Book Reviews

Abe Dueck. *Moving Beyond Secession: Defining Russian Mennonite Brethren Mission and Identity, 1872-1922*. Winnipeg: Kindred Productions, 1997.

I would like to have seen this book a decade ago. It sheds much light on the formative years of the Mennonite Brethren Church. What was its dynamic, identity, promise? What did it have to offer? Was there a convincing rationale for it? Why did the new church of 1860 have to carry the incubus of a Baptist image for so long? Why did it raise so much hostility from the Orthodox Church? These and related questions are answered in this book.

In his introduction the author, the director of the Centre for Mennonite Brethren Studies in Winnipeg, prepares the reader for the three main sections of this volume of documents. First there are maps, tables, and lists illustrating the Russian Mennonite Brethren (MB) conference structure. It encompassed all the churches to the west, north, and north-east into Siberia, the east, and the south into the Crimea. The use of *Reiseprediger* (itinerants) to keep the unity of faith was a practice carried over into North America. Second, there are minutes of nine MB conventions held between 1882 and 1918, some never before published. They clearly reveal what Mennonite Brethren brought with them to this continent: a sense of mission in evangelism at home and abroad. The interesting Russian MB association with the American Baptist Missionary Union, working in India, is clearly demonstrated in these documents. The MB conviction to convert Russians that landed them in trouble with the Orthodox and cast fear among the Mennonite Church during the Great War years.

Third, and most fascinating, a series of ten documents focuses on the crucial matter of identity as Mennonites and bring forward two combatants. No one was more pained by the discussions of 1910-1916 than Peter M. Friesen, who had just completed his great work *Alt-Evangelische Mennonitische Bruderschaft in Russland* (1911). His "*Allianz*" position and his general irenicism seemed shattered. The chief protagonist on the MB side was Heinrich J. Braun. The documents make him the most prominent leader in 1910-1918. The strings of all MB activity seemed to end on his desk at

Raduga Press, Halbstadt, the publisher of Friesen's work. In 1910 Braun sharpened the focus in his "Mennonites or Baptists?" by restating the MB position on immersion, communion restrictions, and intermarriage vis-à-vis the Mennonite Church (117).

David Epp of Chortitza replied for the latter in the *Friedensstimme* of 1910. He felt that his church was being made into the "antithesis" of the MB Church. "How is this possible?" he asked (123). Whereas they had been "one family" they were still strangers to each other fifty years later and "the cause must be seen on both sides." The hurdles placed before his church were great. Where was the golden rule when Braun charged the Mennonites for continuing to think of MB as Baptists, yet repeated even if in a historical fashion, the MB's 1860 description of the general church as "decadent"?

In spite of this tension-filled debate, an earnest effort was made in 1914 to bring to the Tsarist religious authorities a common Mennonite confession which demonstrated that they together were a church and not a mere sect. However, another preacher from Chortitza, Peter Penner (no relation to the reviewer), apparently unauthorized, stated his pessimism at coming to the government with a united confession. He saw the MB continuing to endanger their Privilegium by preaching among Russians (147). This led to Friesen's review of the whole issue in "Confession or Sect?", including Braun's refutation of Penner's charges. Friesen was most upset that after fifty years he found so much intolerance on both sides. On the issue of rebaptism for admission to the MB Church, he believed that "we will proceed like Abraham and Lot, Paul and Barnabas."

This excellent volume will clarify for both Mennonite Brethren and Conference of Mennonites in Canada readers why the differences between the two groups, so deep-seated and carried by the Russlaender to North America, took until the 1970s to find a general reconciliation.

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Perry Bush. *Two Kingdoms, Two Loyalties: Mennonite Pacifism in Modern America*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998;
Glen Stassen, ed. *Just Peacemaking: Ten Practices for Abolishing War*. Cleveland: The Pilgrim Press, 1998.

