

Koops, Enne, *De dynamiek van een emigratiecultuur. De emigratie van gereformeerden, hervormden en katholieken naar Noord-Amerika in vergelijkend perspectief (1947-1963)* (Dissertatie Theologische Universiteit Kampen 2010, Passage Reeks 36; Hilversum: Verloren, 2010, 414 blz., ISBN 978 90 8704 155 7).

The conventional tropes – the hard-won polders, the resolute dikes, for example – seem to represent a stubborn Dutch attachment to place. The truth of the matter is that the Dutch have been a restlessly migratory people. Between 1947 and 1963, some 410.000 Dutch emigrated, approximately 3,4 percent of the total population, second only to the Portuguese in the postwar period. In his thoughtful and well-researched monograph, Enne Koops seeks to explain the ideological history of this migration while avoiding the urge to ‘commemorate’ (25) that plagues some accounts.

Much of the impressive literature on Dutch immigration has focused on the seventeenth and eighteenth century colonial migrations, while elsewhere there is growing consideration of the nineteenth century neo-Calvinist emigration. Twentieth century immigration, especially in the postwar period, has received considerably less attention. Here the reigning interpretation stresses the era’s discontinuities. B.P. Hofstede, in his *Thwarted Exodus: Post-War Overseas Migration from the Netherlands* (1964), found that postwar emigration was of limited significance and was primarily connected to economic distress; once redressed by prosperity, migration quickly fell away.

Koops contends that this view disconnects the postwar period from the larger pattern. From 1947-1963, the number of Dutch emigrants nearly doubled compared to the entire preceding century. Koops argues, in fact, that the postwar emigration was part of a history that constitutes an ‘emigration culture’. This ‘emigration culture’ included the migratory traditions from which subsequent generations of emigrants drew, the images of

destination lands (especially Canada) that were positively conveyed to aspiring emigrants, and the institutions and organizations, such as the *Christelijke Emigratie Centrale*, rooted in countries on both sides of the journey which promoted and organized individual and family resettlement. Such an emigration culture has been especially strong among the mainstream neo-Calvinist (*gereformeerde*) subculture.

Early chapters provide useful background. If much is already known to specialists, it does have the virtue of providing a deep international context for both sides of the migration. Later Koops places the ‘push’ factors of the postwar Netherlands – economic distress, the housing shortage, fears of a Third World War and, importantly, the government’s active emigration policy – in juxtaposition to the attractive ‘pull’ features of glittering new opportunities in Canada and, to a lesser extent, the United States. Moreover, Koops’ research deeply encompasses both sides of the exodus. His concern is not only migration, but the social integration of new arrivals and, in perhaps a too-brief section, with the consequences of emigration for the society left behind.

One great virtue of the book is its comparative perspective, as Koops attends to the theological, historical, and regional factors that made the *gereformeerden* more inclined to leave than their confessional Catholic or *hervormden* counterparts, and to integrate with new church homes in North America. Here one wishes that Koops had been somewhat more energetic in including socialists and liberals in his narrative, the two *zuilen* given comparatively scanty analysis. Moreover, it is not quite clear that new church homes meant the same thing to emigrants as the homes they left behind. Clearly there was an immense *gereformeerden* organizational framework to help emigrants connect to North American churches, and Koops shows clearly a distinct institutional continuity between *gereformeerde* churches in the Netherlands and counterparts in North America. But institutions are not people. A new church may

not necessarily mean theological or spiritual, much less cultural, continuity. A new language, strange neighbors, and different liturgies mean that the new church is a place of some alienation, however ostensibly similar the theology on offer. Koops has provocatively asserted, but in my estimation not quite proved, that institutional continuity means ideological stability.

Likewise, he notes that while the data is imprecise, it may be the case that up to forty percent of *gereformeerden* emigrants did not take up regular church attendance once in North America. Hofstede stressed that many conservative migrants moved to escape the modern Sodom of the postwar Netherlands. Koops sees this differently, as those wanting to move are choosing to stay connected to a vibrant and dynamic faith. But in both cases, authors are at pains to explain why such significant minorities of migrants chose to break away from prevailing orthodoxies. No doubt many emigrants saw emigration as a Christian pilgrimage to a healthier economic climate, but so too many must have seen emigration as the best chance to leave the confining and confessional Netherlands altogether.

Cultural analysis struggles with cause and effect, in this case whether the greater organizational energy of the *gereformeerden* resulted from the demands of *gereformeerden* groups, or whether the organizational machinery itself fostered and encouraged the desire to emigrate. While Koops attempts an answer by tracing the emigration tradition among the *gereformeerden* back to the nineteenth century (and indeed earlier), and argues that that tradition became first institutionalized and then part of postwar emigration culture, the historical linearity seems a little strained. Clearly the early ideological passions became institutionalized, but it would have helped his case to show that the later emigrants were motivated by some historical echo, or an ideological mission of their own. Nevertheless, if cause and effect remain somewhat obscure, his analysis more than makes up for this

by its demonstration of consequence: there was a relationship between an emigration culture among the *gereformeerden* and the greater numbers of (and apparently greater success of) *gereformeerden* emigrants. This is an engagingly written monograph that advances understanding in this vibrant subfield of Dutch historiography, and the publisher is to be commended for the many charts, tables, and photographs that illustrate the text throughout. For English-only readers, Koops has distilled many of these themes in his contribution to the recently published landmark *Four Centuries of Dutch-American Relations 1609-2009* (Albany 2009).

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Van Kemseke, Peter, in samenwerking met Dendievel, Ward, **België aan het hoofd van Europa (1948-2010)** (Antwerpen, Apeldoorn: Garant, 2010, 191 blz., ISBN 978 90 441 2623 5).

2010 was een bijzonder jaar voor het Belgische beleid ten aanzien van de Europese samenwerking. Op 1 januari werd Herman Van Rompuy officieel benoemd tot vaste voorzitter van de Europese Raad. In de tweede helft van 2010 zat België de Raad van de Europese Unie (ook wel bekend als Raad van Ministers) voor. Men zou dus kunnen zeggen dat Van Rompuy en demissionair minister-president Yves Leterme in deze periode gezamenlijk 'aan het hoofd van Europa' stonden.

Het recente Belgische voorzitterschap van de Raad van Ministers was het twaalfde sinds de totstandkoming van de Europese Economische Gemeenschap (EEG) in 1958. De historicus Peter Van Kemseke, medewerker van de Permanente Vertegenwoordiging van België bij de Europese Unie, beschrijft kort en bondig de geschiedenis van deze voorzitterschappen. Hoofdthema is de wijze waarop België de positie van voorzitter in de