Fight: A Christian Case for Nonviolence. By Preston Sprinkle with Andrew Rillera. Colorado Springs, Colo.: David C. Cook. 2013. Pp. 301. $14.99.

New Testament scholar Preston Sprinkle has published numerous works in Pauline studies, but he is best known as the coauthor of Francis Chan's *New York Times* bestseller, *Erasing Hell*, written in part as a response to Rob Bell's *New York Times* bestseller, *Love Wins*. As a self-described nondenominational Reformed evangelical who likes guns and hunting but not liberal political views, Sprinkle is not someone you would expect to author a book on Christian nonviolence. He seems as surprised as anyone that that is precisely what he has accomplished in his latest book, *Fight*. Sprinkle writes to evangelicals as an evangelical and thus sets out to make a biblical case for nonviolence based on a straightforward reading of the text, which he takes to be infallible and incapable of internal contradictions. This would seem to be a tall order, but Sprinkle is up to the challenge.

After an introductory chapter in which he lays out the problem of American evangelical militarism and describes his own journey from militarism to pacifism, Sprinkle spends four chapters working through the Old Testament. The argument he develops from the text is that God's "Edenic ideal" was nonviolence (41), but God "*accommodates to* some of the moral norms of the ancient Near East" by allowing for some amount of violence within the Mosaic Law (47). However, God's intention is to draw God's people back to this ideal as evidenced by the prophets' visions of eschatological *shalom* and scathing condemnations of Israel's militarism. Along the way, God fights for the Israelites in order to establish "God's residence on earth" in Canaan (76), although God always condemns militarism per se. Drawing predominantly from evangelical Old Testament scholarship and apologetic works, Sprinkle softens the Joshua narrative's seemingly genocidal accounts by arguing that the text often uses hyperbole in its description of the Canaan conquest. Nevertheless, Sprinkle argues that, as the author of life, God had the ultimate prerogative to take life as well, though even when God does institute retributive justice, God only does so after long periods of "preemptive grace" (79).

Turning to the New Testament, Sprinkle spends two chapters on the Gospels, one on the epistles, and one on Revelation. He first describes Jesus' teaching of the kingdom of God, which—as opposed to other political options in Jesus' day—is characterized by nonviolence. Turning next to the Sermon on the Mount, Sprinkle argues that nonviolent enemy love is central to Jesus' teaching as well as his ministry. Sprinkle then argues that, according to the epistles of Peter and Paul, citizenship in the Kingdom involves following the nonviolent example of the King. This chapter includes a section on Romans 13, in which Sprinkle

deconstructs common uses of this passage that support "a militaristic spirit among Christians" (170). In his next chapter, Sprinkle similarly deconstructs uses of Revelation that support violence on the part of Christians, writing, "The book often thought to overturn the ethic of nonviolence is actually its greatest defender. By suffering unto death, believers participate in the suffering power of Christ" (181).

Following his biblical exposition, Sprinkle concludes with four chapters and an appendix that tie down a number of loose ends. He first turns to the nonviolent witness of the early church, arguing that "there was *widespread* and *diverse* agreement that Christians should never use violence; in particular, they should never kill" (198). Sprinkle then turns to the "attacker at the door" scenario, the first of many common questions and objections to which he devotes two chapters of response before concluding with a meditation on martyrdom as the ultimate "cruciform victory" (257). In the appendix Sprinkle explains just war theory and notes its problems, although he concludes that just war arguments are not very far from a nonviolent stance.

Sprinkle emphasizes on multiple occasions that he is not a Mennonite and had little contact with Anabaptists prior to researching his book. Nevertheless, the arguments in *Fight* will be familiar to those who have read the previous generation of Mennonite scholarship such as Millard Lind and John Howard Yoder, both of whom Sprinkle cites in his notes. At the same time, Sprinkle's more accessible approach is akin to John Roth's *Choosing against War*.

Fight also inherits a number of difficulties that Mennonites themselves have yet to overcome, of which I will mention three. First, Sprinkle concedes that in the Old Testament "God sanctions specific wars to protect His living room" (104); yet, he later argues, "Nonviolence sinks its roots deep into the narrative of a cruciform God, which stretches from a garden to a manger, a manger to a cross. It's the path we should take, because it's the path first trudged by our cruciform Creator-King" (255). This tension gets at the heart of a theological issue that Sprinkle's biblical arguments fail to address: Should Christians be nonviolent because they follow a nonviolent "cruciform Creator-King" or because vengeance is left to God alone? Sprinkle argues specifically that Christians should *not* use violence to defend their own living room, but such defensive violence would seem consistent with the example of the Creator-King suggested by Sprinkle's retelling of the biblical narrative.

A second difficulty Sprinkle shares with Mennonites regards police service. Sprinkle argues that Christians may serve as police officers, but they may not kill in the line of duty. To support this paradoxical stance, he notes that "it's rare for a cop to actually kill someone" and that in seventeen years in the police force his father "was forced to kill only one person in the line of duty" (250). Sprinkle offers a number of differences between serving as a police officer and serving as a military combatant in order to allow for the former but not the latter. Indeed, he even speculates about whether "being a Christian police officer could actually be an effective witness to the gospel" (251). He fails to consider, however, how serving in the police force entails taking an oath to uphold the responsibilities of the office as well as undergoing training to kill. Arguing that one can serve in

this capacity as long as one does not kill when put in a situation to do so is strangely legalistic.

Finally, as with many works advocating Christian nonviolence, Sprinkle reaches for the most extreme example in order to prove his point: the case of a woman forgiving her rapist (138–140). His account of a woman's kidnapping and rape minimally should have begun with a trigger warning regarding its graphic and traumatic nature. But more significantly Sprinkle and other male advocates of nonviolence need to listen more closely to women's voices regarding the ways such stories—especially when told by men—can unintentionally reinforce the message that following Jesus entails accepting sexual abuse.

As Mennonites continue to grapple with these biblical and practical issues regarding nonviolence, *Fight* will be a welcome gift from a sympathetic non-Mennonite. It is at the same time comprehensive and eminently readable. It is the first book I will recommend church groups (Mennonite or otherwise) interested in exploring Christian nonviolence.

Baylor University DAVID C. CRAMER

Beyond the Cutting Edge? Yoder, Technology, and the Practices of the Church. By Paul C. Heidebrecht. Eugene, Ore: Pickwick Publications. 2014. Pp. 232. $28.

It sometimes seems that Mennonite theologians are so consumed with the topic of violence that they have time for little else—that, or there aren't resources within the tradition to engage other topics. This is obviously an overstatement but it's against this background that I read Paul Heidebrecht's new book on technology. The topic is a crucial one. There are few things that define the contemporary age like the pervasive influence of technology; from the mundane to the cutting edge, it is everywhere. Heidebrecht, following Albert Borgmann, observes that while the challenge to the faith of the potential martyr is overt, many of the challenges of modernity are hidden in the ordinariness of daily life. But challenges they are, and the constant social grind shapes us inevitably (almost) into our culture's mold (185). Technology is a part of that. It is important to notice that in this discussion the word ''technology'' applies to more than just tools. Heidebrecht professes his interest in "the interactions and connections between various technologies," including "networks of tools and instruments, as well as the processes and institutional structures that make it possible for systems to function" (xiii). That is the topic of *Beyond the Cutting Edge.* The thesis is that the work of John Howard Yoder shows how church practices "make it possible for Christians to conscientiously engage . . . technological artifacts, systems, and ways of thinking" (xvi).

Against what might appear to be the grain of the volume's thesis, I do not think *Beyond the Cutting Edge* is really another "Yoder book." Heidebrecht's subject is larger. His argument, which unfolds over six chapters, engages Yoder's work in the service of a bigger objective. Nevertheless, this is an academic book

and Heidebrecht engages in the usual wrangling of secondary literature, definition of terms, and reflection on the genealogy of ideas. The book's argument begins with the claim that technology is not morally neutral and therefore is a worthy theological issue. While Yoder did not often address the topic of technology directly, Heidebrecht argues that his work is relevant. For instance, Heidebrecht follows Yoder's lead and endeavors to work out a theological approach grounded in particulars. The examples of the automobile, genetically modified food, and the Internet course through the book's central chapters. The crucial issue is how each of these modern technologies encourages specific ideals and frustrates the cultivation of certain Christian virtues. So Heidebrecht employs the analysis of Wolfgang Sachs to suggest that the automobile nurtures our desire for autonomy, speed, and comfort. When the church sees technologies with this sort of clarity it can speak to their fallenness and to their potential for redemption. Some of the analysis here is indebted to Yoder's reflection on the principalities and powers. Like Jacques Ellul, who was a more strident critic of technologized society, Yoder found that this Pauline concept enabled him to speak about a set of supra-individual forces mostly ignored in modern theology. However, Heidebrecht wants to focus on the way these concepts are put to work. Consumerism, militarism, sexism, and so on are not structures as such but "are better thought of themselves as *signs* of the fallen nature of the principalities and powers." Heidebrecht continues: "In other words, a phenomenon such as racism is a systemic or structural problem not because it is itself a system or structure (or a principality or power), but because it lives within and corrupts all of the systems and structures that rule our existence" (182).

Another way Heidebrecht thinks Yoder's work relates to how technology can be improved is with respect to Yoder's understanding of engineering. For Yoder the term encapsulates the temptation for the church to make the kingdom happen instead of fulfilling its proper mission of *proclaiming* the kingdom. Heidebrecht writes, "Engineering is more accurately thought of as a kind of artistry rather than the straightforward application of theoretical reasoning. Thus the practice of engineering is not, as Yoder suggests, diametrically opposed to his own understanding of the way the church should relate to the world" (171). Heidebrecht convincingly argues that Yoder himself was a sort of engineer. One can't help but wonder what role Yoder's practice of sexual manipulation should play in this discussion. *Beyond the Cutting Edge* was written before this part of Yoder's biography became so closely associated with his legacy. At the very least, Heidebrecht is right to point out that Yoder doesn't do much work to show how the practices of the church form a people capable of the sort of witness Yoder sees as necessary. One could surmise that this lack of pastoral awareness was part of the man's failing, but that is (rightfully) beyond the scope of Heidebrecht's book.