These two texts complement each other: while Perry Bush describes the difficult articulation of an ethno-religious group ethic, identity, and political acumen, the edited volume by Glen Stassen generalizes this learning process. Bush's social history, *Two Kingdoms, Two Loyalties: Mennonite Pacifism in Modern America*, thereby saves Stassen's *Just Peacemaking: Ten Practices for Abolishing War* from presuming too much and explaining too little. Together, they explore whether and how peace and justice might combine to form an alternative ethic to the realism, neoliberalism, and international institutionalism of the post-Cold War era. If we accept that a new paradigm is a sound insight emerging from the paradoxical relations of two very different things – say, peacemaking and justice, or good Christian discipleship and loyal state citizenship – then these books point to the grace (and genius) that might undergird church-societal-state political will. In Stassen's volume, ten essays posit the birth of a new "just peacemaking" ethic rooted in love and community. The introductory and concluding chapters claim to "remedy" the conceptual tension of justice and peacemaking by dwelling not on *positions* but on *practices* that incrementally create normative political behavior. Drawing on the experience of twenty-three Christian ethicists, international relations scholars, and moral theologians, the text describes peacemaking initiatives rooted in Christian discipleship (Part One), argues that God's reign requires critical engagement of peace and justice in a broken global political system (Part Two), and speaks of the church strengthening cooperative forces as a hopeful sign of God's incarnate love and sovereignty (Part Three).

Part One affirms the risky steps that ordinary citizens, citizen-diplomats, and people of faith take in making peace. Chapter 1 argues for nonviolent direct action, but knowledge as to how and when citizens (or states) may stage effectively such actions is presumed, not examined. In chapter 2, peacemakers pursue independent initiatives to increase international transparency and reduce the threat of force, yet there is no bridge for us to grasp how citizens, diplomats, or inter-state entities play such roles. Chapter 3 posits cooperative conflict

resolution principles that combine spiritual commitment, political and cultural anthropology, and self-disclosure of one's personal and corporate role in injustice. Here the "ordinary" citizen-diplomat-spiritual person who models just peacemaking is former President Jimmy Carter during the Camp David Accords. Yet in chapter 4, this same man is the enfeebled goat who rejects cooperative conflict resolution and responsive honesty in the Iranian Hostage Crisis. Stassen could delve into this perfectly ambiguous (and revealing) case study. We might then sort out who is involved in what decisions at which levels of local to global peace and justice praxis. The text could clarify when and why just peacemaking is likely to be person-to-person, person-to-society, society vis-à-vis state, global civil society before international organizations, and states (large and small) in the world political and economic system. Complicated? Yes. But dissecting layers of legitimate political interaction is a firmer foundation than a presumption that peacemaking efforts will accrue in a statist system under realist, neoliberal, and internationalist paradigms.

Nonetheless, Parts Two and Three lead one further down the latter path. How might we begin to realize solidarity in "love and community" with less privileged actors or less developed states? The text largely ignores non-combat, non-weaponry means of domination, such as under-regulated neoliberal economic norms that disadvantage many states and people otherwise hoping for peace and secure conditions. Unsurprisingly chapters 5, 7 and 9 rehearse familiar self-interested arguments of states and international organizations in endorsing democratic peace theory and an enlarged free market system. Granted, Stassen does list obstacles to sustainable and holistic development for the underside of globalism, and pleads for enlightened and enhanced United Nations monitoring of speculation-driven commerce and investment. But his concluding chapter echoes the refrain that the accumulation of peacemaking *practices* is evidence that just (and economic) war thinking is circumscribed. The ambiguity of just peacemaking *positions* is understudied. If "just peacemaking theory must empower ordinary people" (181), then what levels of analysis, concepts, or empirical weight will help citizens or leaders grasp this new ethic of love and community? *Peacemaking* as presented here is not a compelling alternative that proclaims mercy, sacrificial faith, or solidarity among those most oppressed by injustice.

