Offenbarung voraussetzen als die ihr im biblischen Zeugnis anvertraute. Aber sie müsste von dieser her eine Tiefenschau in die Geschichte wagen und angesichts der eigenen, unsrigen apokalyptischen Ängste darauf hindeuten, wo sich Untergang vollzieht, wo Wende und was Neuschöpfung wäre. Sie wäre darin prophetische Theologie, aber im Gegensatz zu den billigen Fundamentalismen eine solche, die auf dem Niveau nach-aufgeklärten Denkens die vergehende Welt angemessen beschriebe. Das Buch bietet eine Menge Material für Fragen, die es nicht angreift.

Gregor Taxacher

Manfred Gailus, Wolfgang Krogel (Eds.), Von der babylonischen Gefangenschaft der Kirche im Nationalen: Regionalstudien zu Protestantismus, Nationalsozialismus und Nachkriegsgeschichte 1930 bis 2000, Berlin: Wichern Verlag, 2006, 550 p., EUR 29,80, ISBN:3-88981-189-2

Behind[1] the long German title of Gailus' und Krogel's edited volume hides a fact-filled, detailed study of regional German church history from the beginning of the Nazi era until the end of the twentieth century. (Both men are historians: Manfred Gailus at Berlin's Technische University, and Wolfgang Krogel at the archive of the Provincial Church of Berlin-Brandenburg.) The 19 substantive contributions, framed by an excellent Introduction and Epilogue by Manfred Gailus (who seems to be the intellectual driving force behind this volume), all fall into the particular field of "Kirchliche Zeitgeschichte." A literal translation would render this phrase as "contemporary church history," but that would misname its specific character: It refers to the study of the impact of Nazism on the German (Protestant) churches, including the postwar history of church and theology.

[1] First published in: *Newsletter of the Association of Contemporary Church Historians* (Arbeitsgemeinschaft kirchlicher Zeitgeschichtler), June 2007 - vol. XIII, no. 6, Editor: John S. Conway

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What distinguishes *Von der babylonischen Gefangenschaft* from earlier studies is its focus on the history of different regions—or better, on the specific contexts of the various Protestant Provincial Churches (Landeskirchen). It offers the reader an in-depth view of the complex interactions between divergent groups and individuals within each "Landeskirche" and the way in which these groups vied for power and influence during the Nazi dictatorship and the postwar years. This volume moves away from the earlier grand designs that tried to present the entire "Kirchenkampf" (Church Struggle) across the national spectrum (e.g. Meier and Scholder). What is emphasizes instead is the importance of finely-tuned local and regional histories.

It needs to be stated that in the last few decades German scholars have produced a plethora of local and site-specific church studies. Yet, most have remained unnoticed because they are buried in small regional publications, booklets, or newsletters of archives, churches and professional organizations. *Von der babylonischen Gefangenschaft* makes their accumulated findings available to an interested public. The material is worked into narrative overviews for each Provincial Church, deepened by new and original research, and generously footnoted for the experts. For this accomplishment alone, the present volume is worth having in one's library.

The long German title—which, at a first glance, rather looks forbidding—indicates a refreshing departure from more conventional "Kirchliche Zeitgeschichte." The main title, "Of the Babylonian Captivity of the Church in Nationalism," suggests a close link between German nationalism and Protestant mentality. Substantiating this thesis is part of a larger project Manfred Gailus has been pursuing (see, for example, his *Protestantismus und Nationalsozialismus* [Köln 2001] and his co-edited volume with Hartmut Lehmann, *Nationalprotestantische Mentalitäten* [Göttingen 2005]). As a modern historian (rather than church historian), Gailus argues that a fuller picture on the role of the Protestant churches can only be gained by understanding and incorporating the influence

of larger social forces--the "Protestant social milieu," as he calls it. Given the general mentality of national Protestants in the early parts of the twentieth century—monarchic, conservative, state-loyal and obedient--it is no small wonder that parishioners and their spiritual leaders were ill-prepared to resist the ideology of National Socialism and were, instead, swept up by the (messianic) promises of national renewal.