Some of the challenges raised by technology become headline news: the tweaking of the human genome and climate change are but two examples. The more insidious challenges, however, are harder to spot, and this is why *Beyond the Cutting Edge* is a valuable book. Heidebrecht shows the seriousness of the subject when, citing Alasdair MacIntyre and Albert Borgmann, he posits that

"technology undermines the possibility of nurturing the kind of tradition that presents any alternative to a technological worldview" (141). That is quite striking. It is something recognized more readily in contemporary film or literature (e.g. *Her, Blade Runner, Oryx & Crake)* than in theological circles. Heidebrecht's own work is helping to change the balance. Another key contribution of *Beyond the Cutting Edge* is its call to reconsider the church/world dichotomy. One of the limitations of this dichotomy is that it tends to wash out practices that stand between the two poles. Heidebrecht is right about this, and one of the regrettable results is the way contemporary Anabaptist theology tends to address topics like ecclesiology and war, but has much less to say about the world of human culture in-between. I think it is also why Anabaptists tend to discuss tangential issues under the rubric of peacemaking: for example, food production, transportation, environmentalism, and municipal politics. The dominance of this dichotomy is also partly to blame for the fact that concerns for remedial justice tend to overshadow constructive cultural creation in Anabaptist institutions.

If *Beyond the Cutting Edge* can help us reconsider these fundamental issues it will be very valuable. More specifically, if the book can help readers maintain a critical perspective on common technologies it will fulfill Heidebrecht's laudable intent. Part of doing that will require the elevation of what he calls "meaningful suffering." Meaningful suffering is Heidebrecht's way of talking about deliberate choices to forgo modern comforts in favor of less-comfortable practices that cultivate important virtues. The idea is not unlike what the educational theorist Robert Bjork calls "desirable difficulties," short-term challenges to learning that enable deeper understanding. Churches that can model this sort of an approach to modern technology will offer a profound contribution to the common good.

Ottawa Mennonite Church ANTHONY G. SIEGRIST

Latino Mennonites: Civil Rights, Faith, and Evangelical Culture. By Felipe Hinojosa. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press. 2014. Pp. 300. $45.

Latino Mennonites highlights the role of Latino evangelical Protestants in general, and Mennonites in particular. Felipe Hinojosa links Latino religion and religious organizations with African-American, Puerto Rican, and Chicano civil rights movements, and in doing so illuminates the vibrant yet complicated relationship within and beyond the Mennonite Church in the United States. From the initial push by Mennonite missionaries in the 1930s (comparatively late by most accounts) in Mexican communities of Chicago, South Texas, Puerto Rico, and New York City, to the role of the "politics of identity" as a tool for political and religious mobilization in the 1970s, Hinojosa eloquently combines the complicated and contentious histories of Latino civil rights, race, and religion in the United States. By emphasizing the need to focus on and better understand non-Catholic Latino Christians in communities and cultures that were otherwise overwhelmingly Catholic, this study will become the go-to-guide for writing about Latino evangelical culture and the influence of Latinos in steering religious

organizations into the civil rights movements and a focus of cultural understanding within the organizations.

In his introduction, Hinojosa explains the two central goals of this book. The first is to underscore the role of wider African-American, Chicano, and Puerto Rican civil-rights movements in encouraging coalitions among African-American and Latino Mennonites. He argues persuasively for the importance of interethnic coalitions in empowering the rise of Latino evangelicals. By doing this, Hinojosa's book "moves beyond a single-ethnic-group approach and shows how closely linked black and brown concerns are within the Mennonite Church" (5) and how those concerns were connected to broader, national movements and developments. It was interethnic religious groups, like the Minority Mennonite Council, that challenged white Mennonites to diversify their institutions and challenged the Mennonite leadership to reexamine "the role of white missionaries in Latino and African American contexts" (5). The second central goal of *Latino Mennonites* is to "extend and disrupt the traditional civil rights narrative by discussing the changing nature of Latino religious activism before and after the turbulent 1960s" (6). In the view of this reviewer, Hinojosa accomplishes both of these goals.

The book is organized into three sections with a total of seven chapters. The first section, "Missions and Race," focuses on the early stages of Mennonite evangelization of Mexicans and Puerto Ricans in the United States, a missionary movement that started in 1936. These missionaries represented both the Mennonite Church and the Mennonite Brethren denominations, although most of the book focuses on the Mennonite Church side of this history. These initial encounters took place in both rural and urban settings and included Latinos deeply-rooted in their communities as well as immigrant households recently on the move. In the second half of this first section, Hinojosa describes the long and arduous struggle to get the Mennonite Church to enter the fight for African-American civil rights. Along the way, Hinojosa provides a sweeping history of the Mennonite Church to the 1960s, with its rural traditions and an overwhelmingly white membership, the creation of Puerto Rican and Mexican-American Mennonite churches, and the frequent tension between Anabaptist and Evangelical traditions and spirituality.

The second part of *Latino Mennonites,* titled "Black, Brown and Mennonite," represents the core of the study. In this section (chapters 3 through 5) Hinojosa takes the reader through a detailed examination of the actions of church members and organizations in the African-American and Latino civil rights movements, including the creation of the Urban Racial Council (later known as the Minority Ministries Council). Chapter 3, "The Fight Over Money," explores "the politics of interethnic alliances" (83) among black and brown leaders of the Minority Ministries Council (and its predecessor) who struggled to receive recognition and respect from white Mennonite leaders, a struggle symbolized by the short-lived Compassion Fund that, for a time, provided money to Minority Ministry Council priority projects but revealed deep suspicions on the part of white Mennonites that black and brown church members could not be trusted with money. The larger story here becomes one of the council moving its focus

from addressing white racism in the church to being an organization "that became a vehicle for exploring the meanings of race and ethnicity in a multiethnic context" (76).

Chapters 4 and 5 examine the 1972 Cross-Cultural Youth Convention and the conflicting Mennonite responses to the farm worker movement. The youth gathering drew "nearly 300 Latino, African-American, Native American and white youth." A remarkable gathering, it focused "important questions about how the politics of gender and race permeated the [Minority Ministry Council's] new mantra of a 'multiethnic brotherhood'" (99) and illustrated a "cohesive group not advocating 'Black concerns' or 'Latino concerns' but 'black and brown concerns together'" (121). Mennonite involvement with the farm worker labor movement in California was complex and contentious because white Mennonite growers opposed brown Mennonite workers (sometimes with force), while white Mennonite activists from the East Coast and Midwest added another set of voices. Mennonite concerns for peace and justice clashed with traditional Mennonite distrust of labor unions and an underlying racism that ultimately failed to take farm worker concerns seriously.

In the final part of the book, "Becoming Evangélicos," Hinojosa includes two chapters that focus on the struggle for women's equality within the church and on the important role of identity politics among Latino Mennonites and in a larger sense the politics of religious identity. The chapter on *mujeres evangélicas* draws especially on oral histories with women who convened interstate gatherings for Latina Mennonites, and with women who popularized "culturally representative music" (169), in place of the Mennonite hymns inherited from missionaries, which changed how Latino and Latina Mennonites worshiped.

Latino Mennonites is an essential read for graduate students, scholars, and anyone interested in better understanding the political and social rise of Latinos and Latinas in the United States. With *Latino Mennonites,* Felipe Hinojosa has set a standard for the historical and cultural study of Latino evangelicals throughout the United States. As Hinojosa notes, "much of the important work on Latino evangelicals . . . has come from religious studies scholars more than from social historians," thus neglecting "larger debates on race and ethnicity, gender, sexuality, and immigration" (217). With a keen historical eye for these very themes, and with the passion that comes from personal and familial ties to South Texan and Midwestern Latino Mennonite communities, Hinojosa breaks new ground by integrating social, political, cultural, and religious scholarship in this study of a numerically small yet representative group of non-Catholic U.S. Latinos.

University of Alabama MICHAEL INNIS-JIMÉNEZ

Pacifists in Chains: The Persecution of Hutterites during the Great War. By Duane C. S. Stoltzfus. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press. 2013. Pp. 268. $29.95.

The title and subtitle of this book stand in a certain tension, with the title more closely describing the volume's focus. Relatively few Hutterite draftees in World War I ended up in chains and little attention is given to those who did not experience Army torture. Of those not so fortunate, four ended up chained to their cell doors in Alcatraz so that "only their toes touched the floor" (115). The four were the three brothers David, Michael, and Joseph Hofer, and Joseph's brother-in-law, Jacob Wipf, from the Rockport Colony near Alexandria, South Dakota. On May 25, 1918, the four, along with Andrew Wurtz, a Hutterite from nearby Old Elm Springs Colony, left on the train for Camp Lewis in Washington State. By the end of the year, Joseph and Michael were dead. Severely weakened by torture, exposure, and malnutrition in Alcatraz, they succumbed shortly after arriving at Fort Leavenworth to the influenza pandemic that swept the world at the end of the war. Stoltzfus primarily tells the story of these four men.

The book follows the chronology of the men's conscription, transport to camp, court martial for refusing cooperation with the military, imprisonment and mistreatment in Alcatraz, and death or release. Along the way, wider elements of the story are woven in with main story. For example, the first chapter provides background on the Hutterite movement starting back in the sixteenth century. In the second chapter, the four men's bewilderment at arriving out west in a large military camp is cleverly paralleled with the history of Hutterite arrival and settlement in the 1870s in the United States.

Next the story takes up the particularly harsh treatment of the Hutterites in contrast to that of other conscientious objectors. Included here is discussion of the government's efforts to whip up war fever. One factor that drew the military's ire onto the Hutterites was that they were given clear instructions by their leadership to report to camp but to refuse any cooperation once there. In contrast, most descendants of 1870s Mennonite immigrants in the Great Plains were given few or unclear instructions from leaders or told to make up their own minds. The more liberal stance of some Mennonites that allowed for noncombatant service—as found, for example, in the writings of President John Kliewer of Bethel College—was, in fact, used by the prosecution as exhibit A in the men's court martial (86). Another avenue of escape from imprisonment could have been farm furloughs. Already in March of 1918, before the four Hutterites got on the train to Camp Lewis, the military had made such provisions for conscientious objectors. However, by the time the Board of Inquiry that determined who was qualified arrived out west, the four had already been court martialed for insubordination and their cases were not eligible for review. Hutterites and other C.O.'s who arrived in camp even a few weeks later fared much better, so an element of poor timing emerges as a key part of the story.