Perry Bush's social history shows the anguish, possibility, and ambivalence of melding justice and peacemaking. When examining the implications of personal and broader levels of integration for people of a peacemaking theology and community, Stassen's "ten practices" are better understood in this Mennonite case to mean "thousands of steps" – rearticulated identities, socialization and differentiation, a new theological hermeneutic, and a profoundly different relationship vis-à-vis the state and world. Initial chapters show how General Conference and Mennonite Church denominations in the mid-twentieth Century sought to acculturate as good citizens within American society. To do so, they proved they were just and equal to carrying civic responsibilities. There was also a demographic shift from rural to urban living. But the recurrent issue of enlistment in a "warfare state" heightened the trauma of their post-agrarian identity. They wrestled with loyalty to the state, obedience to God and one another, and legitimacy before society. The bargain with the state evolves from WW II-era Civilian Public Service, an exclusivist witness that distanced Mennonites from society-at-large, to I-W alternative service, designed to be a positive, engaging witness that sought parity with soldiers' benefits and further integration into American life. The latter form of alternative service emerges as a newly scripted norm, one that begins to identify Mennonite faith with service and sacrifice near and far.

This transformation of normative discipleship sets the stage for a Mennonite identity beyond a "good citizen-good pacifist Christian" pact with the state. The final third of Bush's text addresses the years leading up to and during the US-Vietnamese War. A vocal and public *minority* of this community re-examined their history and theology, and argued in the churches and before society and the state that I-W service did not speak truth about just war and genuine peacemaking. As the war escalated, these Mennonites saw themselves as pacifists in solidarity with suffering people. Nonviolence meant absolute non-participation in war and radical activism against a system that harmed others. Nonresistance meant political outspokenness and criticism of quiet pietism. As this minority protested more and more justice and peace issues, it risked the whole community's social fit in a "welfare state." Even though these youth did not speak for many in the Mennonite community, their domestic and global voluntary service began to reshape Mennonite theology and Christian ethics in the context of many forms of domination and conflict. In discerning a

new identity, this community relearned its theology and reinterpreted its history and socio-political relevance. There was a continuous production and construction of what a pacifist Christian response might mean. Bush engages the personal and communal costs of challenging statist, social, economic, and international norms.

The drawback of Bush's social history is that it devotes only a few pages to the *majority* of Mennonite young men who enlisted in WW II. The author gives but a few more pages to the significant number who joined the US-Vietnam conflict, protested the vocal Mennonite anti-war stance, voiced no qualms with I-W alternative service, or left the Mennonite fold altogether. A deeper analysis of theological hermeneutics would inform our understanding of this evolving sense of discipleship. Bush skirts a fuller discussion of pro-state arguments in the Mennonite church. This critique underscores the complex options of just war, pacifism, or a third path of finding common ground in justice and peace. If a new ethic of "love and community" is being born, then critical case studies will be those citizens, leaders, states, or communities of faith caught in the ambivalence of opting or refusing this alternative path. Here we must welcome the ambiguity inherent in *positions* and *practices* combining theological conviction, political ethics, community experience, and empirical evidence. By struggling in the midst of community, one perhaps discerns segues from an individual level of involvement and analysis to compassionate and communal responses. With these challenges in mind, I recommend both texts together for classes in conflict transformation, peace history, and international relations.

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Ray S. Anderson. *The Soul of Ministry. Forming Leaders for God's People*. Louisville, KY: Westminster / John Knox Press, 1997.

This book does not focus primarily on the practical skills and strategies of ministers, but rather on foundational questions which shape ministering persons. In the author's view ministry is the calling of all Christians, something "in which every member of his (Christ's) body has a share." His understanding of ministry as the "office of ministry" is derived from this broad understanding of the "function of ministry" but does not seem to get adequate attention.

Anderson develops his understanding on a solid biblical foundation, offering helpful interpretations of the Bible as he does so. The ministry of the church must be seen first and foremost as God's ministry to the world through word and deed. "The ministry of God is to the world, for the sake of the world" (viii). On the basis of John 20:21 he concludes that "as Jesus was sent into the world, so too are Christians sent as a continuation of [his] ministry." The coming of Jesus clarifies God's ministry to the world and is thus the basis for all Christian ministry.

Three of the most valuable insights are found early in the book: ministry involves theological discernment, theological innovation, and theological praxis. By theological discernment Anderson means that we "must be open to the direction of the Holy Spirit in order to interpret any given situation in terms of the eschatological preference of God rather than merely conform to historical precedence and principle" (14). The idea of ongoing theological innovation is based on the examples of Jesus and Paul (sabbath and circumcision). "Conformity to the authority of God's Word may require nonconformity to a theological tradition as well as nonconformity to contemporary culture and ideology" (24). This is a challenge to some of our usual ways of dealing with contemporary issues.

