
Book Reviews

Dietrich Bonhoeffer: An Introduction to His Thought, by Sabine Dramm, translated by Thomas Rice, Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2007. 258pp., \$19.95 (paper).

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Dietrich Bonhoeffer: An Introduction to His Thought, by Sabine Dramm, translated by Thomas Rice, Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2007. 258pp., \$19.95 (paper).

This general introduction to Bonhoeffer's life and thought is to be recommended, in large part, because it makes the conclusions of specialized scholarship accessible. Relying on Eberhard Bethge's standard biography, Dramm uses Bonhoeffer's life and death "as the backdrop against which his faith and thought become comprehensible as a whole" (vii). Theologically, Dramm's guide is Ernst Feil's enduringly significant *The Theology of Dietrich Bonhoeffer*. Standing on these giants' shoulders, Dramm outlines Bonhoeffer's life and theology without requiring the commitment necessary to work through Feil's technical tome or Bethge's doorstep of a biography.

Because Dramm's work is animated by the conviction that Bonhoeffer is a special and perhaps unique theologian, much of her energy goes beyond simply introducing Bonhoeffer; she wants him to speak today. Thus she hopes her "project will serve as a bridge both back to [Bonhoeffer] *and* into the future," as an opportunity for Bonhoeffer to "infect" us, for his theology to "touch us in today's world" (5). These convictions, goals, and the sermonic language occasionally deployed to attain them are commonplace in Bonhoeffer scholarship, but they may feel out of place to the non-theologians to whom Dramm hopes to introduce Bonhoeffer.

Some infelicities of translation, together with errors of fact and copy, work against Dramm's effort for a hospitable introduction. One would search in vain for a copy of Bonhoeffer's "*Resistance and Surrender*," a title that correctly translates the German (*Widerstand und Ergebung*) but is found in no English version of the book that American readers best know as *Letters and Papers from Prison*. The errors sometimes come in bunches, as when one learns in the space of a few pages (pp. 69-73) that Bonhoeffer read Martin Buber (which was unlikely), that he studied under Karl Holt (his teacher's name was Karl Holl), and that he denounced the preaching of "cheap amnesty" (the phrase *billige Gnade*, perhaps Bonhoeffer's most famous, should be rendered "cheap grace").

However, these amount to minor jostles on an otherwise smooth ride. Dramm introduces both Bonhoeffer's life and thought in one manageable volume.

–Michael P. DeJonge

Do This in Remembrance of Me: A Ritual Approach to Reformed Eucharistic Theology, by Martha L. Moore-Keish, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008. 192pp., \$20.00 (paper).

Martha Moore-Keish has done an admirable job in applying the insights of liturgical theology to the Reformed doctrine of the Eucharist. This is a welcome departure from the traditional Reformed approaches, according to which theologians treat the doctrine under the theme “theology of the sacraments,” without regard for the ritual structure of the worship event itself. Moore-Keish implicitly recognizes this tendency when she observes that the Reformed tradition generally concentrates on doctrine prior to encounter with God in the liturgy. This has meant a neglect of the eucharistic action in favor of theological explanation outside the sphere of the liturgy. The upshot is theology *about* the Eucharist instead of theology *of*, or *emergent in* the Eucharist. Moore-Keish is interested in the latter. Rather than attempting to elaborate proper doctrinal formulations, she proposes to focus on the objects and actions in the ritual through which the Spirit may work to unite people with Christ and with one another – the goal of the Eucharist in the Reformed understanding.

Is the Reformed tradition hospitable to such a project? Moore-Keish claims that it is, citing John Calvin and John Williamson Nevin as allies. Calvin sought to recover a balance between word and sacrament, arguing that each requires the other. Nevin sought to restore the doctrine of the Eucharist in the Reformed tradition, advocating for the centrality of the Eucharist in Christian worship and life. Moore-Keish is aware, however, that the strand that has come to predominate in the tradition is not exactly open to an appreciation of the meaning of the Eucharist from the perspective of liturgical action. She singles out as representative of this strand Frances Turretin (1623-1687), whose *Institutes of Elenctic Theology* served generations of American Presbyterian pastors in their understanding of Reformed theology. Turretin’s theology privileged word over sacrament, doctrine over practice, and mind over objects and actions. For Turretin and his epigone, the Eucharist is an acting out of prior doctrine rather than a site of divine activity, of “holy encounter,” to borrow her phrase.

