

For example, the decline in Sunday attendance in inner-city churches does not necessarily mean a decline in religious observance, as it went hand in hand with suburban growth, suggesting the possibility of a shift of location of worship, rather than its abandonment. Likewise, the decline of urban and men's religious hierarchies has been accompanied by the rise of rural and women's agendas.

While some historians have seen the eclipse of the Protestant, Social Service Council of Canada and the appropriation of social survey research by government as more proof of the decline of religion, this move was in fact initiated by the Canadian Protestant churches during the 1920s to promote the partnership of church and state, and the growth of the state social apparatus. Protestantism, Christie and Gauvreau conclude, was essential to, not displaced by, the modern welfare state.

In passing, the authors make a compelling case for abandoning the current obsession with American historiographical models and conclusions which confound American and Canadian religious history, to Canada's loss. English Canada is not the United States. The roots of secularization in Canada as a whole, the authors conclude, must be seen after the Second World War, not before, as is the case in Quebec.

Though Cook's work won the Governor-General's Award for non-fiction, and Marshall's brilliantly written and sweeping analysis of modern religious culture is also very persuasive, it is a pity that revisionists such as Christie and Gauvreau are usually ignored outside of a small group of dedicated readers—a situation not helped by McGill-Queen's' lack of attention to editing and presentation. Still, if historians are interested in truth, they will have to make an effort to plow through Christie and Gauvreau's methodical work.

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*The Church for Others: Protestant Theology in Communist East Germany.* By Gregory Baum. Grand Rapids, MI: Wm B. Eerdmans, 1997. ISBN 0-8028-4134-1. Pp. xvii+156.

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The Protestant Church in the former German Democratic Republic (GDR) was perhaps best known to theologians outside of East Germany for the motto which defined the church's pastoral and missionary tasks: "*Kirche im Sozialismus*" ("the church in socialism"). But because East Germany restricted foreign access and theological work was frequently disseminated by passing copies from hand to hand, theologians outside of East Germany were often left to interpret "*Kirche im Sozialismus*" without having access to the context. As a result, some Western theologians have tended to think that the theology of the Protestant Church of East Germany resembled Latin American liberation theology. But, as Gregory Baum has discovered, theology in communist East Germany

was quite different. It was a "pastoral and intellectual achievement responding to a unique historical context" (ix).

In this book, Baum sets out to introduce North American readers to both the theology as well as the context of the Protestant Church in the former GDR. In stark contrast to some recent (West) German critics who relied heavily on Stasi files, Baum concentrates on what the theologians themselves were writing.

Before turning to the theologians, Baum provides the necessary historical context. In 1945, the Protestant Church in Germany was trying to come to terms with its silence under National Socialism. Despite the internal theological tensions surrounding this process, the underlying hope was that the church could start anew in unity. Indeed, it was beginning to do so.

However, with the establishment of a communist-ruled East German Government in 1949, the churches in the East and West began to grow apart. From the outset, the communist party (SED) in the GDR attempted to gain control over potentially antagonistic organizations, including political parties, unions, and the church. Because churches in East and West Germany had remained united under the auspices of the EKD (Protestant Church of Germany), the existence of a unified church in the GDR threatened the SED leadership. In contrast to the Soviet model of persecuting the church, the East German Government policy was to chip away at the church's autonomy.

Upset with the EKD's inability to address the unique problems of East Germany, and troubled by some East German Christians holding on nostalgically to German unity, some pastors and bishops began to organize an independent church federation. In 1969, the East German *Bund der Evangelischen Kirchen* (Federation of Protestant Churches), or BEK, was established with Albrecht Schönherr as the new bishop of Berlin-Brandenburg in the GDR. This new federation enabled the churches to find a single, uniquely East German voice that "expressed their spiritual solidarity with the EKD and their institutional independence from it" (5).

If there is one figure whom Baum most admires, it is Schönherr. Largely because of Schönherr's remarkable administrative abilities, the Protestant Church in the GDR maintained government recognition without becoming an arm of the SED. From its inception, the BEK understood itself only as a "community of witness and service" (10) in society. It was never a political party. As a result, Schönherr and leaders of the BEK were always careful not to support the official Marxist-Leninist ideology of the SED.

Paradoxically, they also did *not* reject socialism. Rather, the BEK followed the formula that the Church was "*nicht neben, nicht gegen, sondern im Sozialismus*" ("not beside, not against, but in socialism"). The church's mission was not to stand against the government (which would have resulted in further isolation), but to take responsibility for every citizen of East Germany, including non-Christians.

This "worldly" pastoral theology meant that some traditional theological convictions had to be reconsidered, most notably the Lutheran two-kingdoms doctrine (chap. 6). Influenced by the Barmen Confession and the work of Dietrich Bonhoeffer, the BEK leadership determined that the church had a responsi-

bility to the world—to care for anyone in need. The church's mission, then, was primarily pastoral, existing as “the church for others.”

Baum focuses primarily on the church's pastoral activities and the theology underlying the church's mission. He devotes specific chapters to the theology of the *Kirchenbund*, the pastoral ministry of the church, and the theological background of key figures, such as Schönherr and Heino Falcke. The fifth chapter, “The Humanistic Ideals of Socialism,” is perhaps the most insightful, to-the-point summary to date of the struggles that the *Bund* leadership faced. Baum captures the tension that existed between theologians and pastors within the federation, between Marxists and non-Marxists, and between the BEK and the communist state. As this chapter demonstrates, out of this tension and conflict there arose an innovative, contextual theology that was “critical” of the government. That is, the BEK responded to the government with neither a universal “Yes,” nor a universal “No” (62). The leadership adopted the term “critical solidarity” to express the church's relationship to the state.

For the North American reader, “critical solidarity” and “*Kirche im Sozialismus*” might sound as though the BEK leadership were in collaboration with the communist dictatorship. In refreshing contrast to some recent German interpretations, this book establishes that these expressions are rooted in a unique historical situation, in dialogue with the GDR government and Christian theology—not *beside*, not *against*, but *in socialism* (103-19).

In short, this concise work accomplishes what it sets out to do. It introduces the theology of the East German Church, and at the same time offers an explanation of it to a North American audience that is unfamiliar with the church's history and sources. It is not an intimidating work. All key German terms and quotations are translated into English, and the sections heavy on the theology can be easily understood by the casual reader. However, for the technical reader there are the requisite citations, a lengthy bibliography of primary and secondary sources, and an adequate index.

Because Western images of a cold, darkened, inefficient East Germany have become the norm in our North American consciousness, the richness of the theology in the former GDR has been neglected. Baum's book is a welcome corrective.

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*Exclusion and Embrace: A Theological Exploration of Identity, Otherness, and Reconciliation.* By Miroslav Volf. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1996. ISBN 0-687-00282-6. Pp. 336.

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The author of this brilliant study is a Croatian Protestant theologian presently teaching at an American university, who has made the violent conflict in the region of his birth the starting point for his theological investigation. Even though reconciliation is a central idea in the New Testament, especially in the