Gailus' suggested approach requires moving away from depicting the "Kirchenkampf" solely in terms of an internal church struggle, in which members aligned with the Confessing Church fought against the German Christians and against the intrusions of the Nazi-State. The volume's subtitle also reflects these changes. Its seemingly inconspicuous listing of the three terms, "Protestantism, National Socialism and Postwar History," points to two insights: First, we need to focus on continuity (not discontinuity) between the war and postwar years and not interpret the year 1945 as a clear break with the past; second, no study today should disregard the history of the field of "Kirchliche Zeitgeschichte" itself. The various waves of "coming to terms with the past" and memory politics (which Norbert Frei has so aptly called "Vergangenheitspolitik") within the Protestant churches and theology after 1945 are as important to study as the years between 1933 and 1945. In other words, when scholars pour over archival materials, memoirs, and secondary work, they need to be aware of how "Kirchliche Zeitgeschichte" has presented its "case" in previous decades. Gailus argues that one has to "historicize" the research itself. Eye-witnesses and scholars of earlier generations have certainly advanced our knowledge of the German Church Struggle, but today one has to be aware that their work itself was an expression of the social conditions and theological paradigms of their time and that, not too seldom, they were guided by personal interests. The field itself, hence, needs critical introspection.

Von der babylonischen Gefangenschaft is a far cry from earlier works on the Church Struggle, especially if one travels as far back as to the 1950s, when people like Wilhelm Niemöller

portrayed the Nazi era in the stark terms of a righteous Confessing Church on the one hand and, on the other, a corrupted and fallen church. Niemöller, as Norbert Friedrich points out in his chapter on the church of Westfalia, was not only a motor behind the early "Kirchenkampfforschung," but also a "decisive interpreter of his own family history," especially with regard to interpreting favorably the role of his brother Martin in the Confessing Church (p. 273f). Other publications on the "Kirchenkampf" were guided by hagiographic interests (lifting the few righteous resisters on pedestals at the expense of a more accurate description of the silence of the majority) or were apologetic in character, especially among those men who had been complicit with the Nazi regime. Gailus summarizes well the new departure he envisions: "Das Plädoyer für mehr Historisierung der Kirchenkampfforschung meint vor diesen Hintergründen, die um 1933 akut werdende schwere Identitätskrise des Protestantismus in längere Zeiträume einzubetten . . . . Die politische Zäsur von 1945 markiert in dieser Langzeitperspektive keinen wirklich scharfen Bruch mit der herkömmlichen national-protestantischen Mentalität" (p. 17). His plea for the broadening and historicization of the research on the German Church Struggle is put to test in the volume's nineteen individual studies on the Provincial Churches.

Appropriate for a volume that emphasizes regional studies, the contributions are arranged according to regions: the North (with churches like Schleswig Holstein, Hamburg and Hanover), Prussia (Berlin, Saxony, Westfalia, Rhineland), the Center (Thuringia) and the South and Southwest (Hessen-Nassau, Bavaria, Württemberg). Originally intended to include more "Landeskirchen," the editors regret that neither the churches in the Eastern provinces (Ostpreussen [East Prussia], Silesia and Pomerania) nor some heavily Nazified churches like Braunschweig and Mecklenburg could be covered. This indeed might be regrettable. However, given the size of the current volume (over 500 pages), striving for completeness may have simply overwhelmed the reader. As it stands, wanting to read all entries (as this reviewer did!) is already a daunting task.

Clearly, this book is not meant for a general audience, not even for a lay audience with a general interest in the German church struggle, since it is too detailed, too rich in information and too complex in presentation. But one may want to purchase it simply for its value as a reference work for select churches--and that, too, would be money well spent.

