

volume seems as likely to lead readers away from a biblical understanding of the extent of the atonement (and many other doctrines) as to it. Pursuit of biblical catholicity is a marvelous project, and a summary of divergent positions can be tremendously helpful. However, a published volume which contains seventy to eighty percent errant teaching is not one to hand out to those desiring to grow in the knowledge of the person and work of Christ.

—William VanDoodewaard

Guido Stucco. *The Doctrine of Predestination in Catholic Scholasticism*. Lexington, Ky.: Create Space Independent Publishing Platform, 2017. 164 pp.

In this book, as in his earlier works on predestination in the Middle Ages, Stucco uses mainly Latin primary sources to present in English the views of medieval writers on the topic of predestination. His first work, *Not without Us* (2006), covered texts from the Semi-Pelagian controversy of the fifth and sixth centuries. Another work of his, *The Colors of Grace* (2008), treated authors from the early Middle Ages, especially those involved in the ninth-century Gottschalk controversy. This third installment covers in three chapters the views of thirteenth-, fourteenth-, and fifteenth-century theologians.

Chapter one explains the teachings of Alexander of Hales, Bonaventure, Albert the Great, Thomas Aquinas, and Duns Scotus. For Hales, the saving will of God applies to everyone, but “not everybody has been predestined” (13). Furthermore, the number of the predestined is fixed. According to Bonaventure, predestination does not impose necessity on a human by forcing an elect person to be saved. While the divine purpose to predestine and to reprobate has no other cause than God Himself, glory and punishment, Bonaventure taught, can be merited. Albert the Great explained that predestination prepares grace for those who will make a good use of it. Duns Scotus asserted the concept of conditional election. The greatest part of chapter one is devoted to the views of Thomas Aquinas which Stucco gathered from that theologian’s various works. Stucco does a good job treating the massive amount of material on the subject of predestination contained in Aquinas’s well-known *Summa contra gentiles*

and *Summa theologica*. Stucco also summarizes the views contained in two lesser-known works of Aquinas, i.e., his *Commentary on Lombard’s Sentences* and *De veritate*. Sections of the latter work were published in English in a 1961 Gateway paperback entitled *Thomas Aquinas: Providence and Predestination*. (Not covered in this book are Aquinas’s commentaries on Romans and Ephesians—witnesses to his early views on predestination—as well as writings of Giles of Rome, a student of Aquinas.)

Chapter two presents the views of Peter Aureol, William of Ockham, Thomas Bradwardine, Thomas of Strasburg, Gregory of Rimini, and John Wyclif. Aureol denied particular and unconditional election in favor of general, corporate, and conditional election. Ockham taught that God’s will does not determine that a human will comply, since humans “are free to reject God’s salvific will for their lives” (77). Stucco admits that some fourteenth-century theologians neglected Augustine’s doctrine of sin’s effect on humans and returned to Semi-Pelagianism. The chapter also presents the views of obscure writers like Landulph Caracciolo and Francis of Marchia who opposed Aureol’s views. Bradwardine, an archbishop of Canterbury in the fourteenth century, opposed the “Pelagians” of his day and asserted God’s absolute sovereignty in the distribution of saving grace. On the other hand, Thomas of Strasburg taught that predestination has its cause in the divine foreknowledge of a person’s good use of free will. Rimini, prior general of the Hermits of St. Augustine, opposed what he saw as the Pelagianism of his time, and rejected the concepts of general and corporate election in favor of particular election. Wyclif defined the church as “the congregation of the predestined” (103).

In Chapter two, Stucco interacts with much secondary literature, including: Halverson’s *Peter Aureol On Predestination*; the translation of Ockham’s *Predestination, God’s Foreknowledge, and Future Contingents* by Adams and Kretzmann; Leff’s *Bradwardine and the Pelagians*; Oberman’s *Archbishop Thomas Bradwardine* and various works about Wyclif.

Chapter three summarizes the views of four fifteenth-century writers: John Hus, Gabriel Biel, Denis the Carthusian, and Pietro Pomponazzi. Hus, in his treatise *On the Church*, described the church as the totality of the predestined. Hus also taught that some who are not predestined to eternal life can nevertheless have “present righteousness.” Not covered in the chapter are Hus’s views on predestination in his *Commentary on the Sentences* (of Lombard), edited

in 1966. The chapter also discussed Hus's predestinarian views condemned at the Council of Constance (1414–1418).

