illustrations enhance the text in significant ways. Ron Hill has outdone himself in this volume.

While the González' stick to historical survey for most of the volume they do conclude the work with a chapter entitled 'What Now?' In this chapter they offer a concise summary of doctrinal development in light of the survey just completed. They settle for a view of doctrinal 'evolution' that is somewhere in-between that of Reformed Protestantism and Roman Catholicism. Evangelicals will most likely think they have struck something like the correct balance, but many others will not. What appear to be disparaging comments on God's providence (p. 150) will disappoint many Protestants, and the rejection of an authoritative Church tradition will equally disappoint Roman Catholics. It is unclear why the González' felt they needed to move from historical critique to a more constructive evaluation of doctrinal development in the first place. It tended to detract from the work as a whole and may necessitate a note of explanation and/or caution from lecturers to their students about the final chapter.

Heretics for Armchair Theologians ranks as one of the best in this series to date and will certainly ensure the well-founded reputation the series has for informative, lively, creative, and fun introductions to church history and thought. Bravo the González's and WJK Press – well done!

Myk Habets

Richard A. Muller. *Christ and the Decree: Christology and Predestination in Reformed Theology from Calvin to Perkins.* Grand Rapids: Baker, 1986, 2008 (xiv + 240 pp.) [ISBN 978-0-8010-3610-1.]

Originally published in 1986, Muller's *Christ and the Decree* was released again in 1988 and again in 2008 highlighting the ongoing interest in this field of study and the importance of Muller's work. Muller's basic thesis is that there is continuity between the Reformers theology and what he terms Reformed scholasticism/orthodoxy; the codification of that theology in late sixteenth and seventeenth century Reformed theology. *Christ and the Decree* is divided into two sections; the first surveys 'Reformed theology in its first codification', the second part considers 'the formulation of orthodox system.'

Muller's thesis is established in direct antithesis to all attempts to divide the theology of the early Reformers, notably Calvin, Bullinger, Musculus, and Vermigli, from Reformed systems of theology of the late sixteenth and seventeenth century, such as are found in the systems of theology developed by Beza, Ursinus, Zanchi, Polanus, and Perkins. In the 2008 Preface Muller reaffirms his commitment to continuity between these period of Reformed theology with the contention that 'barring rather different definitions of doctrine, such differences in order and arrangement have more to do with the literary genres of works examined that with any implied theological messages' (p. xi). In short, according to Muller, the differences between Calvin and Perkins, to take just two examples, are merely cosmetic rather than material. In order to establish his thesis of theological continuity Muller rejects certain features of modern historiography. First, he shows that Calvin, while being an important early source, is simply one of a number of Reformed thinkers and thus a comparison of his theology with that of seventeenth century examples proves nothing. To show continuity or discontinuity between periods of Reformed theology the various Reformed confessions need to act as the boundary markers. When this method is followed Calvin is seen as one of many Reformed thinkers to stress common Reformed themes, but in idiosyncratic ways largely dictated by contextual factors. All such discontinuity thus dissipates. Second, the idea that there is in Reformed theology generally, or Reformed theologians of this period specifically, anything like a central dogma or singular defining motif is erroneous. The commonly made assertion that Calvin's central dogma is the sovereignty of God, or Christ, while that of the Reformed orthodox is predestination, is utterly rejected by Muller as a complete misunderstanding of the sources. Third, the use of the scholastic method by late sixteenth and seventeenth century Reformed systematicians must be seen simply as the adoption of a method which does not affect theological content. Fourth, Muller argues against those who contend that the differences between the Reformers and the Reformed scholastics is based upon the use of rationalism by the latter group as the primary principle of explaining the will of God, as opposed to the use of faith and Scripture by the former group. According to Muller, this argument is misguided, Reformed scholasticism resorted to scholastic methods of reason in order to defend their theology from sophisticated critique from Roman Catholics (and others) who were themselves using scholastic methods of argumentation. A fifth contention of Muller's is that Christology and predestination are not antithetical in Reformed scholasticism but must be seen as interrelated in just the same ways as they are in the theologies of the Reformers. Simply because Beza, for

instance, located predestination in the doctrine of God and not in Christology/soteriology does not mean, according to Muller, a difference in doctrinal content, merely a difference in logical arrangement.