Anticipating the question "where does this leave absolutes?" Anderson says that "what is absolute regarding the command of God is connected with the ministry of God" and, "there must be a theological antecedent for what becomes theological innovation" (19). The challenge he issues is for "those who minister not [to] be satisfied with conformity to what God has said, but [to] press onto participate in what God is doing" (16).

Discernment and innovation operate through theological praxis. "God's ministry comes alive in the praxis of Spirit. First, through Christ's ministry and then through those who are empowered by the Spirit of Christ" (26). Praxis means that the truths of God are discovered through the encounter with Christ in the world by means of ministry (28). Anderson uses the story of Peter and Cornelius as an example of praxis in the Spirit (Acts 10-11). Showing that "the law of Moses (scripture) clearly forbade what the Spirit was bidding Peter to do." Theological discernment ('I perceive that God is no respecter of persons') led to theological innovation (going to Cornelius' house, telling good news and baptizing Gentiles). Thus, "[p]raxis of the Spirit takes precedence over the practice of law" (30).

Anderson has much to offer as we think about the church as a caring and supportive community and about its role in the world. In fact, at some points the book seems to be more about an understanding of the church than about pastoral leaders and their functions. What is disappointing is the limited attention the author gives to the more narrowly understood "office of ministry." The subtitle "Forming Leaders for God's People" suggests that the work of those called to leadership roles in the church might receive considerable attention, but this does not happen.

While Anderson does consider the general concept of "servant leadership," he does not deal with some of the derived and subservient functions of ministers. There is no treatment of the rather important functions of preaching or of administration. Pastoral care is treated broadly, by implication, but not in terms of such specific needs as bereavement. It would have been helpful to see how *The Soul of Ministry* impacts pastoral practice in preaching, administration, and care giving. How do these leadership functions contribute to the ministry of all believers in the world?

In spite of a few shortcomings, this book is well worth studying by pastors, lay leaders, and students who are exploring the meaning of ministry. It is a biblically-based reminder of the foundation of all ministry in the church – God's concern for the well-being of all people in the world. The church is to continue ministering the way Jesus ministered.

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Bernie Neufeld, ed. *Music in Worship: A Mennonite Perspective*. Scottdale, PA and Waterloo, ON: Herald Press, 1998.

The book is a collection of fourteen essays on topics relating to worship and music. It is meant to be a resource for musicians and pastors as well as for seminary and university students in church music courses. (Curiously, there is no bibliography.) In this time of church music turmoil, with the 'old' and traditional pitted against the 'contemporary', these essays strive to paint a larger picture. This is a thought-provoking book, with a clear intent to foster and encourage an attitude towards music and worship that will result in spiritual growth within the church.

As so often happens, it turns out to be easier to discuss the theology and philosophy of music than the music itself. So it is not surprising that the emphasis here is on worship rather than on music. It is much easier to comment on texts (good, bad, indifferent, superficial, deep) than on musical notes. It is possible to propose a definition of worship, such as John Rempel's: "the creature's response of gratitude and surrender to the goodness of the Creator" (31), but who would attempt to define music? What makes a tune good or bad, trite or profound? The best essays in the book, such as John Rempel's and Dietrich Bartel's, are the more philosophical ones.

The authors agree in their promotion of simplicity and live music as opposed to recorded or amplified music. They emphasize virtues like honesty and integrity in worship, and avoid fruitless arguments over music styles. There is no support for taped accompaniments, electronic hymnbooks, McAnthems, or any kind of entertainment-music for pew potatoes. Yet there is openness to new developments such as non-Western music, and a positive recognition of today's revival of interest in hymn writing and singing (The Iona Community, Taize, and numerous poets and composers). Eleanor Kreider ("Worship: True to Jesus") explains that Mennonites attempt to base their worship on a New Testament model, in contrast to other denominations which take their cue from the Old Testament. The one approach is simple, the other may be extremely lavish. There is little in this essay about music *per se*, but Kreider lays a theological groundwork for the chapters that follow. She pleads for worship and music to express the "simplicity, the truth, and the power of the gospel" (29).

