" (28).

This was not the kind of environment in which visual art would be expected to thrive, but Neufeld's mother and stepfather did what they could to expose him to the larger art world. In the late-1920s, for example, they introduced him to Homer Watson, an internationally respected artist in Waterloo. The authors compare Neufeld's art to Watson's and the work of other Canadian artists such as Tom Thomson and the Group of Seven, and the urban realism of New York's Ashcan School of the early 1900s. Neufeld's work, however, always seems more optimistic than the work of these other artists. Whereas the Group of Seven's pristine landscapes often create an ominous impression of inhospitable nature, Neufeld's landscapes usually include welcoming signs of civilization: crops, fences, roads, and so forth.

The authors insightfully note the absence of anything threatening beyond the borders of these illuminated, beatific oil paintings. One particularly nostalgic painting, *A Mennonite Farm in Russia* (1982), was based on memories of Neufeld's family's estate in Ukraine. The authors explain, "There is no sense of the social and political chaos that would engulf and snuff out this picture-perfect world" (7). Of course this prerevolutionary life was actually far from perfect. Throughout his career, though, Neufeld continued to produce pieces of this "picture-perfect world" in which fear was absent, usually avoiding contentious subject matter and overtly political content. It makes sense that the authors compare Neufeld's bright brushwork to the famous pointillist techniques of George Seurat. They also compare his oeuvre to the work of other Modern artists, including Pieter Bruegel, Lyonel Feininger, Vincent van Gogh, and Salvador Dali. And they describe Neufeld's linoleum block prints (1928-1935) as "responses—though without the requisite *angst*—to German Expressionist block prints" (20). Although Neufeld claimed to have been influenced by Expressionism, statements like these seem hyperbolic.

In fact, his idyllic scenes seem almost anti-Modern, given the fact that Modern art is typically understood as an autonomous, formal process whereby painters develop art for its own sake. Neufeld's art, however, is more about the places and traditions it depicts than about art itself. In other words, it privileges content over form. Even in his most stylized abstract expressionist paintings from the 1950s and 1960s—of which *Railway Bridge* (1955) and *Hunts Point, Nova Scotia*

(1960) are particularly notable achievements—it is the content of the picture, not the technique with which it is produced, that commands the viewer's attention. Indeed, his unabashed celebration of content is a defining characteristic of Neufeld's art. Early oil paintings like *Holiday Hockey* (1940) and *After the Rain* (1942), and later oil paintings like *Golden Wheat Field* (1981) and *Backyards of Waterloo* (1982), are absolutely packed with content, all portions of their frames filled with massive amounts of information. This snapshot effect is partly due to Neufeld's sentimental desire to preserve scenes for posterity. He often referred to his work as visual history. "I chose to record the past—my watercolours, oils, and prints, they all work to the same end," he explained. "My purpose is to record" (41). Because he saw his beloved environments of Waterloo and New Milford changing, he wanted to "preserve" them in paint. So his agenda was, literally, conservative. Instead of using art to *transform* culture—which remains an explicit agenda of the avant-garde—Neufeld used art to *preserve* environments for the historical record.

Like many fine artists, Neufeld also worked intermittently as a commercial artist. His paintings and prints always retain at least hints of the techniques he honed as an illustrator. Neufeld admitted as much, insisting "I wouldn't be insulted . . . if a critic came to my show and said, 'Here is an illustrator posing as an artist'" (41). His watercolor and pen and ink pieces employ the prominent outlines of cartoons. Even his oil paintings often have an illustrated quality, and high-contrast pieces such as *Autumn Colours* (1928) almost seem to anticipate the paint-by-number kits that became popular in the 1950s. Neufeld was explicit about his desire to address common people instead of experts. "Mennonites are plain farming people who live simple, clean lives," he proclaimed. "I like my paintings to be like that . . . to be orderly, precise, clean . . . I like them to be realistic rather than abstract and to please the man on the street rather than the snob" (9). If Neufeld's stereotypes and rationalizations sound defensive it is probably because his artwork repeatedly crossed the boundary between fine art and kitsch. As the authors mention, Neufeld's *Waterloo Portfolio* sold out only a few days after its publication in 1982. Many of his pieces served blatantly sentimental Mennonite boosterism.

Woldemar Neufeld's Canada provides compelling glimpses of the histories of Russian Mennonites and the early-Modern Canadian art world that will be new to many readers. Though a fully indexed and genuinely critical assessment of Neufeld's artistic contribution might have been more important, this is still a valuable introduction. Some Anabaptist communities have certainly suppressed artistic inclinations, but somehow Neufeld's art flourished. In fact, because the authors and editors paint a portrait of Neufeld's art as a nearly perfect biographical reflection, it almost seems as though he succeeded because of his religious heritage rather than in spite of it.

Neufeld's historical scenes have obvious "humble" appeal to a people more focused on community than on individuality, more enamored with tradition than with provocation. In that respect, the fact that Neufeld's history—and not his art—is the most compelling part of the story is one of the most revealingly "Mennonite" aspects of the book. But it is more than the historical orientation of

the monograph and the historical content of Neufeld's compositions that make his work arguably "Mennonite." To some extent it is also the techniques he used. Just as Mennonite churches often eliminate mystery and amplify architectural austerity in the name of economy and humility, Neufeld developed his brightly lit illustrations in the name of clear-eyed reportage. In the end, his paintings are washed in the same uniform fluorescence as the un-dimmable, but eminently cost-efficient, light fixtures that illuminate Mennonite churches throughout North America.