This sets the stage for the discussion to follow. Does the celebration of the Eucharist enact prior doctrine or does it rather create theology? In technical terms, what is the relationship between the *lex credendi* (the rule of faith) and *lex orandi* (the rule of worship)? Here Moore-Keish introduces the reader to the discourse of liturgical theology, which sees this question as its starting point. Recent liturgical theology has elaborated the concept of primary theology (*theologia prima*). Primary theology is the theology that emerges from the liturgy as the worshipping assembly encounters God in the worship event. Liturgical action itself generates knowledge of God. Moore-Keish helpfully surveys the

discussion among liturgical theologians about the implications of this claim. In the end, she demonstrates that the methods of liturgical theology have much to teach the Reformed tradition.

Liturgical theology's insights into how liturgy affects and transforms those who participate in it have been deepened by contributions from ritual theory. Moore-Keish complements her chapter on liturgical theology with one that explores this discipline. Rituals, among other things, create relationships, negotiate issues of identity and power, and present models of a world different from our own. But most basically, rituals are primarily about doing, a dimension that is easy to overlook in the Reformed tradition with its preoccupation with meaning.

Moore-Keish enlists what she learns from liturgical theology and ritual theory in the service of an extensive examination of a Eucharist in a local Presbyterian church. Here we see her apply that about which she has been theorizing. Her approach consists in a close observation of the worship event itself, textual analysis of the liturgy, individual and group interviews and a survey. Unsurprisingly, two views of the Eucharist emerge: one that focuses on the individual's personal relationship with Christ through prayer; the other that centers on the corporate sharing of the elements. The first represents the strand in the Reformed tradition the author criticized earlier. Interpretation is separated from practice; meaning from doing. The second sees the Eucharist as a ritual action that forms and transforms people over a lifetime. This is the view that she has sought to persuade the reader to adopt throughout her discussion. A ritual approach to Reformed eucharistic theology sees the liturgical event as a locus of God's activity. This is entirely consistent with the best of the Reformed tradition, especially as it finds expression in Calvin and Nevin. In the Eucharist God acts through our acting, moving in sovereign freedom to unite our humanity with the fullness of Christ.

I can fully recommend this accessible and informative study on Reformed eucharistic theology, which the author develops by means of the tools that liturgical theology and ritual theory provide. I see it as a primer on subjects that are less familiar to Presbyterians and Reformed Christians than to Roman Catholics and Anglicans. My hope is that it is read and will serve to impress on worship planners and pastors in the Presbyterian and Reformed churches the importance of careful preparation and performance of the liturgy.

–Christopher Dorn

King and Messiah as Son of God: Divine, Human and Angelic Messianic Figures in Biblical and Related Literature, by Adela Yarbro Collins and John J. Collins, Grand Rapids; Eerdmans, 2008. xiv, 261pp., \$28.00 (paper).

Was the Jewish messiah believed to be divine? The answer, based on this wide-ranging study of the Old Testament, Second Temple literature, and the New Testament, is “yes and no.” But the reader should be advised that answers to questions like this can vary widely with differing definitions of “messiah” and “divine.” The volume can be read as a sustained apology for an angelic Messiah and an angel Christology. For those who do not take the time to read the entire work, there is an excellent summary of the main points in the final pages (204-213). The book concludes by challenging some ideas of two leading proponents of early high Christology, Larry Hurtado and Richard Bauckham (211ff.).

Co-author John Collins summarizes his own work on the Old Testament (OT) and Second Temple literature in such a way as to provide background on the ideas of the king, messiah, and son of man for New Testament Christology. His definition of “messiah” (42, 71) is stricter than that of William Horbury (Horbury, *Messianism Among Jews and Christians: Twelve Biblical and Historical Studies*, London: T&T Clark, 2003), who includes Daniel 7:13 and Isaiah 52:13, but it is broader than that of Joseph Fitzmyer, who limits it to an eschatological ruler who is explicitly called the “messiah” (Fitzmyer, *The One Who Is to Come*, Eerdmans, 2007). John Collins tries to press OT texts like Isaiah 11:1-5; Jeremiah 33:14-16; and Zechariah 9:9-10 in the direction of messianic readings (43ff., 61f.). The widely-recognized expansion of messianic ideas in the first century BCE (esp. in the Dead Sea Scrolls) is for him, therefore, a “resurgence of messianic expectation” (46) rather than an origin. The difference is largely a matter of definition.

