PAPERS FROM THE 1986 INTERNATIONAL CALVIN SYMPOSIUM McGILL UNIVERSITY

E.J. FURCHA
EDITOR

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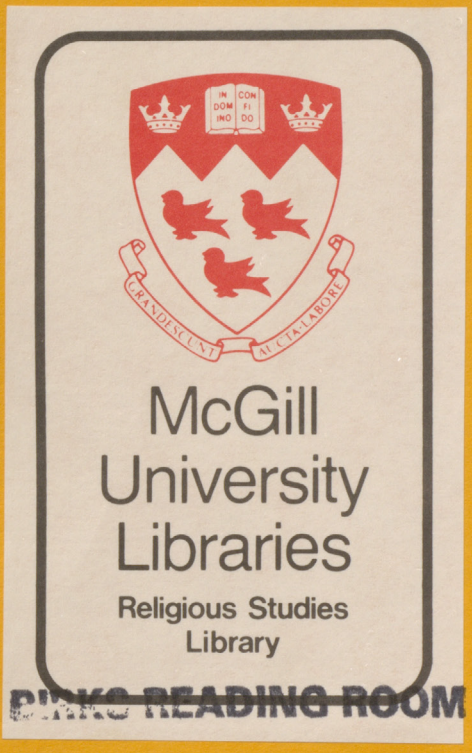

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IN HONOR OF JOHN CALVIN, 1509-64

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McGill University

E.J. Furcha, editor

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PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

During the first week of October, 1986, the Faculty of Religious Studies, McGill University, sponsored its third International Symposium on Reformation Studies. Since 1986 was the fourhundredfiftieth anniversary of the publication of John Calvin's Institutio, the focus of the symposium was on the work and influence of the chief reformer of Geneva.

It has been my distinct privilege to chair the Planning Committee and to take chief responsibility for the symposium, ably assisted by Ms. Elisabeth Dalgaard, and for the editing of the present volume.

Scholars from Canada, France, The Netherlands, Switzerland and the United States of America had been invited to present papers. Unfortunately, many of these were unable to attend. Those who came to Montreal, however, contributed significant insights to the ongoing work in Calvin research. Their enthusiasm for anything related to Jean Calvin made for lively and often intense debate. It is to be regretted that limitations of space in a volume of this kind make it impossible to reproduce anything other than those papers which are not being published elsewhere. Nor was it possible to include the lively dialogue that prevailed during the Symposium. It is hoped, nonetheless, that the high level of scholarship, maintained during the week-long activities, will become apparent in the written products of the sixteen scholars who undertook to re-examine the forces that shaped Calvin's thought and the impact this great

"mover and shaker" had on his own generation and on subsequent developments within the Reformed tradition and beyond.

A word of explanation must be given at this point regarding the order in which the papers are reproduced here. Rather than follow the sequence in which they were read during the Symposium, the papers are grouped in four Sections. Section I contains those papers which address the various influences on Calvin. The two papers placed in Section II delineate the context out of which the 1536 Institutes emerged. Section III contains several papers which deal with specific aspects of the Reformer's thought and which trace the impact Calvin had on subsequent developments in the history of Protestant thought. Section IV represents the contributions made during one of the evening sessions which focused on recent Calvin research.

Two of the papers read during the symposium have appeared in print elsewhere; they have not been included in this volume. Jane Dempsey Douglass' "Calvin Use of Metaphor: God as Enemy and God as Mother" is part of a 1985 publication by the author, Women, Freedom and Calvin (Philadelphia: Westminster Press). The paper by Victor A. Shepherd, "Calvin's Understanding of Election" is a slightly modified version of chapter four of the author's The Nature and Function of Faith in the Theology of John Calvin (Macon, Georgia: Mercer University Press, 1983, pp. 39-96).

The Calvin Symposium would not have been possible

had it not been for the generous co-operation of the Presbyterian College, Montreal, whose Principal made available funds from the "Anderson Lectureship". The Dean of the Faculty of Religious Studies co-hosted the event by inviting two of the Symposium participants, Professor Jane Dempsey Douglass and Fritz Büsser, to be the 1986 Birks Lecturers. The Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research provided a substantial grant with McGill's Faculty of Music and the Renaissance and Reformation group lending encouragement and support. Acknowledgement is also made of the substantial Symposium Grant from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, Ottawa, which included funds toward the cost of publishing the symposium papers. Ms. Heidi Furcha has had responsibility for seeing the volume through to publication; her word processing skills have been of invaluable help.