Syracuse University JON YODER

BOOK NOTES

An Embassy Besieged: The Story of a Christian Community in Nazi Germany. Emmy Barth, ed. Eugene, Ore.: Cascade Books; copublished with Rifton, N.Y.: Plough Publishing House. 2010. Pp. 306. $ 35.

Emmy Barth, an archivist for and a member of Church Communities International (formerly known as the Bruderhof Communities), edited this collection of primary sources that document the group's experience under the Third Reich during the years 1933-1937. Hela Ehrlich and Hugo Brinkmann translated many of the documents. In 1920 Eberhard and Emmy Arnold had begun an intentional community, purchasing what became known as the Rhön Bruderhof, a 175-acre farm where members worked and worshipped while sharing their material goods. Already on March 7, 1933, immediately after Hitler came to power, police arrived at Rhön questioning alleged communist activity. After Eberhard's death in 1935, having been denied appropriate medical care by local authorities, pressure on the Rhön community increased until April 1937, when the Gestapo dispersed the Rhön Bruderhof, and the remaining members fled to England and Liechtenstein. Documents detail Nazi harassment, Arnold's interaction with Dietrich Bonhoeffer, and the Bruderhof's understanding of pacifism and the state in light of the biblical text of Romans 13. Other documents describe the somewhat hesitant support the Bruderhof received in the face of Nazi persecution from South German Mennonites and North American Hutterites and Mennonites. There are twelve pages of photos.

Redefining Duty: Stories of Alternative Service in the Name of Christ, 1942-70. Pat Frazier, ed. South Bend, Ind.: Kern Road Mennonite Church Peace and Justice Committee. 2010. Pp. 174. $12.

The Peace and Justice Committee of Kern Road Mennonite Church in South Bend, Indiana, published twenty-two oral histories of congregational members who performed alternative service in lieu of military conscription, from World War II through the mid-1970s. Most interviews include the spouse of the conscientious objector, and two are interviews with widows of alternative service

participants. Three of those interviewed participated in Civilian Public Service; ten participated in wage-earning I-W work in hospitals and schools; and nine participated in Mennonite Central Committee or Mennonite Board of Missions voluntary service assignments in Greece, Indonesia, Nigeria, Puerto Rico, Taiwan, and the United States. Herbert Neff's story is unique in that he was conscripted into the German army during World War II, and later was drafted by the United States after settling in Iowa City as a refugee. At that point he was able to choose conscientious objection and worked in Aibonito, Puerto Rico. A lengthy account from Phil Bontrager details his two years as a medical "guinea pig" at the U.S. Army Metabolic Research and Nutrition Lab at Fitzsimmons General Hospital in Denver.

The Mennonites of St. Jacobs and Elmira: Understanding the Variety. By Barb Draper. Kitchener, Ont.: Pandora Press. 2010. Pp. 378. $32.50.

Barbara Draper provides an overview of Mennonites living in Woolwich Township, which is located in the Region of Waterloo, Ontario. The book opens with about 100 pages of historical background in which Draper summarizes Mennonite origins in Switzerland, immigration to Ontario (often via Pennsylvania), and elements of nineteenth-century worship and religious ritual. She also offers an overview of nineteenth-century Mennonite architecture, dress, political involvement, and piety. The bulk of the book is given to descriptions of Mennonite groups today, namely Mennonite Church Eastern Canada, Old Order Mennonites, David Martin Mennonites, Markham-Waterloo Mennonites, Old Colony Mennonites, and several other culturally conservative Mennonite groups. Depending on the group, Draper includes information about major institutions, theological changes, limits on technology and transportation, occupational profile, language, and attitude toward schooling and higher education. A final brief chapter outlines various inter-Mennonite cooperative endeavors in the area.

Things We Have Known: Through the 20th Century with A. J. and Alta Metzler. Alice Metzler Roth, ed. Bloomington, Ind.: Author house. 2010. Pp. 189. $12.

In retirement, A. J. Metzler (1902-1996) and Alta Mae Maust Metzler (1905-2000), well-known leaders in the Mennonite Church, recorded family stories and personal memories for their family. Daughter Alice Metzler Roth edited these reminiscences and added excerpts from Alta's diaries and letters, along with some genealogical information and tributes from those who knew the Metzlers. A. J. was a pastor from 1924-1935, the director of Mennonite Publishing House from 1935-1961, the first executive secretary of the Mennonite Church (MC) from 1961-1966, and an instrumental figure in the creation of Laurelville Mennonite Camp. Alta held few such public roles, but this collection demonstrates her significant involvement in church work, as well as her commitment to the couple's six children. Stories include events from childhood, courtship at Eastern

Mennonite School, and the joys and challenges of ministry during the 1920s and 30s. Reflections include Alta's writing on God's goodness amid unanswered questions, as well as A.J.'s love of trains, his experience in church administration, and his "second conversion" to ecumenism while attending the 1961 World Council of Churches Assembly in India.

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