As the title indicates, the book has two distinct topics: ideals of kingship and ideas about the messiah. Trying to cover both of these topics at the same time is necessary for New Testament purposes, but it causes some difficulties because the Old Testament has little if anything explicit to say about an eschatological messiah. Accordingly, John Collins focuses on ideals of divine kingship in the Old Testament, and his first two chapters are more useful for learning about the background for a quasi-divine “son of god” than they are for learning about background for messianic beliefs.

The kings of Israel were already called “sons of God” (2 Samuel 7:14; Psalms 2:7; 89:26-7). Royal enthronement could be portrayed as a divine “begetting” (Psalms 2:7; 110:3 Septuagint) that elevated the king of Israel to a status well above other humans (14-17). According to John Collins, this divine begetting was more than mere adoption (pp. 20ff., 204). The king was empowered to act as

God's surrogate on earth, and the title "god" (*elohîm*, also used for angels) was applicable (Ps. 45:6; Isa. 9:6), a usage that had its roots in Canaanite and Jebusite culture (13, 16, 41f.). Still, none of the kings of Israel were divine in the (proper) sense of parity with the God of Israel (22, 204). This clear subordination may be the reason these divine titles were not completely obscured by the Deuteronomic reform (24, 41f.).

A chapter on "messiah and the Son of Man" focuses on major new developments in the late Second Temple period. In the Similitudes of Enoch and 4 Ezra, the messiah was equated with Daniel's angelic "son of man" (78, 90, 94) and regarded as pre-existent (97, 99, 207). John Collins's coverage of this material is excellent, but the focus on superhuman traits of the king-messiah can give a mistaken impression. Texts like Psalms of Solomon 17-18 that are important for more mundane messianic beliefs are only mentioned in passing (46, 63, 206). John Collins's conclusion, that "it is not surprising or anomalous that divine status should be attributed to someone who was believed to be the messiah" (100), provides a transition to the four chapters covering the New Testament, where co-author Adela Yarbro Collins reaches the same conclusion. This conclusion is rather one-sided: it is based on a few texts that suggest the pre-existence of the messiah (172) and it skirts over the difficulties that the more mundane concept of messiah raised for early Christians (see Paula Frederickson, *Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews*, New York: Knopf, 2000). It also risks misleading readers who miss the strictures the book places on the meaning of "divine status." It is a middling Christology at best.

Co-author Adela Yarbro Collins packs a wealth of exegetical insights into her chapters on the New Testament. Her review of the literature on the "son of man" idiom (156-73) is by itself worth the price of the book. Like John Collins, she has a tendency to read messianic meaning into New Testament texts where other meanings are equally possible (she also finds Jesus as pre-existent Wisdom in 1 Corinthians 8:6; 2 Corinthians 4:4; 111ff., 147, 208). For example, she repeatedly argues for equivalence of the titles "son of God" and messiah (104, 106). Clearly there is a connection between the two titles largely due to a messianic reading of Psalm 2 (102). But Paul's use of "son" also has important connections to the "binding of Isaac" in Genesis 22 and the Suffering Servant in Isaiah 53. Yarbro Collins misses this in her treatment of Galatians 2:20 (106) and she does not even discuss Romans 8:32 (although she does cite the binding of Isaac in her treatment of John 3:16; 181, 202). In both of these texts, Paul describes Jesus as "son of God" in terms very different from any previous treatment of the messiah.

