weil auch im Blick auf Amerika seit der Eroberung durch die Europäer von einer wirklichen und beanspruchten Hegemonie des Christentums gesprochen werden kann. Möglicherweise ist die Suche nach einem Spezifikum also ein Irrweg. Vorläufig legt sich nahe, die Forschungsrichtung „Europäische Religionsgeschichte" nicht über ein Spezifikum der europäischen Religionsgeschichte, sondern bescheiden über die Aufgabe zu definieren, die religiösen Traditionen Europas in ihrer Vielfalt und ihren Beziehungen zu untersuchen.

Zander hat mit seinem Werk einen gewichtigen Beitrag zur Europäischen Religionsgeschichte vorgelegt. Auch wenn die Grundthese überspitzt sein dürfte, ist es ein Verdienst, dass er in komparativer Perspektive die Frage aufgeworfen hat, welche Bedeutung dem Konzept entschiedener Zugehörigkeit zukommt. Viele der Einzelausführungen sind anregend. Die Geschlossenheit des Buches wird jedoch dadurch gestört, dass der Zusammenhang mit der grundlegenden These in manchen Passagen (z.B. im 4. Kapitel) aus dem Blick gerät.

Michael Hüttenhoff

George Faithful*, Mothering the Fatherland: A Protestant Sisterhood Repents for the Holocaust,* New York/ Oxford: Oxford University Press 2014, xvii + 270 p., $74.00, ISBN: 978-0-1993-6346-9

In the fall of 2016, at an exhibit on the Jewish ghetto of Bedzin displayed in the Jewish community center of Scottsdale, Arizona, I met them for the first time: Christian women in religious habit who showed great interest in stories of Jewish survival. Once they learned that I have a German background and was responsible for creating this exhibit, we started to talk. Their motherhouse, they said, is in Darmstadt, Germany, but they themselves are living nearby in the Phoenix area, in a monastic setting called "Canaan in the Desert." The sisters are part of the Evangelical Sisterhood of Mary, founded by Mother Basilea Schlink. When inquiring whether Basilea was

related to Bernhard Schlink, the German author of The Reader, a novel about postwar Germans coming to terms with the Holocaust, it turned out that she is his aunt. A few months later, I met the sisters of "Canaan in the Desert" again during a Yom HaShoah commemoration in Phoenix. This time, they received honorary membership in "Generations After"—the Phoenix association of descendants of Holocaust survivors. Why would a monastic order of evangelical sisters feel so connected to the Holocaust?

With my interest piqued, I was elated to find George Faithful's thorough study of Mothering the Fatherland about the Evangelical Sisterhood of Mary. Established in 1947 in Darmstadt by the German Lutheran women Klara Schlink (later Mother Basilea Schlink) and Erika Madauss (later Mother Martyria), they created a monastic setting for Protestant women to repent on behalf of the German nation and other Christians for the Holocaust. They perceived the annihilation of Jews as a sin against God; only perpetual repentance coupled with a renewed embrace of Jews would be an appropriate spiritual response with utmost urgency.

Mixing contemplative piety with calls for active engagement on behalf of Jews, the sisterhood is unique in just about any way conceivable among Christian responses in postwar Germany. The Evangelical Sisterhood of Mary blends elements of Catholic monasticism and veneration of Mary (mother of Christ) with Lutheran theology, pietistic spirituality, and Pentecostal fervor. Abdicating any Christian attempts at missionizing Jews, the sisters subscribe to the apocalyptic views of dispensationalist-fundamentalist evangelicals. As a women-led group that has resisted all attempts to be put under male authority and supervision, they lived under the strict discipline of their charismatic leader Mother Basilea until her death in 2001. As Christian Zionists, they were among the first Germans to be permitted to visit Israel after its independence, working there as unpaid hospital assistants, and later, in 1959, establishing Beth-Abraham, a care facility for Holocaust survivors. The sisterhood started as an ecumenical movement

limited to their motherhouse location in Darmstadt, but when they later changed their name to "evangelical," they turned global in outreach, with locations today in over a dozen countries, including the United States, The Netherlands, Australia, Brazil, and Finland, to name just a few.

As a historical theologian, George Faithful focuses on examining the theology of its founder Mother Basilea Schlink, contextualizing it within a postwar German setting and showing how Schlink's prolific output of pietistic-theological tractates and publications grew increasingly at odds with the secular and consumerist outlook of West Germans society. In his study, Faithful keeps a prudent balance between appreciating the sisterhood's accomplishments and offering a guarded critique of Basilea's idiosyncratic beliefs and practices. This restrained approach is all the more helpful since previous research on Mother Basilea's work has either been highly laudatory by admirers or critical to the points of polemics by those who disagreed with her on issues of theological rigor or charismatic leadership style. It is with this in mind that Faithful's "Caution to the Reader," with which the book opens, needs to be understood. "My conclusions have met some controversy in the Evangelical Sisterhood of Mary," he writes, but at my

> "work's heart [is] the story of a handful women who courageously and creatively pursued love and peace in a time of hatred and war" (xi).

At the intellectual heart of Mothering the Fatherland is Faithful's exposition of Basilea Schlink's theology of guilt (chapters 1-3) and her theology of repentance (chapters 6-9); sandwiched in between (chapters 4-5) is a most insightful critique of Schlink's unreconstructed notion of Volk (people/nation/peoplehood), which she employs theologically to parallel and contrast the German Volk (understood as a national-spiritual entity) with the Jewish Volk (understood in biblical-theological terms, like Gottesvolk [people of God] or Bundesvolk [people of the covenant]).

