ON THE ROAD

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THE VIEW FROM EPHESIANS FOUR

MARK AND MARY HURST

...to prepare all God's people for the work of Christian service

Are Australia and New Zealand part of Asia? You would think so if you paid attention to the way Mennonite agencies divide up the world. Oz and NZ are part of the Asian Mennonite Conference in the Mennonite World Conference structure. North American mission agencies include us in Asia when it comes to their administration. Doug Hynd travelled to Bali in December representing AAANZ as part of a working party of Asian Historic Peace Churches. We recently attended a conference on behalf of AAANZ in Macau looking at theological training and leadership development in East Asia. Articles in this issue report on these events.

But Mennonites are not the only ones that see a connection with Asia and our part of the world. An online article by Andrew Lam in July 2005 called "Buddhism Spreads Down Under as Asians Change Australia" http://www.axisoflogic.com/artman/publish/article_18985.shtml starts with this editorial comment: "Once oriented toward Europe, Australia today describes itself as part of Asia, a change reflected in many Australians' embrace of Buddhism, the second-largest religion in the country. But tensions resulting from Asian immigration remain."

The article points out that there are more than 50 temples in Sydney and state-wide in New South Wales there are 150. It says:

> "Australia, once a homogenous Western country founded by convicts sent from England in the late 18th century, had traditionally kept its doors closed to immigrants from Asia. But in the mid-1970s, the doors slowly opened to Asian immigrants as trade with Asia

AAANZ Bi-Annual Conference

"LIVING ANABAPTISM: SEEKING A COMMUNITY OF PROMISE"

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On The Road

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AAANZ@iprimus.com.au or
On The Road Editors, P.O. Box 367
Sutherland NSW 1499 Australia

COVER SYMBOL: The lamb in the midst of briars is a traditional Anabaptist symbol. It illustrates the suffering Lamb of God, who calls the faithful to obedient service and discipleship on the road. This particular rendition is from ***Hymnal A Worship Book***. Copyright 1992. Reprinted with permission of Mennonite Publishing House, Scottdale, PA, USA.

increased. These days, the continent publicly describes itself as "part of Asia." Asian immigrants now make up 10 percent of the population of 22 million. Asians are expected to reach a quarter of the population in 2020."

Anabaptists in Oz and NZ share something in common with Anabaptists throughout Asia – we are a minority faith. We can learn from each other about what it means to be faithful to the way of Jesus amidst competing faith claims. Asian Christian books like ***Three Mile an Hour God: Biblical Reflections*** and ***Waterbuffalo Theology*** by Kosuke Koyama can help us learn about being Christian in an Asian context.

Doug Hynd shares with us in this issue about one of our closest neighbours – East Timor. Needs are great in this country and Doug shares some of what he discovered on a recent visit. We introduce Ray Gingerich to you in this issue with his article on "Resurrection: The nonviolent politics of God." We are hoping to have Ray visit Australia next year.

The next AAANZ bi-national conference will be held in Perth 19-22 January 2007. Mark your diaries now. The theme will be "Living Anabaptism: Seeking A Community of Promise." Watch future issues for more details.

At a recent gathering of the AAANZ executive, the need was expressed for a genuine Down Under Anabaptist theology. The conference next year will explore some of these themes, but what do you think? What does Anabaptism look like in an Aussie or Kiwi setting? What is unique about it? Send your contributions to us and we can start a discussion in the pages of ***ON THE ROAD***.

Enjoy the mix of articles, reviews, and news and feel free to contribute your own. We are always pleased to receive contributions from our readers.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Doug Hynd

AAANZ Trip to Timor Leste

The limited contact between Timor Leste and the wider world becomes immediately clear from consulting airline timetables. A twin engine propjet flight from Darwin, ten times a week, or a daily 737 jet from Bali are your only options. As my Merparti Airlines flight came in to land, the single runway seemed only just long enough. When I stepped out of the aircraft the midday heat and humidity hit me with an intensity that I was not quite prepared for, even after a midafternoon arrival in Bali the previous day.

Dili, estimated population of around 180,000 people, is dominated by the dark green of the escarpment that hems in the city against the calm waters of the Ombai passage. The other striking feature is that six years after the orchestrated destruction of Timor Leste by the Indonesian military, burnt out buildings can still be seen on every block.

You can't escape the reminders of that terrifying episode. In just about every town I passed through it was the same story. The remains of houses standing empty with the roofs and internal fittings burnt out. I asked one of my hosts what it was like to be reminded everyday of what had happened. "It hurts" he said.

There are some events that make a significant difference to your life. My brief visit to Timor Leste, from 29 November 2005 to the 4 December 2005, may have been one of those occasions. I was deeply moved and challenged by what I saw and heard during my visit. I am still trying to understand how my spirit was renewed and refreshed in a context where the destruction of 1999 is visible as a day-to-day reality; where everyone has a story of what happened to them, their friends and families during that time.

How and why did I come to be in Dili?

It is a complex story and it is important to summarise the main elements as it is important in the history of the Anabaptist Association of Australia and New Zealand (AAANZ). It represents a defining moment in opening the door to connections with Asia.

In mid 2005 I was nominated by the AAANZ executive to represent AAANZ at a working party of Asian Historic Peace Churches in Bali in early December. The term Historic Peace Churches refers to the Quakers, the Mennonites and the Church of the Brethren as those Christian communities that have been defined by their convictions, variously expressed, that the witness to peace and peacemaking is an integral element of Christian discipleship and community. A report on the Bali meeting, including a press release issued at the conclusion of the meeting is published elsewhere in this issue of ***ON THE ROAD***.

As my travel to the Bali meeting was being paid for by the Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Peace Desk, the AAANZ committee suggested that I should take the opportunity of the meeting in Bali to visit Timor Leste and build on the connections that had been made at the AAANZ conference at Canberra in January 2005.

What were those connections?

At the AAANZ conference in Canberra in January 2005, Christine Vertucci who had been working as a MCC volunteer on assignment with the East Timor Truth, Reconciliation and Reception Commission (CAVR), gave a presentation on the recent history of the country shaped by

stories from the reconciliation process. Chris's assignment to CAVR and her subsequent work in capacity building with NGOs was a short term initiative as MCC does not have a long-term commitment to Timor Leste.

Chris and Jon Rudy from MCC in the Philippines attended the AAANZ conference because MCC was looking to establish links with like-minded groups in Australia to build on the contacts that had been made through her work in East Timor. As a result of Chris's visit, AAANZ, at its Special General Meeting at the conference, agreed to explore with Chris the possibility of developing and running a learning tour to East Timor; and the possible hosting of visits to Australia by East Timor students.

Beyond that organisational commitment by AAANZ to Timor Leste, my wife Jillian and I decided to assist with financial support for a community school at Ossa Huna village that Chris had talked with us about. As a result during 2005 Jillian and I had an ongoing exchange of emails around developments at the school and Chris's work with Fundacao Lafaek Diak. (Good Crocodile Foundation). So in preparation for the visit to Timor Leste I discussed the possibility of obtaining funding for the Ossa Huna school and of building a partnership around organising learning visits to Timor Leste between AAANZ and TEAR Australia with John McKinnon and Lea Davis of TEAR Australia.

Doug Hynd and Christine Vertucci being welcomed to Osso Huna with handmade scarves.

What did I do in Timor Leste?

My time was spent talking to people from a variety of NGOs in Dili and visits to the Ossa Huna village school that Jillian and I had been supporting, the Canossa Sisters community development and training program at Bacau, and discussions with Christine Vertucci and people involved in the Lafaek Diak foundation, particularly Constantino and Inge who provided me with wonderful hospitality.

Most evenings I spent talking with people in passionate conversations around issues of forgiveness and reconciliation, development strategies for the villages and the stories of people's experiences over the past few years. Part of what I experienced was the freedom of sitting and sharing with people with whom I shared commitments about how our Christian faith engaged with the challenges of social transformation.

One of the comments from Constantino during the course of this conversation stuck in my mind: "We have spent the last twenty years being secretive, devious and destructive. The question is now whether we will be able to display the trust and openness of children to engage in rebuilding our communities."

Welcoming group of students doing local dance.

Osso Huna village

One of the highlights of the trip was undoubtedly the visit to Osso Huna village and their pre-secondary community school. The village is about three hours drive, around 50km on narrow winding roads from Baccau, the second largest town in East Timor, itself about three hours drive from Dili. To give some idea of the remoteness of the village and the difficulties for ordinary people in travelling, the cost of a round trip from Osso Huna to Dili, six hours each way on minibus would be $10. To give some idea of cost relativities -the salary for teachers in government schools is $150 per month.

It is hard to overstate the remoteness of the village. It does not currently have access to electricity. There is no reception for mobile phones in the area. There are no on site health facilities. Agriculture is subsistence and access to cash for those dependent upon agriculture is very limited. Because of its remoteness and location in the mountains the area was a centre of resistance to the Indonesians by the armed wing of the independence movement.

The only significant government service provided for the village is the elementary school which currently has 250 students in six grades and has been sharing its building with the pre-secondary school. The experience since the pre-secondary school has commenced and the community expectation is that all students completing elementary school will enrol in the pre-secondary school.

I commenced my visit to the village with an inspection of work being conducted on the building site for the pre-secondary school with labour supplied by members of the community.

This was followed by an official welcome from the school principal, singing by the students, thanks for the

Sister Alice is a diminutive Timorese Canossian sister with a big heart. She was a young sister during the Indonesian occupation and had numerous chances to meet the Indonesian commander of the Special Forces in East Timor.

On one occasion, at a funeral, the Bapa Bapa (commander) made a speech that he thought there was a resistance fighter present and sister knew in her heart he was talking about her. So she said, "Yes it is me, I am the one that gives support and food to the resistance. I have no enemies and have to feed all people. I tell you if it were not for this habit, you and I would be big enemies. I love independence and you want us to be part of Indonesia. But because I love Jesus, I love all people." She went back to the chapel after the funeral and prayed thinking maybe I am crazy to be so blunt.

Feeling the need to show her integrity, she went to the commander and invited him to come for a big meal promising that none of the sisters would say anything bad but would treat him with respect as the big dignitary he was. So the sisters sang a song for him and Sister Alice asked them, "Who wants independence?" None raised their hand. "Who wants integration (with Indonesia)?" They all put up their hands. Of course all knew this was a sham but that was part of the game.

At the time of the referendum in East Timor, the Indonesian Commander came to Sister Alice and said she should encourage their people to vote for integration with the promise that he would give her lots of money. She said to him, "You gave the people lots of things like caps and shirts, I am sure they will vote for you." She went on to say, "You brought all things like development, schools, roads and clinics. But there is one thing we don't accept, your soldiers kill us. Your soldiers do what you tell them to do. Tell them to stop killing us in the night. If it was not for this Canossa medallion and I wasn't wearing a habit, you and I would be big enemies. You give us all things, shirts and caps to try to convince us to be part of Indonesia, but you don't win our hearts, you kill us." Sister Alice knew she was on the Indonesian hit list yet was courageous to say this to his face. Because of this the commander said "You are blessed by the pope." Yet, says Sister, "He was mocking me."