Von der babylonischen Gefangenschaft is an invaluable book for anyone interested in getting a more precise and accurate picture of how messianic expectations and national renewal variously tempted, blinded and convinced so many Christians in the 1930s. The various chapters trace individual people as well as church networks and associations (from the "Bruderräte" to Nazi-sympathetic "Glaubensbewegungen") through the years of the Nazi regime. It shows how Christians became compromised and complicit and how, after the war, they tried to exculpate, excuse or explain themselves. Along the way, the reader will also meet individual church leaders, synods, parishioners and theologians who resisted the Nazis from the very beginning. Others had a change of heart and mind at critical turning points of the Nazi dictatorship (for example, after the public performances of the Deutsche Christen, which turned off many churchgoers, or after the introduction of the Aryan Paragraph). Yet others remained loyal to aspects of Nazism until the end of the war, when German war fortunes had indisputably turned sour.

Perhaps the most valuable aspect of these regional studies is the contributors' unflinching look at what I would call the "gray zone" of human behavior: Christians made all kinds of compromises with the regime, steering a middle course that did not commit them too strongly either way. They became guilty more through passive silence than active participation (though plenty had actively participated as well, as these studies demonstrate). To the "gray zone" belong the uncountable and small day-to-day moral failures and betrayals: a head turned when neighbors disappeared; a public sermon not delivered when it would have been necessary to speak out; compassion not extended to those deemed "other" and "enemy"

by the regime. In the churches, too many parishes, synods, bishops and theologians were caught up in their self-referential, unproductive, internal fights--their Babylonian captivity! And when the war ended, Christian communities concerned themselves with the task of self-purification. Gaining permission from the Allies to purge themselves, their denazification efforts quickly pushed aside questions of guilt and complicity.

The individual contributors to this volume refrain from making explicit moral judgments and from entering theological and ethical discussions. This is due to their shared training and interest as historians, whether they are employed at universities, in archives or parishes, or as church administrators. Depending on one's perspective, one may welcome such restraint or find it unsatisfactory. However, despite the professional distance that the contributors maintain, the presentation of the material itself raises a number of moral dilemmas. Why were the Nazis greeted with such high expectations by so many Protestant Christians? Why did so much of the church discussions during the 1930s focus on preserving of one's own rights and autonomy, while one's fellow citizens disappeared? Why such a myopic, largely self-interested view? Why did the churches after the war not speak out more strongly for justice (that would have put perpetrators on trial) rather than trying to whitewash the culpability of individual members and the collective church body? What happened to antisemites in the church after 1945? These are relevant questions a perpetrator society needs to ask itself, especially as it considers the collapse of those cultural and religious institutions that, ideally and in principle, should have upheld standards of morality in times of crisis.

That religious institutions often do not move beyond the interests of their own in-group (at the neglect of the socially excluded) no longer surprises today. But it would have been good to occasionally address these issues head-on and to explore the contemporary relevance of the particularities of regional studies. Individual chapters come close to such a discussion only when they address particularly virulent antisemitic

church leaders or the postwar German church debates on the "Schuldfrage," the question of guilt (e.g. Björn Mensing for the Bavarian church, Gerhard Lindemann for Hanover, and Rainer Hering for Hamburg).

The nature of this edited volume makes it impossible to summarize, let alone critically assess each contribution. But it is important to commend the editors for pulling together chapters that are consistently of high scholarly quality. Equally important is the fact that none of the chapters centers on the grand moments of the "Kirchenkampf," on the well-known confessional debates (like Barmen), or on the hagiographic portraiture of such towering figures like Wurm and Meiser, Dibelius and Niemoeller. Thus, this volume thankfully avoids repetition of information available elsewhere. What the various contributions share in common, instead, is their focus on the many small groups of ministers and parishioners that formed in alliance with or in opposition to National Socialism; they focus on the biographies of lesser known figures in the Provincial Churches as well as on the debates among laity and clergy that form the backbone of parishes and church life. The big themes and recognizable figures do not, of course, disappear from view, but they function in these texts as markers and background to the new materials introduced here.

