

written a daring and slightly provocative monograph. Further research will be helpful to answer the question whether he is convincing, or not.

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History of Christianity

Harm Goris (ed.) together with Riemer A. Faber (trans.), Andreas J. Beck, William den Boer & Riemer A. Faber, *Synopsis purioris theologiae / Synopsis of a Purer Theology*. Latin Text and English Translation, Volume 3: Disputations 43-52. Studies in Medieval and Reformation Traditions 9 (Brill: Leiden/Boston 2020), 716 pp., € 112,80.

With this third volume, the re-edition of the *Synopsis* has come to a close. One of the early surveys of Reformed orthodoxy, written in the aftermath of the Synod of Dordt, with an *élan* derived from this momentum (and nicely composed as a year cycle of weekly disputations), is now completely available in its Latin text with an *en face* translation, three informative introductions and a number of cross-references and explanatory notes. This edition is a major opportunity for students and teachers in both historical and systematic theology. When I studied theology, my Barthian professor wanted us to read not only a volume of the *Kirchliche Dogmatik*, but also a textbook from the Reformed scholastic tradition: Heinrich Hepppe, *Dogmatik der evangelisch-reformierten Kirche*. Now we have a better and much more accessible way to keep in touch with our protestant roots and, through them, with our Catholic roots, for the *Synopsis* covers more or less all the traditional topics arranged by Peter Lombard's *Sentences* which served as a textbook for Ph.D. students in theology since the 13th century.

In the final disputations of the *Synopsis*, we find topics presently subsumed under ecclesiology and eschatology: sacraments (especially the last Supper), church discipline and church organization, the relation between church and state, the resurrection of the body and the last judgment, life and death everlasting and the end of the world. In this volume, the introduction to these topics remains rather brief (compared to the introduction offered in the first two volumes). Instead, there is an extensive study of the historical and theological context of the *Synopsis* as a whole, including some background information of its four authors. Most of the *Synopsis* text was drafted by these authors but defended by their students, thus illustrating a student-teacher setting in its own form.

This new edition offers the opportunity to reassess a view on Reformed orthodoxy that has been prevailing since the 19th century: that its formative principle is the doctrine of predestination. The *Synopsis* takes a stand on the whole range of Christian topics and draws demarcation lines on a variety of deviating views (like Socinians, Anabaptists). In fact, some of these lines show a rather Catholic quality, like, in this volume, the view on the relation between church and state. 'For the law of grace which God has revealed to his church does not take away the law of nature and nations whereupon the magistrate's authority rests, but it establishes and perfects it' (479). Notably, this view is advanced with an 'anti-papal' edge and a modern stance. It criticizes the Roman-Catholic position which during and after the Reformation continued a medieval practice by allowing a bishop or pope some worldly power and by claiming that clerics are not subject to secular authorities. The *Synopsis'* more modern or more biblical political theology is sustained by the idea, among others, that the pope sees himself as vice-regent of Christ who, however, 'put matters of temporal concern away from himself and placed them upon the civil magistrate' (477). Here the *Synopsis* does not seem to consider whether the *kingly* office of Christ started with his baptism and was completed by his entrance in Jerusalem and subsequent crucifixion.

We largely owe this volume to a Reformed-Ecumenical effort. The *Synopsis* offers ample opportunities to (re)value 'the confessional age' in the history of church and theology without being entrenched in it. What is the dominant drive behind the need to articulate one's own view on each topic? Is it the search for truth or a justification for being a separate church, and if the latter, how is the Reformation really different from the Renaissance which gave the prime motivation to being individual and original?

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Paul Silas Peterson, *The Early Karl Barth. Historical Contexts and Intellectual Formation, 1905-1935* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2018) ISBN 9783161553608, xiii + 474 pp.; € 114.

In 1939 the Swiss religious socialist Leonhard Ragaz asked Karl Barth why it had taken him so long to hear the 'cry from the concentration camps'. The inability to see the truth of things, Ragaz continued, means the 'fiasco of your theology' (358). After the second World War Barth would admit