After the referendum voted for autonomy, the Indonesians had to leave. As they did, in September 1999, they went on a burning, looting, raping and killing rampage. Sister Alice was in Suai at the church compound where hundreds of people sought refuge from the last colonial convulsion. The militia, East Timorese who were pro-Indonesia, were charged by the Indonesians to kill and destroy. They came to the compound and started to kill people. Three priests were killed in the slaughter. Sister Alice was an eye witness to this massacre perpetrated by those she knew. She called out to the militia commander, who she had learned to know over the years, by name saying "What are you doing?" Because she had built a relationship with him, she risked speaking to him. He answered, "Shut up sister this is not the time to talk." Sister answered, "Yes I know it's not the time for talk yet you can kill us but you are only hurting yourself." This man ended up in a refugee camp and a year later killed himself.

She hid in their house with other sisters and when the militia came in they asked if there were any men in the house. Sister said only the driver. She had seen others hiding but didn't know where they were or if they were in the house at all. The militia commander said if there are any others I will personally shoot you. When the militia didn't find any other men he fell down in front of her begging, "I am sorry sister that I almost killed you, we are under pressure now." She answered, "Get up, you are not at fault, it is the war that makes us do this."

Sister eventually got to the Indonesian refugee camps and was quickly spirited away to Rome since she was an eye witness. When I asked her if she dealt with her anger, animosity and hatred, she replied that she worked with a Canossian priest/psychologist who "Helped me transform my feelings into love for the perpetrators. Because of that experience I have a deeper understanding of what Jesus calls us to."

welcome from the visitors. The outdoor welcome was interrupted by heavy rain that saw a sudden adjournment to a classroom in the elementary school.

The welcome from the students and teachers was followed by an hour long discussion with the teachers from the pre-secondary school around their hopes and dreams for the school and their priorities for assistance.

The school has been effective in the results it has achieved for the students and in harnessing community support to an amazing degree. I have written a report for TEAR Australia about the school in support of what I anticipate will be a strong application for project funding for two to three years.

In early February, I received this email from Christine Vertucci about the school:

"I have some bad news. A tornado (very strong winds and rain) hit Osso Huna last week and wreaked havoc on the community. The construction of the new school building was damaged. Jose and Phyllis Ferguson estimated that the damage amounted to US$1,000. The roof of the elementary school building was blown off. Desks and chairs were turned upside down and windows were broken. Jose doesn't know what the students are doing now. I saw pictures taken by Jose; it looked like a disaster. A lot of work will be needed to clean up the classrooms and make them useable from what I could see. I was shocked; I just couldn't believe it."

[See photos on page 5 of classroom after tornado]

Canossian Sister in East Timor

Another highlight was a visit with the training program for women in leadership and community development being run by the Canossian sisters, a Catholic order in Baaccau. The Director of the program was Sister Alice. Jon Rudy, who shared the trip with me, recorded the following story she told us over morning tea at the Centre, 2 December 2005:

[see story box above]

Christine (second from left), Doug (fifth from left) and Jon Rudy (third from right) pose with some of the school construction crew.

Fundacao Lafaek Diak (Good Crocodile Foundation)

The Lafaek Diak foundation, where Chris Vertucci is working, was formally established early in 2005 as a non-profit development organization committed to principles of inclusiveness and participation, accountability, gender balance, and respect for the environment. They are committed to work in a way that is non-partisan, non-sectarian, with proficient governance, and a commitment to volunteerism. The primary focus of the foundation is dissemination of information, education and training, coordination, research and advocacy, and institutional strengthening.

I met with the following members of Lafaek Diak during my visit: Constantino Pinto who has had extensive involvement in a range of rural based community organising over the past twenty years; Jose Caetano Guterres who has been working with the archives for the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and is currently studying law; and Venancio Alves Maria, who was trained in finance and is responsible for risk management for petroleum funding for the Timor Leste Central Bank.

I was able to inspect two of the projects, one proposed and the other actually underway on my way back to Dili from Baccau. Lafaek Diak was approached by a group of 30 families for assistance in cultivation of two, six hectare areas in the Triloka district. The intention is that the project will assist in expanding the food security of the families and hopefully generate a small surplus that can be sold and generate some cash. One of the plots has been planted in dry land rice and the other in corn and peanuts. Lafaek provided funding to hire a tractor for ploughing and for purchase of implements and seeds. A supervisor with experience in agricultural production who lives in a local village is also providing advice and support for the families. We visited the project on our way back to Dili and witnessed weeding of the rice fields by several of the families.

While in Triloka we inspected two abandoned buildings that had accommodated a health clinic during the Indonesian occupation. The buildings are now abandoned and the community has approached Lafaek Diak for assistance in opening up a clinic. Health Department approval has been obtained. The Department of Lands and Property also needs to approve this development and have not made any response to the request for approval in the six months since the request was made. If no response is received before the end of the year Lafaek Diak will review the issue with the local community.

In addition to people working on projects in the field the foundation has just appointed Salvador Sarmento as a staff member to manage administrative issues. Members of the foundation have a strong commitment to developing the capacity of their organization and have requested funding from MCC to support Christine Vertucci in this role for a further year beyond November 2006. Due to shifting priorities by MCC this request seems unlikely to be met.

Opportunities for AAANZ

We have a number of matters relating to the way AAANZ is organised and functions that need our attention as an organisation. I would argue strongly that energy and resources devoted to the internal life of AAANZ need to be balanced by an outward engagement. We have committed ourselves to involvement with people in Timor Leste. I am now a lot better informed following the trip as to the needs and possibilities of some of the communities in Timor Leste. Some of the projects that I would like us to commit ourselves to are:

1. Working on planning and running a learning trip to Timor Leste, hopefully in partnership with TEAR Australia.
2. Identifying possibilities for reciprocal learning visits to Australia, to enable networking, capacity building for people associated with the Good Crocodile Foundation.
3. Visits to Christian communities that we have contact with to inform people in the churches about the issues facing Timor Leste.
4. Exploring possibilities for closer links with TEAR Australia

I have committed myself on a personal basis to act as an advocate for the Lafaek Diak in seeking funding for the school and building links with Australian church groups.

(For those interested in the details, a copy of my trip schedule is available from the AAANZ office.)

The following article is reprinted, by permission of the publisher, from ***Vision: A Journal for Church and Theology***, 5 (Fall 2004). The issue's theme was "Power and leadership." The author, **Ray Gingerich**, is professor emeritus of theology and ethics at Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Virginia. He is director of EMU's Anabaptist Center for Religion and Society, a new research and action organization for academic retirees. His intended audience was North American Mennonites but there is much here for us Down Under.

Resurrection: The nonviolent politics of God

RAY GINGERICH

Power is at the centre of who we are as a church, a nation, and a global humanity. Our perceptions of power—what it is and how it functions—shape how we structure institutions and organize work, how we train leaders, and how they exercise authority. Our understanding of power also moulds the ethos of our communities and the personalities of their members.

What, then, is the nature of power? Mennonite views of power have tended to be dualistic: power is nonviolence for the specially called, and it is coercion and violence for those who run the state. But power—whether ecclesial, national, or transnational; whether personal, vocational, or institutional—is ultimately of one nature and essence. It is not both violence and nonviolence.

How would our understanding of the church, its structures, and its leadership be altered if our most fundamental understanding of power were all-encompassing nonviolence? How could our understanding of the resurrection—the central tenet of Christian faith—inform our individual and collective perception of power?

This article is structured around four theses: (1) Violence as a political instrument is a dead-end pursuit. (2) Power is nonviolence;**1** to speak of nonviolent power is redundant.**2** (3) The resurrection of Jesus is a historical epiphany of nonviolence countering the politics of empire. (4) The church and its leadership must reclaim authentic power (i.e., nonviolence) if we would be representatives of the Jesus way in our present empire.**3**

These theses are too sweeping to defend in the scope of this brief essay. My aim is more modest: to challenge our predisposition to believe that those who hold weapons of violence are "in power," and to commend the practice of the politics of nonviolence in both church and world, on the basis of the early church's understanding of the resurrection of Jesus.

Violence as a political instrument is a dead-end pursuit.

Jonathan Schell notes that "in a steadily and irreversibly widening sphere, violence, always a mark of human failure and the bringer of sorrow, has now also become dysfunctional as a political instrument. Increasingly it destroys the ends for which it is employed, killing the user as well as the victim. It has become the path to hell on earth and the end of the earth."**4** Pursuing domination through the instrumentality of violence will lead to the destruction of the human species and our host, planet earth. This outcome is the definitive evidence that violence is not power but the loss of power, not courage but the demonstration of fear, not the expression of strength but of human desperation and weakness. As Hannah Arendt notes, "Power and violence are opposites; where one rules absolutely, the other is absent."**5**

In its war on Iraq, the United States holds the military capacity to defeat a nation, maim its people, and destroy its infrastructure. But that strategy has stripped us of the power to win Iraq's people over and to build a nation. In Arendt's words, "Violence can destroy power; it is utterly incapable of creating it."**6** This statement may evoke disbelief in those who assume that violence is power and that systemic, sustained, legalized, state-sponsored violence—war—is the ultimate form of power.

Yet the prospect of nuclear annihilation has led many who had believed in the necessity of war to the commonsense conclusion that war in the twenty-first century is obsolete. Having traced the rise and fall of the war system, Jonathan Schell concludes that "never has a single technical invention had a more sudden or profound effect on an entrenched human institution than nuclear weapons have had on war. . . . The logic of total war had carried its practitioners to the brink of a destination, the far side of human existence, to which the logic of politics could not follow. For politics was a human activity, and in the post-nuclear landscape there might be no human beings."**7**

> **"Power and violence are opposites; where one rules absolutely, the other is absent."**

War is better understood as religion than as a science; it requires a political momentum that is sustained by an ethos of fear and ethnocentrism rather than by the logic of analysis. Its religious character is evident in rituals, strict codes of group behaviour and identity, a threatening enemy that constitutes the reality against which the group's identity is formed, a belief in a transcendent power or cause, and an ethos that clothes these conceptions with an aura of facticity.**8** "The conviction that force was always the final arbiter was not in truth so much an intellectual conclusion as a tacit assumption on all sides—the product not of a question asked and answered but of one unasked."**9** Those who can free their minds of the myth of constructive violence will conclude with Jacques Ellul that "violence begets violence—nothing else."**10**

Whether it is implemented by the state or supported through the religious practices and theological systems of the church, violence destroys what it claims to preserve. Yet even the pacifist church has borrowed from the empire much of its logic, many of its patterns of thought and theological assumptions. The church, like the world (the peoples and powers that have not submitted themselves to a nonviolent God and the way of Jesus), takes for granted that violence is power. It is the coercion that some people must exercise if society is to have peace and Christians are to have freedom of worship. Citing Romans 13:1-7, many Christian pacifists assume that worldly leaders (politicians) know best how to run the world, that some Christians have

a special calling to follow Jesus, and that non-Christians and Christians who do not have this special calling have been given authority to exercise violence.**11**

This wisdom leads peace-loving Christians to presume that as we move into positions of leadership in society, we will need to become more responsibly engaged in the rhetoric and the practice of warfare. Augustine made this assumption in constructing what we now call just war theory. Reinhold Niebuhr shared this outlook as he developed his political theology of responsibility. Significant numbers of Mennonite leaders today, those who are pro-Niebuhr and those who are anti-Niebuhr, struggle with this point of view. For some, the code words are ambiguity, compromise, and responsibility. For those with a more traditional *Stillen im Lande* (the quiet in the land) stance, the code words are separation and withdrawal. Both groups assume—unlike Jesus—that God wills that some people exercise violence some of the time.