Bernie Neufeld ("Crossing the Border: Music as Traveler") points out that "it is not important to ask where or how we worship but who and why we worship" (52). Or as Christine Longhurst puts it (quoting Don McMinn), "God is not just seeking worship. He's seeking worshipers" (84). Simplicity carries over even to the planning of worship. George Wiebe ("Anticipating God-Presence") provides a fascinating insight into the life of a director of music. There is much thinking, planning, and praying, but not so much as to "domesticate the Spirit," as John Rempel would say (45). "Our concern with carefully, logically structured worship services, significant as they are, can never replace the prerequisite of crying for God's help and blessing for ourselves and for our task" (Wiebe, 127).

It is not surprising to see congregational song, or hymn singing, extolled as the chief musical activity in the Mennonite church. In the Protestant/ Mennonite tradition the congregation is the "basic actor" (43) and hymn singing is the fundamental, though not necessarily the only, musical activity. This theme is eloquently reinforced by Gary Harder ("Congregational Singing as a Pastor Sees It"), who refers to congregational singing as the center of a church's music ministry, "a barometer of the spiritual vitality of the church" (110). Similarly, Kenneth Nafziger ("And What Shall We do With the Choir?") states that "the most significant music of worship must be congregational song" (182). Bernie Neufeld expands on this concept by explaining that the "basic actor" in today's global church, that is, the congregation, is made up of people with increasingly diverse musical backgrounds. In order to recognize and utilize these various gifts, it is important for leaders to "create a balance of musical styles" (55). Leonard Enns ("The Composer as Preacher") draws fascinating parallels between preaching and composing, in showing how music, especially congregational song, can function as the sermon in a worship service. Text-only emphasizes the intellectual approach, whereas music "feeds and enriches the spiritual life" (242). He illustrates his thesis in non-technical terms by reference to two choral compositions by Arvo Pärt and William Matthias.

Marilyn Houser Hamm shares some of her enthusiasm in "Creative Hymn Singing." Her examples are all taken from *Hymnal: A Worship Book*, except for two Iona community songs published in 1995. J. Evan Kreider also highlights the congregation's role in worship. His essay ("Silencing the Voice") is an appeal for acoustically vibrant places in which people are drawn together rather than isolated. It is a sad comment on our churches today that this point

needs such stressing, yet most church buildings continue to be built not so much to help congregations worship as to feature the sounds produced from the "stage." Acoustically live spaces will result in more energetic and enthusiastic congregational participation.

Although hymn singing has been central to worship among Mennonites, it is somewhat odd that Anabaptists have produced almost no original hymnody of their own. The essay by hymn writer Jean Janzen ("The Hymn Text Writer Facing the Twenty-First Century") expresses a longing for more creativity: "Next to the Bible, they [hymns] are our best source for light and hope" (253). Flexibility, tolerance, and openness to present-day developments are themes in Mary Oyer's essay "Global Music for the Churches." In the demise of the organ's role in church music, she sees a reflection of an end to the complete hegemony of the Western world. But rather than merely bemoan this fact, she highlights the beauty of non-Western sacred music and makes a plea for taking it at least as seriously as traditional Western music. In this way a "healthy and invigorating cross-cultural interchange" can occur in Christian worship (81).

Another, perhaps more appropriate, title for this book would be *Music in Worship – in Search of a Mennonite Perspective*. A specifically Mennonite point of view is never clearly articulated. Just as there appears to be no such thing as Mennonite hymnody (Jean Janzen), neither is there such a thing as "Mennonite worship." The emphasis on congregational song is certainly not unique to Mennonites. Most if not all of the ideas in this book have been expressed by Christian musicians and theologians from other traditions and denominations (Marty, Routley, Westermeyer, Webber *et al*.). Mennonite features, such as the SATB a capella tradition, receive virtually no mention in the book. Perhaps it is in the very reluctance or inability to frame a uniquely Mennonite style of worship and music that a "Mennonite" perspective lies. The Mennonite church borrows from any and all traditions and cultures, to find and adopt what is good. Psalms are popular and form an integral part of all Mennonite hymnals, but so are all kinds of hymns and spiritual songs. At times, instruments and choirs play an important role in worship, but often they do not. Where this tradition is a genuine, loving, and caring 'welcoming of the stranger' and not merely a careless assimilation of other traditions and styles, an all-inclusive, dare we say "Mennonite," attitude emerges.