We appreciate the opportunity of being able to make this volume of essays available through the Faculty of Religious Studies publication ARC, as Supplement #3. May these papers from the International Calvin Symposium at McGill University contribute significantly to the ongoing dialogue with the great thinkers of the past and in vital exchange of viewpoints and ideas with all who are serious about truthful living in well-ordered and humane communities.

May 1987

Faculty of Religious Studies
McGill University

I. INFLUENCES ON CLAVIN

ELEMENTS OF ZWINGLI'S THOUGHT IN CALVIN'S INSTITUTES

Fritz Büsser

First of all let me express my gratitude for having been invited to the Birks Lectures and having been given the opportunity to speak to you on a topic which deserves a more comprehensive treatment. Secondly I would like to express my thanks on this occasion - and I am really sincere about this - to the North American scholars of Reformation research who have not only contributed substantially to the spread of the works of Calvin, but to those of Zwingli as well. I may mention here first the names of Philip Schaff and Samuel Macauley Jackson, but then also of Ford Lewis Battles and his students H.W. Pipkin and E.J. Furcha. All of them, and many others, promoted and advanced the knowledge of Zwingli on this side of the Atlantic ocean, but above all it was their excellent translations which contributed essentially to the accessibility of the works of Zwingli. Because of their efforts more writings of Zwingli are currently available to the public in an English translation than in modern German.

Finally I would like to express my appreciation-

and once again I am very sincere about this - that we at Zurich have always been able to profit from the editorial work done in North America. For this reason I would like to repeat the sentence which Jackson addressed in the year 1912 to the editors at Zurich (Finsler and Köhler) in the preface of Volume One of the Latin Works of Huldreich Zwinglil now, however, addressing his words to this side of the Atlantic ocean. Jackson said: "I desire here to thank these editors, publishers and translators for their generosity and manifestation of interest in this enterprise. By this combination of Swiss and American labours, Zwingli is properly presented to the English-speaking public, as he would not be without it." To address these words to this side of the Atlantic ocean means that today the whole world belongs to this English-speaking public. That is to say that we Swiss, too, can learn from the scholarly work of our colleagues in Canada and the United States. (And that the same is to be said about Calvin, especially about the scholarly editions of the Institutes by Ford Lewis Battles must be added for the sake of completeness!)

I.

When I speak to you about "Elements of Zwingli's Thought in Calvin's Institutes" I realize that it is not possible to present to you the last word on this topic. What I shall say here can only be a contribution, some aspects, some points and general observations. To this

belong first of all some references to the history of research on the topic. In modern historiography it was first dealt with by Reinhold Seeberg, though, in an absolutely negative sense. He said: "The general viewpoint which tries to prove in one way or another a closer relationship between Calvin and Zwingli cannot be sustained historically, as can be seen from Calvin's negative attitude towards Zwingli, as well as from his almost unlimited approval of Luther."[2] This quasi-dogma has been questioned since then. August Lang still maintained that Calvin "did not descend from the school of Zwingli," but based upon remarks which he found in the edition of the Institutes in the Opera Selecta,[3] he added, having become a little more cautious: "Nevertheless, the French reformer already knew Zwingli's Commentarius de vera et falsa religione before the year 1536 and he used it here and there, and not only in a negative sense."[4] August Lang was followed by Fritz Blanke and Alexandre Ganoczy. Both of them - each in their own way - proved beyond all doubt that Seeberg's position could not be maintained. Based upon a careful analysis of all of "Calvin's Judgements on Zwingli" Blanke was able to show as early as 1936, and in an enlarged article in 1959[5], that Calvin had come from an initial skepticism induced from the outside (Luther) to an almost complete approval of the Zurich reformer. That is to say: Calvin himself counted Zwingli, together with Luther and Oecolampadius, among the three most important leaders of the reformation; he

called Zwingli a "faithful and courageous servant of God" and even in the controversial question of the Lord's Supper he considered himself "shoulder to shoulder with Zwingli."[6]

The findings of the Catholic scholar Alexandre Ganoczy were similar. In his book Le jeune Calvin (1966) he compiled a long list of especially interesting parallels between Zwingli's Commentarius and Calvin's Institutio of 1536.[7] These parallels, ranging from similarities in content to word-for-word adoption and only very rarely to disagreement, concern, among other things, the teachings of the law and of the sacraments but in particular the article on the mass and on the Lord's Supper, which was strongly disputed in 1536. To be more specific, there are similarities in the rejection of images as "biblia pauperum;"[8] in the comparison of the baptisms of John and of the apostles; in the terminology and interpretation of the Lord's Supper in that Calvin speaks, not as Luther "de missa" or "de sacramento altaris," but with Zwingli "de coena" or "de eucharistia;" in the rejection of the mass where Calvin stresses, together with Zwingli, the commemorative character of the Lord's Supper and with this the absolute uniqueness of the priesthood and sacrifice of Christ, and where he rejects any "adoratio carnalis."

