

The coverage of primary sources, both published and unpublished, is extensive and the bibliography alone would be useful to anyone researching British Baptist life and practice today. From a potentially bewildering amount of material and names, Goodliff presents a clear and engaging account of the time. His argument is always in focus, but the reader unfamiliar with the time and personalities is helped by the addition of biographical footnotes. Clarity is created by the early identification of a structure (the two streams) with which to assess the period, which is further distilled in the detailed examination of the work of the primary representatives of the streams, such as Paul Fiddes and Nigel Wright. Goodliff, however, resists the temptation of oversimplification and demonstrates that the concerns of the different streams were not mutually exclusive, but a matter of emphasis.

This book is a welcome addition to the growing collection of volumes reflecting critically on British Baptist theology and practice. The decade considered is within recent memory for many, and it may be that, as time passes, more themes and critical questions will emerge from this period. However, Goodliff's work raises a rich set of questions for the current leaders and theologians of the denomination to consider. As a minister in both the BUGB and the Baptist Union of Wales, I believe that this book should also be widely read by those in other Unions, as it offers a helpful prism through which we could assess our own denominational practice in context.

X Erich Geldbach, ed., *Baptisten weltweit: Ursprünge, Entwicklungen, Theologische Identitäten, Die Kirchen der Gegenwart*, Vol. 7, Heft 118 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2021), 475 pages. ISBN: 9783525565001.

Reviewed by Uwe Swarat

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Professor Emeritus Erich Geldbach (born 1939), an outstanding Baptist theologian from Germany with a prominent and long-time involvement

in ecumenical theology, serving in commissions of the Baptist World Alliance (BWA) for decades, has edited an omnibus volume on *Baptisten weltweit* (Baptists around the World). The volume includes no fewer than 30 essays written by 32 authors with a total extent of 475 pages. Apart from Geldbach's own essay (on the first hundred years of the BWA), probably all contributions were not written in German but have been translated. The collection is part of the series 'Die Kirchen der Gegenwart' (The Contemporary Churches), published in German by Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht in Göttingen. The subtitle of Geldbach's volume means in English: Origins, Developments, Theological Identities.

The 30 essays are grouped in five chapters: origin and development of the Baptist movement; Baptist missionary efforts; Baptist doctrines; Baptist women; Baptists in all continents. The last chapter is the largest: it includes two essays on the BWA; four on North America; three on Latin America; three on Africa; three on Europe; and four on Asia (including Australia and New Zealand).

Because I am mostly interested in Baptist doctrines, I would like to draw the readers' special attention to Steven R. Harmon's text on 'Das kirchliche Amt' (Ministry in the Church). He bases the ministry in the church on the threefold ministry of Jesus Christ as prophet, priest, and king. Christ's ministry as king is communicated to all believers as the ministry of oversight (*episcopè*). This ministry is exercised communally as well as personally, locally as well as trans-locally. Nearly everything in this essay meets with my approval — including the sentence that Baptist churches are not only independent, but interdependent too. However, what Harmon depicts as Baptist practice, is in two points not true for Baptists in Germany: our local churches have the threefold ministry of pastor, elders, and deacons and not the twofold ministry of pastor and deacons that Harmon considers as a typically Baptist order. And ordination is among German Baptists the prerogative of the Union, not of the local church.

Baptists who cannot speak German may be unhappy that this broad presentation of Baptists around the world is published in this language. But I can comfort them: Geldbach told me that an English

version is in preparation (by Wipf and Stock Publishers). Baptists in German-speaking countries may be unhappy that this collection, published in the German language through a German publishing house, does not include any essay on Baptists in Germany. Unfortunately, I have no real consolation for them. They must be content that the German-speaking audience will learn a lot about the Baptists outside of Central Europe. It is to be hoped that readers with a non-Baptist background will not be given the notion that Baptists in German-speaking countries are a negligible group — even in their own eyes.

**Beth Allison Barr**, *The Making of Biblical Womanhood: How the Subjugation of Women became Gospel Truth* (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2021), 256 pages. ISBN: 9781587435348.

*Reviewed by Laura Dijkhuizen*

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‘A biblical Woman is a submissive woman. This was my world for more than forty years. Until, one day, it wasn’t.’ (p. 2)

Professor Dr Beth Allison Barr specialises in the history of women in Europe, medieval and early modern England, and church history. Besides lecturing and supervising students in universities, she was a youth minister alongside her husband. He was a pastor in a Southern Baptist Church until he was fired over Beth’s ‘not staying silent’ (pp. 4–10) anymore regarding her view on complementarianism.

Although the occasion to write this book might be the loss of the job, the ministry, a church family, and a life she knew, it is not the motive. Barr has been teaching about women in church history for a long time and her motive is to remind her evangelical students who were mostly brought up in complementarian homes, of their historical heritage in which women have always played a significant role.

Barr challenges the claim of complementarianism as an important identity marker of ‘being a biblical church’. Through the lens of history, starting at the Roman time giving context to Paul’s writing about men and women, she unfolds the history of Christians throughout the ages. She reveals that societal changes have an important impact on church life and affect the way we interpret Scripture. This contrasts strongly with the contemporary teachings of ‘Biblical Man- and Womanhood’ in which different gender roles are brought forth as coming from biblical passages and in that matter have their origin in God’s perfect creation.

According to Barr, the way complementarianism is constructed is in contrast with the gospel and is contrary to good news for all creation. So how could this way of framing biblical womanhood become gospel truth?

While I thought I knew all the arguments for and against women in leadership, Barr opens a history I was not aware of, and I expect many European evangelicals are similar to me. The way she includes personal experiences, both in her family and in her professional environment as a university lecturer, enriches the book and connects with the challenges people (men and women) face within complementarian churches nowadays. In this way it resonates with my personal story and made me realise that the evangelical church and organisation I attended during the 1980s/90s, was very much influenced by leaders of the Southern Baptists in the United States of America. Reading this book was both a confronting as well as a healing experience for me and, as Twitter shows, for many others too. I highly recommend this book.

**Darren Carlson**, *Christianity and Conversion Among Migrants: Moving Faith and Faith Movement in a Transit Area* (Leiden: Brill, 2020), 308 pages. ISBN: 9789004443440.

*Reviewed by Will Cumbia*

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