Yarbro Collins also sees Paul's references to the "Lord" who is coming (1 Corinthians 1:7, 8; 1 Thessalonians 3:13) as the coming messiah or "son of man,"

interpreting them in terms of the Synoptic Gospel Sayings Source (Q), even though Paul is earlier (108f., 208). She studiously avoids Paul's descriptions of Jesus as Yahweh using OT texts like Zechariah 14:5 that describe Jesus as Yahweh (cited in most footnotes of English translations of the Bible; see Donald Capes, *Old Testament Yahweh Texts in Paul's Christology*, Tübingen: Mohr, 1992). Other divine epithets like "Lord of glory" (1 Corinthians 2:8) and "the name above every name" (Philippians 2:9) are said to have been "transferred to Jesus" as a result of the Resurrection. (110f., 118). The possibility that Paul saw the Great Glory in human form (as in 1 Enoch 14:20) and realized that it was Jesus is never considered (cf. Alan Segal, *Paul the Convert*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990). The problem here is not so much the particular explanations that Yarbro Collins offers, many of which are well argued, but her systematic attempt to exclude other possibilities (although she occasionally expresses some uncertainty) and make all texts affirm an angel (or first creature) Christology. Yarbro Collins does not appear to allow for the possibility that early Christians arrived at a diversity of formulations, human, angelic, and truly divine.

Yarbro Collins does give a thoughtful account of the origin of "deity" Christology, which goes like this: when the disciples had visions of Jesus exalted to heaven, they identified him with the Son of man whom he had proclaimed as coming in glory (taking Mark 13:26 as authentic). Since contemporary Jewish sources discussed by John Collins regarded the Son of man as a pre-existent angelic being who exercised divine kingship as God's agent, the risen Jesus was also recognized as an angelic being. Since human rulers were worshipped as gods in Hellenistic ruler cults, Jesus was even worshipped as a god (172ff.). In her final chapter, Yarbro Collins suggests that her ideas are hypotheses (172, 201). If so, it would help to make that clear from the start. Hypotheses can be affirmed and tested, but the researcher ought to begin with all current hypotheses on the table. What is clearly needed is a study in which various hypotheses concerning the origin of deity Christology are articulated and tested at critical points. One of the values of this volume is that it may provoke a more comprehensive research program.

In short, I recommend this volume to scholars who already have a good grasp of the diverse possibilities for the meaning and origin of deity Christology, but a newcomer to the field may be misled by the biases of this (as any) particular approach.

–Christopher B. Kaiser

Cornelius Van Til: Reformed Apologist and Churchman, by John R. Muether, Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 2008. 288pp., \$24.99.

Cornelius Van Til (1895-1987) taught apologetics at the Orthodox Presbyterian Church's Westminster Theological Seminary in Philadelphia from 1929 to 1972, during most of which time he was its leading light in apologetics and theology. His name became synonymous with a highly polemical critique of what he regarded as deviations from Reformed confessional orthodoxy, including Barthianism, neo-evangelicalism (e.g., that of Fuller Seminary), Calvin College's "progressives" (on common grace), Gordon Haddon Clark (on God's incomprehensibility), Herman Dooyeweerd (on Scripture), G. C. Berkouwer (on abandoning Reformed orthodoxy), not to mention old-fashioned Protestant liberalism. Late in life, Van Til attacked Western Theological Seminary's John Hesselink in *The Banner* (Nov. 7, 1975) for his "process theology" and implicit support of the "neo-orthodox Romanist axis." Van Til manifested a kind of theological perfectionism.

When I studied at Fuller Seminary in the 1950s, the standard putdown of Van Til was wryly to point out his simplistic custom of disposing of others' views as being "wrong in starting point, method, and conclusion." Our teachers, E. J. Carnell and P. K. Jewett, two of his former students, as well as Carl Henry, introduced us to him. I bought (and partially read) his two major onslaughts on Barth's theology, *The New Modernism* and *Christianity and Barthianism*. I also studied the dispute between Van Til and Calvin College's James Daane on common grace, which Van Til (somewhat like Herman Hoeksema) tended to minimize in favor of "the antithesis." I was in Princeton in 1962 when, after Barth had spoken at the University Chapel, Van Til reportedly introduced himself to the famous theologian, who became highly agitated, wagged his finger at Van Til, and said, "You naughty boy, you naughty boy!"

