I also note that neither Yoder nor Cartwright and Ochs interact with the internationally acknowledged Christian statement about the Church and Jews in the *Nostra Aetate* of Vatican II. As well, no mention is made of the great contributions of the statement's authors, Monsignor John M. Oesterreicher and Sister Rose Thering.

It is regrettable that we cannot know Yoder's response to the way his essays are arranged in the present dialogical format, and we may wonder what his rejoinder would be to Ochs and Cartwright.

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Loren L. Johns. *The Lamb Christology of the Apocalypse of John*. Mohr Siebeck, 2003.

This volume explores one aspect of the Apocalypse's rhetorical force, namely the integral link between its Lamb Christology and ethics. Loren Johns argues that by his faithful witness unto death, Jesus, the slaughtered lamb, conquered evil and thereby became a model for first-century believers' own nonviolent resistance to evil. Johns's reading of the text seeks both faithfulness to its historical context and concern for the effects of the reading on the community of faith. Both of these aims he accomplishes well.

Much of this book is a detailed examination of the semantic and religio-historical background of the image of Christ as lamb, in order to understand its associations for the original readers of the Apocalypse. A study of the semantic domain of "lamb" in biblical and extra-biblical writings results in the cautious conclusion that "lamb" in the Apocalypse has a non-sacrificial connotation and expresses vulnerability. To establish the cultural gestalt of ovine symbolism in the Apocalypse, Johns examines the role of sheep in Paleolithic art, Egyptian religion, Aesopic fables, and Greek and Roman mythology, art, and religion. A study of early Jewish literature and rabbinic literature follows. Johns finds no precedent for the triumphant Lamb Redeemer figure in Early Judaism, where lambs usually symbolize vulnerability.

A discussion of method in symbol analysis in chapter 5 prepares the way for questions addressed in the final chapter: What kind of symbolic universe does the Lamb Christology help to construct, and what does it *do* within that symbolic universe? (120) Johns argues that the social-historical setting of the Apocalypse is not a specific experience of persecution but the pervasive economic and political seductiveness of the imperial cult. The chapter examines traditions in the Hebrew Bible upon which the author of the Apocalypse may have drawn. Johns concludes that "the concept of non-violence or vulnerability seems most capable of characterizing the symbolism expressed in most of these symbolic uses of lamb" (148). This vulnerability is not helpless victimization but leads to victory.

Johns's final chapter takes up the project's core question, the rhetorical force of the Lamb Christology. It focuses on Revelation 5, which provides the "rhetorical fulcrum" of the whole Apocalypse. The crucial reversal occurs when the One worthy to open the scroll switches from being the Lion of Judah to the slaughtered Lamb. The nonviolent resistance of the slain but victorious Lamb is paradigmatic for believers' own response to evil. Johns explores key exegetical terms such as "witness" and "victory," and investigates the ethical import of the violent imagery.

It is not entirely clear how the examination of lambs in Greco-Roman culture helps clarify the rhetorical impact of lamb symbolism on the primarily Jewish Christian, "average Ephesian" audience of the Apocalypse, since it seems to yield few results for this study. One also wonders why Johns devotes so much attention to the "ram" traditions when he has already argued that the animal in question in the Apocalypse is the "lamb" and not the ram (23-25).

As well, Johns's argument sometimes needs further support. For example, except for citing Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza as a precedent (123, n 57), he does not defend deciding to translate the Greek term as "consistent resistance" instead of the usual "patient endurance." Also, at one point he implies that the disciples' *safety* is in view in Luke 10:3, whereas the real issue in this text is their *danger* (144). In his argument that "lamb" in the Septuagint "symbolizes defenceless vulnerability in the face of violent power" (148), it is hard to see how the "trembling submission" of Ps. 114: 4, 6 or the tender care of the shepherd in Isa. 40:11 (Aquila ms.) constitutes vulnerability in the face of "violent power." Finally, although Johns does believe that the

triumph of the Lamb comes through death *and* resurrection, he often settles for language that asserts "evil is conquered by the death of the lamb" (194) and that defines "victory as non-violent resistance to the point of death" (170). More explicit emphasis that victory comes through God's *overturning* of death might have been helpful.

The author does persuasively argue that the Lamb Christology has ethical implications for Christians' nonviolent resistance. The attention to exegetical detail and the thorough exploration of the religio-historical background of the lamb imagery is an obvious strength, even as it marks the book as more for scholars than non-specialists. Especially valuable is Johns's balanced consideration of the merits and problems associated with seeing each Old Testament tradition as an antecedent for the Lamb Christology. The book's critical engagement with current scholarship is also a strength, especially in the last chapter, where Johns forthrightly addresses difficult questions that might challenge his thesis. His scholarship will be welcomed especially by pacifist Christians troubled by the violence of the Apocalypse and unsure about its ethical relevance.

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Jean Janzen. *Piano in the Vineyard.* Intercourse, PA: Good Books, 2004; David Waltner-Toews. *The Complete Tante Tina: Mennonite Blues and Recipes.* Kitchener, ON: Pandora Press, 2004.

Jean Janzen and David Waltner-Toews are two of the earliest successful poets in the late-twentieth century flowering of Mennonite literature. Both poets use the cruel experiences of their Russländer ancestors to fine effect. And in the two books under review, both offer their best, mature poems. But, otherwise, what an odd couple they make for a combined book review!

Waltner-Toews writes dramatic monologues in the swaggering, colloquial sprawl of Whitman. Janzen writes closely observed, restrained lyrics in the manner of Dickinson.