Nonviolence is power.

If the twentieth century demonstrated the failure of violence, movements in that century have also demonstrated persuasively that there is a political force more powerful: nonviolence. Mohandas Gandhi, Martin Luther King, and Nelson Mandela come quickly to mind, but dozens of other people and movements have also established the successes of nonviolence.**12** But despite the successes of nonviolence and the conspicuously dismal failures of violence, our culture continues to accept as true the myth that violence is the midwife that will deliver a peaceful and orderly society.

War is better understood as religion than as a science.

Peace church theology, like the cultural worldview that leads us to believe that violence is power and therefore a societal necessity, is riddled with anomalies and contradictions.**13** We are called to hold to the simple claim that to be a follower of Jesus is to take up our cross in our day in our empire—the United States and its allies—even as Jesus took up his cross in the empire of his day. As The ***Politics of Jesus***, John Howard Yoder's seminal contribution to biblical studies, expresses it, "Only at one point, only on one subject—but then consistently, universally—is Jesus our example: in his cross."**14**

Were we to adhere to this conviction, we would eliminate the double-talk in much contemporary Mennonite theology. We would reject the assertion that God "paradoxically" calls some Christians to be violent so that others may be nonviolent. This dualistic theology is doubly dangerous: it legitimates our society's violence (including its wars), and every theology that legitimates violence turns to stab those who underwrite it. Consoled beneath this theology's sacred shroud, we are oblivious to the violence to which we cling.

Gandhi noted that violence has many forms; he claimed that passivity is a greater evil than overt violence. As North American Mennonites move from the passivity and withdrawal characteristic of our agrarian background, we are increasingly caught up in the covert structural violence that is supported by the theology emerging out of our cultural milieu. But the God of Jesus does not now need violence, in any form, nor has God ever needed violence to protect the nonviolent way of life Jesus taught and practiced.

Despite all theological arguments for its political necessity, violence has failed the church even as it has failed the world. Jesus understood the way of nonviolence to be in the design of the universe, to be life-giving power. The nonviolent way of Jesus represents the character of the new world, the reign of God that is coming now but awaits the fuller realization which has been anticipated in the resurrection of Jesus.

In Jesus' resurrection, nonviolent power counters the politics of empire.

We not only have a body of political science that supports the thesis that power is nonviolence, we also have a biblical heritage and parts of an Anabaptist theology that undergird this conviction. What Schell demonstrates historically and Arendt argues philosophically, the early church through the Gospel writers and Paul states in "narrative theology" by describing the Jesus event that culminates in the resurrection and exaltation. For the early church, the resurrection account is the theological narrative that substantiates the political viability of nonviolence.

The resurrection affords us a glimpse of the nonviolent power**15** of God and the universe that is ordinarily obscured by the pervasive myth of redemptive violence. We need a theology that views Jesus' resurrection and exaltation as epiphany, as proleptic manifestation of the power of the universe.

Resurrection for the first Christian believers was the defeat of violence through exposing its illusory and deceptive character. As Richard Hays has aptly written, "Jesus of Nazareth died on a cross. Those who follow him can hardly expect better treatment from the world. Insofar as the community of faith follows the path of the Jesus of history, it should expect suffering as its lot."**16** Resurrection, then, was the triumph of nonviolence, of God's life-giving power to those and for those who had followed Jesus to the cross.

We gain a better understanding of what resurrection meant for those early followers of Jesus from Philippians 2, the Bible's seminal Christological passage for those who claim an Anabaptist heritage. Paul speaks not of Jesus' death and resurrection but of his death and exaltation. As N. T. Wright notes, Paul does so with the clear assumption that Jesus was raised from the dead. Why then, asks Wright, did Paul use the language of exaltation?**17** He suggests that Paul "was consciously modelling the poem and its portrait of Jesus, not simply on Adam and Israel . . . but also on Caesar (or rather perhaps on the whole tradition of arrogant emperors going back at least to Alexander the Great, with the Roman emperors as the current embodiment of the type). Jesus . . . is the reality of which Caesar is the parody."**18**

"The poem," continues Wright, "follows quite closely the narrative sequence of imperial propaganda, and thereby stresses the point for which Paul of Acts was accused: of

saying that there is 'another king named Jesus.' He, not Caesar, is the world's true lord."**19** Jesus is Lord and Saviour. And by direct implication, Caesar is not. This is more than a creedal or dogmatic declaration. It is a claim based on the kind of life Jesus lived, which is the very reason for Jesus' exaltation. Unlike Caesar, Jesus did not use violence to defend either his status or an empire.

The resurrection was a political event of revolutionary magnitude. But we have tamed this passage and the Gospel accounts of the resurrection by spiritualizing them. The church's theology has brought the resurrection narratives under control by stripping them of their political import, by unlinking them from Jesus' life. These passages may now be used in insipid sermons, which cite these scriptures while failing to grasp their revolutionary significance—a failure so momentous that the effect is to deny the resurrection!

A dramatic shift in the understanding of power was within the purview of the earliest followers of Jesus, including Paul. But the prophetic understanding of power, and of economics,**20** failed to be sustained as the core of the message. Resurrection took on sacral or magical meaning, and by the end of the fourth century, its original meaning as the failure of violence (the crucifixion), and divine validation for the power of the Jesus event, had been structured out of "Christian" existence.**21**

The Jesus event—the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus—had barely been registered on the map of history, much less fully grasped by those who knew of Jesus, when it was packaged in the theological framework of the day. That repackaging continued not simply and not primarily through the experiences of the prophetic and the early apostolic community but largely through the intelligentsia who mirrored the wisdom of the pagans more than the carpenter of Nazareth. Early on, they became more concerned that the "faith" of the Messiah be communicated in respectable, non-revolutionary terms than that the daily life of its adherents be transformed by it.

Jesus understood the way of nonviolence to be in the design of the universe, to be life-giving power.

Sacralized as a miracle story, the resurrection narrative could be shared and the event celebrated. But what adherents believed was not the politics of nonviolence in the midst of empire. To outsiders, the resurrection was a non-threatening fable; to church leaders, it was a creedal statement to be repeated by bishop and emperor alike. The resurrection was something Christians believed in; no longer was it an event demonstrating the revolutionary nonviolent power of the reign of God.

The church and its leadership must reclaim the power of nonviolence in order to represent the Jesus way in our present empire.

That God's power is nonviolence may feel wildly out of sync with our everyday reality. Yet we should be psychologically and spiritually attuned to this alternative worldview, if our perceptions have been transformed by our Anabaptist heritage. Mennonites and other pacifist communities should be prepared culturally and politically to embrace this reality, to be the harbingers of nonviolence in a world dominated by the fear of violence.**22**

The resurrection, although theoretically indispensable to salvation, has not served as theological bedrock for the practice of nonviolence. In much Mennonite theology, salvation and ethics, being and doing, have been presented as sequential—not as warp and woof of a single fabric. Our traditional theologies contain explicit or implicit dualisms regarding violence: the violence of a God of justice versus the nonviolence of Jesus the Son of God, the end-times violence that initiates the kingdom of God versus the nonviolence of the kingdom, the violence of the state ordained by God versus the nonviolence of those called to follow the way of Jesus, the covert violence required to carry out the job to which God has called me versus the nonviolence of my life in family and fellowship, the necessary violence of the atoning death of Jesus versus the nonviolence of the atoned one. Each of these dualistic theologies constitutes a denial of the resurrection of Jesus. They not only leave room for violence but draw violence into the arena of God's work.**23**

We may respond by saying that the world will not accept resurrection leadership. But we need to start by asking, Will the church? Will the Mennonite Church embrace resurrection nonviolence? How would our church be transformed if the Jesus event, climaxing in the vindication of nonviolence, constituted the power in our day-to-day vocations? With what new authority would we speak, if as leaders and as a people we embodied this power? How would the theology in our seminaries change if "power is nonviolence" became self-evident to us? How would leadership structures be altered if we lived as Jesus did and anticipated the real possibility of dying as Jesus did? Can the church trust its future to the God of nonviolent power?

I pray for the day when the church will reject evil by saying "No" to violence—both political and theological. I long for a day when we as a people among the nations will perceive that power is, and always has been, nonviolent. I look for a day when the church, living in the power of the resurrection, will be characterized by the nonviolent politics of God, as the resurrected Jesus promised those who stood in the shadow of the cross (Matt. 28:19-20).

Notes:

1 By nonviolence I mean the power of action without violence, cooperation rather than coercion, akin to Gandhi's *satyagraha* ("truth force"). The term nonviolence, which seeks to express a positive concept by stating what it is not, reflects the poverty of language (see Jonathan Schell, ***The Unconquerable World: Power, Nonviolence, and the Will of the People*** [New York: Metropolitan Books, 2003], 350–51).

2 Hannah Arendt, ***On Violence*** (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1969, 1970), 56.

3 Empire here refers to a dominating authority, mythically conceived as sovereign, whose officials are widely presumed to represent a worthy transcendent power. This authority dictates the thought and action of large groups, thereby enhancing the interests of a few to the detriment of many. Politically, the early

church and the church of today, particularly within the U.S., share a common political phenomenon: both exist in the midst of empire.
4 Schell, **The Unconquerable World**, 7.
5 Arendt, **On Violence**, 56.
6 Ibid.
7 Schell, **The Unconquerable World**, 46.
8 For a more complete description of characteristics of religion, see Clifford Geertz, **The Interpretation of Cultures** (New York: Basic Books, 1973), 90–91.
9 Schell, ***The Unconquerable World***, 105.
10 ***Violence: Reflections from a Christian Perspective*** (New York: Seabury Press, 1969), 100.
11 For a reading of the later Paul that supports a more thoroughgoing pacifist position than that reflected in Romans, see Richard J. Cassidy, ***Paul in Chains: Roman Imprisonment and the Letters of St. Paul*** (New York: Crossroad Publishing Co., 2001).
12 See Peter Ackerman and Jack DuVall, ***A Force More Powerful: A Century of Nonviolent Conflict*** (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000). A set of documentary films (with the same title) accompanies this unusually insightful account.
13 For my use of worldview, see Thomas S. Kuhn, ***The Structure of Scientific Revolutions***, 2nd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970), especially chapters 5–8.
14 John Howard Yoder, ***The Politics of Jesus***, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994), 95. This theme is repeated throughout ***The Politics of Jesus*** (see, e.g., 52–53).
15 Although I agree with Arendt's statement that "nonviolent power is a redundancy" (***On Violence***, 56), as a bridge in communicating I at times use nonviolence and nonviolent power as synonyms for what Arendt calls power.
16 ***The Moral Vision of the New Testament: Community, Cross, New Creation*** ([San Francisco]: HarperSanFrancisco, 1996), 167.
17 N. T. Wright, ***Resurrection of the Son of God***, vol. 3 of Christian Origins and the Question of God (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2003), 225.
18 Ibid., 228.
19 Ibid.
20 See Acts 2:46-47; 4:32.
21 Robert Doran's ***Birth of a Worldview: Early Christianity in Its Jewish and Pagan Context*** (Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 1999) includes a helpful chapter on "the source of power" (85–114). Doran discusses the realm of the divine and the various Trinitarian and Christological formulations leading up to Chalcedon in 451. The discussion differentiates power along the lines of the divine/human, the spiritual/material, and the temporal/eternal. But his treatment only alludes to whether power (and hence the nature of the divine) is coercive or persuasive, determined or free, destructive or life-giving.
22 See also my essay, "Reimaging Power: Toward a Theology of Nonviolence," in ***Peace and Justice Shall Embrace: Power and Theopolitics in the Bible: Essays in Honor of Millard Lind***, ed. Ted Grimsrud and Loren L. Johns (Telford, Pa.: Pandora Press, U.S., 1999), 192–216.
23 For a schema of dualisms found in Mennonite theologies, see appendix 2 in "Resurrection: God's Nonviolence Made Known," an unpublished paper presented at "Teaching Peace Conference: Nonviolence and the Liberal Arts Curriculum," Bluffton College, 26–28 May 2004.

