

and Ernest continued corresponding for about a year until March 1936, when Bonhoeffer wrote his last – and clearly conclusive – letter to Ernest. The letters were carefully preserved by Ernest, who chose to keep them to himself, even though he was cognizant of Bonhoeffer's growing fame after the war. When the letters were found in 2010, however, he gave the responsibility for their publication to his daughter-in-law and Bonhoeffer-enthusiast Toni Burrowes-Cromwell, who then worked together with Stephen J. Plant to publish them.

The book does much more than simply present the letters. It opens with a careful introduction by Plant. It describes the background of the letters, sketching the context of Bonhoeffer's life and work in London, the nature of the confirmation classes Ernest took with Bonhoeffer, their joined holiday, and the subsequent development of their relationship. The second part of the book consists of the transcription of an interview by Plant with Ernst Cromwell, in which the latter recollects the confirmation classes and his friendship with Bonhoeffer. The third part contains the actual letters, translated into English and carefully annotated by an international team of Bonhoeffer scholars. These letters form the core of the book, even though there are only twelve of them, some of them very short and none longer than three pages. They deal with practical issues, such as arrangements for the Scottish holiday, but they also show how Bonhoeffer continued to mentor his friend in the Christian faith. In a letter dated June 8, 1935, for example, he reflects on the feast of Pentecost, making the observation that the Holy Spirit is the spirit of community, not just of any human community, but the spirit of brotherly love, a spirit that comes from 'above' and not from 'below'. Bonhoeffer-readers will recognise in this statement an echo of his first published work, *Sanctorum Communio*. But to Ernest it is presented not in convoluted theological jargon, but clearly and succinctly.

The fourth and final part of the book consists of an Afterword, written by Ernst's daughter-in-law. From her background in student ministry and social policy reform she describes the contribution Bonhoeffer's approach to spiritual mentorship can make to contemporary youth ministry. She emphasizes the value of Bonhoeffer's relational approach which focused on spiritual formation rather than on impassionate presentation of 'religious principles'. She also places much emphasis on the call to 'earthly responsibility' which she detects in the letters. She translates this call in today's world, emphasizing the importance for young people to be involved in social work.

In evaluating this book, first of all thanks should be expressed to Ernst Cromwell for making these letters available to the wider public and for commenting on his relationship with Bonhoeffer. The letters, as well as the personal story behind them, shed more light on Bonhoeffer as a spiritual mentor of the young. They also add to our knowledge of Bonhoeffer's time in Great-Britain.

The book is carefully edited, placing the discovery in the context of the Bonhoeffer-research. The Afterword by Burrowes-Cromwell continues an important tradition of Bonhoeffer-research, namely the effort to translate his legacy, indicating its relevance for contemporary debates.

Yet the Afterword also gives rise to some critical questions. First of all, Burrowes-Cromwell recognises in Bonhoeffer's mentoring a call to help young people develop a Christian worldview. In working out this worldview, she leans on the Reformed tradition. This is peculiar because Bonhoeffer's theology has a distinctive 'worldview' of its own: one in which the concept of *Christuswirklichkeit* is central. Yet Burrowes-Cromwell does not refer to this deeper structure. It can also be asked if she does not go too far in her eagerness to make Bonhoeffer's approach relevant for today's youth ministry, for example when she commends his method of writing letters for youth work, arguing that this will help to instil the virtue of patience (in waiting for the mail to arrive). These are only minor criticisms, however, as on the whole this is a fine volume that will make a notable contribution to Bonhoeffer-research.

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### *Cross and Kremlin. A Brief History of the Orthodox Church in Russia*

Thomas Bremer

Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2013; 178pp., pb, \$26;  
ISBN 978-0-8028-6962-3

#### SUMMARY

This is the English translation of a German book from 2007. It does a good job as a basic introduction to the Russian Orthodox Church, its history and theology, but the author brings nothing that is new and he shows no awareness of recent research in Russia itself. Bremer looks at the positive aspects of his subject and the reviewer misses attention to the dark sides.

#### ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Hier handelt es sich um die englische Übersetzung eines deutschen Buches aus dem Jahr 2007. Als eine grundlegende Einführung in die russisch-orthodoxe Kirche, ihre Geschichte und Theologie leistet es einen guten Dienst. Allerdings bringt der Autor nichts Neues und erwähnt auch nicht die neuere Forschung in Russland selbst. Bremer betrachtet die positiven Aspekte seines Themas und lässt die eher negativen Seiten vermissen.