In the meantime Ganoczy's suggestion to compare Zwingli's Commentarius with Calvin's Institutio has been picked up by other authors. Ernst Saxer was able to

show that Calvin's use of the terms of "superstition," "hypocrisy" and "piety," which were so decisive for the reformation, had its roots in Zwingli.[9] And Tjarko Stadtland pointed out connections between Calvin and Zwingli in the areas of the teachings of the law, the linking up of justification and ecclesiology, the emphasis on grace above faith, the relationship between faith and works, and of justification and sanctification in regards to life with Christ.[10]

II.

Having given you this survey on the state of research I would like to turn now to my own understanding of the topic of "Elements of Zwingli's Thought in Calvin's Institutes." When I speak in the following about "elements of Zwingli's thought" I am using the term "elements" in a general sense. I am not using it, as Ganoczy and Stadtland did, in the sense of "a component or essential part, especially a simple part of anything complex," but in the sense of "an ultimate and essential principle in the make-up of anything; an essential constituent."[11] In this more encompassing sense I am using the term "element" for the following three "essential constituents" in Calvin's Institutes:

1. The summary of theology in the formula "cognitio Dei et hominis" (Institutio 1536).
2. The application of humanistic learning and especially its theory of scientific methodology to the structure of theology

(Institutio 1539).

3. The understanding of the "politica administratio" (civil government) (Institutes 1536=1539).

Firstly. The first element of Zwingli's thought in Calvin's Institutes is the famous opening sentence of the Institutio 1536/1539. It reads in the Latin edition of 1536: "Summa fere sacrae doctrinae duabus his partibus constat: Cognitione Dei ac nostri,"[12] and in the English translation of the 1559 edition: "Nearly all the wisdom we possess, that is to say, true and sound wisdom, consists of two parts: the knowledge of God and of ourselves."[13] Speaking of this introduction, in the modern English translation of the Institutes (Library of Christian Classics, Volumes XX and XXI) Ford Lewis Battles remarks: "These decisive words set the limits of Calvin's theology and condition every subsequent statement."[14] Battles also referred to the possible origin of this opening formula and suggested the following authors: Clement of Alexandria, Augustine, Thomas Aquinas and Farel. ("Entre paranthèses": the same translator continues there: "It is worth noting that Descartes, in an important letter to Father Marin Mersenne, April 15, 1630, parallels Calvin's language here. Having referred to 'human reason,' Descartes continues: 'I hold that all those to whom God has given the use of this reason are bound to employ it in the effort to know him and to know themselves.'")

Back to Calvin and Zwingli. It is not yet in his translation of the Institutio 1559 (1960) but only in the following translation of the Institutio 1536 (1975) that Battles mentions that the formula "cognitio Dei et hominis" is also found in Zwingli's Commentarius. However, as little as the modern French and German editions of the Institutio 1536 and 1539/59 so little does Battles consider the necessity that Calvin must have taken over this formula directly from Zwingli, or to say it differently: "that Zwingli is a far more obvious choice." This is quite understandable. Battles, who also was an expert on Zwingli, and who was well-versed as a classical philologist in classical and ancient Christian literature, was not able to know at the time of his translation of the Institutio 1559, that in Germany and Switzerland slowly, but with increasing certainty, the opinion had risen, or to say it more precisely, the consensus had been reached, that the opening formula of the Institutio should be ascribed to Zwingli. This opinion was first held by Paul Wernle (1919), then by August Lang (1936), and Fritz Blanke (1936/1959, 1941), and later on with special emphasis and much competence by Gerhard Ebeling. He was followed by Christof Gestrich and Ernst Saxer and in a summary fashion finally by Gottfried W. Locher.[15] All of them were and are of the opinion that in 1536 Calvin not only knew Zwingli's Commentarius in general ("grosso modo"), but that in regards to the "cognitio Dei et hominis" Calvin must have based himself very concretely on

Zwingli's sentence in Chapter Two of the Commentarius, which reads: "Religion cannot be duly treated of without first of all discerning God and knowing man."[16]