Jesus is Lord and Saviour. And by direct implication, Caesar is not.

Peace Churches Consider Asian Consultation

An international group of Mennonites, Quakers and Brethren met in December to discuss how historic peace churches can share their insights on peacemaking with Christians around the world.

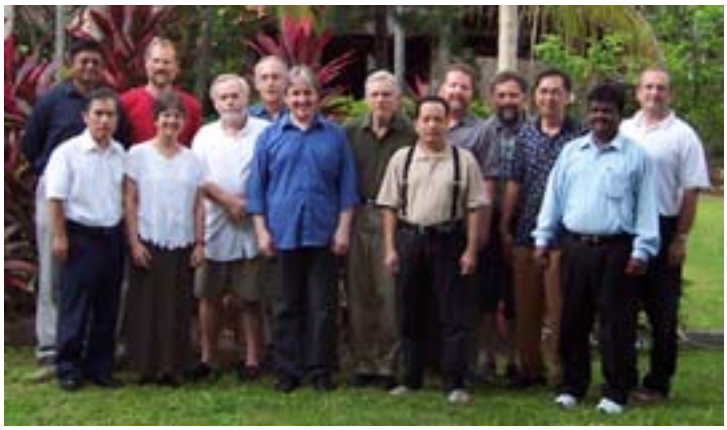
The group met December 5-9 in Bali, Indonesia, to consider organizing an international peace consultation in Asia in 2007. The event would be the third in a series of international consultations organized by historic peace churches.

The consultations are a response to the World Council of Churches, which declared 2000-2010 a "Decade to Overcome Violence" and encouraged historic peace churches to share their insights on peacemaking with other Christians.

The two previous international peace consultations were held in Bienenberg, Switzerland, in 2001 and Nairobi, Kenya, in 2004. Participants in each of the consultations shared about their conviction that "peace is at the heart of the Gospel - this is what we have to offer the world," says Robert Herr, one of the organizers. Herr is a co-director of the Peace Office of Mennonite Central Committee (MCC).

The meeting in Bali brought together 14 members of historic peace churches in Indonesia, India, Japan, Australia and the United States. The group appointed a committee to consider organizing an Asian peace consultation in 2007 and determining the location and date.

The committee will post information on this peace consultation when it becomes available at **www.peacetheology.org**.



Doug Hynd represented AAANZ at this meeting and wrote the following:

The workshop was an intense period of working together across theological boundaries, cultural differences and differences of context for Christian witness. My response to the experience of participating in this working party as a representative of AAANZ is best summed up in some comments I made at the closing worship session:

"We have been practicing among ourselves some of the disciplines that are a part of peacemaking...There has been much patient listening and careful asking of questions to clarify understandings across cultural and language barriers...I have heard a passion in our conversation and worship for the renewal of our communities of faith, to embody, to live out in practical daily life the gospel of peace and to do so for the sake of the

vulnerable and suffering people in our region. For the sake of the suffering, the marginalized and for the sake of the whole creation we have been urged to choose life.

My vision of those seeking peace as an expression of their discipleship or in discerning how we can honour that of God in every person, as the Friends might say, will now include names and faces from the jungles of Kalimantan to the streets of Tokyo, India and central Java.

…It has been good for this ecclesially dislocated Australian of Scots descent and lover of the quiet Australian landscape to have been accepted for the purposes of this meeting as both a Mennonite and an Asian. That is I think a step forward that will encourage AAANZ in developing its mission and identity."

(A more detailed report of this meeting is available from the AAANZ office.)

Consultation On Anabaptist Leadership Development in East Asia

Representatives from China, Taiwan, USA, Canada, Korea, Japan, Hong Kong, Macau, Thailand, Philippines, and Australia gather in Macau for Conference.

Pastors, mission agency directors, mission workers, and seminary professors met from 13-16 March in Macau for a consultation on Anabaptist theology and leadership development. Mark and Mary Hurst represented AAANZ. Each day began with worship and devotionals on the theme of Servant Leadership. Papers were presented from each country represented. A listening committee pulled together seven themes in their final report.

Mennonite missiologist and long-time missions professor Wilbert Shenk opened the consultation with a paper entitled "An Overview of Mennonite Missions and Leadership Development in East Asia." Shenk said the basic Western model of theological education has not been changed for the past 200 years. This model "assumed that the church was located in a so-called 'Christian' society. The church's role in society was essentially that of chaplain whereas the fledgling churches in Asia and Africa were invariably minorities in a culture dominated by other religions." This insight led to discussion about developing relevant theological training in Asia that is different from this chaplaincy model.

One of the strengths of a meeting like this is the networking that is done between the participants. Learning about resources and hearing what others are doing in training leaders and developing theologies relevant to an Asian setting is important for these Anabaptists who live and work in environments where they represent a minority position.

The need for reconciliation was also expressed particularly from the representatives from Japan, Korea, and China. The listening committee report said "We need to do theological work which will address historical conflicts and tensions. We can do much more to model and teach reconciliation and forgiveness for all of society. Past historical tensions are being passed on to younger generations. We need to teach and model forgiveness in fresh ways."

Much discussion centred on the development of flexible, Asian based, graduate-level theological education with the purpose being to train a group of select church leaders who could then provide a stronger and lasting Anabaptist identity to the greater church. (Conference reports including the Hurst's paper, "A 'Down Under' Vision for Anabaptist Theological Education," are available from the AAANZ office.)

The Korea Anabaptist Center works with individuals, groups and churches to actively participate in the mission of God by cultivating biblical discipleship, peace and Christian community and by developing and providing resources, education, training and relationships in the Anabaptist / Mennonite faith tradition.
http://www.kac.or.kr/English/Home/AboutKAC/aboutKAC.asp

KAC staff

Waves Community Development Resources is a multicultural humanitarian team who seeks on learning, working, and growing together with local communities and international organizations to find peaceful and lasting solutions to human poverty, suffering, and injustice. They are currently working with the Bangsamoro people in the Philippines in their search for justice and peace by enlisting, training, developing, deploying, and managing peacebuilding teams throughout Muslim Mindanao—in partnership with local, national, and international organizations. www.wavescommunity.org

Dann and Joji Pantoja work with Waves

Bud Dahu Peace Pilgrimage

BY JON RUDY

One hundred years ago the US was entangled in a pacification campaign in one of its newly acquired colonies, the Philippine Islands. Tausugs, the stubborn group of dissidents inhabited the Sulu archipelago in the southwest extreme of the Philippine Islands. With pride in their history of governance by a Sultanate - which existed long before the Spanish and then American colonizers arrived on their shores - the Tausugs put up fierce resistance. They feared conversion couched as education as well as taxation. What the Spanish had failed to do in 334 years of colonial rule, the Americans were determined to accomplish by brute force in order to exploit the rich resources of this chain of islands. In 1906 General Leonard Wood mounted the 2200 foot volcano on the island of Jolo, ringed the rim of the crater with 790 US troops armed with rifles, machine guns and cannon and commenced to systematically slaughter 1200 warrior resisters.

The Tausugs, having fled to this mountain with families, placed their women and children in the crater of the volcano to keep them as far away from the fighting as possible. Reports are that the Tausugs, armed only with spears, knives and a few odd rifles put up stiff resistance but were overwhelmed by the US armaments. On 8 March 1906, after the previous day's heavy bombardment from cannons aboard a ship and on an adjacent hillside, the US soldiers rushed the top of the mountain, dispensing with the remaining warriors and proceeded to strafe a mosque in the crater where the women and children were gathered. This massacre, by local accounts, killed more than 400 women and children. Only six remained alive.

Later, in defending his actions against the massacre, General Wood alleged that the Tausugs used their children as human shields and that the women wore pants. The soldiers, he claimed, could not distinguish male from female in the heat of battle. This account is strongly rebuffed by local Tausug historians. Reports of this massacre incensed a segment of the US public already infuriated with US imperial designs. Among the most vocal was Samuel Clemens a.k.a. Mark Twain. The Bud Dahu battle/massacre made big sensational US news headlines and was subject to a congressional inquiry.

Jolo is one of those impoverished remote islands that many, including those in the Philippines, fear to travel to. It is a place that has experienced continual conflict since the early 1970's when the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF), led by Nur Misuari, initiated an armed struggle to reclaim Moro self determination. Recently it is alleged that the Abu Sayyaf has been active on this island thrusting Jolo into the spotlight in America's ghost war on terror. There is a huge contingent of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) on the island which, ironically, was hosting US troops conducting anti-terror training exercises just prior to the culminating event and 100th year anniversary.

With an approaching centenary of the battle/massacre, a broad coalition of civil society and local government proposed a year long commemoration of events including fact finding, truth telling and rituals of healing. This peace pilgrimage to Jolo Island was organized to coincide with the exact 100th anniversary. The series of events commemorating this battle/massacre included forums on peace and human rights, healing and solidarity and a youth drama depicting the Tausug historical view of events before and after the Bud Dahu battle/massacre. The culmination of the commemoration was for participants to climb up the mountain. Security was high with close to 100 heavily armed police fanning out all over the area, the Red Cross providing medical services as well as a civilian radio service offering communications for the climbers.

The justification for my joining this pilgrimage stems from a commitment to connect with Mindanao 25% of my time as Peace Resource Person for Mennonite Central Committee (MCC). Also it is my attempt to be present to the huge and widening Muslim/Christian fault line wracking the planet since this part of the Philippines is overwhelmingly Muslim. I tested carefully my participation as an American with partners and they confirmed that my presence would be a positive display of good will on the part of Americans not enmeshed in the US politics of power our government plays. MCC, as an American organization, was

asked to provide funds for a commemorative art piece. The words placed on the marker were as follows:

A Peace Marker for Honoring

A tribute to more than a thousand Tausugs who fell as martyrs to the Bud Dahu Battle, March 5-8, 1906

Let the memories of our ancestors be the legacy for those generations who will continue to work for peace and justice

Let their wisdom spread in manifolds so that peace will reside in our minds and hearts and finally reign in our beloved land

In remembrance of the Tausug men, women and children martyrs of Bud Dahu, Jolo, Sulu Mindanao, Philippines.