Their imprisonment and mistreatment at Alcatraz at the beginning of their sentences to twenty years of hard labor are put into a broader context of government-induced war fever and a naïve hope on the part of the secretary of war, Newton Baker, that C.O.s could be "converted" to military service if

handled properly. Letters, sermons, and church statements rejecting war bond purchases or supporting C.O.'s were prosecuted by the government under the Espionage and Sedition Acts. The connections the author draws in the introduction and epilogue between war fever then and the acceptance of torture in the United States today are most clearly illustrated in this portion of the book.

Word of their dire treatment and poor health eventually reached both the Hutterite community and leadership in Washington. The four men were transferred to Fort Leavenworth on November 14, 1918. Joseph died two weeks later. His wife, Maria, having been alerted to his poor condition by a telegram from David, arrived only the night before his death and reported the aid of a angel who helped her find and get access to her husband in the prison. Joseph's body was returned to her in the prison clothed in the military uniform he had steadfastly refused to wear in life. When Michael died a few days later, his family was able to persuade the Army not to put the uniform on him as the military prepared the body for shipment home for burial. Although both the death certificates listed the flu as the cause of death, the official *Chronicle of the Hutterian Brethren* lists "cruel mistreatment by the United States military" as the cause.

The final portion of the book notes numerous ramifications of this government-imposed suffering and death. The Hutterites began large-scale migration to Canada, where a majority of their colonies are now found. Mennonites and other peace churches began in the 1930s to look for alternatives to imprisonment for their members who would not serve as noncombatants, and the military eventually did the same. Thus the four men's imprisonment played a role in making Civilian Public Service possible during World War II. The National Civil Liberties Bureau, the forerunner of today's American Civil Liberties Union, took up this case among others, giving an important impetus to its work. The simple tombstones of Michael and Joseph match the uniformity of all Hutterite grave markers, with the exception of the addition of a single word: "martyr."

A handful of questions remain unclear after reading this book. Most historians, for example, would not find nation-states functioning as early as the sixteenth century. The analysis of the role of President Wilson and the U.S. government in whipping up the war fever that loomed so large in causing these two deaths could have been even more explicit and concentrated. The footnotes do not make clear where the transcript of the court martial trial that was cited can be found. And the role of the German language was occasionally confusing. The acknowledgements note that the letters of the family were written in German in the old script, making research challenging. Yet when the Hofers worry about the Army censoring their letters, it is not clear if they were forced to write in English or expected the Army was employing script-reading censors. At times it was clear the Hutterites did not understand what the military expected of them, and the book does not explore the question of whether it was their lack of education or their lack of command of English that was the bigger culprit. Andrew Wurtz, who was on the train to Camp Lewis with the four, recounted on the next page of a source cited in the book that he told military officers that he did not understand English well and documented the Army's use of interpreters

to communicate with him (95-96) yet the impact of Hutterites as German speakers is not analyzed. Imagining a German-speaking "enemy" C.O. in front of military officers would add to the portrait of abuse documented here.

The strengths of the analysis and the clear writing outweigh whatever shortcomings the book may have. Hutterite voices and sensibilities appropriately receive a great deal of attention and helpfully explain what these men were thinking and feeling as they resolutely stood by their decisions of noncooperation with the military. The focus on weighing factors of timing, national mood, and personal experiences and backgrounds of those involved provides a thoughtful explanation of how torture happened and was viewed as necessary by some. Balanced and important were the judgments Stoltzfus offered concerning the involvement and responsibility of top officials, including Secretary of War Baker, in this tragedy. Individuals and systems were both to blame.

Bethel College, North Newton, Kan. MARK JANTZEN

The Constructed Mennonite: History, Memory and the Second World War. By Hans Werner. Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press. 2013. Pp. 205. $27.95.

Hans Werner's gripping book traces the adaptability of Mennonite identity in the turmoil of the twentieth century using the example of John Werner (Hans's father), from John's early life in Siberia on a collective farm, through war experience in Europe, and finally as he faced the challenges of immigrant life in Canada. To navigate, survive, and thrive in a variety of difficult political and social environments (the Soviet Union, wartime Europe, and postwar Canada), John adopted new identities symbolized in his changing names: Hans, Ivan, Johann, and, finally, John. By presenting and interrogating John's memories of his life, Werner raises important questions of how individual Mennonites remember and retell stories that diverge from the accepted norms of the community—a particularly haunting problem among post-World War II Mennonites.

The book is divided into three sections: Siberia, War, and Becoming Normal. The first section follows John's memories of his family history and his early life in Siberia, including the death of his father from cholera, the family's failed attempt to emigrate in 1929, and the suicide of his stepfather. John's first transition occurred here, from a Mennonite boy named Hans to a young man named Ivan, who worked with machinery and as a driver of tractors and combines on a Soviet collective farm. In the summer of 1938, Ivan, with apparently little trepidation, entered the Red Army.

In the section entitled War, Hans Werner describes his father's stories of fighting on both sides of the eastern front. Ivan (John) began the war as a Red Army soldier, cutting his teeth in the Winter War between Russia and Finland. After his capture in 1941 by the German army, Ivan, like many Mennonite men

from the Soviet Union, simply switched sides and became Johann, a naturalized German citizen who eventually fought for the German army.

The third section, Becoming Normal, follows Johann through his postwar transition from life as a soldier to a civilian named John. This transition involved working in variety of mechanical and technical jobs, navigating the bureaucracy of refugee resettlement to Canada, entering into a relationship with Margarethe Vogt, a Mennonite refugee from the Soviet Union, and joining a Mennonite church. Eventually, the newly married couple immigrated to Canada and started a new life together in Saskatchewan and then Manitoba.

Hans Werner painstakingly weaves together his father's memories with collaborating and contradicting evidence from a variety of sources. Using this method, Werner is able to pull apart John's memories showing their constructed nature, as these autobiographical stories both reveal and obscure a true picture of his father. It is striking that all the while that John is adopting and shedding new ethnic and national identities, Mennonites persistently appear and reappear in his stories and experiences. Also interesting is his eventual embrace of a Mennonite church and community after the many experiences as a child, teen, and young adult that took him away from that identity.

As Werner reminds us, the audience of these stories mattered and shaped the way in which John represented himself. Certain tales simply could not be told; for instance, "in the context of the pacifist Mennonites social milieu . . . accounts of [John's] direct participation in killing might well have been untenable" (77). Just as surely, praising or identifying too strongly with the Soviet state would have been unacceptable in postwar Canada among Mennonites. Werner senses this tension in John's autobiographical stories and comments on how John had "to balance his own story's plot . . . with the reality of the evil represented in that society" as he recounted his early life under the Soviet regime (46). The power of the community narrative over individual narratives emerges strongly throughout the book and raises fundamental questions about the policing of memory and identity among Mennonites.

One of the strongest contributions of this work is the insight it provides into the development of masculinity in communities ravaged by turmoil and conflict. No other book of which I am aware offers such a coherent and sophisticated analysis of how boys grew into men in Mennonite communities transformed by Communist rule, collectivization and terror, the war against religion, and the loss of their fathers. As Werner shows, at least some of these men found a place in the Soviet system, shedding much of the community's religious identity. Many of them grew up without a stable family unit and within a disintegrating community, contexts that influenced their outlook on life and relationships with others. This version of Mennonite masculinity shows traits of strong self-reliance and aloofness in relationships—including with their wives—that were routinely left behind and quietly forgotten. While Werner identifies the drafting of Ivan into the Red Army as disconnecting him from his former life (and family) in Siberia, the story also seems to suggest that the profound instability of his and other boys' early lives shaped the ways in which these Mennonite young men later engaged with and adapted to the world around them, especially under the

chaos of war. Yet much of this, Werner suggests, remains hidden in untold stories, a silence familiar not just to John's family but to many, many Soviet Mennonites of that generation.

Books on Russian and Soviet Mennonite history often omit Russian language sources. Werner relies on German and English sources, but in his case, since the story is primarily about Mennonite identity, this linguistic selectivity does not seem to hamper his analysis. While references to Russian sources would complement the footnotes and provide broader context, they would not fundamentally change the book, which examines the "script[ed] and rehears[ed]" nature of autobiographical memories and how the stories told from these memories shape identity (171).

This book is a highly personal story told with scholarly rigor. It is truly a crossover book, appealing to both academic and popular audiences. For academics, the book's interrogation of memory, identity, and community provides a great deal of thought-provoking material. For general readers, the book offers a riveting journey into a son's quest to make historical sense of his father's stories, told and retold, over the course of forty years.

University of Winnipeg AILEEN FRIESEN

The Collected Works of James Wm. McClendon, Jr. 2 vols. Ryan Andrew Newson and Andrew C. Wright, eds. Waco, Texas: Baylor University Press. 2014. Pp. 314 + 406. $69.95 (each).

In an early essay on "Biography as Theology," James McClendon deployed the unusual metaphor of the medieval "trial by ordeal" to describe his understanding of theology. Noting that many people find theology to be empty or boring, "an anodyne of conscience or a cold storage locker for preserving dogmas," he counters that his own work in theology involves intense wrangling with profound questions and with critics of Christian answers to those questions. Theology "for me," he says, has therefore been "a trial by ordeal, the very arena of conscientiousness" (2:155). Along with his several books, the essays gathered in the *Collected Works* (some previously published, many not) show McClendon in the midst of the trial. Here he carefully, sympathetically, investigates an opponent's perspective; there he draws on theological and philosophical resources to formulate a creative response. Here he speaks with the assurance of one confident in his abilities to endure the ordeal; there his humility conveys respect for his disputants and the knowledge that, in the end, it is God who judges.