This impression is strengthened if one pays attention to the context. Even though Zwingli and Calvin deduce the "duality of the object of knowledge" in different ways, - Zwingli from the term "religion" (Chap. 1: "De vocabulo religionis"), while Calvin claims it as a postulate - Calvin even follows the Zurich reformer in immediately paraphrasing the terms of God and of man. This results in the following: in the Commentarius Chapter One "The Word Religion"[17] and the few remarks of Chapter Two "Between Whom Religion Subsist"[18] are immediately followed by the more detailed Chapter Three on "God"[19] and Chapter Four on "Man,"[20] before Zwingli closes the general introduction of the Commentarius with Chapter Five on "Religion"[21] and turns to the treatment of the "Christian Religion" (Chap. 6-29). In Calvin's Institutio 1536 now, the initial thesis of the "cognitio Dei ac nostri," or more specifically the "certa nostri notitia," is followed immediately by concise statements on "God"[22] and by more extensive statements about "man."[23] It is precisely in this - preliminary - exposition of the two "factors" (as Zwingli calls them) or "parts" (as Calvin calls them) that one can find surprising parallels in many details. Any correspondence, however, in the basic assertion on the "cognitio Dei et hominis" as in the succeeding interpretation of the Commentarius and the Institutio

1536, cannot conceal the fundamental differences of their application by Zwingli and Calvin, - and in Calvin the additional differences in the editions of the Institutes of 1536, 1539 and 1559. I mentioned already that Zwingli deduces the formula from his definition of religion: "For I take 'religion' in that sense which embraces the whole piety of Christians: namely, faith, life, laws, worship, sacraments. And when I distinguish religion from superstition by adding the words 'true' and 'false,' I do it for this purpose: that, having set before you religion drawn from the true fountains of the word of God, I may offer you superstition also in another cup, as it were, not for anyone to drink of but for him to pour out and shatter."[24] As Gerhard Ebeling was able to show in his convincing analysis, it was also Calvin's intention to summarize the whole of his theology with the formula "cognitio Dei et hominis." With this formula, however, Calvin associated changing conceptions: in 1536 under the influence of Luther the "antithesis of sin and grace,"[25] in 1539 only the "requirement of the law"[26] and in 1559 - notably enlarged - the "contents of creation and redemption."[27]

III.

With this we have arrived at the next element, the second essential constituent which Calvin adopted from Zwingli. As I mentioned before, it is the application of humanistic learning, and especially its theory of scientific methodology to the structure of theology.

What does this mean?

1. In order to understand what I mean we will use as a starting point the Institutio 1543. Only recently I discovered in Conrad Gessner's Bibliotheca universalis of 1545 that the Strasbourg humanist Johann Sturm prefaces this "multo locupletior" edition on the title page by recommending Calvin with the following words: "He is an author of wide writing, rich and pure; ... I don't know whether there is anybody else like him who is more perfect to teach religion, to correct manners and to abolish errors."[28] Since 1539 Calvin began the editions of the Institutes with a "Preface to the Reader" ("Joannes Calvinus Lectori") in which he describes his work: "Moreover, it has been my purpose in this labour to prepare and instruct candidates in sacred theology for the reading of the divine Word, in order that they be able both to have easy access to it and to advance in it without stumbling. For I believe I have so embraced the sum of religion in all its parts ..." (and farther down:) "If, after this road has, as it were, been paved, I shall publish any interpretations of Scripture, I shall always condense them, because I shall have no need to undertake long doctrinal discussions, and to digress into commonplaces."[29]

As you will know, this statement of Calvin needs to be taken absolutely literally. In the very same year of 1539 Calvin started his superb series of exegetical works on the Old and New Testaments with the publication of the Commentarius in epistolam Pauli ad Romanos. This

commentary on the Letter to the Romans was followed in the reformer's 25 years of work by the commentaries on the Pauline and Catholic Letters, the commentary on John, by The Harmony of the Synoptic Gospels, and by his expositions of Genesis, the Psalms and of the Major and Minor Prophets. In other words, the theology of Calvin is not only set forth in the different editions of the Institutio, but besides the Institutio, and closely related to it, there exists an extremely respectable exegetical corpus. That Calvin himself aimed at this intertwining of Institutio and commentaries is clearly documented by a sentence following the just mentioned quotation from the "Preface to the Reader". In the editions of 1539-1554 it reads: "The commentary on the Letter to the Romans will furnish an example." In 1559 he can say: "The program of this instruction is clearly mirrored in all my commentaries."[30]

2. You will rightly say at this point: so far, so good. We acknowledge the central function of Holy Scripture in the theology of Calvin, in his systematic work and in his exegetical work, agreeing here with Calvin himself, with his contemporaries and with modern Calvin research. Yet, how is all this related to Zwingli and to his influence on Calvin's Institutes?

