

Brecht, Martin. *Martin Luther: The Preservation of the Church 1532-1546*. Trans. James L. Schaaf. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 1993. xviii + 511 pp. \$42.00.

Martin Brecht's *Martin Luther: The Preservation of the Church 1532-1546* is the third and final volume in his monumental series covering the entire life span of Martin Luther. Because of the relative paucity of secondary coverage of Luther after 1530, this volume is the most significant of the three.

To be sure, the "late Luther" had not been totally neglected prior to Brecht's new book. Several Luther biographies give minor attention to the period, and there are also significant works treating specialized areas (e.g., Mark U. Edwards, *Luther's Last Battles: Politics and Polemics, 1531-46* [Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1983], and a multi-authored two-volume compilation of essays edited by Helmar Junghans, *Leben und Werk Martin Luthers von 1526 bis 1546* [Berlin: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 1983]). Brecht's publication is, however, the first to treat in a detailed and unified manner the wide array of significant aspects of the Wittenberg Reformer's career from 1532 to 1546.

In his foreword, Brecht has stated a reason for his choice of 1532 as a starting point: namely, his "expectation that there were new discoveries to be made in the relatively little-used later volumes of the Weimar Edition" (xii). Another justification for beginning with 1532 was that the inauguration that year of John Frederick as the ruler of Electoral Saxony brought to Wittenberg and to the rest of Ernestine Saxony a new, or at least intensified, political paternalism. Thus Brecht's publication gives us insights into how Luther lived and operated within a changed religio-political climate.

Even a quick glance at the table of contents (v-viii) makes clear that Brecht has left untouched no significant events, developments, circumstances, or situations relating to the Reformer during the last fourteen years of his life. Among the subject areas treated are Luther's completion of his Bible translation (chap. 4); the spread of Lutheranism within the German lands and elsewhere (chaps. 2 and 12); polemics and controversies that involved Roman Catholics (chaps. 3, 7, and 13; and *passim*); theological disagreements and disputes that occurred within Lutheranism itself (chap. 6; mainly the "Cordatus," "Schenk," and "Antinomian" controversies); and polemics that berated the Jews and the Turks (chap. 13). Also, there are chapters that provide glimpses of Luther's home life and personal affairs (chaps. 1 and 9), his activities as a university professor (chap. 5), and his role as a pastor and church administrator (chaps. 10 and 11).

In this volume, one misses, however, any thoroughgoing theological analysis at various places where such analysis would have been pertinent and helpful. Also, I feel that Brecht's attention to Luther's eschatological beliefs and concerns is too scant in view of the emphasis that the Reformer himself placed on them, especially in his later years. There is, for instance, not even a succinct example of the kind of treatment that has been given by Ulrich Asendorf, *Eschatologie bei Luther* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1967). In this matter of theological analysis, we can bemoan the fact that Heinrich

Bornkamm, known for his theological interests, was prevented by death from producing the third volume of what he had begun (earlier than Brecht) as a massive three-volume study of Luther's career.

Regarding Brecht's use of source materials, he points out that aside "from insignificant trivialities, every text [in the later volumes of the Weimarer Ausgabe] has been included in this presentation, although in different degree" (xii). But he also makes substantial use of the earlier volumes of WA, plus giving a considerable number of citations from various other collections of primary source materials. His huge section of endnote references (385-444) underscores the care with which he has worked.

James Schaaf, the translator for the English edition, has given us an excellent rendition (approved by Brecht himself), but he has done much more. Painstakingly he has searched out in the 55-volume American edition of Luther's works all references that can be matched with Brecht's citations of the WA, and has supplied them as supplements to the WA citations.

Two indexes (a general index for this volume, 445-460; and a "Subject Index to Volumes 1-3," 461-511) conclude the volume. Further enhancement is achieved by inclusion of a section of twenty photographs between pp. 14 and 15, and fourteen other pictorial illustrations (generally woodcuts) placed appropriately throughout the volume.

In every respect, this is a book that deserves to be widely read. And indeed, Brecht must be congratulated and thanked for his phenomenal achievement in producing the entire set of volumes.

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Cohen, Mark E. *The Cultic Calendars of the Ancient Near East*. Bethesda, MD: CDL Press, 1993. 504 pp. Cloth, \$37.50.

*The Cultic Calendars of the Ancient Near East* by Mark E. Cohen is a comprehensive study of the calendars and annual or semiannual festivals of much of the Ancient Near East, including Mesopotamia, Elam, and the Levant. Building on the pioneering efforts of scholars such as B. Landsberger (*Der kultische-Kalendar der Babylonier und Assyrer*, 1915) and S. Langdon (*Babylonian Menologies and the Semitic Calendars*, 1935), Cohen has brought together a vast and up-to-date array of material relevant to over two thousand years of calendars and festivals. Much of this material was not yet available to Landsberger and Langdon, coming as it does from more recent excavations, tablet publications, and studies of cultic calendars limited to certain cities or periods.

Cohen's intention is "to provide a basic tool for further research" (ix) by non-Assyriologists as well as Assyriologists. By making the material in this volume accessible to non-Assyriologists, Cohen has provided a valuable reference work for scholars and students pursuing various disciplines of Ancient Near Eastern studies.