McClendon was born in 1924 in Shreveport, Louisiana, and grew up Southern Baptist.[1] After serving in the Pacific as a U.S. Navy officer near the end of World War II, he returned to the United States and began studying, eventually earning

1. Biographical details are gleaned from various autobiographical reflections included in volume 1, an interview of McClendon by Ched Myers, the editorial introductions that begin each volume and head each essay, and Nancey Murphy's affectionate foreword.

a Th.D. degree from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. Following a few years as a pastor in Louisiana, he took up a teaching post at Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary near San Francisco, but he left in 1966 after disagreements with the school's administration over his support for the civil rights movement and his opposition to the Vietnam War. Some of his writings from this period appear at the beginning of volume 1 of the *Collected Works*, in particular a series of short pieces on doctrinal themes (creation, sin, anthropology, atonement, resurrection, eschatology) for a Baptist student journal. These essays show an ability to turn a phrase, sensible theological judgment, and sensitivity to narrative (cf. 1:42), traits that would characterize his later work. An early interest in process theology, indicated here by repeated references to William Temple, would not survive long.

In the early 1960s, McClendon spent a sabbatical year at Oxford studying J. L. Austin's speech-act theory with some of Austin's students. Against accounts of language overly focused on its representational capacities, Austin argued that our words perform a variety of tasks. For example, when the phrase "I now pronounce you husband and wife" is uttered at a wedding, the utterance itself changes the state of the couple from engaged to married. The meaning of the phrase is found in what it accomplishes—an accomplishment that requires a certain context (a wedding, in this case)—and not primarily in its being a true or false description of a state of affairs, as most previous theories of language held. Many of the essays from the 1960s presented here show McClendon working out the implications of speech-act theory for theological topics such as baptism and the trinity. Austin's philosophy, as well as the complementary perspectives of Ludwig Wittgenstein and, after the 1980s, Alasdair MacIntyre, was central for McClendon's theological development.

Antiwar activism caused problems for McClendon at another academic institution, the University of San Francisco, resulting in his dismissal. He then embarked on a series of visiting professorships before finally landing a long-term position at the Graduate Theological Union, in Berkeley, California, in the early 1970s. McClendon befriended Stanley Hauerwas around the same time, and not long thereafter he read John Howard Yoder's *The Politics of Jesus*. Yoder, too, became a friend, and McClendon describes reading *Politics* as a rediscovery of the discipleship-oriented vision of his Southern Baptist youth. In the ecumenical environment of the Graduate Theological Union, this "second conversion" (1:22) helped McClendon articulate his differences from his Protestant and Catholic colleagues.

He came up with the name "baptist vision" to describe the common heritage of Baptists, Mennonites, Restorationists, and other Christians whose faith centers on a "this is that" reading of Scripture. For these baptists, the Bible is the basic authority for faith and life; witness to Christ is the church's basic task; liberty is the church's freedom for nonviolent witness, regardless of the consequences; discipleship denotes the common Christian discipline of Christ's way; and community embodies that way (1:100). Volume 1 as a whole is dedicated to showing McClendon's progress toward and outworking of this vision, particularly in regard to history, ethics, and ecumenicity. The essay "The

Mennonite and Baptist Vision" will be of special interest to readers of *Mennonite Quarterly Review*, with its call for adherents of both traditions to "answer the identity question by saying 'baptist'" (1:149). Also of note are an essay on Balthasar Hubmaier, another on ecumenism coauthored with John Howard Yoder, and a reflection on the universal nature of Christian witness via the story of Dirk Willems (2:350-353).

Volume 2 explores in greater detail the philosophical resources that undergird many of McClendon's distinctive theological claims. This is not to say that the writings here are philosophical rather than theological. McClendon puts philosophy to work for theological ends, as evidenced by groups of essays on religious language ("convictions") and practices ("powerful practices"), and the narrative, nonfoundational character of theology, ethics, and witness ("biography as theology," the "three strands of Christian ethics"). All of this work is related to his study of speech-act theory in the 1960s, but from the 1970s is clearly directed by his baptist vision and, from the 1980s, by his marriage to the Christian philosopher Nancey Murphy, with whom he joined the Church of the Brethren. Their jointly authored essay on "Distinguishing Modern and Postmodern Theologies" (2:39-61) provides a philosophical history that makes sense of the theological transformations visible in McClendon's (and Murphy's own) writings. In 1989 McClendon moved to Fuller Theological Seminary, in Pasadena, California, to be with his wife after her appointment there. He remained there until his death in 2000.

Readers of McClendon's books will be familiar with much of the material in the *Collected Works*, but as a collection of essays they give us greater insight into his working method and how he developed a set of finely honed tools to withstand theology's trial, as well as a more detailed view of the tools themselves. Our questions concern what we are to make of McClendon's tools today. Are they still of use for the trials Christians face? And are they of use to Mennonites and other Anabaptists? On the first question, it must simply be acknowledged that much water has passed under theological and philosophical bridges since McClendon's heyday. Many now see recourse to community narratives and practices as an evasion of tough metaphysical and ethical problems. Speculation and realism are both back on the agenda as vital for our day. These may be wrong turns, but they need to be engaged by McClendon's followers.

McClendon is also a key theological representative of what many now refer to as "neo-Anabaptism." Neo-Anabaptists have come under scrutiny for an ahistorical interpretation of Anabaptism and for reducing theology to social ethics. On my reading, McClendon seems to be clear of both charges. His baptist vision is rooted in a theologically and philosophically sophisticated historiography aimed at correcting problems of earlier summaries such as Harold Bender's "Anabaptist Vision" (1:91-118). Moreover, his theology is wary of reductive tendencies (cf. 2:48) and seeks to provide a fully theological framework for ethics, even as it maintains the practical primacy of the common Christian life. In light of recent debates, however, all of these topics deserve revisiting.

Neo-Anabaptist theology has also justly been accused of being the exclusive domain of white males. Although contextual and liberation theologies were birthed in the 1960s and 1970s, many white male theologians, including neo-Anabaptists, have largely ignored these movements and have continued to write as if their theology were uninflected by their racial, gender, and other formations. McClendon does somewhat better. His concern for lived embodiment and the full historical expression of the baptist vision directed him to undertake careful study of black American Christianity, including a biographical treatment of Martin Luther King Jr. (2:153-172). He was also attentive to women's experience, making Sarah Pierpont Edwards's biography the focus of his "ethics of delight" (2:295-312; cf. 1:301-302). His general theological perspective led him to emphasize the multiplicity of social and historical contexts and the need for particular theologies to speak to them.[2] These themes are drawn together in a 1998 essay published in volume 1, "A baptist Millennium?," where he names the fact that baptists have been "participants in the marginalization of women, people of color, and non-Westerners," and contends that we must now listen to such persons "in order that we may find where we are to go next" (1:302; cf. 1:260). The trial continues.

Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary JAMIE PITTS

Mapping Exile and Return: Palestinian Dispossession and a Political Theology for a Shared Future. By Alain Epp Weaver. Minneapolis: Fortress Press. 2014. Pp. 174. $39.

In August 2014 the state of Israel announced the largest land appropriation in thirty years, just south of Bethlehem in the occupied West Bank. To some, this action is further evidence that a two-state solution in Israel-Palestine is no longer a viable option. In *Mapping Exile and Return*, Alain Epp Weaver argues that neither the two-state solution nor the unified (one-state) alternative holds any real hope for a peaceful future, because both rely on mapping models that either absorb difference or exclude otherness.

The battle of the maps is often framed as a zero-sum game in which one people's dispossession is required for the homecoming of another. Here Epp Weaver interrogates whether there is an alternative way of mapping that disrupts the "exclusivist logic of the nation-state" (39). What other way might there be to describe, map, and implement a binational future?

Epp Weaver begins by examining the practices of counter-mapping, particularly the attempts of Palestinian refugee activist Salman Abu-Sitta to

2. See also McClendon, *Doctrine: Systematic Theology, Volume 2* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1994), 50-62, for his evaluation of the "political" context of his theology in imperial America. Among his leading lights for theology in such a situation were King and Georgia Harkness. McClendon warned against focusing too much on context at the expense of the content of Christian theology, and accused James Cone and Mary Daly of an "unstable" mix of ideology and theology (53). This judgment bears further examination.

document the *nakba*, the forced exile of Palestinians by Zionist militias in 1948. Driven by the conviction that memory production is the only hope for return, Abu-Sitta's cartographic productions include both the Hebrew map and the villages that the Zionist forces sought to erase. Rather than engaging in the kind of counter-mapping that excludes memory of the other, Palestinian refugee cartography typifies a palimpsest, a document in which previous renderings are still visible even as inscriptions are added or restored. These maps recognize that a binational future can only emerge "not in the smooth, homogeneous spaces of the nation-state but rather in an embrace of the heterogeneous character of the landscape and its peoples" (49).

Framing the shape of return in such a way also challenges the meaning of exile. In the second chapter Epp Weaver identifies two competing political theologies of exile (Hebrew *galut*). The national colonial theology of Zionism views the *negation* of exile as the goal of return. Rather than signifying a condition of expectant longing as it does in traditional Jewish terms, in a Zionist framework exile represents a weak or morally degenerate state. In contrast, John H. Yoder treats exile as a *vocation* that demands complete reliance on God. He argues in *The Jewish-Christian Schism Revisited* that the failure of the church to maintain its Jewish roots is demonstrated in the loss of the theological vision of seeking the shalom of the cities in which they are exiled (Jer. 29:7), a task that rabbinic Judaism has generally performed much better than has Christianity.

The problem, according to the author, is that exile and return are placed in diametric opposition. Defending Yoder from criticisms that a theology of exile has nothing to say about what it might mean to be landed, Epp Weaver points out that exile in Babylon is not exclusively homelessness or landlessness, but "teaches God's people that its embodied political witness need not be bound to sovereign power" (74). The goal of an exiled landedness is to build the city for others, "accepting one's exilic status, even when one is at home, and recognizing that one truly inhabits and takes possession of particular places not by seeking to escape one's exilic status but rather through efforts to create polities that welcome and incorporate the exiles (the refugees, the internally displaced) created by the exclusionary politics of the nation-state" (76-77). In this sense, to be landed and exiled simultaneously is the vocation of God's people. The second chapter is the theological center of the book. Readers interested in Yoder's theses on the Jewish-Christian schism and the responding criticisms will find Epp Weaver's analysis insightful. This chapter alone makes *Mapping Exile and Return* well worth the read.