Installed on the 100th Anniversary of the Bud Dahu Battle, March 5-8, 2006 a peace offering from the Mennonite Central Committee (MCC)

This trip was an amazing opportunity to extend a hand across the cultural, religious and geographical divide that characterizes the current reality for the Muslim Tausugs of Jolo and American Christians. I learned a few important lessons on this trip.

First, my apology, made during an opening speech, was warmly and gladly accepted but they are firm in not pressing for such from official channels. They have no demands for apologies or reparations from the US government. They refuse to even request advocacy groups standing in solidarity with them to press the US for an apology. This attitude, from those known as a warrior people, is one of the most actively nonviolent attitudes I have personally encountered in Asia - nonviolent because it is completely non-coercive.

The second learning is that Tausugs do not see themselves as helpless victims of a brutal American Empire, then or now. They suggest that the 1200 mujihidin who fell were doing what warriors do, fighting, and there is no victimization in that. They acknowledge that the massacre of 400 plus women and children was unjust. To say the whole battle was a massacre is to turn all Tausugs into a victimized people and perpetuate the colonial habit of stripping colonized people of self-identity by ignoring their voice. The Tausugs do not see themselves as victims with regard to Bad Dahu.

The third learning I gleaned from this trip is that historical events carrying heavy emotional freight can be easily co-opted by people with political or power aspirations. I repeatedly witnessed this co-option which included a local politician advocating his plan, a person in civil society promoting his referendum for Mindanao agenda and even the history written by Samuel Clements for an anti-imperialist US domestic agenda. What is a fitting tribute that would honour the living and dead without using them for some selfish purpose?

Repeatedly throughout Mindanao when I encounter Moros (Muslims), they repeat the same request. The only thing that could symbolize US government contrition over past battles of domination including massacres of women and children, would be for the current US government to support their aspirations for having self governance once again. This is why they fought and why the wars will continue– until Manila and Washington understand.

Jon Rudy, MCC Asia Peace Resource, Philippines

"Aslan or Jesus?" reactions

Mark recently wrote a reflection on Aslan and Jesus which was published by Online Opinion as "Who does it for you? Aslan or Jesus?"
http://www.onlineopinion.com.au/view.asp?article=4076
Below are some of the responses we received:

Thanks Mark for the thought provoking article regarding the comparison of Aslan and Jesus. I was reminded that the joy of discipling is to always point towards Jesus within the relevant context within which God places us. Your article helped me review this concept.

Our oldest son came home from the movie saying it contained Christian concepts. Your article helped me see how we could have taken that discussion of the movie to a deeper level that is more consistent with the Lion Lamb of God found in scripture.

Carolyn Peachey Rudy
Davao City, Mindanao, Philippines

A good and timely intervention in the bland world of Christian commentary on ***The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*** movie. I especially liked your concluding paragraphs

However, C.S. Lewis casts Aslan in more than one guise, and several times refers to him as a Lamb (e.g. in The ***Voyage of the Dawn Treader***, Aslan appears as a Lamb to Edmund, Eustace and Lucy; and in ***The Last Battle***, the Lamb observes that Narnia is Aslan's and Calormen is Tash's - an intriguing statement in itself). See Paul Ford, ***Companion to Narnia*** (2005 edition), pp. 280-281, and 480-482.

Perhaps the rule of God is best portrayed (if we're limited to animals) by a lion-like lamb - as Revelation 5:5-6 suggests?

Rod Benson
Morling College

I have been receiving your AAANZ mailings for several months and appreciate very much the work you are doing to provide this rich source of information and ideas.
With regard to your piece in 0nline Opinion, here are some ideas that have been running through my head about Lewis, Aslan and art. [See article below.]
Since writing them, I have read Rowan Williams' ***Grace and Necessity*** which contains some strong views about the role of art and the danger of religious people simply seeing art as a way of supporting their propositional theology.
I am somewhat alarmed when I hear of book titles like ***Narnia Explained***. You will understand why.

Mac Nicoll
Princes Hill, Victoria

Art, C.S.Lewis and Some Reflections

Thirty years ago I loved reading the Narnia stories to our daughters and I gained some profound insights about life as a result. I recently saw the current Disney film and was once again deeply moved by the account of Aslan's death and resurrection.

Why then am I so disturbed by the way in which some Christians overseas are using the film as a tool for

evangelism, preparing study material to explicitly link this superb fantasy with the Christian faith?

I suspect it's something to do with the authentic role of the artist in the culture. I have a brother-in-law and a wife who are both artists and Christians. While their work is an expression of who they are, they would both be uncomfortable to be asked what a painting means, for they would want to emphasise the role of viewers in finding their own meaning from the painting.

So it is with literature. The great value of Lewis' Narnia stories will be experienced as people read the book or view the film, but as soon as others with a vested interest begin to intrude and to direct the reader or viewer to a particular meaning there is a great danger that the power and beauty of the work will be lost.

I am uncomfortable that some Christians are trying to capitalise on Lewis' work rather than standing back a little and allowing the story to speak for itself in a variety of ways. ***The Lion, The Witch and the Wardrobe*** is not a substitute for the renowned book ***Mere Christianity*** and I fear that the attempt to make it so does an injustice both to Lewis and to the Christian faith.

We have already seen newspaper articles pointing out, with some validity, that Lewis' stories can be seen as sexist, monarchist and racist. This sort of criticism, although it ignores the cultural context, is what happens when we begin to conscript art for some ulterior, even if noble, purpose.

Lewis was one of the finest Christian apologists of the twentieth century and his writings continue to engage people. By all means let us promote his work but let us beware lest we exalt his writings to the status of Holy Writ and somehow therefore rob them of their power to charm and inspire today's readers.

A friend who is both an artist and a Christian sent me this quotation from Susan Sontag's book ***Against Interpretation*** [Vintage, 1994]

"Real art has the capacity to make us nervous. By reducing the work of art to its content and then interpreting that, one tames the work of art. Interpretation makes art manageable, comfortable."

Sontag's comment reminds me of a memorable statement in Thomas Howard's autobiographical ***Christ The Tiger***. [Shaw, 1967]

"In the figure of Jesus the Christ there is something that escapes us. He has been the subject of the greatest efforts at systematization in the history of man. But anyone who has ever tried this has had, in the end, to admit that the seams keep bursting. He sooner or later discovers that he is in touch, not with a pale Galilean, but with a towering and furious figure who will not be managed."

CS Lewis Conference

Sydney – May 4-6, 2006

A major Australian conference for educators, academics and the general public, exploring the life and faith of C. S. Lewis

The program includes speakers, workshops and events based around Lewis's fiction, his Christian writing, and his own life's story.

KEYNOTE ADDRESS: Douglas Gresham (stepson of C. S. Lewis and author of ***Lenten Lands***, ***Jack's Life: A Memory of C . S. Lewis*** and co-producer of the film ***The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe***)

For Further Information Contact:

CASE: (02) 9381 1730 • case@newcollege.unsw.edu.au
www.case.edu.au (Centre for Apologetic Scholarship and Education, New College, University of NSW)
MCSI: (02)9850 6133 • integrating@mcsi.edu.au
www.mcsi.edu.au (Macquarie Christian Studies Institute; Macquarie University)

BOOK REVIEWS AND RESOURCES

Conscientious Objection to Military Service in Australia and New Zealand

In early January this year a story was floated by the Australian media and was immediately met with cries of alarm by politicians of all stripes. "Bring back the draft, cries Young ALP" was the headline in one Sydney newspaper. The story lasted a day. It was a bit of a beat-up really. Young Labor was not talking about a draft; they wanted "compulsory national service for high school students as part of their graduation." They are interested in high school students receiving a "well-rounded education." The group's president, Sam Dastyari, said there were too many young people who were not willing to contribute to society. "It does not mean you would have to do military service or be an army cadet," he said. "You can learn more from working in the community than you can behind a desk in a class," he said. "It is only fair that after having been given so much from the community during your schooling years, students should be required to formally contribute to Australian society." (***Sydney Morning Herald***, January 6, 2006)

What was interesting was how quickly this idea was seen as a non-starter by all the politicians I saw interviewed on the TV news. There are still strong feelings remaining from the last time the Australian government instituted national service in 1964. The policy sparked mass protests and was opposed by the ALP at elections in 1966, 1969 and 1972. One of Gough Whitlam's first actions on being elected prime minister in 1972 was to abolish it.

Then I read this letter in ***The Mennonite*** (December 20, 2005):

"As part of my doctoral research, I have identified six young Mennonite men who died in Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, after incarceration as conscientious objectors…Two other young men died in the training camps…These men were among more than 30 who died in the United States during World War I as conscientious objectors. Their treatment included torture, death threats, solitary confinement, exposure and starvation. Their lives and deaths have been overlooked in Mennonite history, and I hope to be able to reconstruct enough details so they can be remembered as the martyrs for their beliefs that they were …"

A number of books and articles have been written about North American Mennonite and Amish young men who suffered

for their beliefs during the first two World Wars. What has been written about conscientious objectors (CO's) to war in Australia and New Zealand?

An internet search for CO's in Australia did not produce much. I discovered one scholarly book written on the subject, ***Peacemongers: Conscientious Objectors to Military Service in Australia, 1911-1945*** (Fremantle Arts Centre Press, Fremantle, 1997). The author, Bobbie Oliver, "shows ably and well the contempt, abuse, official harassment, fines and jailings which were the lot of many of those who chose to take a public stand for what they believed. Most were members of smaller Christian sects, with some members of the mainstream denominations and a few whose motivation was other than religious, and it was mostly their religious faith which sustained their opposition." According to the review I read, "Oliver demonstrates that harsh penalties did little to change the position of individual objectors, and that the existence of provisions for exemption did not undermine recruiting for the armed forces - by the end of 1943 only 0.3 per cent of those eligible for military service had applied for exemption."

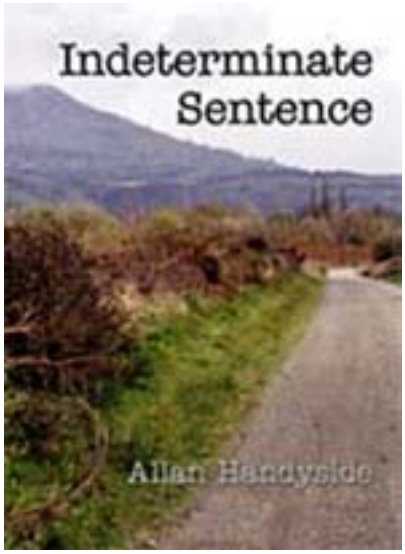
An article by Moira Coombs, "Conscientious Objection to Military Service in Australia" (***Australian Journal of Politics and History***, No. 31, 11 April 2003) was enlightening about the history of CO status in Australia. I learned that "almost from Federation, Australia recognised the validity of conscientious objection to military service. Australia's Defence Act 1903 was the first national legislation to grant total exemption from military service on the grounds of conscientious belief for those who could prove that the doctrines of their religion forbade them to bear arms or perform military service. In 1910, the Defence Act was amended to remove the reference to religion and referred instead to persons being able to satisfy the prescribed authority that their conscientious beliefs did not allow them to bear arms."