For example, the reader will learn about the church of Lübeck (which, in 1976, was merged with two other small churches into the "Nordelbische Landeskirche") and its "Hauptpastoren" Helmuth Johnson (NS-compromised), Axel Werner Kühl (chair of the "Jungdeutsche Orden") and Wilhelm Jannasch, an outspoken critic of the NS-regime. The chapter on Berlin, for example, does not focus, say, on Dibelius, but presents Karl Themel, a pastor who had embraced nationalist notions of race research. Joachim Hossenfelder, the Reichsleiter of the "Deutsche Christen," is put into the context of the small Eutiner Landeskirche, which, in 1954, reemployed him despite his blemished past. With respect to the Hamburg Lutheran church, we hear, for instance, about pastor Wilhelmi, who, by 1960, had finished a critical book on the church's

past, and how then- bishop Karl Witte prevented its publication because it shed unfavorable light on Franz Tügel. Tügel, bishop of Hamburg during the Nazi regime, had displayed open sympathies for the NSDAP and the German Christians. Wilhelmi died before his work was posthumously published in 1968. Or--to mention one last example--attention is not paid to Martin Niemöller, but to the biography of his lesser known brother, Wilhelm. We hear about Wilhelm's odd protest against the decision to cancel his NSDAP membership in 1933; in 1934, when the decision was rescinded, he rejoined the Nazi party, and from 1939 to 1945 he served as a soldier on the Eastern Front.

Gailus offers suggestions on how to think about the larger issues and themes that emerge within this kind of specialized research. Envisioning a new direction for the study of the contemporary history of German Protestantism, he lists four ideas: "historicization" as a way of investigating the field of "Kirchliche Zeitgeschichte" itself and of re-conceptualizing historical periods; "contextualization" as a means of embedding official church proclamations and theological/confessional statements into their larger social milieu; "regionalization" as a way of taking into account geographical and local differences in order to better understand attitudes and behaviors; and finally, "interdisciplinarity" as a multi-faceted approach to drawing a comprehensive picture. The few examples Gailus employs to illustrate these categories show him to be open to such new perspectives as gender studies, discursive analysis and auto/biographical research.

Gailus' vision, however, is not fully realized in this edited volume since these categories are employed unevenly by the individual contributors. With respect to "regionalization," there is remarkable consistency among the chapters, and this is the true strength of this volume. But in terms of "historicization" and "contextualization," most contributors pursue a rather conventional approach: They provide historical frameworks to the particulars of their research and survey briefly the relevant literature. Only a few authors address the kind

of broader methodological issues relating to "historicization" (e.g. Thomas Großbölting, Peter Noss and Norbert Friedrich) and "contextualization" (e.g. Thomas Seidel and Markus Heim) that Gailus has in mind. When it comes to reaching out to "interdisciplinarity," there is a striking lacuna. Although sociological data are sometimes incorporated, other approaches, like gender analysis, appear only in Rainer Hering's piece on the church in Hamburg and briefly in Thomas Seidel's contribution to Thuringia. Given the chronic underrepresentation of women in this field, and given the domination by men in the German (regional) churches, the absence of critical reflections on male discourse, male biographies, masculinity and the disappearance of women is regrettable.

It is fair to say that the framework of Von *der babylonischen Gefangenschaft* points to a new and welcome direction for re-conceptualizing contemporary German church history, but that the individual contributors do not yet fully realize the promise of such a refreshing approach. Still, the volume is a significant contribution to the field.

Björn Krondorfer

***Gerechtigkeit im Dialog der Religionen*, ed. by Elmar Klinger and Francis X. D'Sa in co-operation with Thomas Franz and Jürgen Lohmayer, Würzburg: Echter Verlag 2006, 226 pp, EUR 19,90, ISBN: 3-429-02793-4**

This book, the first in a series entitled *Missionswissenschaft und Dialog der Religionen*, culminates in the "Würzburg Declaration on the Dialogue of Religions". The conference at which this text was formulated in July 2004 inaugurated a foundation chair of Missiology and Interreligious Dialogue in Würzburg University's Faculty of Catholic Theology, and the book contains the series of papers, each followed by a reply, on which the Declaration is based. Noting that more and more people are losing out as globalisation spreads, it calls for "a 'globalisation' of justice and solidarity", inspired by a theology whose understanding of mission leads it "to intervene

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