

Aquinas among the Protestants. Edited by Manfred Svensson and David VanDrunen. Oxford: Wiley Blackwell, 2018. xii + 314 pages. \$39.95.

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This volume aims to fill a lacuna in current reflections on the place of Aquinas in Protestant thought. Though the essays do not offer a “final word” on Aquinas and Protestantism, the editors are keenly aware that up to this point “no one has written a general survey of Aquinas and Protestant thought” (17); they also aim “to set the record straight” (2)—the record being the widespread and erroneous impression that Aquinas is irrelevant for the history of Protestant thought. Most of the essays argue that the theology of Thomas Aquinas has been a fruitful Scholastic source for the articulation of (especially) Reformed theology and that his thought can continue to contribute positively to dogmatic and moral theology today.

Thus, after an informed introduction on the reception of Aquinas in Protestantism, the book first presents seven essays elaborating the reception of Aquinas within Protestantism and then another seven essays exploring ways in which dogmatic (and moral) theology can benefit from engaging with the Angelic Doctor. (As an aside, although the title promises to discuss Aquinas among “the Protestants,” only one essay—that of Jack Kilcrease—really deals with Lutheran theology. Most authors are Reformed and deal with Reformed theologians.)

This collection follows the recent trend (perhaps most notably advanced by Richard A. Muller and Willem van Asselt) of looking for continuities between Reformed theology and medieval Scholastic thought. In particular, a number of the essays highlight the Thomist influence on Reformation theologians (e.g., Jordan Ballor’s general introduction to this topic, David Sytsma’s essay on William Whitaker, Stefan Lindholm’s on Jerome Zanchi, Torrance Kirby’s on Richard Hooker, and Jack Kilcrease’s on Johann Gerhard), and the common refrain is that Aquinas was treated as a significant interlocutor, whose thought was appropriated in all sorts of positive ways. As David Sytsma puts it with regard to the question of Aquinas’ biblical interpretation, “The contrast between the reception of Aquinas in the twentieth century, during which both Catholics and Protestants largely ignored his biblical interpretation, and his reception in early-modern Protestant biblical interpretation, is striking” (66). This volume puts beyond doubt that Thomas Aquinas has been tremendously influential within the Reformed tradition.

Space does not permit me to discuss each of the essays in detail. I should nonetheless mention a few of the highlights. Kirby does a masterful job of discussing Hooker’s embrace of the natural law tradition. John Bolt’s devastating critique of Herman Dooyeweerd’s anti-Thomist rhetoric is a most welcome

correction to neo-Calvinist thought, and Michael Allen presents a crisp, informed discussion of Aquinas' understanding of the beatific vision and of the active and contemplative life, which should be of great help also for Reformed theologians.

The essays are all of a high quality, in every case authored by an expert on the topic under investigation. To be sure, not every aspect of each essay is equally convincing. To describe the magisterial Reformation as "a diverse group of variants within an even larger and more diverse landscape of the Second Scholasticism" (Ballor, 43) surely exaggerates the Scholastic element in Reformation theology. And while it may be fair to suggest that the positive engagement with Aquinas nuances the common argument that modern secularism derives, via the Reformation, from the late medieval nominalism, Kilcrease writes off the Radical Orthodoxy perspective far too quickly (119).

These (and perhaps other) criticisms are minor quibbles, however, in a volume that accomplishes what it sets out to do, and that both informs and delights in the process. Moreover, the result is an ecumenically promising engagement between Catholic and Reformed thought. This is not to say that differences between Catholic and Reformed thought are ignored. J. V. Fesko, for example, deftly weaves an argument that combines Thomas' notion of an infused habit of faith with the Reformation understanding of imputed righteousness. Differences between Aquinas and Protestant thought are not simply elided. But every one of the authors does take a stance of openness to Thomas Aquinas' theology, in recognition of the usefulness of his Scholastic thought for an articulation of Reformed theology.

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All the Fullness of God: The Christ of Colossians. By Bonnie Bowman Thurston. Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2017. 149 pages. \$21.00 (paper).
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A pivotal chapter in *All the Fullness of God: The Christ of Colossians* begins with a series of "what if" questions: "What if Paul were *not* viewed as a rather pugilistic and argumentative theologian, but as a spiritual master? What if the Church had presented him not so much as a shaper of Christian doctrine and ecclesial practice, but as a person of remarkably wide experience of and wisdom in the life of prayer, say as a really wise spiritual director? What if the Pauline letters were read primarily as spiritual documents?" (64). This accessible, insightful volume provides the reader not only with a succinct,