Author John Muether is a (post-Van Til era) graduate of Westminster Seminary. He served as librarian there, then at Western Seminary in Holland, and (since 1989) at Reformed Seminary in Orlando, where he also teaches church history. An Orthodox Presbyterian Church (OPC) layman, Muether has written a sympathetic but not uncritical life of Van Til in the context of the ecclesiastical and theological struggles of his time, suggesting that he may really have been a sheep in wolf's clothing. Muether tells of Van Til's humble immigrant origins (a child of the *Afscheiding* - not of the *Doleantie*), his early career in the Christian Reformed Church, and his eventual long association with the OPC.

The main influences on Van Til were Bavinck (more than Kuyper) in systematic theology and Geerhardus Vos and John Murray in biblical theology. According to Muether, there was less of a disparity between Van Til and the "Old Princeton" evidentialist apologetics of Warfield and Machen than is generally

supposed. Van Til, as a dedicated OPC churchman, aimed to provide a truly Reformed apologetic for the theology of the Westminster Standards by means of a presuppositional, theological (not philosophical) defense of the faith (“Reformed militancy”), unadulterated by the evidentialism of “Old Princeton” and the neo-evangelicals. In this he seems to have a superficial affinity with Karl Barth and to be a precursor of Nicholas Wolterstorff and Alvin Plantinga, not to mention theological postmodernism. Moreover, Van Til’s influence extended to men such as Francis Schaeffer and (to some extent) R. J. Rushdoony.

Muether points out Van Til’s virtues as a devout, kind, gracious, humble, self-aware (especially about the opacity of his prose) Christian gentleman and a loving husband and father. He tried to defend the faith once for all delivered to the saints, but he did not particularly relish the role of theological warrior that he believed God had called him to fill. This book is informative, well researched, nicely written—worthy of its fascinating subject.

–Earl Wm. Kennedy

Post-Reformation Reformed Dogmatics: The Rise and Development of Reformed Orthodoxy ca. 1520- ca. 1725, vols. 1-4, by Richard A. Muller, Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003. 2176pp. \$200.00.

Post-Reformation Reformed Dogmatics vols. 1-4 is an expansion of Richard A. Muller’s original two volume work by the same name published in 1987 and 1993. These original two volumes dealt only with the prolegomena to dogmatics and the doctrine of Scripture. In this expanded version, the original volumes are revised and expanded, and the doctrines of the divine essence and the Trinity are also included.

Muller’s approach to Reformed scholasticism is unique in relationship to earlier generations of scholars for two main reasons. First, Muller (to a certain extent like Heiko Oberman) is willing to see a dialectical continuity between medieval theology, the Reformation and the Age of Orthodoxy. This is particularly pronounced when dealing with the continuity between the early Reformers and the Protestant scholastics. Whereas many in earlier generations have wished to see “Calvin against the Calvinists,” Muller demonstrates (in a similar manner to Robert Preus on the Lutheran front) the faithfulness of the later theologians to the substance of the Reformation breakthrough. In fact, Reformed orthodoxy is not a betrayal of the insights of the Reformation, but rather part of the process of the churchly integration and digestion of its insights into the fabric of ecclesial intellectual culture.

In this regard, one main focus of these volumes is the impact of developments in the intellectual culture within the sixteenth through eighteenth centuries as a catalyst for the new and creative appropriation of these earlier sources by the Protestant scholastics. Due to this challenging intellectual environment, continuities and discontinuities arose with the earlier tradition of western Christian theology.

First, there is a significant break between the biblical Augustinianism of the Reformers and medieval theories of grace and nature, penance and merit (particularly those proposed by the *via moderna*). Nevertheless, the Reformers left a vast number of doctrines (notably the doctrine of creation and the doctrine of God) relatively unchanged. The need for the integration of the new insights with the older formulations became a significant task for the theologians of the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.

A second source of both continuity and discontinuity, according to Muller, was the necessity of the Reformed orthodox to respond to new challenges to their doctrine both from within and without the Church. Within the Christian tradition, Reformed orthodoxy had to defend itself against both the Counter-Reformation on one side and the Remonstrant and Socinians on the other. External threats also came in the form of early Deism (particularly in England) and Cartesianism (particularly on the Continent). This made it important for the Reformed scholastics to both invent new answers in light of new challenges, as well as draw on older traditional sources which had dealt with similar challenges in the past.