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Thomas R. Yoder Neufeld. *'Put on the Armour of God': The Divine Warrior from Isaiah to Ephesians.* Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series 140. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997.

Piqued by questions related to the theme of power and empowerment in Ephesians, and more particularly Eph. 6:10-20, Tom Yoder Neufeld in this stimulating, well-crafted, and concise monograph explores the biblical history of one aspect of the divine warrior myth – namely the arming and dressing of the warring deity. The study begins with Isa. 59:15-19, proceeds through Wisdom of Solomon 5:19-23 and 1 Thess. 5:1-11, and climaxes with Eph. 6:10-20. Essentially Yoder Neufeld's 1989 Harvard Divinity School doctoral dissertation, this work is rich in exegetical insight, sharp in theological acuity, and suggestive for ecclesial social performance.

The author argues that in the four texts, all of which presuppose a situation of social victimization, the motif of the divine warrior in armor is exploited "as a forceful expression of the power and inevitability of divine intervention both in judgment and salvation. . . . Divine intervention is interpreted as the presence and exercise of divine qualities, virtues, and actions in each of these texts" (154). Yet each text appropriates the motif in a distinctive way. In Isa. 59's social critique, addressed to a situation of social oppression, "a highly usable and reusable" motif is fashioned from the familiar myth – YHWH takes on armor (righteousness/justice as a breastplate, a helmet of salvation, garments of vengeance and fury) to reclaim the lost social virtues of justice and righteousness in the post-exilic Jewish community. In the Wisdom of Solomon, this motif is appropriated in the climax to the introductory segment, in which the divine warrior (with righteousness/justice as a breastplate, impartial judgment as a helmet, integrity as an invincible shield, and stern wrath for a sword) vindicates the suffering "righteous one" (modeled on the servant of Isa. 52-53).

The chapters on 1 Thess. 5 and on Eph. 6 unveil how the motif of the divine warrior in armor is transformed in early Christian ethical exhortation. Yoder Neufeld's passions come to full expression (also evident from the Conclusion) and he makes his most significant contributions here. He concludes: "In 1 Thessalonians 5 Paul takes the breathtaking step of placing the

confused and even fearful Thessalonians into God's armour, thereby implicating them in the invasion of the divine warrior. Moreover, the surprise element of that divine intrusion is heightened by the nature of that participation – the militant exercise of faith, love, and the hope of salvation" (154).

The following are key elements of his argument: (1) The rhetoric in 1 Thess. 5 has an explicitly (but not exclusively) socio-political horizon, evident especially in "a brief but cutting critique of Rome" (82), caricaturing the imperial slogan "peace and security" (1 Thess. 5:3). (2) In contrast to prophetic and apocalyptic traditions in which the divine warrior is given *sole* agency to judge and vindicate, rendering the community largely passive as it awaits divine intervention, Paul exhorts the community to become engaged in the struggle. Paul's purpose is not simply to assure believers of their protection, nor to exhort them to a defensive stance, but to prod them into militant action. (3) This task emerges out of the community's particular status and identity, taking up the very role of the divine warrior, by virtue of its baptismal status, as believers "don the Messiah and with him his identity and task" (85). 1 Thess. 5:8 is interpreted in light of Rom. 6:1-14 and 13:11-14: "the experience of baptism [is] the entry into the armour" (a significant novel argument, though submerged in a footnote on p. 90). In this sense, it is the community that inhabits the divine armor, taking on the role of God yet without actually replacing God; in this way the divine warrior in armor is "democratized." (4) Believers are exhorted to employ an ironic "strategy of surprise" – the warfare of love. Moreover, the absence of the "cloak of vengeance" (Isa. 59:17) suggests a restriction of the character of the divine armor and a recasting of the nature of divine warfare. In this sense, the divine warrior is "pacified" even as "God remains in the picture as warring judge who brings wrath" (89).