In the third chapter, Epp Weaver considers the important role that trees play in the mapping of land. The planting of trees signifies ownership of land and can erase prior habitation, as the Jewish National Fund has attempted to do with former Palestinian villages. But trees can also be sites of memories, and serve as metaphors for being rooted in a particular place. Father Elias Chacour, like many Palestinian clergy, emphasizes his family's ancient roots in Palestine. But rather than serving as a claim against Israeli Jewish rootedness, Chacour's vision of belonging is one in which "all of God's children are 'rooted' in the land…ancient roots are not deployed to serve a cause of dispossession or exclusion but to insist

on his rightful place in the land" (109). Chacour employs Paul's grafting metaphor to describe a vision of common belonging in the land.

The fear of counter-dispossession that mirrors that *nakba* causes many Israeli Jews to reject refugee mappings of return. But what can be the response of Israeli Jews who see a common vision of a binational future not as a threat but as a source of hope? In the final chapter, Epp Weaver points to the work of an Israeli organization called the Zochrot Association, which is dedicated to remembering the *nakba* in Hebrew, particularly on the site of the depopulated West Bank village of 'Imwas. Epp Weaver uses the term *exilic vigils* to describe "actions in which return is shaped by the exilic commitment to building the city for others and that anticipate a coming, binational future" (128). Only a shared sense of belonging can overcome the fear of dispossession. In this sense, an exilic vigil longs for return not to a lost past but to the acceptance of the homogeneity within a particular place and the possibility of co-presence.

The novelty of Epp Weaver's proposal demonstrates how thoroughly entrenched are the zero-sum cartographies and nationalist mappings of space that characterize nation-state models. In this logic, communal differences are a threat that must either be subsumed into the identity and rights of the individual citizen (the one-state solution) or cordoned off through policies of separation (the status quo and the two-state solution). Hope is found not at the negotiation tables in the perpetual peace process, but rather "among individuals and groups that are already now holding exilic vigils in the land and are thus through their actions mapping a shared landscape and outlining the contours of a coming community in which Palestinians and Israeli Jews find refuge in one another, recognizing one another as fellow exiles" (165).

Epp Weaver's argument leaves the reader asking what a shared future might look like. Because of the necessarily ad hoc nature of exilic vigils, he is hesitant to describe in overly concrete terms what shape a binational political formation might take. He suggests a loose confederation of independent canons; that is, "smaller, sometimes overlapping, communal units" based on mutuality and sharing (81). Yet the question remains as to how such a future intersects with the ongoing negotiations and political processes.

This volume is a welcome addition to the growing body of work on Palestine-Israel that questions traditional nation-state models. As the former Mennonite Central Committee co-representative in the region, Epp Weaver's firsthand experience, nuance, and sensitivity to various parties is evident throughout. Lay readers and undergraduate students may struggle with the heavily philosophical treatments of space (particularly in chapters 1, 3, and 4). But the central argument is clear and hopeful, avoiding the pitfalls of both cynicism and platitudes.

Lancaster, Pa. PETER M. SENSENIG

Reconcile: Conflict Transformation for Ordinary Christians. By John Paul Lederach. Harrisonburg, Va.: Herald Press. 2014. Pp. 191. $14.99.

During Advent in 2013, Pastor Bill Hybels preached a sermon about Jesus the peacemaker. Hybels is the senior pastor at Willow Creek Community Church in the suburbs of Chicago. Willow Creek could be described as the premier mega-church in the United States, with roughly 25,000 people attending services each weekend, and with teaching events and resources used by pastors across the country.

Hybels preached that peace is at the center of Jesus' vision of God's kingdom coming on earth. "And when Jesus said blessed are the peacemakers," Hybels continued, "he was formally commissioning each and every one of his followers to do absolutely everything in their power to contribute to the kingdom vision of peace on earth," in marriages, families, neighborhoods, cities, and the world. Peace, like war, Hybels said, has to be waged: strategically, courageously, persistently, with imagination and heart and wisdom. Hybels went on to report that the elders of Willow Creek had recently added a critical phrase about peacemaking to one of their guiding statements. "We are wrestling," he said, "with the question: What peacemaking role does God want Willow Creek Church to play in the next five, ten, fifteen years?"

While Hybels spoke extensively of the evil of warfare, most of his sermon was focused on interpersonal peacemaking. The heart of Hybels's sermon used a peacemaking framework drawn from a chapter in the book *The Journey Toward Reconciliation* by John Paul Lederach (Herald Press, 1999).

Bill Hybels credits his wife, Lynne, with leading the way in a deepened commitment to peacemaking. For roughly seven years, she has immersed herself in the conflicts in Israel/Palestine and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. At a conference in the fall of 2013, I heard her lead a session on peacemaking where she said, "I am convinced that peacemaking is the cutting edge of discipleship in the coming era." She presented together with two graduates of Fuller Theological Seminary who cited the writing of Glen Stassen and John Paul Lederach as being formative in their thinking and work.

In little more than six months after learning about Hybels's sermon, editors at Herald Press had reworked and republished Lederach's book under the new title *Reconcile: Conflict Transformation for Ordinary Christians.* Lynne and Bill Hybels wrote the foreword together. The book has much of the same content as the previous edition. The way it is presented, however, already starting with chapter headings, makes it more accessible and compelling for an evangelical audience. Chapter titles now reflect biblical themes from Genesis to Jesus and Paul. A key chapter, on Jacob and Esau as a framework for understanding conflict, has been expanded. A chapter on Jesus and the reconciliation arts has been added. Insider references to Mennonites have been deleted or modified to make the book feel more inclusive to those readers who are not Mennonite. The book also includes roughly forty pages of concrete tools for understanding conflict (including a section on understanding terrorism in a post 9-11 world), worship resources, and resources for further study and action.

John Paul Lederach is a practitioner, scholar, poet, and storyteller. He has consulted with the highest-level government officials and national opposition movements in war-torn settings like Nicaragua, Somalia, Northern Ireland, Colombia, Nepal, and the Philippines. Lederach served with Mennonite Central Committee in Latin America and as director of Mennonite Conciliation Service before becoming founding director of the Center for Justice and Peacebuilding at Eastern Mennonite University and then a professor at the Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies at the University of Notre Dame.

This book draws from Lederach's deep rootedness among Mennonite Christians and more than thirty years of work in international conciliation. Lederach brings key biblical passages and his own peacemaking experiences into conversation with each other in ways that illuminate both. Principles and practices are highlighted that are helpful in any conflict situation, including a valuable chapter on working with conflict within the church. Transforming conflict into a source of creativity where God can work is not a matter of learning a lesson once, but rather a matter of continually shifting perspectives and developing new skills and habits. For those who read the first edition fifteen years ago, it is well worth reading, pondering, and digesting this material again.

The annual Global Leadership Summit of Willow Creek Association was held shortly after *Reconcile* was released. At the opening session, which was broadcast to 190,000 people in 300 cities around the world, Bill Hybels held up the book and promoted it as a critical book for Christians in our time. Immediately there was a social media buzz. By that afternoon the book was the No. 1 seller on Amazon for Christian Social Issues and No. 716 for all books in all categories.

The turn toward peace at Willow Creek calls to mind the story of Greg Boyd and Woodland Hills Church in St. Paul. During the Iraq War, Boyd preached a sermon series at his 5,000-member church; the sermon series was later published as a book, *The Myth of a Christian Nation*, in which he highlighted the peacemaking character of those who seek the kingdom of God. More recently, another mega-church pastor, Brian Zahnd, wrote *A Farewell to Mars: An Evangelical Pastor's Journey Toward the Gospel of Peace.*

Each of these pastors and churches has a different style and speaks in a somewhat different key. Yet this renewed attention to the gospel of peace among these mega-church pastors is looking less like an accident, and more like a pattern. If indeed peacemaking is at the heart of the gospel, this should not come as a total surprise. As the longstanding alliance between Christian churches and imperial culture and power is starting to unravel, many Christians are rediscovering dimensions of Jesus and his message that have long been neglected.

In these shifting times, can Mennonites become students and fellow-learners both in the way of active, courageous Jesus-rooted peacemaking and in ways of communicating and connecting with a much broader audience than we've been used to reaching? How might we become co-workers and collaborators with new partners? The story of *Reconcile* offers glimpses of the possibilities before us.

Interchurch Relations, Mennonite Church USA ANDRÉ GINGERICH STONER

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On Diaspora: Christianity, Religion, and Secularity. By Daniel Colucciello Barber. Eugene, Ore.: Cascade Books. 2011. Pp. 155. $20.

What do we mean when we talk about this Western phenomenon called secularism? Some have talked about secularism as what follows after the collapse of Christendom; thus the declaration that we live in the secular era of post-Christendom, where fewer and fewer people attend Christian worship services, and where Christianity no longer exercises power over sociopolitical realities. "Our society is rapidly becoming post-Christian and even anti-Christian," wrote the authors of the current strategic plan for my denomination, Mennonite Church USA.[3] Last year an article in *The Mennonite* magazine claimed that Christians in the United States and the United Kingdom live "as marginalized minorities in societies that are experiencing secularization."[4] All of these writers would have us believe that secularism is the antithesis of Christendom, that modern secularism is a social dominant that has marginalized Christianity.

In *On Diaspora: Christianity, Religion, and Secularity*, Daniel Colucciello Barber explains the interrelationship of Christianity and secularism, how the one learns from the other. What secularism learns from Christianity is supersessionism—that the Christian faith universalizes the particularity of God's call to Abraham and his descendents by rendering unnecessary the rituals of Jewish belonging, rituals that have everything to do with the flesh, with bodies, with materiality. This is the logic of a Pauline trajectory operative throughout the history of Christianity, Barber argues. "Israel according to the flesh gives way to—is preserved by being subordinated to—Israel according to the spirit, in other words the new Christian people" (84). As the apostle Paul wrote, "For neither circumcision nor uncircumcision is anything; but a new creation is everything! . . . peace be upon them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God" (Gal. 6:15-16). The new Israel is not the old Israel, because the new people are not required to mark their flesh nor the flesh of their children. The new Israel is a universal peoplehood, reaching beyond the limits of ethno-religious identity, transcending the physical markers of belonging so as to include both Jews and Gentiles in a spiritual belonging, a corporate spiritual identity—beyond the physical, beyond the flesh, beyond the law, beyond rituals, beyond circumcision: Christianity as the fulfillment of Judaism, the preservation of the essence of true faith, while stripping away all the crass physicality of Judaism. The Jewish scholar Peter Ochs captures the inextricable relationship in Judaism between God and corporeal life: "Any God who won't tell you what to do with your pots and pans and genitals isn't worth worshiping."[5] In other words, there is no spiritual essence to Judaism that is separate from the bodily rituals of faith—no spiritual

3. "Our Purposeful Plan," http://www.mennoniteusa.org/about-us/our-purposeful-plan/ (retrieved Aug. 28, 2014).