The last area of continuity and discontinuity with the earlier tradition was Reformed orthodoxy's understanding of reason and revelation. With the exception of Luther's radical iconoclasm with regard to metaphysics, the Reformers and the early orthodox did not have significantly different ideas about reason and revelation than many of the medieval scholastic authors. In fact, for the most part the medieval theologians served as models for the Reformed and Lutheran orthodoxy's approach to the problem. Stoic, Aristotelian, Platonic, Cartesian and Hermetic philosophical traditions in more purified forms (through the efforts of Humanistic scholarship) also played a role in the formation of the conceptual structure of Reformed orthodoxy. Nevertheless, Reformed orthodoxy broke from certain forms of the medieval scholastic tradition in its strong insistence on Scripture as the exclusive source of revelation. Accompanying this trend was the influence of the Humanist tradition with its emphasis on the original languages of the text and textual criticism which helped clarify the original meaning of the Bible.

The second reason that Muller's approach stands out is its unique proposal regarding the structure of Protestant scholastic dogmatics. Muller's expansion of these volumes has much to do with a clarification of how his methodological approach to Reformed orthodoxy stands in contrast to scholars of earlier generations (notably Schweizer, Althaus, Emil-Weber, Heppe, and Bizer). This earlier group of scholars posited that Reformed orthodoxy (as well as Lutheran) operated on the basis of "central doctrines." According to this theory, each doctrinal system possesses a central doctrinal principle (in the case of the Reformed, the doctrine of election; with the Lutherans, justification by faith) which determined the rest of the system. Contrary to this conception, the early Reformation theologians (Luther, Melanchthon, Calvin, Bucer, Vermigli, etc.) organized their work around the structure of the Bible. Luther organized his catechism around the structure of the creed (i.e., the history of salvation) which in turn became the model for how Calvin organized the *Institutes of the Christian Religion* (originally conceived as a sort of catechism!). Similarly, Melanchthon in writing his *Loci communes* ("theological common places") organized his first edition of 1521 around the structure of the book of Romans. Subsequently, Melanchthon developed a more elaborate systematic theology in his later editions of the *Loci communes*. In these later editions, each *loci* was developed independently of the other through a careful investigation of the particular topic within Sacred Scripture. This served as a model of later Reformed (as well as Lutheran) systematic theologies.

Since each of the *loci* was developed independently and based on the teaching of Scripture, the glue that held the different topics together became delineated in later Reformed orthodoxy (and in Melanchthon's earlier treatment) was the dual *principium* of the doctrine of God and his written Word. The two *principia* are dependent on one another in that if one understands the Scriptures as the Word of God, there must be a God who speaks in them. Similarly, if God exists and reveals himself to human beings so that they can talk about him and recognize the salvation he has brought about, there must be a medium whereby he communicates with them. For this reason, Muller expanded and organized these volumes around these dual *principium* of Reformed orthodoxy rather than around a central "doctrine." This move is extremely helpful in that it allows the method of study to arise from the structure of the material itself.

As previously noted, the first two volumes of *Post-Reformation Reformed Dogmatics* are a reworking of material found in the original publications of 1987 and 1993. The highlight of the first volume is the emphasis placed by Muller on the structure and method of Reformed orthodox dogmatics according to the aforementioned delineation of the *principia*. Also prominent in the first volume is Muller's careful investigation of the use of various models of faith and reason. Not only does Muller describe the use and reworking of medieval scholastic

models of reason and revelation (particularly Scotistic ones among the Reformed), but he also describes the development of Ramist logic (a simplified logic developed in the late sixteenth century that worked on the principle of bifurcation) which was particularly important to Reformed authors of the early seventeenth century. Our author also highlights the revival of Aristotelianism in the late sixteenth century and its influence on the Reformed orthodox.

