Some seasoned readers may find this succinct volume limited in the extent of its ethical and philosophical analysis. Nevertheless, it does cover a wide range of topics in the development of philosophical and Christian ethics, and this makes it suitable for new students, church members, and study groups. Many would find that Bechtel's text and intimate style offer an enjoyable, approachable, and accessible introduction to Christian ethics.

Jason Frey, Ph.D. student, Chicago Theological Seminary, Chicago, Illinois

Andrew P. Klager, ed. *From Suffering to Solidarity: The Historical Seeds of Mennonite Interreligious, Interethnic, and International Peacebuilding*. Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2015.

According to editor Andrew Klager, *From Suffering to Solidarity* sets out to examine how Mennonite history and specifically "narratives, memories, and myths of suffering and nonviolence . . . in the midst of persecution" have shaped Mennonite solidarity with those who suffer (2). The volume is not intended, however, as a contribution to Mennonite self-understanding but as a case study of how one tradition draws on its past in its present peacebuilding efforts. Klager hopes this book will inspire peacebuilders to investigate their own traditions' histories as resources for peace and to be open to the contribution of religion to their work (5).

The first of three sections covers "the historical conditions of Anabaptist-Mennonite peacebuilding" in chapters on early 16th-century Anabaptism (John Derksen), Russian Mennonites during the Soviet era (Walter Sawatsky), North American Mennonites (Royden Loewen), Mennonite Central Committee (Esther Epp-Tiessen), and global and neo-Anabaptisms (John D. Roth). Although much of this material will be familiar to Mennonite readers, overlooked and emerging narratives also come to the surface in illuminating ways, particularly in the pieces by Sawatsky and Roth. This section could be helpful for teachers of Mennonite history looking for a concise and up-to-date (albeit selective) historical overview from origins

to global expansion.

In the second section, scholars and peacebuilding practitioners interact critically with various dimensions of the formative historical narratives. Janna Hunter-Bowman's essay demonstrates how several of John Paul Lederach's groundbreaking contributions to peacebuilding are rooted in his Mennonite "narrative community," including his "elicitive method" that prioritizes strategies emergent from dialogical encounter. This interdependence of experience and communal formation unsettles any tidy account of the relationship between history and present peacebuilding. (To my mind, the case studies in section three confirm her thesis.) Carl Stauffer similarly challenges naïve appropriations of central "myths" of Mennonite peacebuilding, including Dirk Willems, Russian Mennonite persecution, and the Elmira, Ontario restorative justice case. Stauffer demonstrates how both peace and exclusionary violence can follow from each of these myths.

Lowell Ewert contends that "contemporary Mennonite peace theology . . . cannot be reconciled with the contemporary global human rights regime," because of the anti-state bias of the former (162). Ewert goes on to outline how that regime is vital for peace today, and how Mennonite peacebuilding actually supports it in spite of itself. The author's lack of engagement with any critical theological or philosophical discussion of "human rights" means this essay is unlikely to persuade many Mennonite peace theologians.

In one of the most important pieces in this volume, Marlene Epp calls for a "gendering" of Mennonite peace studies. To that end, she reviews the positive contributions of North American Mennonite women to peace efforts during and after World War II. She further identifies how Mennonite peace theology and practice has overlooked violence against women, with disastrous results. An unfortunate case in point appears in a following essay by Ron Kraybill. Although Kraybill (and Virgil Wiebe, in his own essay) rightly argues for the spiritual formation of peacebuilders, he proposes humility theology and *Gelassenheit* as paradigmatic without attending to the ways they have negatively impacted women.

The third section contains several fascinating case studies of peacebuilding projects in which Mennonites have been centrally involved. Chapters cover Egypt (Klager), Colombia (Bonnie Klassen), Indonesia (Sumanto Al Qurtuby), Palestine-Israel (Alain Epp-Weaver), the Democratic

Republic of Congo (Fidele Ayu Lumeya), and Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo (David Steele). That some of the case study authors are not Mennonites or Christians bolsters a sense that Mennonite peacebuilding is a relational, dialogical phenomenon. Peace is not Mennonite property.

What is certainly close to home for Mennonites are determinative theological convictions. These convictions do not come in for detailed examination here, but they are an important part of the history and present context that conditions Mennonite peacebuilding work. Moreover, just as there is no single Mennonite approach to peacebuilding, there is no single Mennonite peace theology. Compare, for instance, claims by Derksen, Sawatsky, and Epp-Tiessen about the centrality of faith in Jesus Christ for their subjects (30-34, 47, 89) with Kraybill's vision of "non-creedal" formation for peacebuilders (203). Any adaptation of Mennonite history by other traditions will need to do the hard work of wrestling with the complex imbrication of Mennonite peacebuilding and theology. Comparative history, in this case at least, requires comparative theology.

Jamie Pitts, Assistant Professor of Anabaptist Studies, Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Indiana

Alan Kreider. *The Patient Ferment of the Early Church: The Improbable Rise of Christianity in the Roman Empire.* Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2016.

What accounts for the growth of the Church in the three centuries between Jesus and Constantine? Alan Kreider seeks to answer this question in *The Patient Ferment of the Early Church*. In Parts I and II, Kreider describes two factors in the growth of the early church that he claims have been underappreciated by previous scholars: "patience" as the church's peculiar virtue, and a distinctive and attractive "habitus," or set of embodied habits, inculcated by catechesis and worship. The author likens the growth of the Church in the first three centuries to fermentation—a slow, natural process of expansion powered by a living force within.

In Part III, Kreider takes a closer look at early Christian community life, worship, catechesis, and baptism, arguing that each demonstrates