"However, CO did not apply to the universal compulsory military training scheme that operated between 1911 and 1929 for males aged 12 to 26 years. Those who objected, including the fathers of minors, faced fines and/or gaol. Some boys suffered solitary confinement in Army gaols. As there was no conscription during WWI (two referenda supporting the introduction of conscription were defeated), the application of the law relating to actual combat service remained untested until the following war. Conscription was introduced during WWII for service within Australia but the area of service was extended to the southwest Pacific zone in 1943. The Defence Act (No 2) 1939 broadened the definition of "conscientious" to include all beliefs, not just religious beliefs or doctrine, thus allowing members of a non-pacifist church to hold pacifist views as individuals. About one per cent of all conscripts applied for CO exemptions, and a quarter of these were rejected. Most successful applicants performed non-combatant duties or civil work."

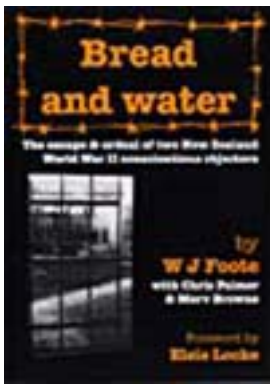
"Between 1965 and 1971 (time of the war in Vietnam), 733 men were granted total exemption, 142 were exempted from combat duties and 137 had their applications rejected. The Defence Legislation Amendment Act 1992 included the recognition of conscientious objection to particular conflicts and the requirement that prior parliamentary approval of conscription be obtained." With this act, Australia became the first and only country to recognize legislatively a right of selective conscientious objection to war.

But I am not satisfied with knowing only this factual information. What are the stories of the CO's who suffered for their beliefs? What sustained these men (boys)? What can we learn from their courage and struggle to be faithful to their beliefs? If you know of recorded stories of Australian CO's, can you please let me and the readers of ***ON THE ROAD*** know about them. This is an important part of Australia's history that needs to be shared.

Philip Garside Publishing in New Zealand (**http://www.pgpl.co.nz/**) has done a good job of recording and making available stories from New Zealand's CO's. We reviewed ***A Question Of Faith: A History of the New Zealand Christian Pacifist Society*** in ***ON THE ROAD*** #24 (September 2004). Two more insightful titles are ***Indeterminate Sentence*** by Allan Handyside and ***Bread and Water: Escape and ordeal of two NZ WWII conscientious objectors*** by W. J. Foote. These accounts from Kiwi CO's, called "conchies," show us the personal costs of taking an unpopular principled stance during times of war.



Elsie Locke writes the following in the Foreword to ***Bread and Water***:



"The heroes of war are publicly honoured, and their brave deeds are taught to children of the following generations. The heroes of peace most often go unrecognised, and their courage is little known outside their family circles; indeed, that courage is made to appear as cowardice. In both world wars in which New Zealand was involved, those who rejected the call to take up arms were harshly treated, and not only by the state." (4)

The author of ***Bread and Water*** says, "This story is a reminder that even in the greatest conflagration of modern times there were those who felt that there was a better way." (5)

Historic Peace Churches – Mennonites, Quakers, and The Church of the Brethren – had no presence Down Under when war was brewing early in the twentieth century but the Methodist Church in NZ spoke out on a number of social

issues, including war. There was a strong "Bible class movement" where many discovered through their study of the Bible that "war is contrary to the spirit and teachings of Jesus Christ." (20) The Bible class movement "had a vital influence" on the lives of many of the CO's. The author of ***Bread and Water*** said, "It provided a safe environment where young people could meet and have serious discussions on social issues. This sort of forum does not seem to exist today." (62)

In 1935, the Methodist Church made the following declarations in their annual conference:

- The Christian Church accepts as an integral part of her redemptive mission a duty to promote peace and prevent war
- We believe war is a crime against humanity and must be utterly repudiated as a method of settling international disputes
- We press for a world-wide reduction of armaments, limitations and control of their manufacture and sale. (11)

A number of Methodist young men took these words seriously and refused military service when it was demanded of them. Many were given "indeterminate" or "indefinite" sentences in detention camps around New Zealand. About 800 men were sent to these camps. These men tried to speak out about their condition. They wrote in a statement:

"We consider that it is contrary to the principles of true justice that any man should be imprisoned for an indefinite period. These camps may well prove an undesirable prototype for dealing with any special minority problems that may confront the Government in the future. We fear lest what is adopted as a temporary expedient to deal now with one particular minority group be translated by special interests into a fundamental political policy." (32)

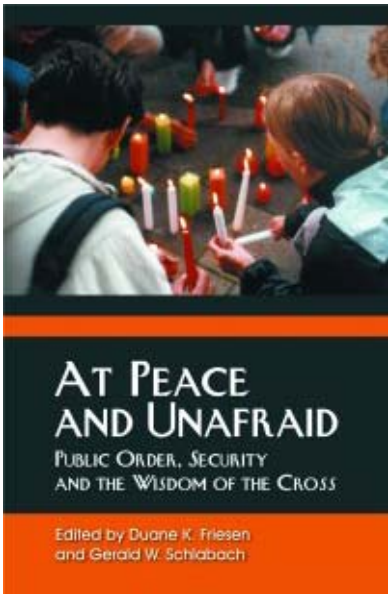
Detention camps were used for Japanese in the United States during World War II. The U.S. continues with this model at Guantanamo Bay and the Australian government uses it for immigrants they do not want. Governments tend to believe that "out of sight" means "out of mind." And sadly, they are often right. Few people in the general NZ population spoke out against these indeterminate sentences and the camps which imprisoned these men. The author of ***Indeterminate Sentence*** writes that "New Zealand had little experience in dealing with groups who departed widely from the average and that the community in general, '…showed a certain blank impatience in dealing with CO's'." (5)

Alan Handyside writes, "The greatest frustration for a pacifist imprisoned in time of war is that he is restricted to a passive role. Protest can be a very active and creative action, but one longs to be a peacemaker by involvement in a life of goodwill and brotherhood." He laments that by "saying 'No' to participation in war, the doors of opportunity for peaceful service closed for many pacifists." (13) Another problem was family tension over the CO's decisions. "Many found estrangement from parents the worst feature of our experience." (100)

These two books tell the stories from the men who were imprisoned for their beliefs. An interesting sideline is that "community" was another important value for many of these CO's. Some of these men went on to help form and live in Riverside Community. Pacifism was just part of their alternative worldview.

At Peace and Unafraid: Public Order, Security, and the Wisdom of the Cross

Duane K. Friesen and Gerald W. Schlabach, Herald Press (2005)



At Peace and Unafraid explores principles and practices to guide Christians in living out Jesus' way of nonviolent love in societies that often do not share their convictions. Commissioned by Mennonite Central Committee (MCC), the authors ask what faithfulness to Christ means in the context of:

- Violent conflict in Colombia?
- Conversations between Muslims and Christians in Indonesia?
- The Palestinian/Israeli conflict?
- A Christian politician in a poor neighborhood of East London?
- Mennonites serving in public office in Paraguay?
- A church congregation responding to a sexual offender?
- The post-9/11 challenges to democracy in the United States?

Duane K. Friesen was a professor of mine in the mid 1980's back at Bethel College in Kansas. Since then I have kept abreast of his writings in books such as ***Just Peacemaking: Ten Practices for Abolishing War*** (Pilgrim Press 1998), and ***Artists, Citizens, Philosophers: Seeking the Peace of the City: An Anabaptist Theology of Culture*** (Herald Press 2000). Friesen is a member of MCC's Peace Committee and has been an important voice of peace discernment for the Mennonite Church.

In the latest book he has edited, ***At Peace and Unafraid: Public Order, Security, and the Wisdom of the Cross***, Friesen along with Gerald W. Schlabach have put together a compilation of essays that directly speak to several simultaneous realities experienced by readers of this review. The first is being citizens of the US Empire or it's "Coalition of the Willing." The second is an affinity with the Anabaptist tradition. These two realities often clash in their understandings of what constitutes true human security.

Currently the Empire's foundational narrative has scarcity, fear and preemptive aggression as its modus operandi. The Anabaptist tradition, on the other hand, has abundance, love, and the redemption of the Cross as its prime narrative. The Empire has clearly embedded and articulated its values within American society. Retributive actions, redemptive violence and annihilation of the enemy seem like common sense reactions for threats to security. Anabaptists are just now beginning to find cohesive voice to alternatives views concerning human security. Our narratives of security are based on Biblical themes and stories.

Born out of an MCC Peace Committee, ***At Peace and Unafraid*** looks for ways in which Mennonites contribute to practical peace and order discussions in the communities where they live. The two-year study process, conducted by the Peace Committee, involved study and reflection, including five consultations and one international conference, bringing together Mennonite and Brethren In Christ members who represented a wide diversity of sectors from public life. The book is a compilation of the wisdom of this process. From essays on abuse, human rights, democratic engagement, and the theology of engagement with the state, the reader can gain from the experience of those who put their faith into action by working in the civic sphere. Included in the book is a perspective from the global Mennonite church. Essays come from those who are minorities, whether religiously or theologically, within their national context. These essays come from Indonesia, Columbia, Israel/Palestine and Paraguay.

For anyone from the Historic Peace Church tradition, ***At Peace and Unafraid*** provides both theoretical and practical examples of how we as the people of the Prince of Peace should seek the peace of the city (Jeremiah 29:7) where we live...be it Washington, Ottawa, Newton, Calcutta, Hanoi or Salatiga. I found this book wonderfully empowering for discussions about security with those who only have the Empire's view of our world.

Reviewed by Jon Rudy, MCC Asia Peace Resource

Where will they sit? The life and work of Mennonite Central Committee in the Philippines

edited by Benjamin Baniaga and Helen Liechty Glick, Mennonite Central Committee, 2005

This account of the life and work of the Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) in the Philippines is an unusual example of the institutional history genre. If you want to find out what the MCC from a program point of view was actually doing in the Philippines during any given period, for example, you will need to turn to Part IV starting at p.185 where you will find summaries from the MCC annual workbooks. The information that you might anticipate would form the core of the book has been relegated to a location where only the earnest seeker after enlightenment would go.

Similarly you will find little information that directly and systematically discusses the institutional structure of MCC activities in the Philippines. This is not to say that the information is not there. A good deal that is relevant to that issue emerges indirectly throughout the narrative as you read through the extracts from the stories of the workers from both the first period of MCC involvement after World War II, from1947-1950, and the second phase of engagement from 1977-2005.

The placement of the institutional program information after the stories and experiences of the MCC volunteers suggested something quite critical to me about the ethos and philosophy of the MCC as it came to expression in over three decades of engagement with churches and community organizations in the Philippines. The structure of the book suggests strongly that the orientation of the organization was strongly focussed on the people and the connections that the volunteers made. Formal programs were not the overriding concern of MCC and its volunteers. I do not mean to suggest that there was not intentional structured activity directed at meeting real needs. There clearly was quite effective program delivery by the organisation.

What I am trying to suggest is that there seems to have been flexibility in responding to emerging community identified needs and opportunities. The stories in the book tend to support to some degree at least my reading of the ethos of the organization suggested by the structuring of the books contents.