Christ and the Decree has been followed up by Muller in a series of major publications which develop the same thesis. In his *The Unaccommodated Calvin: Studies in the Foundation of a Theological Tradition* (2000), Muller attempts to understand Calvin in his 16th-century context, with attention to continuities and discontinuities between his thought and that of his predecessors, contemporaries, and successors. In the sequel to this work, *After Calvin: Studies in the Development of a Theological Tradition* (2003), Muller carries his thesis forward, with the goal of overcoming a series of nineteenth- and twentieth-century theological frameworks characteristic of much of the scholarship on Reformed orthodoxy, or what is often termed Calvinism after Calvin. This in turn was followed up by his *magnum opus* (to date!), the four volumes of his *Post-Reformation Reformed Dogmatics: The Rise and Development of Reformed Orthodoxy, ca. 1520 to ca. 1725*, (2003). Contending that the theology of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries is often misrepresented in church histories and scholarly treatments, Muller exhaustively (and exhaustingly!) studies four specific doctrines (Prolegomena, Scripture, God, Trinity) to demonstrate how doctrine developed in the early Protestant period. These works should in turn be read in conjunction with *The Cambridge Companion to Reformation Theology* (2004), and *Protestant Scholasticism: Essays in Reassessment* (2006), which include important essays by Muller on the same theme.

Muller's work is meticulous, exhaustive, and dense. His project is focussed and significant. In his opinion he has proven his case and 'convincingly set aside the negative caricatures of Protestant orthodoxy that they persist only among the most historically blinded of dogmaticians (p. ix). While that is really a decision best left to others, it is true that Muller's work has established some useful parameters in the study of doctrinal development, has unearthed a wealth of important information that must be taken into consideration when venturing into this field, and he has constructed a formidable argument against those, like Brian Armstrong (*Calvin and the Amyraut Heresy*, 1969), and Basil Hall ('Calvin Against the Calvinists,' 1966), who wish to argue for radical discontinuity between the theology of the Reformers and Reformed orthodoxy. For this alone Muller's work proves itself to be absolutely essential for studies on Reformation theology.

This does not mean, however, that Muller's is the last word on the subject, despite him having the most words on it. After working through

Muller's arguments I am still not entirely convinced. Despite his protestations to the contrary Muller tends to flatten out the diverse thinkers and their theologies into neatly packaged categories. While he dismisses Armstrong's thesis outright, Armstrong does show how diverse Reformed thinkers are not cut from the same cloth and do in fact differ over essential theological points. Muller's claim that these are merely cosmetic differences is not true enough to the case. A second concern relates to Muller's repeated claim that method does not affect content. While this may be true it is not a necessary truth, each case in point has to be evaluated on its own merits. Muller simply assumes his point and then seeks evidence to illustrate it rather than entertaining a genuine historical inquiry to see if his point is true or not. In this regard Muller does not appear to critique his own subjective presuppositions sufficiently. A final concern relates to this point; when one reads Calvin's *Institutes*, Beza's *Tabula praedestinationis*, or Perkins' *A Golden Chaine* one gets a very clear sense of the differences between Calvin and the Reformed scholasticism of Beza and Perkins; and this strikes me as more than merely cosmetic. There are substantial differences of doctrine. Whether the divine decree is singular or plural makes a huge difference materially to soteriology not to mention proclamation and worship. These differences have been played out in the rejection of Barth's doctrine of election by federal Calvinists, for instance. Clearly they recognise doctrinal difference and not merely cosmetic masking, so much so that federal Calvinists refer to Barth's theology as 'neo-orthodox'. Would Muller's method extend to this debate as well? One thinks not. Perhaps Marshall McLuhan's adage, 'the medium is the message' holds true here, more so than Muller is willing to concede. These and other concerns remain over Muller's thesis, despite its undoubted value to scholarship.

Myk Habets

***Global Dictionary of Theology.* Eds. William A. Dyrness and Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen. Downers Grove: IVP, 2008. (xxviii + 996 pp.) [ISBN: 978-1-84474-350-6]**

The *Global Dictionary of Theology (GDT)* is a major new venture which represents the first reference work of its kind. From the Introduction we read that it 'was conceived to provide a general overview of theological reflection and practice throughout the world' (p. vii). The editors have