The final chapter provides one of the finest studies of Eph. 6:10-20 and a compelling treatment of the strategy of the entirety of Ephesians and its preoccupation with power and empowerment. Yoder Neufeld convincingly argues that the concern of the author of Ephesians (a pseudepigraphical document) is not the institutionalization or hierarchicalization of the church as commonly assumed but empowerment in its struggle. The author conflates for a circle of divided Paulinists the perspectives of heavenly status through completed salvation and the "unfinished task of cosmic struggle and victory" (97). Ephesians reappropriates the Pauline legacy of the divine warrior in

armor, maintaining an emphasis on the "democratization" of the warrior, based on the baptismal identity and status of the Christian community, (who "step into the role of the Divine Warrior by taking up his power" and so "inhabit the armour of God"). "In effect [the author] replaces Christ the warrior with the saints as corporate warrior," Yoder Neufeld says. In contrast to 1 Thessalonians, the battle is against the cosmic "peers of God, as it were – the devil and his principalities and powers" – "diverse manifestations of a seamless web of reality hostile to God." The socio-political dimension is muted, yet "it is in the realm of human interaction that the battle with the supra-human powers (also) takes place." The warfare of the community is no longer ironic but overtly aggressive and confrontative, even as peace, love, and reconciliation are crucially important in Ephesians. The announcement of "peace" (6:15) refers not to an ironic mode of warfare but "to the state which follows cessation of warfare once the powers have been vanquished" (138). Paul's earlier "pacification" of the warrior is given a new twist.

Yoder Neufeld's work is especially suggestive for the interpretation of other passages in Paul in which divine warrior/warfare imagery applied to the community is evident or close to the surface (e.g. Rom. 12:21; 1 Cor. 16:13; Phil. 1:27-2:18). I hesitate slightly with respect to the argument that the community in 1 Thess. 5 is pictured as taking on the "role" of the divine warrior. I prefer to suppose that for Paul the community participates in the warrior's judicial battle and dons the warrior's virtues. While Yoder Neufeld nuances his argument carefully, noting that in 1 Thessalonians the role of God is not actually "replaced," Paul clearly distinguishes the role of the community and the role of the divine warrior in the eschalogical battle, reserving special prerogatives of justice and vengeance for God (e.g., Rom. 12:19-21; 16:19-20; 1 Cor. 5:12-6:3; 1 Thess. 5:8-9). Thus I would prefer to understand the related roles of warrior and community in terms of synergism (e.g., Phil. 1:27-30; 2:12-13). Indeed, on this point of imaging the community as synergistically active in the cosmic battle (e.g., 1 Cor. 6:2-3), Paul stands in continuity with various apocalyptic writers (e.g., *Jub.* 23; *1 Enoch* 85-90, 93:1-10; 91:11-17; 1QM). What distinguishes him is not the notion of the community's active participation in the warrior's battle but his emphasis on the ironic character of the community's warfare of love in the human plane.

These are minor points, however. Yoder Neufeld's work invites further theological reflection and conversation. First, it invites conversation with another biblically-oriented perspective on divine warfare which highlights the notion that, while the divine warrior is active, the community is to be passive (e.g., M. Lind and others). Assuming the ongoing validity of "biblical realism," Yoder Neufeld's thesis moves away from passive non-resistance as a pacifist framework toward active participation in the struggle for peace and justice, in concert with a peace-making, justice-vindicating God. Indeed, it suggests that the normal place of the Christian community is not in a zone of comfort, stability, or isolation, but in the heart of the struggle. On the other hand, his thesis invites conversation with Mennonite pacifists less comfortable with the biblical imagery of a warring deity in ethical discourse (e.g., H. Huebner, R. Gingerich, and others). Now in broader circulation, this book should become a strategic component of any biblically-oriented peace theologian's arsenal.

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