When I first started reading I was to put it mildly somewhat disoriented by being plunged into the middle of life in the Philippines. What I encountered was a collection of stories, testimonies and reflections from MCC participants arranged under three broad categories:

- Experiences of life in the Philippines
- The work of the MCC volunteers organised under the main areas of activity, from health and education, to justice and peace, relief, agriculture and reverse mission
- Reflections on life and work and the involvement of the MCC in the Philippines.

The extracts provided in this book are engrossing and richly textured accounts of the experience of volunteers. As I read my way into the book through the personal stories of life and encounter with the Philippine people, society and politics, my original unease and disorientation dropped away and I found myself moved and engaged with the scenes, the people and the realities of life for those on the margins of Philippine society.

I could almost visualise the scenes, feel the heat and sense the smells of travel and everyday life that are recorded in the letters and journal extracts. It probably helped that I had just returned from Timor Leste and Bali and could transpose my memories of the landscape and the people in contexts not too different from those described in the book.

What I found in this book was the expression in the reports of the volunteers both a spirituality of service and some sense of the costs and limitations of placing yourself as a well resourced and educated Westerner into a situation of struggle and deprivation.

I also learnt from these stories much about the reality of life for individuals in the Philippines over the past six decades. The accounts left me more sceptical about the depth and reality of political change and disturbed by how little democracy is actually experienced by many groups within the Philippines. I was also moved by the stories of courage and faith of many Filippino individuals and communities.

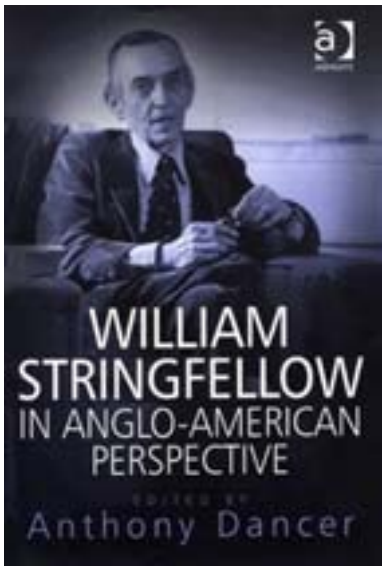
This is a book worth reading by those interested in the Philippines, those interested in volunteer work in a neighbouring country and those who want to glimpse an earthed spirituality of service and commitment to peacemaking and community building and an experience of the rich gifts that can be given by those that you thought that you came to serve.

If you wish to obtain a copy of this book you should try emailing Jon Rudy who is still in the Philippines n0nm@arrl.net or by contacting the MCC through their website: www.mcc.org

Reviewed by Doug Hynd

William Stringfellow in Anglo-American Perspective

Anthony Dancer (ed.), Ashgate Publishing Company, 2005.



The name of William Stringfellow (1928-1985) is not well-known to the theological establishment. This is partly because he was not a "real" theologian, in the professional sense of the term. He was an attorney who practiced law in the slums of East Harlem, but a lawyer who, by his own admission, found reading the Bible and, more importantly, listening to the Bible, to be one of the major preoccupations of his life, much more so than studying law. He was a grassroots theologian, one who discerned the Word of God in the midst of everyday life and who penned what Kenneth Leech calls "street theology, theology in a hurry".

Stringfellow denied that the political and lifestyle commitments he derived from listening to Scripture were "radical"; to him, they were simply an expression of being truly Christian, or truly human (which for him amounts to the same thing). But by anyone else's standards, Stringfellow was a radical – a genuinely prophetic voice who critiqued both American culture and the American church in light of the gospel and who earned the admiration of Karl Barth and Jacques Ellul. Indeed Stringfellow is the only American theologian whom Barth advised America to listen to. This is very interesting, for Stringfellow wrote theology in a different style than Barth, notwithstanding affinities between their views. Were he alive today, Stringfellow would perhaps be called a narrative theologian, one who considered biography to be the best genre for reflecting theologically on the meaning of human life. He authored 16 books before his premature death and had a significant impact on the likes of Jim Wallis, Walter Wink and Stanley Hauerwas.

Little has yet been published on Stringfellow, and the only Ph.D done on his work is that by New Zealand's own Anthony Dancer, currently the Social Justice Commissioner with the Anglican Church. In this highly engaging and well-written book, Dancer commends the legacy of Stringfellow to the current generation. The book falls into two parts. In Part One, Dancer gathers together a representative sample of Stringfellow's writings touching on such things as the centrality of the Bible to Christian consciousness, the unavoidably political nature of Christian commitment, the idolatry of American nationalism, the all-pervasive clash between the powers of life and the death (Stringfellow was, we are told, obsessed with death), the meaning of Christian freedom, and the character of Christian mission (which he rightly refuses to collapse into charitable deeds or mere social work). Included in the collection is an excellent short essay on the meaning of the biblical phrase "principalities and powers", which Stringfgellow decodes as the power of images, ideologies and institutions.

Of course some of the political comment Stringfellow makes in these excerpts is necessarily dated, referring to events in the 1960s and 1970s. But subsequent developments have only confirmed Stringfellow's prophetic prescience. For example, with reference to the Reagan administration in the early 1980s, he writes:

> I do not give much credence to conspiratorial interpretations of history, but I apprehend that the truth is that there are persons and organizations and financing resources seeking to transmute the mythology and rhetoric concerning America the holy nation into a political and ideological movement to 'convert' America into a so-called Christian nation…I conclude that such forces actually gather; they meet, they strategize, they launch pilot exercises, they recruit support, they get ready for their own style of coup d'etat. Meanwhile they manipulate Reagan and others who have power or influence temporarily, and they largely dominate and direct a vast, unfortunate, misled constituency, generally assembled as the 'Moral Majority'…(pp. 71-72).

The so-called "neo-con revolution" in America and elsewhere, the violent fruits of which we see all around us today, would have come as no surprise to Stringfellow.

In the second part of the book, a number of scholars offer reflections on the life, theology and significance of Stringfellow. Several of these essays are biographical in nature, which only adds to their interest. But the essays are not mere hagiography. Clearly Stringfellow had a tendency to dogmatism, extreme language and impatience with others. But these typically prophetic faults can be forgiven for, as one contributor puts it, "Stringfellow cared about the right issues" – poverty, violence, racism, and the fidelity of the church to the gospel of Christ.

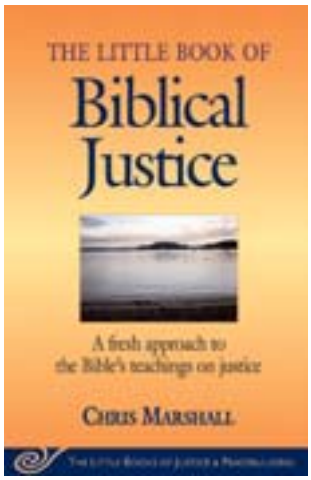
Tony Dancer is to be thanked for making this feast of theological reflections on the meaning of Christian discipleship, both by Stringfellow and by his perceptive commentators, available to the rest of us. Twenty years after his passing, William Stringfellow remains a voice worth listening to. His call for the church to be less religious and more biblical is as urgent as ever.

reviewed by Chris Marshall, Victoria University

The Little Book of Biblical Justice: A Fresh Approach to the Bible's Teachings on Justice.

Chris Marshall, The Little Books of Justice and Peacebuilding, Good Books, 2005

A few years ago now, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., in conjunction with New Zealand's Lime Grove House Publishing, brought out a much-needed book on a New Testament approach to crime and punishment by Chris Marshall called ***Beyond Retribution: A New Testament Vision for Justice, Crime and Punishment.*** I would



certainly list this tightly-argued book as one of the most formative influences on me in understanding God, righteousness and justice, containing as it did an excellent and detailed chapter entitled "The Justice of God in Paul and Jesus." I have occasionally wanted to share the insights of that book with others and found all too often that it is difficult to get people to sit down and read—whether it is because of the busyness of 'activism' or just everyday life, or perhaps because of the intimidation that a 'large', well-documented (i.e. footnoted!) book occasionally brings, or—worse, I think—because of the ethical blind spot among many who say they care about theology or biblical studies yet do not actually share the Bible's concerns for justice.

Well, to those who said "maybe later" or "too busy", notice is served: Marshall has now put together an accessible, biblical—and little—book on the nature of biblical justice that can be read and re-read in a short space of time and could easily serve as the basis for small group study or inspiration for a preaching or teaching series.

In less than 70 pages, Marshall introduces us to the variety of concerns that are caught up in discussions of justice—distribution, power, equity and rights—as well a tightly-packed yet highly readable study of the 'contours' of biblical justice. Close attention is given to the grounding of justice in the character of our Creator and its revelation in God's dealings with the world through Israel, beginning with God's act of liberation in the Exodus, and through Jesus. Thus, following Marshall's methodology, justice is not something we all know about (even if we keenly feel its absence) and which we then go to see whether the Bible or (particularly) Jesus is concerned about: rather the various overlapping concerns we call justice are seen properly only in the light of the rightness of God's character and the right-making nature of God's actions in the world. In order to understand the unveiling of God's character and purposes, close attention must be paid to the shape of the biblical narrative and hence Marshall sets justice talk in the context of shalom, covenant, torah, and the structures of deed-and-consequence and atonement-and-forgiveness.

This is particularly useful in showing how God's 'partiality for the disadvantaged' is articulated in Israel as a commitment which God expects his people to share but to be worked out on a variety of scales, from the national to the intimate, and embodies integrity in its means as well as its ends. As Stanley Hauerwas once said, Evangelicals need to understand more about 'justice' and liberals need to understand more about 'righteousness'. Both the sexually chaste Christian saluting the flag and the activist screaming through a U.S. air force base perimeter fence could learn more from Marshall about how these are interlocked in the biblical story.

The relational character of biblical justice also overthrows a dichotomy present in our Latin-based view of justice: that between justice and mercy. As Marshall shows, the biblical concept of justice as primarily restorative in its goals means that right-making involves a variety of processes and practices that aim at producing a healed and healing community: therefore forgiveness, mercy and community-building and not simply 'due process' and retributive punishment are essential to the proper execution and goal of justice.

Naturally, a large section is dedicated to seeing this integrated vision embodied in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. A quick survey of the gospel material demonstrates Jesus' pervasive concern for seeing the vision of justice that the Old Testament upholds being brought to its proper realisation in Israel through his own ministry. What may be more challenging is Marshall's concern to show the cross as not only an act of brutal injustice but the supreme place of God's saving justice at work. The challenge exists for those who feel morally superior to God to see God truly at work in this darkest of dark places in the cause of justice. The challenge for others more 'orthodox' is to grasp the deep logic of the cross in Jesus' refusal of vengeance and so a challenge to some theories of what happened on the cross in terms of 'divine justice'.

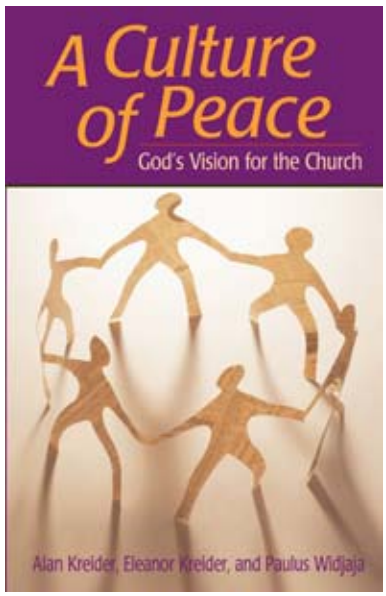
Where would a review be without some criticisms? Well, I have to say that any criticisms I have are fairly half-hearted. Perhaps a little more about the role of the Christian community as an instantiation of a "new form of human existence [which Jesus] initiated" would have been useful especially given the common idea that Paul is not interested in 'social questions' and since Marshall has written a helpful article on this. But one cannot do everything in a (little) book.