The second volume deals with the problem of Sacred Scripture. Contrary to the caricature of the doctrine of Scripture placed on the Reformed orthodox by twentieth-century theologians (notably Emil Brunner), the Protestant theologians of the seventeenth century had a lively understanding of the Bible as the living Word of God. Similarly, although many have interpreted Luther, Calvin, and many other early Reformation theologians as having low views of scriptural inspiration, Muller shows that the contrary was actually the case. Nevertheless, the early Reformation's understanding of Scripture was frequently poorly developed due to their greater focus on the doctrine of sin, grace and justification. This created the need for the Reformed scholastic to develop this doctrine with greater precision, especially in light of debate undertaken with Rome.

Muller also helpfully exonerates the Protestant orthodox from the charge that they operated with a mechanical doctrine of inspiration. For the most part (there are notable exceptions—John Owen and several other Puritan authors come to mind), although they accepted the idea of inerrancy and verbal inspiration, the Protestant scholastics understood the authors of Scripture as playing a fully human role in the production of the Bible. Such a role was of course determined by the agency of the Holy Spirit, but this did not make the authors of Scripture automatons in their writing. Much as their predecessors in the Middle Ages, the Protestant scholastics had inherited the Patristic authors' aversion to overly mechanical conceptions of inspiration primarily due to the fallout from the Montanist heresy which attributed a "manic" conception of inspiration to both the authors of Scripture and to the leaders of their sect.

The third volume deals with the doctrine of the divine essence and attributes. Muller shows that although it is often claimed that western theologians writing after Thomas Aquinas abstracted divine essence from this Triune nature of God, this charge has little foundation. Particularly in the case of the Reformed scholastics, the *loci* method necessarily presupposes the separation of different topics for the purpose of their clear investigation and does not suggest any kind of systematic disintegration of the divine attributes from the Triune nature of God. Furthermore, our author also does an excellent job describing the debate concerning divine simplicity in Western theology and relating it to the Reformed orthodox discussion of the subject. Muller argues that for the most part, the

Reformed scholastics followed Occamist and Scotist understandings of divine simplicity which made distinction of attributes in the divine essence either real without suggesting that the divine essence was compounded (Scotist) or accepted the radical thesis that such distinctions were merely nominal (Occamist).

The fourth volume deals with the question of the Trinity. Muller again gives an extremely detailed description of the debate from Augustine through the Middle Ages up to the eighteenth century. A series of other interesting and related topics are also discussed. First, there is the discussion of the use of traditional Trinitarian language by the Reformers and the later Reformed scholastics. Whereas the Reformers were fearful of using traditional Trinitarian language (Luther once said that he “hated” the word *homooúsios*, “consubstantial”), the Reformed scholastics gradually readopted the lion’s of share of the traditional terminology created by the Patristic theologians and the medieval scholastics. This was not only due to their usefulness in working through very complicated questions with regard to the Trinitarian relations, but it also became necessary to use such a language in order to help intellectually safeguard the doctrine against the attacks of various anti-Trinitarian groups that arose during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

Muller makes this defense of the doctrine of the Trinity the second major topic of his discussion of the Trinity among the Reformed orthodox. Particularly in England, but also on the Continent there was a great proliferation of anti-Trinitarian literature during this period to which need to be responded to. On the Continent this mainly took the form of Socinianism and Rationalism. In Britain, this took the form of early Deism, but also Biblicistic rejections of traditional Trinitarian language and a preference of interpreting Scripture according to either a form of Modalism or Arianism (this later approach was particularly characteristic of John Milton, Isaac Newton, and William Whiston). There was also recognition among many persons that the traditional Trinitarian language of “substance” and “person” did not work particularly well in light of the Cartesian and other more modern philosophical ontologies. How, for example, does one talk about “subsisting relations” when the world is made up (on the basis of the Cartesian model) of matter (which is “pure extension”) and consciousness? There were, as Muller shows, various attempts (generally not very successful ones at that!) to re-interpret the doctrine of the Trinity on the basis of Cartesianism and other philosophical schemas among the later orthodox Reformed theologians.

Overall, these volumes are an extremely helpful and thorough guide for those interested in studying the interrelationship between medieval theology, the Reformation, and Protestant scholasticism. There is no other recent study in

English or any other modern European language that gives such an impressive breath of knowledge, or is so sober and informed in its judgments regarding the subject matter.

-Jack Kilcrease