The author demonstrates well the firmness with which Mother Basilea believed in the necessity of repentance based on the profound guilt that the German people and the German nation heaped upon themselves when murdering millions of Jewish people. In a brief but superb chapter on the Protestant church's position during Nazism and its public confessional statements after 1945, Faithful points out how strongly Schlink's insistence on the gravity of the Holocaust differed from the less forceful public confessions of the church's male leadership (among them the 1945 Stuttgart and the 1947 Darmstadt statements on German guilt, which consistently omitted any references to Jews). What happened during the Holocaust was, according to Schlink, not only a crime against Jews or a moral failure of the church but also a grave sin against God himself. Such a sin against God was in need to be expiated through nothing less than a radically new way of life that Germans ought to embrace. No return to normalcy and no lip-service of public statements would do justice to repenting Germany's guilt; only life-long devotion of intercessory prayers, contemplation, and practical care would prevent the wrath of God to descend on the German nation. Mother Basilea subscribed to an apocalyptic view, expecting Germany to be destroyed by an impending nuclear war unless Germany repented. Since most Germans were not ready to do so, the Sisterhood of Mary assumed the role of "priests" to do the work of repentance on behalf the Volk.

Monastic vows of celibacy, poverty, and obedience were the formal elements of creating cohesion among this dedicated group of women; specific gestures of expressing love to the Jewish people represented the distinctive specific style by which the sisterhood became known. For fifteen years, for example, the sisters in the Darmstadt motherhouse would eat "their breakfast standing and in silence, in memory of the victims of the Holocaust and in prayer of the Jews today" (p. 70). Or, to mention another example, the sisters created "Kanaan," sacred gardens filled with Christian devotional stations in an imaginative landscape of biblical Israel. In their Darmstadt

compound, Kanaan included a section called "Efrata," which was planted with desert-like plants "in sharp contrast to the conventional German flora elsewhere" in the garden (p. 196).

Theologically, the firmness with which Basilea Schlink charismatically pronounced her beliefs was rooted not in intellectual nuance and consistency but in the simplicity of a literalist reading of the Bible and inspired by the Holy Spirit. For example, Schlink rejected the anti-Judaism of traditional Christian replacement theology, which posits that Jews have been replaced by Christians as God's chosen people. Instead, Jews, for her, were God's people. "Schlink's logic was simple: Jesus loved Jews and whoever loved Jesus needed to love the Jews, too" (p. 71). At the same time, she held on to a thoroughly biblical image of Jews as people of God without accounting for modern Jewish history and identities. She did not distinguish between Israelis and Jews, secular and Torah-Talmud loyal Jews, or modern and orthodox Jews. Similarly, she held steadfast to the distinction between a German Volk and the Jewish people, utterly oblivious to the assimilated identity of German Jews pre-1933 or Jewish-German mixed marriages. In Schlink's understanding, post-Shoah Christians had lost any entitlement to proselytize Jews, but she also expected that Jews would accept Jesus as Messiah at the end-of-times. Finally, to name one last example, her adoration of Mary's self-sacrificial suffering for the sake of her son Jesus Christ became a model for the sisterhood's self-sacrifice in present times, including their demanding spiritual service for the sake of a wayward German nation (hence the book's title, Mothering the Fatherland). At the same time, the sisterhood's veneration of Mary remained very much within the devotional realm inspired by Catholicism, with no indication that Schlink was aware of the Jewish identity of Mary.

"Ostensibly innocent women," Faithful concludes his study,

> "cast themselves as members of a guilty people, enduring emotional distress in the present light of what they and their fellow

> Germans had failed to do to help the people God so loved" (p. 213).

In their monastic setting, they mourned the loss of Jews during the Holocaust. However,

> "their shortcoming in this has been that they have been more concerned with their spiritualized construction of Jews than with real Jews" (p. 212).

The American sisters of the Evangelical Sisterhood of Mary I met in Phoenix are today living in a community that is no longer guided by their spiritual founder Mother Basilea; they are also far removed by time and geography from the immediate struggles of guilt and repentance during Germany's postwar years. Yet, their love of Jews has remained strong. It is possible that this love now extends beyond a Christian image of biblical Jews and, instead, embraces contemporary expressions of Judaism and real Jews. The sisters I met attend Passover Seders hosted by their Jewish neighbors and they are reaching out to the descendants of Holocaust survivors.

Björn Krondorfer

Verena Pawlowsky, *Die Akademie der bildenden Künste Wien im Nationalsozialismus. Lehrende, Studierende und Verwaltungspersonal*, Wien/Köln/Weimar: Böhlau Verlag 2015 (Kontexte. Veröffentlichungen der Akademie der bildenden Künste Wien, Band 1), 125 S., 20,- €, ISBN 978-3-205-20291-2

Die Geschichte der künstlerischen und wissenschaftlichen Institutionen im Nationalsozialismus liegt bis heute erst in Ausschnitten vor. Das verbreitete Bild von den Künsten und Wissenschaften als unabhängige ethische Instanzen hat sich auf ihre Institutionen übertragen und eine kritische und politische Auseinandersetzung mit ihnen lange Zeit verhindert. Wenn sie doch stattfand, dann waren es häufig besondere Anlässe oder bevorstehende Jubiläen, die eine kritische Revision