Read it, think about it, discuss it, share it. And then jump into ***Beyond Retribution…***

reviewed by Ian Packer, Sydney, Australia

A Culture of Peace: God's Vision for the Church

Alan and Eleanor Kreider and Paulus Widjaja, Good Books, 2005



Sometimes after a particularly stimulating trip for Mennonite Central Committee (MCC), say to East Timor or Iran, I sit in church and sing "The Lord is my tower, he gives me the power, to bring down the works of the enemy..." or "God is good all the time, he put a song of praise in this heart of mine..." Now these are songs I have come to appreciate in worship but sometimes I think their theology is only about a quarter of an inch thick. I need worship that explores the depth of human suffering or

brokenness and God's longing to reconcile all people.

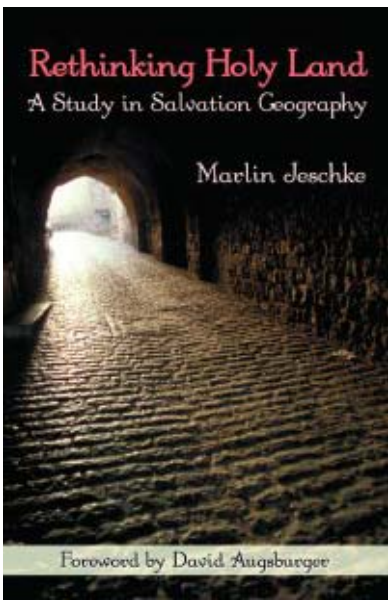
We know that we are ambassadors for God's new kingdom (II Cor. 5:20). We know that this new kingdom has a new order to it (Col. 3). This new order (culture) has shalom at its core. Shalom is peace, justice, security and right relationships all rolled into one. This is how we are to be living now in the church with a counter culture of peace.

A Culture of Peace; God's Vision for the Church is a book that challenges the church to be a culture of peace. Kreider, Kreider and Widjaja first do a mini systematic theology of how the Biblical record is one calling God's people to be this culture of peace. They then go on to test this culture in various settings such as the church itself, the work place and within the social settings where we live. They spend some time laying out what it means to be a culture of peace in war time and what that would mean for evangelism.

Much of what is written would not make sense to "real politick" think tanks in an age of terror and retribution. Yet the book is a re-centring on Jesus' good news. ***A Culture of Peace*** is a wealth of Biblical counter culture. Whether for a Sunday school study or personal devotions, it is a deep water drink for a planet made thirsty by perpetual war and insecurity.

Reviewed by Jon Rudy, MCC Asia Peace Resource

Herald Press Books



• ***Rethinking Holy Land: A Study in Salvation Geography*** by Marlin Jeschke

The author's vision for possessing land is a fresh alternative to the historical pattern of conquest and displacement of terrorized populations. Jeschke's careful reading of the biblical narrative offers a redeeming view for stewarding space on God's earth, a way we might call "salvation geography." God's design in salvation history is for a quality of life that sanctifies the whole earth.

"Marlin Jeschke offers an important, compelling personal reflection on the Israeli-Palestinian struggle. Using insights from a lengthy stay in Jerusalem, as well as a careful reading of the Bible and history, Jeschke argues for a fresh understanding of 'salvation geography' in which land is seen as a divine gift and not the subject of conquest. Jews, Muslims, and Christians have all been guilty of such conquests (as he demonstrates richly) and it is abhorrent to the heart of what Jesus came to announce." -Gary Burge, Wheaton College

"The control of land and the use of land are among the most contentious political topics of our time. Marlin Jeschke observes that land questions permeate the Jewish and Christian scriptures. Jeschke's fresh phrase 'salvation geography' makes land issues central to living the gospel, past and present." -John A. Lapp, Mennonite Central Committee

Marlin Jeschke is Professor Emeritus of Philosophy and Religion at Goshen College in Goshen, Indiana, where he taught from 1961 to 1994. In 1996 he and his wife Elizabeth spent four months at Tantur, the Ecumenical Center for Theological Study in Jerusalem. He is currently President of the Mennonite Historical Society in Goshen.

• ***Meditations for the Grieving*** by Richard L. Morgan

In this inspiring book of 30 meditations for the grieving, best-selling author, Richard L. Morgan, offers insight and spiritual counsel for those experiencing grief due to the death of a loved one, or the "living death" of Alzheimer's disease or other terminal illnesses. Each meditation is connected with a Bible story or verse and readings from valued authors and poets for personal reflection. This month-long collection of meditations uniquely speaks to the entire span of grief: from when death comes, through the difficult first days, to recovery when life for the grieving begins again.

"It is impossible to comprehend the anguish and sorrow of loss until death comes to someone you love. With the death of a loved one, a part of yourself has died, too. During more than 50 years of pastoral ministry, I have been with many families who grieve. Their stories inspired me to write these meditations for others who mourn. These meditations of Scripture, poetry, personal and other devotional thoughts were written to help you as you work through your own grief. I hope and pray that whenever death enters your life, robs you of loved ones, and launches you into uncharted waters of the grief journey, these meditations will offer spiritual help." -Richard L. Morgan

Richard L. Morgan is a bestselling author who has written and spoken widely on spirituality, aging, and grief. A retired minister and professor, he has also served as a chaplain in a variety of settings including hospitals, nursing homes, and hospices.

• ***Preparing Sunday Dinner: A Collaborative Approach to Worship and Preaching*** by Marlene Kropf, Rebecca Slough, and June Alliman Yoder

Surveys show that greater numbers of people say they are spiritually hungry. Yet in the past 50 years many churches have witnessed a precipitous decline in attendance at Sunday worship. Why are these seekers, and other Christians, not being fed on Sunday morning?

Using the metaphor of a meal, Marlene Kropf, Rebecca Slough, and June Alliman Yoder look at how preachers and worship leaders can collaborate on a "Sunday dinner" of praise that feeds individual Christians and their communities. They address the steps of planning, preparing, and hosting worship and examine some of the challenges and pitfalls faced by those who collaborate in ministry.

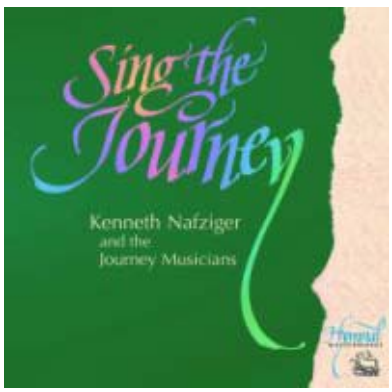
"The authors have mixed together the basic

foundational elements of our faith and worship tradition with a fresh integration of our world and church in our current context. This is a great resource for all who worship, but especially those who plan and lead worship."-Chip Andrus, Presbyterian Church USA

Between 2001 and 2003, Marlene Kropf served as director of the Office of Congregational Life and minister of worship for Mennonite Church USA. She continues part-time in that role while also serving as Associate Professor in Spiritual formation and Worship at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary. Marlene writes regularly for several Mennonite publications and was a member of the worship committee for the group that produced ***Hymnal: A Worship Book***.

Rebecca Slough's gifts in worship, music, ministry, and the arts come together in her teaching at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary. She is a musician, focusing attention on congregational song, and has done liturgical studies at the University of Notre Dame and Graduate Theological Union, Berkeley, Calif. She served as managing editor for ***Hymnal: A Worship Book*** from 1989 to 1992.

June Alliman Yoder is Professor of Communication and Preaching at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary.



• ***Sing the Journey*** CD conducted by Kenneth Nafziger and performed by the Journey Musicians

The 18 hymns featured are found in ***Sing the Journey***. This music is a gift of the spirit by which we mark and measure the life of the Church and its mission in the world, corresponding to the season between Pentecost and Advent.

Included are: One is the body; Listen, God is calling; We will walk with God; You are all we have; O hear my people; My soul is filled with joy; God of the Bible; Beloved, God's chosen; Just as I am; Rain down; Come and be light for our eyes; Somos el cuerpo de Cristo; How can we be silent; Creation is a song; The peace of the earth; Keep me safe, O God; Ubi caritas; and All will be well.

"Sometimes songs tell the events of our journeys; sometimes they offer directional signs. At other times they remind us of the destination for which we have set out, or they might ask us to look back and see where we have been.

"They are oases where we stop for rest and refreshment; they are statements of faith we have learned from experience. Songs give language and sound to our deepest longings; they document the conversations of the soul within itself, with members of the journeying community, between the self and the One who gave the gift of song.

"At all times, songs are found in the luggage that travels with us. At this point in the 21st century, the songs we carry are Spirit-filled, colour drenched, and arrayed in the sounds and experiences of many cultures and times. We are indeed a blessed people. The boundaries of ecstatic and agonized human utterance seem to have no end. The musical and poetic languages of praise and worship resist narrow definition. Therefore, we make our journeys, we sing our songs, and we offer our deep thanks." -Kenneth Nafziger

Kenneth Nafziger is Professor of Music at Eastern Mennonite University. He served on the committee that created ***Hymnal: A Worship Book*** and ***Sing the Journey: Supplement 1***. Performed by the Journey Musicians.

The Anabaptist Association of Australia and New Zealand Inc.

The purposes of the Association are:

- To nurture and support the Christian faith of individuals and groups in Australia and New Zealand who identify with the Anabaptist tradition.
- To network and link individuals, churches and groups of Christians who share a common Anabaptist understanding of the Christian faith.
- To provide religious services including teaching, training, pastoral care, mediation, and counsel to its members and others interested in the Anabaptist tradition.
- To provide resources and materials relating to the tradition, perspectives, and teaching of Anabaptists to both the Christian and general public.
- To convene conferences and gatherings which provide opportunity for worship, teaching, training, consultation, celebration, and prayer in the Anabaptist tradition.
- To extend the awareness of Anabaptism in Australia and New Zealand assisting individuals, churches and groups discover and express their links with the Anabaptist tradition.
- To provide an opportunity for affiliation for churches and groups who wish to be known in Australia and New Zealand as Anabaptists.

What is Anabaptism?

Anabaptism is a radical Christian renewal movement that emerged in Europe during the sixteenth-century Reformation. Whilst Anabaptism was a grassroots movement with diverse expressions in its early development, its enduring legacy usually has included the following:

- Baptism upon profession of faith
- A view of the church in which membership is voluntary and members are accountable to the Bible and to each other
- A commitment to the way of peace and other teachings of Jesus as a rule for life
- Separation of church and state
- Worshipping congregations which create authentic community and reach out through vision and service

AAANZ
c/o Mark and Mary Hurst
P.O.Box 367 Sutherland NSW 1499
Australia
02 9545 0301
AAANZ@iprimus.com.au

AAANZ Homepage on the internet
http://www.anabaptist.asn.au