#### RÉSUMÉ

Voici une édition anglaise d'un ouvrage paru en allemand en 2007. Il constitue une bonne présentation de base de ce qu'est l'Église russe orthodoxe, de son histoire et de sa théologie. Mais il n'apporte rien de nouveau et l'auteur ne

manifeste aucune connaissance de la recherche récente en Russie même. Il considère les aspects positifs de l'orthodoxie orientale et l'on peut regretter qu'il n'en relève pas les côtés plus sombres.

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'Russia is endless and Moscow far. Who is able to grasp our history and culture, our Orthodox faith and the faithless praxis of our pseudo-religious life?' These words of a good Russian Orthodox friend in Moscow set the parameters for anyone interested to write on any aspect of Russian Orthodox past and present. Thomas Bremer, a recognized German specialist on Ecumenical theology from the Roman-Catholic Faculty of Theology at the University of Münster wrote his *Brief History of the Orthodox Church in Russia* originally in 2007 in German. The book has been translated into a number of Eastern-European languages and appears now surprisingly unchanged in English.

After a short Introduction, the author covers thematically historical, structural and theological issues of Russian Orthodox Christianity through centuries of history. In brief chapters he divides the history of the ROC into five epochs (chapter 2), names the missionary expansion (chapter 3), discusses the ecclesiastical structure and the relationship of the church to the state (chapters 4-5), theological developments in the church (chapter 6), monasticism and spirituality (chapter 7-8) and closes his book with a chapter on the relationship of the church to the West and the history of dissent and splits (chapter 9-10). This thematic rather than chronological approach is highly interesting and helpful for what the author offers. The reader screens Russian Orthodoxy again and again with each new theme. In this regard the short introduction to the five epochs in chapter 2 is most helpful. The informed reader will, however, ask why these five epochs and not others; the divisions seem somewhat artificial, probably due to the brevity of the book.

The shortness of the book limits the author to a very broad introduction to the themes, which allows him to underline basics and to highlight a few historical figures and events. No in-depth discussions are given. Some paragraphs come across as impulses inviting to study more. The author seems first and foremost interested in providing an overview. He does his work well, but only for those less informed about the subject. The book does not offer anything new or raise any questions for ongoing discussion. Academic discourse is widely avoided; where it appears, it follows the pattern of older German scholarship. Contemporary historical research from Russia is nowhere mentioned. The publications cited cover knowledge available before the turn of the last millennium. This is the greatest disappointment with this book. Russian historians and church historians in other Orthodox countries have just started to recover the ecclesiastical memory of their church; significant research has been done since the year 2000 but none of this is reflected in the book. A revision of the first

German edition, which was published in 2007, would have been very helpful.

Writing from a non-Orthodox perspective, Bremer seeks to cover the positive sides of the well-known history. Tensions and splits are mentioned, but in such a way that the overarching positive impression stays with the reader from the beginning to the end. Laudable as such an approach might be, readers in Russia and elsewhere who discover the very complex history of the ROC with her heroic and dark sides may find such praises shallow and superficial. Russia and its church face enormous challenges. What they need is less repetition of the known facts, but a discussion of the hidden ones, uncovered and unjustifiably glorified. Bremer seldom points to the problems of Orthodox historiography with its immanent tendency of sacralisation on the one hand and forgery on the other. But if the project of recovering of memory in the ROC is to be successful, historians will have to ask deeper questions than Bremer does. The ROC seeks her future and the last chapter shall never be on splits and religious dissenters. This is how the first millennium of the ROC ended, but there are new signs on the horizon. This chapter of reform and revival, and of recovery of the beauty of her Trinitarian theology, must be added to Bremer's book. The book as written offers an easy read, but leaves the reader with many unanswered questions.

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### *Christology and Evil in Ghana: Towards a Pentecostal Public Theology*

Joseph Quayesi-Amakye

Amsterdam / New York: Rodopi, 2013; xi + 363 pp.,  
€ 80.00; ISBN 978-90-420-3753-3

#### ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Dies ist die veröffentlichte Dissertation eines pfingstkirchlichen Theologen, der christologische Ansätze innerhalb der Pfingstkirche in Ghana im Umgang mit dem Bösen untersucht. Der Autor steht seiner eigenen Tradition nahe und zeigt, wie die Kirche in Ghana zum Wohlergehen der Nation beitragen kann. Europäische Leser seines Buches werden ein tieferes Verständnis gewinnen für das Denken der zahlreichen Christen aus Ghana in unserer Mitte.

#### RÉSUMÉ

Voici la thèse de doctorat d'un théologien pentecôtiste, qui traite des approches christologiques de la question du mal dans les Églises pentecôtistes du Ghana. L'auteur a une perception positive de cette tradition et tente de montrer comment les Églises ghanéennes peuvent contribuer au bien-être de leur pays. Les lecteurs européens acquerront une meilleure compréhension de la pensée de nombreux chrétiens ghanéens présents parmi nous.