4. Alan Kreider and Stuart Murray, "A Case for Post-Christendom," *The Mennonite*, May 2013.

5. Peter Ochs quoted in Stanley Hauerwas and William Willimon, *The Truth about God: The Ten Commandments in Christian Life* (Nashville,: Abingdon, 1999), 20.

kernel hidden inside the husk of religious practices. To throw away the husk is to throw away Judaism. To throw out Jewish religiosity is to throw away Jewish bodies.

In an unnerving piece of writing, Immanuel Kant outlined this supersessionistic tendency within Christianity, which he extolled as the hope for a religion of pure spirit, finally freed from ethnic particularity, freed from everything having to do with being a Jew: "The euthanasia of Judaism is pure moral religion, freed from all the ancient statutory teachings, some of which were bound to be retained in Christianity (as a messianic faith). But this…too must disappear in time, leading, at least in spirit, to what we call the conclusion of the great drama of religious change on earth (the restoration of all things), when there will be only one shepherd and one flock" (85). Kant, a harbinger of secularism, confessed the denouement of Christianity's supersessionism, a religious impulse that he imagined would birth a universal peoplehood, a globalized secular polity finally liberated from all the cultural and ethnic trappings of materialistic religions, a future with a singular politico-religious order without the divisiveness of coarse particularity, a dream of a future without Jewish distinctiveness—what became a nightmare of a Europe without Jews.

Modern secularism flows from historic European Christianity, argues Barber, a movement with deep roots in anti-Semitic supersessionism. "If Europe is to be secular," explains Barber, "this means that it must cease to be Semitic" (106), just as Kant fantasized. The modern era is regulated by an assemblage of forces Barber calls "Christian-secular racism" (108). Those of us who live within Western modernity are subjected, not to post-Christian secularism, but rather to "a secular transmutation of religion" (112). While Barber acknowledges that secularism has superseded Christianity, he explains how secularism's act of supersessionism was a movement of internalization, where secularism subsumed a thoroughly Christian logic, which had become inseparable from a racial logic—a European Hellenism liberated from Semitism. To use Hegel's terms, secularism sublated Christianity—an instance of the "Aufhebung" at work (109). As Barber summarizes Gil Anidjar's argument, "Secularism is the modality by which Christianity both erases and maintains itself as normative" (111).

Barber's criticism of supersessionism follows from his concern about transcendence, where transcendence becomes an attempt to diminish differences and antagonisms for the purposes of coercing the reconciliations of all things, of reducing differences for the sake of unity, for the sake of sameness. For Barber, the assemblage of "Christian-secular racism" functions as a trajectory of transcendence, a teleology that reaches beyond the irreducible variety and differentiation of the world. "In fact, the secular can be understood as remaining closer to Christian religion, in virtue of their common installation of a transcendent plane, than to any immanent affirmation of the world" (102).

Here Barber invites his readers to consider a life immersed in the world, in materiality, in the conflux of identities and traditions all around us and flowing through us—an invitation to immanence, to a life that refuses the illusions of escape offered in transcendence. Transcendence, according to Barber, wants to

eclipse the world, to leave it behind, in all its chaotic plurality. And supersessionism wants to surpass racial and religious difference, to render them obsolete. But a commitment to immanence draws us into the depth of the world around us, and to recognize our diasporic identities— that, as Gilles Deleuze put it, "One is always the index of a multiplicity"[6]; that we are always already composed of differences; that we are an amalgam of divergent traditions; that there are no originary essences that transcend our particularity; that from the beginning there has been a chaos of multiplicity, excesses of creative plurality, as Catherine Keller explains her book, *Face of the Deep*: At the beginning of creation, in Genesis, "the chaos is neither nothing nor evil," and "to create is not to master the formless but to solicit its virtual forms." After quoting this passage from Keller's book, Barber spells out his argument about a diasporic existence, a life of immanence: "It is precisely this [i.e., Keller's] approach that is implied in diaspora, which sees difference neither as something to be sublated in identity nor as something that remains the brute inverse of identity" (130-131).

Barber invites Christians to abandon the security of transcendence, to disavow fantasies of escape from this world and this flesh, as well as the flesh of others, of very different others, of strangers, and instead "to invent novel relations" across distinct identities and traditions (127). This involves a risk, a vulnerable exposure of our traditions, of what we've held as essential, because everything might change through our engagements with others, even our theologies. Once a transcendent vantage point is taken away, there is no longer an outside to appeal to as an ultimate security for our religious identities; no longer are there any theological essentials safely preserved above the fray, no religious identities beyond the back-and-forth of relationships across differences. Instead, we have "an immanent movement . . . that is bastard, impure, syncretic" (40); "there is no ontological place that can transcendently preserve this gospel outside of the context in which it is declared and performed" (36).

In other words, there is no such thing as the Christian gospel ("what is declared") available beyond contexualized embodiment of Christian life ("what is performed"). There is no essence to Christianity that transcends embodiment; there is no core message underneath the cultural clothing of Christianity, no kernel hidden within a husk. Instead, Barber argues, what we have is a "serially produced" gospel that "can never be traced back to its origin," but "can only be produced again and again" (34) — the gospel alive in people marked by race and gender and class and language, all inextricably bound together in a life, in a community of lives. There is no gospel without all that comes with being a body.

Chapel Hill Mennonite Fellowship, N.C. ISAAC S. VILLEGAS

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6. Gilles Delueze, *Pure Immanence: Essays on A Life* (New York, N.Y.: Zone Books, 2005), 30.

Cooperative Salvation: A Brethren View of Atonement. By Kate Eisenbise Crell. Eugene, Ore.: Wipf & Stock. 2014. Pp. 144. $19.

I once shared a conference program on Brethren and Mennonite theology with Dale Brown, perhaps the preeminent Brethren theologian of a generation ago. After hearing a debate among competing schools of thought about the proper approach to theology for Mennonites, Brown told me that the Brethren could not replicate that debate. Since their defining theological mantra was "no creed but the Bible," he said, the Brethren had no criteria for arguing about what might constitute a Brethren theology. Thus for his presentation on "Brethren theology," Brown spoke on "what I have learned from Karl Barth." In light of that precedent, by offering a Brethren view of atonement Kate Crell is indeed breaking new ground, which befits her position as an assistant professor of religion and chair of the department of religion and philosophy at Manchester University (North Manchester, Indiana). *Cooperative Salvation* is a stimulating work that Anabaptists interested in atonement conversations should read.

Crell's proposal of an atonement model for Brethren answers four questions: the nature of the problem; the role of Jesus; the role of God; and the effect of atonement. She defines the problem of sin as alienation from each other, from the environment, and from God. Human survival depends on attending to an individual's needs. However, when desires become all-consuming individuals become isolated and alienated, by individual actions as well as by the structures of the domination system. Balance is required. "Atonement is the process by which we achieve that balance so that we do right by ourselves, but also care for the other—whether that is other people, the environment, or God" (117). Jesus' role is to model this salvation. "Salvation, in this model, depends on Jesus' life and ministry. It has nothing to do with his death" (120).

God's role in salvation is persuasion. Crell rejects the idea of an omnipotent God who could intervene to stop suffering but does not. Instead, she accepts a view from process theology in which the outcome of history is unknown, God lacks the power to intervene in history, and God's power is that of persuasion. People desire an omnipotent God who controls, Crell believes, as compensation for their own weakness. Crell also rejects all Christus Victor images and any image of the atonement that depends on resurrection. Victory through resurrection requires the death of Jesus, she believes, and the result is a God that is a "horrible monster" who could have stopped Jesus' suffering but does not. Even when resurrection is delayed to the eschaton, it still depends on God's authoritarian power. Crell declares that "a God who wishes to stop the world's suffering but cannot" is more reassuring and worthy of worship than "a God who can stop that suffering but . . . chooses not to do so" (125). As a part of this model of salvation, Jesus need not be the only model for this salvation. Others might be the Buddhist call "to live in the Middle Way" or a call to "participation in the love of Krishna" (136-137).

This view of the problem, of the roles of Jesus and of God, produces what Crell calls "cooperative salvation." This model of salvation "contains no heavenly, after death reward for individual souls" (128). It defines salvation in

terms of relationships with "God, humanity, and all of creation in this life" (128). Thus one cannot claim to be saved or in right relationship with God when people are starving and the earth is being polluted. Salvation occurs when all are saved or in right relationship together. Crell's intent with such a statement is to emphasize that an individual is not saved alone. Personal salvation necessarily involves "physical conditions on and of this Earth" (128). Salvation concerns only this life. When salvation is linked to a heavenly reward, Crell believes, material bodies are devalued for the spiritual.

Cooperative salvation retains four emphases learned from Anabaptism and Pietism: it takes seriously the life and ministry of Jesus; it values community; it is concerned with the here and now; and it shares early Anabaptist optimism that human beings are capable of participating in their salvation.

Four chapters lead up to Crell's sketch of cooperative salvation. The first chapter describes the emergence of the Brethren from the two streams of Anabaptism and Pietism, and the emphases from the history that may find a place in a Brethren view of atonement and salvation. The second surveys the inherited models of atonement. The third summarizes "contemporary models of atonement" from important twentieth-century writers, and the fourth performs the same task for contemporary Anabaptist theologians.

As I read the book, I was eager to reach the fifth chapter to learn Crell's view and to see how she might use the historical material. Readers with some knowledge of the atonement discussion might skip from the first chapter to the fifth, and then return to the other chapters to get a sense of her critiques. Since her view of atonement deals with neither Jesus' death nor his resurrection, only when reading her final chapter does one learn that Crell rejects virtually all the images surveyed. (Spoiler alert: Crell treats my book on atonement as an important Anabaptist contribution, but rejects my approach.)