In seven pages, Stucco explains the views contained in Biel's *Sentences* (of Lombard), which taught that divine foreknowledge is infallible, but contingency of future events stands. He added that the "predestination of the elect is unchanging, even though the theoretical possibility of their damnation is real" (119). Although not mentioned in Stucco's book, it was Biel's teaching that if a person does as much as possible, then God will certainly give grace to that person. Luther called this "pure error and blindness" in his *Schmalkald Articles* (cf. Martin Luther, *Schmalkald Articles*, trans. by W. R. Russell [1995], 16).

Stucco presents the views of Denis the Carthusian from five of his writings (but not his *Commentary on Romans*), including a little-known text *On the Providence, Predestination, and Foreknowledge of God*. Another contribution to scholarship in this chapter is the presentation of the anti-Thomistic views of Pomponazzi from chapters five through nine of Book III of that philosopher's treatise *On Fate, Free Will, and the Predestination of God*.

Many of the views of the medieval theologians treated in this book were rejected by the Reformers. However, those in the Reformed tradition will find affinity with the thought of Bradwardine and Rimini, whose assertions of divine sovereignty in salvation are refreshing and praiseworthy. The views of Wyclif and Hus may also be of particular interest to Reformed readers. For all interested in the history of the theology of grace, *The Doctrine of Predestination in Catholic Scholasticism* offers summaries of the major theologians of the thirteenth to fifteenth centuries and contains discussions on predestination found in obscure Latin writers of the period that have not been translated or discussed elsewhere in any detail.

—Francis X. Gumerlock

*The Minutes and Papers of the Westminster Assembly, 1643–1653*. 5 vols., ed. Chad B. VanDixhoorn with David F. Wright. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012.

The five-volume edition of the *Minutes and Papers of the Westminster Assembly (MPWA)* has established itself as one of the most important scholarly works for the study of English post-Reformation historical-

theology and early modern English religious history. It makes a unique and incalculable contribution to understanding not only the Assembly and its principle documents, but to the historical, ecclesiastical, and political context of the interregnum. Although Chad Van Dixhoorn undoubtedly received significant guidance along the way from numerous assistants, and especially from David F. Wright and John Morrill, the exacting level of detail and virtually flawless final product of over one million words was the result of Chad Van Dixhoorn's twelve years of full-time arduous labor. These volumes will be of tremendous benefit to confessional ecclesiastical historians and scholars of early modern England. A debt of gratitude is owed to not only Dr. Van Dixhoorn, but to his wife and children for their sacrifice.

As John Morrill explains in his foreword to the volumes, prior to the publication of the *MPWA*, there were essentially two historiographical camps who explored the events and details of the Westminster Assembly. On the one hand was the "horizontal tradition" of historians of the English Civil War, who primarily depicted the Assembly as a body of theologians whose ideologies drove the revolution. On the other hand was the "vertical tradition" of historians, who viewed themselves as part of the living tradition of the ministers and confessions they studied. Subscribers to the Standards have often studied them in a manner disembodied from their political and ecclesiastical context, which overlooks or at least underappreciates that the Westminster Assembly took place at an important time in English and Protestant history, namely, in the context of the English Civil War. However, a reading of the *MPWA* reveals that understanding the historical and political context sheds light on the motivations and goals of the Assembly members.

These volumes not only fill in the gaps in the historical record but provide a definitive account of the enduring records of the Assembly. While the three massive folio volumes housing Doctor Williams Library are the principle sources for the *MPWA*, personal diaries, public newspapers, and other documents supplement these volumes to provide a full-orbed record of this event. Tremendous paleographical labor was involved in transcribing these documents, especially transcribing the atrocious hand of the Assembly's scribe, Adoniram Byfeld, who had, in John Morrill's estimation "the worst handwriting I have yet encountered from the seventeenth century" (i, p. ix). For this labor, the scholarly community will remain forever grateful.