

Politics and piety. The Protestant awakening in Prussia, 1816–1856. By David L. Ellis. (Studies in the History of Christian Traditions, 186.) Pp. xii + 337. Leiden–Boston: Brill, 2017. €189. 978 90 04 30808 4; 1573 5664
JEH (70) 2019; doi:10.1017/S0022046918002129

With its focus on a Protestant, neo-Pietist revival movement known as the Awakened, *Politics and piety* describes a contentious relationship with the mainstream Protestant Church, discusses the complicated changes in Prussia's religious environment and assesses the political implication of these changes from the Congress of Vienna in 1815 down to the start of the New Era in 1858 under Wilhelm (later king of Prussia, and after 1871 German emperor) as prince regent. During the decade or so that followed the end of the Napoleonic era, the religious environment among the inhabitants of Brandenburg and Pomerania – two important provinces within the Hohenzollern kingdom – witnessed a remarkable religious renewal. Fashioned and dominated by an aristocratic elite, this growth in popular religiosity, according to David Ellis, was encouraged by means of revival meetings, prayer groups, charitable foundations, lay preachers, vigorous proselytisation campaigns and sundry new forms of devotional expression. This reinvigorating process, he argues, was fuelled by long-standing resentment toward a perceived rationalism within the established state Church, disruptive bureaucratic interference in religious matters (including the fusion of Lutherans and Reformed into the Union Church of 1817, together with the liturgical changes that followed), and the perception among the Awakened of decline in both the function and identity of the region's aristocratic elite. The two decades before the revolution of 1848, on the other hand, witnessed a lessening of tension between the Awakened and the Prussian state as the neo-Pietist elite rallied to the state Church and a more orthodox Protestantism. This narrowing of the gap between the established Church and the monarchy on the one hand, and the neo-Pietists on the other, Ellis makes clear, owed much to the Awakened's willingness and ability to mobilise religious sentiment in upholding the existing socio-political order as well as to a more benevolent attitude from state officials in ecclesiastical matters, a process that picked up momentum after 1848. It was this new working relationship, in Ellis's opinion, that explains the post-1848 emergence of the Awakened as a major political force in Brandenburg and Pomerania. The mobilisation of religious sentiment, Ellis concludes, together with the adoption of new organisational forms and the creation of two widely-circulating newspapers, offered a threatened aristocracy both the means to combat revolution from below and a way of articulating resistance to the policies of a centralising monarchical state that menaced historically-sanctioned liberties and the privileged status of the landed nobility. Within the span of a single generation, Ellis claims, the Awakened transformed themselves 'from pariahs to powerbrokers' (p. 2). Although Ellis has much to say about this devotional renewal and how the gap eventually narrowed between the state Church and the Awakened, his careful, detailed analysis none the less tells us more about organisational forms and political goals or agendas than about religious belief as such. Nor does Ellis's account have much to say about the shopkeepers, tradesmen and peasants who made up the rank-and-file of the Awakened movement. He shifts his attention instead to those pious aristocrats,

estate owners, officials and army officers who saw themselves as a bulwark against bureaucratic absolutism from above and a shield against democratic subversion or revolution from below. Despite the pivotal role played by its conservative leadership after the mid-century revolution, however, the Awakened's achievements proved ambivalent and the legacy of its new position cast a long shadow. Competing agendas in the struggle against liberalism and the effort to restrain governmental growth created divisions among the Awakened's conservative leadership that exhausted all factions, preventing them from achieving the regenerated Prussia that they had envisaged. This divided and stalemated post-1848 movement was unable to stop a reactionary bureaucracy from reshaping the Prussian monarchy along more authoritarian lines. Ellis's willingness to explore difficult issues – the role of popular religion, for example, or the unintended consequences of attempting to repair or renew old forms of society – provides an important and more nuanced discussion of the cultural response to political and social change in eastern Prussia during the transition from post-Napoleonic reform to the emergence of a modern bureaucratic authoritarian state.

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MILWAUKEE

RONALD J. ROSS

Pitfalls of trained incapacity. The unintended effects of integral missionary training in the Basel Mission on its early work in Ghana (1828–1840). By Birgit Herppich (foreword Wilbert R. Shenk). Pp. xii + 372 incl. 6 figs and 4 tables. Cambridge: James Clarke & Co., 2016. £31 (paper). 978 0 227 17621 4
JEH (70) 2019; doi:10.1017/S0022046918002233

The history of mission has not lacked attention and in recent years has received some incentives from various corners. David Maxwell, for instance, argued for a revision of the relationship between mission and science, whereas Robert Woodberry saw a connection between the history of mission and democracy. The revisionist wave, in which studies of empire set out to re-explore mission, which had hitherto largely been regarded as a mere function of imperialism, probably reached a plateau with Andrew Porter's 2004 *Religion versus empire?*, and has continued ever since. One dimension that may have been somewhat neglected is the relation between mission and education, and it is here that Birgit Herppich positions her book.

Pitfalls of trained incapacity is a densely written study that takes the Basel Mission in Ghana as its subject. In itself this is hardly original. The Basel Mission has been of interest to historians and religious scholars for a long time, being one of the first missionary organisations. It was established by Germans and Swiss in 1815 as a non-denominational missionary organisation with a global aspiration. The Basel Mission was responsible for despatching workers to China, Latin America, various African states and Indonesia. Its first missionary project in 1828 was in the Danish territory in Gold Coast, present-day Ghana, which is a point of departure for Herppich's study.

The focus of her book is the Basel Missionary Training Institute, established to prepare missionaries for their work overseas. Training missionaries was, according