I fully agree with Crell's assumption that all theology comes from a context, which makes it as legitimate to articulate theology for Brethren as for any other identifiable group. I welcome the four emphases from Anabaptism and Pietism that she incorporates into her model of cooperative salvation. And I support her description of salvation that engages our responsibility and focuses on relationships in this world among people, God, and the environment.

With these agreements in mind, there are several important points that Crell and I could very profitably discuss. For example, I agree with Crell that a God who coerces and uses violence is a God described in terms of humankind writ large. However, when I have defined the omnipotence of God not as the capacity to overcome evil with ultimate, coercive violence, but as God's capacity to give life and to restore life where it has ceased to exist, is my view of God necessarily authoritarian? Does the idea of a future salvation breaking into the world now and becoming visible when people live it really devalue the material at the expense of the spiritual? Or is the image of God authoritarian when evil creates its own hell and resistance to God is not crushed violently but evil simply crumbles in light of the full revelation of the Word?

Many such questions arise in reading *Cooperative Salvation*. Anyone interested in theology for the peace church should engage them. The book would be more useful with an index.

Bluffton University J. DENNY WEAVER

Renegade Amish: Beard Cutting, Hate Crimes, and the Trial of the Bergholz Barbers. By Donald B. Kraybill. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press. 2014. Pp. 208. $24.95.

"Did you hear the one about the Amish boys, armed with beard-cutting shearers and not afraid to use them?" This could be an opening line of a joke or the beginning of a harrowing tale of terror and violence. Or maybe both.

The book's cover—three Amish hats and a pair of scissors hanging on a plain wall—as well as the protagonists' moniker ("the Bergholz Barbers") suggests we're in for a wacky comedy. But allegations of hate crimes and the author's somber dedication to traumatized women and children point to something quite different.

In the end, the gravity of what happened in eastern Ohio in 2011 remains open for debate, but you'll want to hear the tale nonetheless. Donald Kraybill utilizes a scholar's keen analysis and a storyteller's charm to tell the true story of an Amish splinter group and their most unorthodox behavior. It's a bewildering man-bites-dog story; or in this case, pacifists-force-unwanted-haircuts story that keeps one turning pages to learn what happens next.

Renegade Amish is in large part a story about Bishop Samuel Mullet, a leader and messianic figure to his followers. Mullet was a head-strong, ultra-conservative Amish man with a mission to stem the modernizing drift he saw in the Amish community. Unsatisfied with the level of vigilance even in very traditional communities, he and his wife, Martha, founded a new settlement in the isolated hills near Bergholz, Ohio. "We wanted to step back in time a little and live more like our grandparents . . . no bathrooms, no modern or power tools, . . . no box-shaped or fancy caps [for women] which is way out of hand in most settlements," (26) explained Martha.

They attracted sympathetic families and appeared to be thriving in the early 2000s. But Mullet's autocratic bent led him to lash out fiercely at those who challenged his authority. He excommunicated rivals and dissenters, which for the strict conservatives attracted to the Bergholz settlement was a most distressing punishment. A ban of this sort kept them from joining another Amish congregation unless they returned to Mullet and confessed their sins. Fearful families started sneaking away at night, and a once flourishing community began to crumble. In "2006, at least nine families, more than a third of the Bergholz community, fled into exile, marked with a stigma of excommunication" (32).

The setbacks for Mullet only got worse. First, in an unprecedented move, 300 Amish elders representing settlements across several states, undercut his authority by ruling that those excommunicated by Mullet need not confess to him before joining another Amish congregation. Then an Ohio court ruled in

favor of a former member who had fled and was suing for custody of his two young daughters still at Bergholz. Mullet's humiliating comeuppance came from both insiders—Amish leaders who stripped him of his power—and outsiders—the secular legal system. The devastated community shrank to about one hundred people, mostly members of the extended Mullet family. And that's when things started getting really weird.

Sam Mullet began to speak of himself as God's prophet who, like Noah, was being ridiculed for proclaiming God's truth in dire and sinful times. He was sure his hypocritical detractors were going to drown in hell unless they repented and returned to the old traditions. To get the Bergholz community right with God, a host of severe rituals of remorse and depravation were instituted. For example, to help pry the devil out of their lives, men and women spent days or weeks in "Amish jails" (chicken houses and dog kennels) to reflect on their sins. Also, a paddle with one-inch holes and affixed to an ax handle was fashioned for community members to spank the devil out of each other. This wasn't simply used on disobedient children, but included brothers paddling brothers, and daughters paddling mothers: "three of Martha's daughters spanked her so hard that she had difficulty walking" (71). And most disturbing, Mullet took it upon himself to provide "marriage counseling" to women, which included having them sit on his lap and kiss him as well as spend the night in his room when their husbands were in "jail."

Another unique ritual of remorse initiated in 2009 was members cutting their own beards and hair. This actually has some Old Testament precedence as an act of grief for one's sins and a rite of purification. But it did not remain a voluntary ritual within the Bergholz borders. In 2011, Bergholz members ambushed unsuspecting Amish outside their community, forcibly cutting the beards of men and, in one case, the hair of a woman. Kraybill helpfully explains the significance Amish put on men's beards and women's hair to convey how upsetting and shameful it is to suffer such a violation.

The "Bergholz Barbers" justified their violent attacks as acts of compassion; "warnings of the devastation to come from God's hand if the Amish hypocrites did not repent and turn around" (80). But the larger context makes clear that these were rage-filled acts of revenge as well.

It's the beard-cutting raids that got the attention of federal prosecutors. After an investigation, sixteen members of the Bergholz settlement were indicted for violating the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act, a charge that not only brought the possibility of lengthier prison sentences, but also deepened the story's intrigue. Never before had anyone been convicted of a religion-driven hate crime under the act, which became federal law in 2009. To win, prosecutors needed to prove the suspects willfully caused bodily injury to another because of the victim's religion.

In telling this part of the tale, Kraybill switches to a first-person narrative because he made an appearance as an expert witness for the prosecution. The storytelling gets a little self-serving at this point; for example, Kraybill writes: "[The defense lawyer] noted that the government's 'own expert, Dr. Kraybill, the most preeminent Amish scholar in the country. . .'" (116). Also, Kraybill's

tendency to repeat facts mentioned a few pages earlier gets more pronounced. Yet the courtroom drama remains captivating.

The last chapter of the book is the least satisfying. It's here that Kraybill seeks to address larger questions, such as: Was the Bergholz settlement really Amish? Were they a cult? How does Amish forgiveness relate to events here? None of these questions are addressed with enough depth.

The book ends with an overly optimistic conclusion. After all sixteen defendants are found guilty and sentenced to prison, Kraybill proclaims: "The big beneficiaries in this story are the adherents of any religious faith. They can now be assured that . . . the government will prosecute those who violate anyone's right of free religious expression" (152). Yet the book was published before the U.S. Court of Appeals had ruled, and it overturned all the hate crime convictions due to the trial court's misinterpretation of the law. The appellate court's correction will make it harder for prosecutors to get convictions under the Hate Crimes Prevention Act, and therefore less likely to pursue this kind of indictment in the future.

Still, *Renegade Amish* captures a fascinating chapter of legal history and Amish history. Sixteen members of a rogue and arguably cultish Amish group become the first persons convicted of a religious hate crime under the 2009 federal law. That is a tale begging to be told, and Kraybill proves worthy of the task.

Goshen, Ind. KARL S. SHELLY

If Not Empire, What? A Survey of the Bible. By Berry Friesen and John K. Stoner. Lancaster, Pa.: Berry Friesen and John K. Stoner in cooperation with CreateSpace LLC. 2014. Pp. 348. $17.

Does the Bible support or critique the concept of empire?[7] Berry Friesen and John K. Stoner's biblical survey helps untangle this question and provides a biblical alternative to empire. The authors show that although the Bible holds both pro- and anti-empire messages, its overall message is one that critiques empire and lays out the foundation for a new kind of society. This message is pertinent because North American Christians tend to privilege the pro-empire texts since those texts justify their complicity with empire. Tackling every book of the Bible, the authors address such topics as power, justice, and salvation. They illustrate how YHWH worked to create an alternative, nonviolent culture that sought justice and the kingdom of God, a culture that continues today.

The critique of empire shows up everywhere in the Bible. In Genesis the patriarchs share Canaan with their neighbors. In Exodus YHWH works in history, saving a mixed ethnic group of slaves from the oppression of Pharaoh. The monarchy is decried in many of the prophetic oracles, and the theocratic, jubilee vision of the wilderness even shows up in spots throughout the otherwise pro-monarchy books of 1-2 Samuel, 1-2 Kings, and 1-2 Chronicles. The exile to

7. Empire is "a system of coordinated control that enriches itself through overwhelming socio-economic and military power at the global level" (2).

Babylon raises the question again, when the Israelite empire itself collapses, along with the unconditional Davidic covenant. The crisis turns out to be a gift, a chance to make a radical break from the worship of empire, but the exiles receive the gift only in part. Ezra trades the security of the monarchy for the security of ritual and ethnic purity, and empire simply changes its outward form.

Enter Jesus, born into the violent reality of the Roman Empire. Through his teachings, life, miracles, and crucifixion, he demonstrates another way to live—a way of nonviolent resistance, a sharp critique of unjust religious systems, a radical inclusion of Gentiles and "sinners," and a refusal to use the tools of empire. This refusal is shown most clearly in the wilderness temptations narrative, which the authors unfortunately gloss over. The critique continues with the early church's story, where Peter and John tell their captors, "We must obey God rather than human authority" (Acts 5:29). The Jerusalem Council's decision to fully include Gentile believers without circumcision is another bold critique of empire-fed exclusivity. The few restrictions given the Gentile believers all function as ways to discourage participation in imperial festivals.

Finally, both Paul and Revelation round out the resounding critique of empire. Paul gets into trouble with the governing authorities everywhere he goes, which is normative for the Jesus follower (266). His understanding of the "New Creation" (2 Cor. 5:17) is not about individuals becoming new spiritually through a relationship with Jesus but the miraculous new reality of Jews and Gentiles being one egalitarian body, worshipping together. The crucified Messiah, foolishness to the world, is actually a profound critique of the Roman Empire and all human pretenses at wisdom. Revelation is an apocalyptic vision that seeks to encourage Christians suffering under the Beast, none other than the Roman Empire. The authors hesitate over what appears to be YHWH's fairly direct destruction of evildoers in Revelation, but the text here resembles much of the rest of the biblical narrative, where evil self-destructs. The Beast devours the harlot, both symbolizing evil in Revelation 17:15-18. So too the empire.

