

Robert Peters: *Oculus Episcopi. Administration in the Archdeaconry of St. Albans (1580–1625)*. Manchester (University Press) 1963. VIII, 116 S., 1 Karte, geb. 21s.

There are few studies of the working of Elizabethan and Jacobean ecclesiastical administration, and most of these are concerned with High Commission and the bishops' consistory courts. Mr. Peters has provided a useful and succinct account of administration at the level of the archdeacon's jurisdiction. In some ways the archdeaconry of St. Albans was not typical. It consisted of only 26 parishes, and was derived from the former exempt jurisdiction of the Abbey of St. Albans. Its archdeacon had no stall in St. Paul's Cathedral, and he claimed unusual privileges such as the right to grant marriage licences, usually an episcopal prerogative. The smallness of the jurisdiction, however, with the completeness of the remaining records, makes St. Albans appropriate for this type of administrative study.

The Archdeacon himself was a somewhat shadowy figure. Usually a rising ecclesiastic, involved in the affairs of university or diocese, he attended in person rarely. The true administration was local in character and fell mainly to the Official (the Archdeacon's permanent deputy) and to the Registrar. For the major part of the period under review the rector of St. Albans was the Official, or acting as his surrogate, while the Registrar was a prominent St. Albans magistrate. The enforcement of episcopal policy depended largely on a willingness on the part of these local officials to co-operate; and the Bishops of London seem to have found it quite impossible to obtain their personal attendance, when summoned to Fulham Palace, or their obedience to episcopal regulations.

The practice of the court in matrimonial, probate, and moral matters appears to have affected only those wholly resident in the archdeaconry, and therefore rarely extended to those of the rank of gentleman or above; but in view of its quite wide jurisdiction over clergy and laity it is apparent that its fees must have been a considerable grievance. At a time when the benefice of St. Albans itself was worth only £ 10 per annum, a fee of no less than 12d. was demanded when a non-preaching clergyman certified that monthly sermons had been provided in his church. The study does not throw great light upon the extent of Puritanism in the area at this period, but it would seem to indicate that Romanism was almost non-existent.

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Fairy von Lilienfeld: *Nil Sorskij und seine Schriften. Die Krise der Tradition im Rußland Ivans III.* (= Quellen und Untersuchungen zur Konfessionskunde der Orthodoxie, hrsg. von Konrad Onasch). Berlin (Evangelische Verlagsanstalt) 1963. 336 S., kart. DM 28.-.

Die Bedeutung des Mönchtums für die Geschichte der russischen Kirche und noch des russischen Staates wurde in Rußland selbst bereits im vorigen Jahrhundert richtig erkannt. Doch fehlten noch viele Vorarbeiten, um dieses Thema sachlich zu bearbeiten. Die Spannungen innerhalb der geistigen Strömungen brachten zudem die Gefahr einer einseitigen Darstellung mit sich. Daß aber auch die sowjetrussische Geschichtsforschung dem Mönchtum ein besonderes Interesse entgegenbringt, unterstreicht nur die Tatsache, daß Rußlands Vergangenheit ohne seine Einbeziehung nicht zu begreifen ist. Im Westen besitzen wir eine gute Gesamtdarstellung von I. Smolitsch, *Russisches Mönchtum, Entstehung, Entwicklung und Wesen, 988–1917* (Das östliche Christentum, NF 10/11, Würzburg 1953).

Die hervorragende Arbeit F. v. Lilienfelds gilt einer der großen Gestalten des russischen Mönchtums. Nil Sorskij hat nicht nur für seine Zeit, die zweite Hälfte des 15. Jahrhunderts (er starb 1508), große Bedeutung für das Transwolga-Mönchtum gehabt, sondern weit darüber hinaus durch sein Schrifttum gewirkt und der Mönchsaskese immer wieder Anregung gegeben. Daß freilich seine Richtung des Skitsvo der sog. „Besitzlosen“ oder auch „Uneigennütigen“ gegenüber dem Koinobitentum des Josif Volockij in der hauptsächlichen Ausformung des russischen Mönchtums verlor,