

political content of sphere sovereignty—an attractive idea, it must be admitted—is unclear and leaves the practical consequences of the concept fatally vague. Furthermore, Dooyeweerd's emphasis upon the antithesis between Christianity and humanism, which for him meant that Christians could not legitimately combine with non-Christians for political purposes, appears to be rooted in the particular political traditions of the Netherlands. As a result, it holds little relevance for the American political scene with its basically two-party, limited ideology politics. The Christian social thinker will find these essays worthwhile reading as an example of Christian thought within a particular historical context, but will need to be selective in using Dooyeweerd's philosophy.

Roots of Western Culture is written in a ponderous style (perhaps the result of translation) that sometimes makes the ideas appear more difficult than they actually are. And, because it originally appeared as a series of articles, there is frequent repetition. Dooyeweerd, however, deserves more attention than he has received outside Calvinist circles. This volume is a good introduction to his thought.

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Karant-Nunn, Susan C. *Luther's Pastors: The Reformation in the Ernestine Countryside*. Transactions of the American Philosophical Society, vol. 69, part 8. Philadelphia, 1979. 80 pp. \$8.00.

It has long been a desideratum in the study of the German Reformation to have information of more detailed nature as to how the Reformation actually progressed at the "grass-roots" level—i.e., in the parishes. The present volume takes a giant step toward filling the sort of vacuum which has existed on this topic, as it carefully analyzes the situations, attitudes, and developments affecting local clergy and laity in Ernestine Saxony from the 1520s through about 1555. Indeed, the broad outlines pertaining to the visitations, establishment of the consistory, and political involvement (especially on the part of elector John Frederick) have long been known, but the unique contributions of the book here under review is that it adds a wealth of useful and fascinating detail—sometimes with surprises that may necessitate revision of certainly widely held viewpoints.

Following a several-page introduction, the volume has nine chapters: "The Evangelical Pastors' Backgrounds" (pp. 8-13), "Preparation for

the Ministry" (pp. 13-21), "Some Remedies for Clerical Shortcomings" (pp. 21-31), "The Pastors' Daily Lives" (pp. 31-38), "The Economic Position of the Ministers" (pp. 38-52), "Shepherds and Sheep" (pp. 52-56), "The New Ordination" (pp. 56-60), "Pastors and Church Authority" (pp. 60-70), and "The Ernestine Reformation" (pp. 70-74). It should be mentioned that the volume is in two-column format (8 1/2" x 11" page size), and each chapter begins within a column immediately after the conclusion of the preceding chapter.

The work was originally undertaken as preparation of the author's doctoral dissertation under the supervision of Gerald Strauss at Indiana University, and the author points out (p. 3) that the present study is based on that dissertation. It is also pertinent to note that the basic material in chaps. 2 and 5 have been in print before: chap. 5 in a slightly different version in *ARG* 63 (1972): 94-125; and chap. 2 in a German summary in Max Steinmetz, *Der deutsche Bauernkrieg und Thomas Müntzer* (Leipzig, 1976), pp. 150-156.

The first two chapters, in addition to their informative discussion of the pastors and their backgrounds, are enriched by tables of statistical information regarding the previous occupations of pastors ordained in Wittenberg between 1537 and 1550 and regarding the character and performance levels of pastors as determined by various visitations from 1526 through 1555. The tables illustrating the latter also categorize the pastors as to university or non-university education, with further classification for the former group as to which universities had been attended—Erfurt, Wittenberg, Leipzig, or more than one of these. The relatively low proportion of university-trained pastors for various locales—generally not exceeding 20-30 percent—is striking, especially when one realizes that the majority of these university-educated pastors did not go beyond the bachelor's level and that statistics regarding their "university education" may frequently mean little more than that they had matriculated at a university. Of ninety-six "university-educated" clergymen noted by the author, she found only one holding the doctorate, Johann Drach (or Draco), who soon took up scholarly activities at Eisenach and then university professorships at Marburg and Rostock.

The discussion of the visitations, in chap. 3, is enhanced by inclusion of Spalatin's list of problem areas to be considered, the articles for interrogation by visitors provided by Elector John, and the series of thirty-four questions for pastors and deacons and the five questions for peasants prepared by Jonas. This chapter treats also the development of pastoral supervision and the literature made available to preachers (including the *Betbüchlein*, *Postille*, and Luther's "Large Catechism").

The pastors' daily lives, especially as related to their economic situation, left a great deal to be desired, as aptly portrayed in chaps. 4 and 5 (especially did rural pastors need to engage in farming in order to maintain livelihood for themselves and their families). And the chapter on "Shepherd and Sheep" (the pastors and the parishioners) furnishes striking evidence that Reformation theology did not permeate the parishes nearly so quickly nor so pervasively as has frequently been assumed to have been the case.

The final two chapters, in their detailing and analysis of the administrative developments pertaining to the emerging Lutheran church in Saxony, provide further correctives to certain widely held assumptions, as well as enlarging our understanding of those early decades of Lutheranism. As important as Luther was personally in giving advice and supervision to the emerging church until his death in 1546, Elector John (1525-1532) and especially his successor John Frederick took church affairs increasingly into their hands. This was so much the case, in fact, that "during the late 1530's Johann Friedrich became vehement in his insistence that all decisions in church affairs be his alone" (p. 67). Indeed, there is evidence that he "employed visitation for purposes of imposing his influence on areas not under his rule," such as the lands belonging "to the bishops of Naumburg-Zeitz and the earls of the Reuss family," and that he "regarded the Wittenberg consistory as an organ of his government, a judicial arm with which to grasp his territorial church more firmly than ever" (p. 73).

As our author further comments, "From Johann Friedrich's perspective, the Reformation was most nearly a success during that interval between 1541 and 1542 when he was his church's supreme earthly governor" (p. 74). But the events of the mid-1540s, when the elector had to turn his attention to external affairs and especially as he met humiliating defeat in battle in 1547, altered the situation. During the decades that followed, "the ability of the superintendents in Thuringia and of the consistory in Saxony to administer the church when princes were unable to do so," led to advance; and these were "years when Johann Friedrich's personal church reverted to the status of a territorial church" (ibid.).

All in all, *Luther's Pastors* is a very informative and readable book, providing a comprehensive review of the various factors involved in development of the early Lutheran church at the parish level in Ernestine Saxony. The volume includes a fairly comprehensive bibliography (pp. 74-79) and an index (pp. 79-80).