Preachers and People in the Reformation and the Early Modern Period concludes with Anne T. Thayer’s essay on the historical ramifications of late medieval preaching. Thayer convincingly shows how the sermon could be important for the development of religious topographies in Early Modern Europe. Unfortunately, her essay is slightly out of place and belongs to a probably yet to be conceived sequel to this excellent work, a work which will use this first one to search for further and deeper meanings and convergences.

The work’s major drawback is its geographical bias. Though it never claims to be comprehensive, it nonetheless leaves large geographical territories outside of its scope. In her introduction, Larissa Taylor describes what a chapter on Spain could have included. Significant parts of Western and Central Europe remain untouched and would have deserved similar mention. One also has to raise the question whether it is possible to discuss the Early Modern Period using present day geographies. The result of such a path is that territories important for understanding the political structure and social fabric of Early Modern Europe disappear. By talking about historical entities, such as the kingdoms of Poland, Denmark and Sweden, for instance, new territories, integral to our understanding of Early Modern Europe, could have been easily included and important linkages highlighted. The strength of this work is that it draws on the creative methodologies of the predominantly American scholars, but also underlines their geographical biases.

Notwithstanding its rather awkward title, Preachers and People in the Reformation and Early Modern Period will be a classic, a standard work in the field of preaching. It clearly demonstrates that preaching matters, which also just happen to be the last words of this outstanding compilation.

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This volume appears as the result of a symposium held at Utrecht in May of 1997 dedicated to the so-called continuity hypothesis, a hypothesis that there is certain continuity from the Medieval Scholasticism, through the Reformation to Reformed Scholasticism. In the introductory chapter the editors present a brief survey of past and recent scholarship on the topic. It is then followed by a summary of scholars’ positions with regard to the development of Reformed Scholasticism which fall into three theories: discontinuity, negative continuity, and positive continuity (p. 28). The contributors notably support the positive continuity theory. The editors are also
aware that "continuity" and "discontinuity" should be used with care, since "continuity is not the same as static reproduction and discontinuity implies the presence of a continuum" (p. 34).

The articles in this volume support the position that Scholasticism is a method rather than a doctrinal content. In the first chapter Richard Muller defends this position. Criticizing nineteenth-century scholarship with its idea of "central dogma" in Reformed theology, Muller asks present-day scholars to allow the Protestant scholastics to speak for themselves when they use the term "scholastic" in the principles of their own theology. The term as used by sixteenth- and seventeenth-century theologians indicates "both the setting and the method of their theology, with fairly careful distinction between the positive and the negative connotation of the words" (p. 53).

Cornelis Augustijn concentrates on the works of Wittenberg theologians to the period before 1536. He maintains that "scholastics" referred to the theology and theologians of the universities from around the year 1000 to the time of Luther and Melanchthon. For him Luther’s attack on Scholasticism was aimed at the content of Scholasticism of his time, and not at its form, and only occasionally at its method. Luther’s rejection of the content of Scholasticism was mostly related to the centrality of Aristotelianism with its rejection of total dependence on God, anthropology without consideration of sin, and theology without Jesus. Melanchthon’s rejection of Scholasticism, on the other hand, was inspired by the ideal of the humanists.

Willem van ‘t Spijker divides the development of Reformed theology into four periods. The first spanned until the middle of the 1530s, the second ran between the mid-1530s to the 1550s, the third began around the publication of the Lutheran Könkordienbuch to the end of the sixteenth century, and the fourth started just before the beginning of the seventeenth century. He then presents some theological issues that are significant during this period: the authority of the Scriptures, the doctrine of grace and the doctrine of the church. As a method, Scholasticism was practiced by Calvinist and Lutheran theologians as well as the Roman Catholics. Like arts and science, theology adopted conventions of expression of the era.

Antonie Vos traces Reformed Scholasticism in the historical context of European universities. He argues that no systematic thought of the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries can be understood apart from this context. Thus, scholastic tradition was interwoven with church tradition and theology.

Focusing his essay on Zanchi’s *De Natura Dei* Harm Goris demonstrates that Zanchi knew Aquinas very well while reading him intelligently, deviating from him especially in the doctrine of grace and the discussion on divine names. Zanchi’s Scholasticism concerned mainly with methods and techniques, while it also showed the characteristics of the writings of the humanists, marked by interest in philology and literature, consideration of historical