

much emphasises that the church is a spiritual reality directed towards the Kingdom to come that it almost neglects the fact that the church is also a profoundly human institution with a material reality and a particular history. Pace Kalaitzidis, if the church is to be renewed then it must re-envision (not 'reform') its canon law, hierarchical liturgy (which glorifies the bishop as an emperor) and theology retaining continuity through a 'living tradition'. Kalaitzidis, in fact, has made concrete suggestions elsewhere, not for ecclesial re-envisioning but a root and branch 'reformation' of Orthodoxy. However, I think that the vagueness in this short presentation is largely due to beginning with eschatology – swerving between the extremes of the already and the not yet. The temptation is to see the church as passing through the midst of history with its gaze fixed on the eschaton, surviving in this way the vicissitudes of history. History and culture for such a theology are not the essential garments of the body of the living Christ, the church, but at best afterthoughts to be abolished or ecstatically taken up into the life to come. The antinomies of history and the eschaton need to be kept in a creative tension through faith and tradition or the church either becomes static or erratic.

Nevertheless, Kalaitzidis' project is a genuinely new and desperately needed rethinking of the Orthodox Church's positive engagement with the secular realm, human rights and liberal democracy. The question remains, however, with the recent calling of an Ecumenical Council by the Orthodox Primates for 2016, whether the gifts and witness of academic theologians like Kalaitzidis will continue to be marginalised in world Orthodoxy or drawn on as a resource. The renewal of an ancient church stands in the balance.

Brandon Gallaher

Faculty of Theology and Religion, University of Oxford, Oxford OX1 2LB, UK

[brandon.gallaher@theology.ox.ac.uk](mailto:brandon.gallaher@theology.ox.ac.uk)

doi:[10.1017/S0036930614000830](https://doi.org/10.1017/S0036930614000830)

Angela Dienhart Hancock, *Karl Barth's Emergency Homiletic, 1932–1933: A Summons to Prophetic Witness at the Dawn of the Third Reich* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2013), pp. 372. \$42.00.

Angela Dienhart Hancock has written a gripping book. She wants her readers to understand Barth's homiletic, developed ad hoc over two semesters at the University of Bonn in pre-war Germany 1932–3, in the context of the Nazis coming to power. She links it in particular to the problem of *Gleichschaltung* or coordination of political, cultural and ecclesial institutions and all that that entailed. The result is a book which puts Barth's homiletic, which has come under some criticism in contemporary homiletic theory and theology,

against a stunning backdrop that only foregrounds the controversial claims of that work as an act of cultural resistance and at the same time faithfulness to the gospel. Hancock places Barth's work in its cultural moment and it makes for a compelling read.

The book is written in a focused and powerful way. Chapter 1 describes Karl Barth's development from liberalism to dialectical theology. Chapter 2 explores the difficulties of the Weimar years and touches on Barth's own social democratic political leanings. The third chapter, perhaps the most crucial chapter of the book, demonstrates how the rhetoric of Weimar and its propagandistic tendencies set the stage for Barth's theological intervention into the teaching of homiletics in the autumn term of 1932. As rhetorical context, says Hancock, the moment affected political, cultural and ecclesial life in the form of a longing for the so-called spirit of 1914 – a time at the beginning of the First World War when Germans felt spiritually unified and their churches were full. In chapters 5 and 6 Hancock describes, on the basis of course protocols and student recollections, not only the content of Barth's course on preaching over two terms, but also intersperses the instructional sessions with a week-by-week recounting of events in politics and in the church which impacted the unfolding seminar. She treats her subject richly and with exceeding care.

I can think of three types of courses where a book like Hancock's can and should be used. Preaching courses would gain great depth from reading a text where someone wrestles mightily with the theological implications of preaching in a most difficult context. Courses in theology would benefit from an on-the-ground reflection on the question of gospel and context, Christ and culture. Courses in particular on Barth would find in Hancock's treatment a discussion of the very contextual issues which often lie hidden or, worse, are sometimes obscured behind the bifurcations by which we tend to read Barth in our present theological moment.

At the same time, this last suggestion is also my greatest critique of the book. Hancock wants to convict homiletic theory, and in particular the Tillichian, David Buttrick, for not appreciating the strange features of Barth's homiletic for reasons which deeply relate to Barth's own context and historical moment. That may well be, but it is at the very least ironic. Indeed, some of the most compelling readings of Barth (I think of Douglas John Hall's brief treatment in *The Cross in our Context*) evince appreciation of Barth not solely because of his ability to say 'Nein' to culture, but also to engage it critically and contextually.

David Schnasa Jacobsen

Boston University School of Theology, P.O. Box 253, Boston MA 02215-1401, USA

[dsjacobs@bu.edu](mailto:dsjacobs@bu.edu)