Yet the biblical narrative also contains elements that support empire, or at least portray it in a positive light. Stoner and Friesen set the contrasts up nicely, reminding us of the importance of the historical context of the writers. So according to Genesis, YHWH's people were to share the land with their Canaanite neighbors, but by the time of Joshua, those same neighbors were to be "utterly destroyed." Abram's call to bless all the families on earth contrasts with Ezra's religious purge of all non-Jewish spouses on his return from Babylon. The Persian king Cyrus is seen as a "messiah," in sharp contrast to Exodus' view of Pharaoh. David and Solomon glory in their military victories, while Jesus shows YHWH's glory in his nonviolent march to the cross. Paul tells the Philippians that their citizenship is in heaven and the author of I Timothy exhorts the believers to pray for the king, and uses the teachings of Jesus as a reason to acquiesce to an unjust status quo (315).

Since the Bible speaks with different voices concerning empire, we must choose which voices have more authority over how we understand our own discipleship. Friesen and Stoner clearly call us to favor the biblical texts that critique the empire, following the teachings and example of Jesus. This

hermeneutical practice is not as simple as choosing the Second Testament over the First, as many Anabaptists have been taught to do. Some parts of the Second Testament, the Pastoral Epistles in particular, would guide us to go-along-to-get-along (317). But with every text, we ask questions about the perspective of the writers, how power is defined, and who benefits—questions we must ask today when we hear differing interpretations on current events.

Friesen and Stoner identify two primary audiences for their book: millennials and Christians who struggle to make sense of the Bible's moral offenses and intellectual contradictions. Members of the millennial generation, in particular, have often chosen to not assume "biblical faith nor attempted to persuade readers to embrace such a faith" (9). I appreciate the intentional way the authors are seeking to reach these audiences. Yet I also grieve the diminishment of all things miraculous or divine in *If Not Empire, What?* because I believe it is that aspect of biblical faith that gives us the strength, wisdom, and courage to live into this alternative, nonviolent community. How can we find the love and energy needed not only to fight the empire but to help YHWH redeem it?

There is a third audience I would love to see reading this book: U.S. evangelicals. But the book's suspicion toward Jesus' divinity, miracles, and the resurrection and a portrayal of salvation as primarily fighting corporate oppression will very likely push evangelicals to stop reading before they get to the compelling argument for a biblical alternative to empire. Perhaps the authors fear that if Jesus followers put too much emphasis on things like miracles or the second coming, then we will sit on our hands, ignore injustice, accept an individual and spiritualized salvation, and fashion Jesus into a convenient version of ourselves.

At times it seems as if the authors fear that the very indulgence of the supernatural will deflate the critique of empire. I share that fear, to some degree. But we can also become off-balance in the opposite direction, trying to fight justice and love our enemies simply on our own strength and grim determination. Empire can't be defeated just by a good example, even one as good as Jesus'. Christians don't have to agree completely on which miracles were historical or how exactly Jesus is divine to agree on our calling to resist empire, and to recognize that such resistance is an impossible task without supernatural help from YHWH.

If Not Empire, What? is a valuable addition to biblical scholarship and the church, giving us not only a fresh survey of the canon, but also a solution for the apparent disunity of the biblical narrative concerning the role of empire. It provides a standard for discerning which texts should be given more authority for our ethics, the standard of Exodus, the standard of Jesus.

Hesston College MICHELE HERSHBERGER

John Howard Yoder: Radical Theologian. J. Denny Weaver, ed. Eugene, Ore.: Cascade Books. 2014. Pp. 419. $48.

In recent decades J. Denny Weaver has established himself as one of the most influential living Mennonite theologians through his development of "nonviolent theology." Now in active retirement, Weaver has enlisted five of his friends and colleagues to help pay homage to his single greatest theological influence. *John Howard Yoder: Radical Theologian* is not a *Gedenkschrift* for Yoder, however; its purpose is to offer a sustained and unified argument for Weaver's "school of Yoderian thought" (23), which he contrasts with three other schools: the orthodox Yoder (Stanley Hauerwas, Mark Thiessen Nation, Craig Carter, Branson Parler), heterodox Yoder (A. James Reimer, Paul Martens), and new Yoder (Peter Dula, Chris Huebner).

Weaver lays out the main lines of his argument in the introduction and opening chapter, which constitute part one of the book. According to Weaver, previous studies of Yoder's theology have paid insufficient attention to Yoder's posthumously published lectures on Christology, *Preface to Theology*. Those lectures, as well as Yoder's essay "But We Do See Jesus," offer Weaver the interpretive key to Yoder's entire corpus. For Weaver, Yoder is a "radical" theologian in the sense that he derives his theology and ethics from the "root" of Christianity: the New Testament narrative of the life of Jesus of Nazareth (9). From this starting point, Yoder relativizes all later developments in Christian theology, including the major ecumenical creeds. He does not declare the creeds wrong (as a heretical theologian would), but neither is he beholden to the language of the creeds for his own theology (as an orthodox theologian would be). Instead he historicizes, contextualizes, and thereby relativizes creedal Christology and Trinitarianism as one possible way of developing theology faithful to the New Testament, which at the same time "open[s] the door to bypassing the classic language" (79).

In part two of the book, Weaver invites colleagues to discuss various sources of Yoder's theology. Particularly helpful is Gerald Mast's chapter, "Deconstructing Karl Barth," which ably demonstrates why, despite being a student of Barth, Yoder was never simply a "Barthian." Rather, as he did with other sources, Yoder "exhibited hospitality to a trajectory in Barth's argumentation that exceeded Barth's own intention and purpose" (168).

Part three demonstrates how Yoder's theological methodology—as understood by Weaver—can be extended into a number of contemporary conversations in theology and ethics, including intrareligious dialogue with black and evangelical theologians; interreligious dialogue with Jews, Muslims, and Hindus; and public dialogue with secular ethicists and activists. According to Weaver and his co-authors, traditional theology can be a conversation stopper due to its insistence on doctrine. In contrast, beginning theology with the story of Jesus results in "an intrinsically practical theology, a lived theology or a theology for living" (317), which allows for a "less defensive approach" to conversations with those from other traditions (286).

John Howard Yoder: Radical Theologian clarifies how Weaver has used Yoder for his own project, which until now has remained mostly implicit in his other

writings. His interpretation of Yoder—as a theologian and ethicist who emphasizes the New Testament narrative of Jesus and relativizes later theological developments—is defensible as far as it goes. Often, however, Weaver's reading raises more questions than it answers.

Weaver says that by his reading Yoder is neither orthodox nor heterodox (371). Yet, typically these are considered mutually exclusive categories. Heterodox theologians are precisely those who "relativize" orthodoxy (as opposed to explicitly rejecting it as heretical theologians would) and thus "open the door" for nonorthodox readings of Scripture. It seems that Weaver acknowledges as much but simply does not like the negative connotation of the word heterodoxy. Weaver himself is ambivalent on whether creedal orthodoxy was appropriate even in its own day. At times he says that it was "a correct answer within its context" (286), but yet he repeatedly cites Philip Jenkins's *Jesus Wars* to note that the "context" of orthodoxy's development was one of violence and power machinations.

Regardless of this ambivalence, Weaver, following Yoder, is clear that modern Christians should read the New Testament not in ontological terms but in ethical and historical ones (275), despite the fact that some of the former language—language of preexistence, for example—is itself included in the New Testament narrative (Jn. 1:1-18; Jn. 17:5). In making the uncontroversial observation that Yoder based his theology on the New Testament narrative, Weaver fails to ask the most important questions: How did Yoder read the New Testament? What parts did he emphasize or elide? Why? How is his hermeneutical approach consistent or inconsistent with other approaches (e.g., those that gave rise to creedal orthodoxy)? These are the kinds of questions that animate debates among the various "schools" of Yoder interpretation, and Weaver has largely sidestepped them.

One of the book's major criticisms of traditional orthodox theology is that it separates theology from ethics and thus allows for orthodox theologians to practice or support abhorrent behaviors, as when two of the three Cappadocian fathers accepted slavery (326). In contrast, Weaver recommends Yoder's theology as "a lived theology or a theology for the living" in which "[t]heology and ethics are inseparable, they are two sides of the same proverbial coin, a lived and a written expression of the commitment to Jesus Christ as Lord" (329). However, as Lisa Schirch's important afterword highlights, Yoder himself committed "acts of domination that tore at the dignity of the brilliant and potentially powerful women Yoder deliberately chose to violate" (380). Given Weaver's commitment to "lived theology," it would seem that he would be suspicious of Yoder's theology in light of Yoder's actions, just as he is suspicious of the theology of the Cappadocians for their acceptance of slavery. Instead, the final two chapters of the book recommend Yoder's theology by distancing it from his actions. Gerald Mast considers how Yoder's actions might "provide an opportunity to correct and qualify and strengthen" his radical Anabaptist vision (359), but then distances Yoder's life from his thought by considering Yoder a "sinful human vessel" of a radical vision (370).

Ted Grimsrud goes further. For him, "Yoder's life story . . . is not important because of his sexual violence. It is important most of all because of his intellectual endeavors and his influence on Christian theology and ethics" (344). He thus admits that he now "focus[es] mainly on Yoder's ideas" (344) and believes that "as time passes it becomes less and less important where the ideas came from (and what kinds of terrible things the originator of the ideas might have done) and more and more important how the ideas stimulate further ideas and—more importantly—peaceable living" (345).

Yet, if, as Weaver argues, theology and ethics are inseparable—simply "two sides of the same proverbial coin"—then we cannot receive Yoder's "ideas" free from the "terrible things" he did. Alternatively, if we are free to "focus mainly on Yoder's ideas" apart from his actions, then we may need to reconsider Weaver's dismissal of orthodox theology in light of the actions of its originators, noting that they, too, were "sinful human vessels" of the Gospel.

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