Soteriological interpretation of predestination as developed by Vladimir Boublík (1928-1974) and its presuppositions

Vladimir Boublík, a former professor and dean of the Theological faculty of the Pontifical University of Lateran (Rome), developed throughout his life the theory of predestination based on soteriology. In direct opposition to St. Augustine, Boublík develops his argument starting from the universal salvific will of God as expressed in 1 Tim 2:3-4 and Ef 1:3-14. The predestination is for him the eternal predestination of Christ to the Sonship of God in the first place, and through Christ and in Christ it embraces all the God’s people unified in the “Body of Christ”, i.e. in His Church. In this way the calling to salvation is extended to all people in all times, unlike the Augustinian theory of the election of the few. Although God calls all people to participate on his bliss, some may not be saved at the end because of the obstacles they put against this grace. However, Boublík does not solve the traditional question how to harmonize the God’s omniscience, omnipotence and gratuity of grace with the fact that some may be not saved.

We can see Boublík’s teaching of predestination going along the same line with thoughts of catholic or protestant theologians of the 20th century, like A. Šanda, A. Piolanti, K. Barth and O. Cullmann, to mention just a few. This line of thinking brought theological investigations in the field of predestination gradually to its turning point: away from the Augustinian fatalism and to the optimistic soteriological solution. Vladimir Boublík may be seen as the pivotal figure of this turn.