Let me give you the solution in advance: It is precisely this method of pursuing theology which Calvin took over from Zwingli. Yet at this point one needs to add immediately that the concept as such does not originate with Zwingli himself, but with the

intellectual environment of humanism, that is to say with an intellectual background which was common to all reformers - including Luther and Erasmus. But according to my judgement there was no other reformer before Calvin (and Bullinger!) who put this concept into practice with greater consistency and competence than Zwingli!

What do we mean by that? Today, four hundred and fifty years after his death, it must be taken as a recognized historical fact that actually Erasmus was a theologian. In the centre of his life stood his efforts for the Bible: the Greek and Latin editions of the New Testament, the corresponding Annotations and Paraphrases and the editions of the Church Fathers. In his recently published biography[31] (summer 1986) Cornelis Augustijn has illustrated effectively, that with these very impressive achievements the relevance of Erasmus for the reformation is not at all exhausted. At least as important is the concept of the integration of humanistic learning into theology which Erasmus had demanded in the prefaces to his editions of the New Testament and which was adopted immediately by the reformers. According to Augustijn this scholarship consists of three basic elements: firstly, the consistent application of the philological method of the humanists to the study of the Bible in the original languages and to the study of the Church Fathers, which means that the Bible and the Church Fathers are treated in the very same way as the tests of antiquity;

secondly, the call for a new methodology for theology; and finally, the search for a new form of spirituality, a contemporary piety.[32]

In our context the second of the three points is of greatest interest. Point 1, the application of rhetorics, and point 3, the "new spirituality", biblical theology, and "philosophia Christi" will be generally known since they are presuppositions of reformation theology. Much less known, however, is point 2, the "quest for a new scientific methodology for theology." The content of this new quest, or in other words, what Erasmus had called for and what would then be put into practice by Zwingli for the first time and then by Calvin in the best way, was expressed once by Erasmus himself in the Ratio seu methodus compendio perveniendi ad veram theologiam[33] which was published in 1519 as a publication of its own and in 1519 as introduction to the second edition of the Novum Testamentum. He said: "You should select some theological themes for yourself or some already dealt with by someone else. And with regard to such themes you would then arrange everything you read about them, like in little nests ..." and further: "When they have been arranged in order, according to their diversity and similarity (as we have already indicated in our Copia), you should collect in respect to these themes whatever is especially of value in all the books of the Old Testament, in the Gospels, in Acts and in the Letters of the Apostles, whether it is in agreement or in opposition."[34]

You will have understood without difficulty what I am aiming at with this quotation: the new methodology of science which Erasmus calls for in his Ratio seu methodus verae theologiae consists in the gathering of theological "loci." One is supposed to compile them either oneself or to take them over - if available- from somebody else.

3. With this I am returning now to our theme: It is precisely this "Ratio seu methodus" which Calvin applied to his Institutio. In 1536 Calvin followed, as is commonly known, the structure of Luther's Small Catechism. Naturally he also knew Melanchthon's Loci communes of 1521 and 1522. He also knew Zwingli's Commentarius, as we have mentioned before. To these basic facts there needs to be added, however, a significant differentiation: In his exposition of Romans, Melanchton derived only seven "loci" and Luther adhered in his Catechism to the traditional form as handed down from ancient times. But it was Zwingli- and this before Calvin (and Bullinger!) would do so- who applied the loci-method in the comprehensive sense which Erasmus had called for; and he did it in both forms.[35] Models of theological "loci" which he compiled himself are the two major systematic works of Zwingli: the Auslegen und Grunde der Schlussreden of 1523[36] and the Commentarius of 1525.[37] A model of theological "loci" which he took over from someone else, is, on the other hand, applied in his later confessional writings: in the so-called "Credo-Predigt" ("Credo-sermon") held

at the Bern disputation of 1528[38], the Fidei ratio of 1530[39] and the Fidei expositio of 1531[40] which follow the 12 articles of the Apostolic Creed.

4. Zwingli, the pioneer and forerunner of Calvin regarding methodology. This second element certainly deserves some more comprehensive and detailed research. Within the limits of this lecture it is, however, not possible to accomplish this. But I would like to lay out briefly the approximate directions such research would need to take:

- First of all one would need to explore the question- in analogy to Zwingli (in general) - how Calvin ordered the "loci", sometimes according to his own discretion, and sometimes according to fixed traditional forms. I suppose that he ordered them freely according to his own choice in the Institutes of 1539 and 1543 and in the editions depending on them, and that he applied a traditional format in the editions of 1536 (Luther's Small Catechism) and 1559 (Credo).

- Secondly, Zwingli's Commentarius of 1525 (29 chapters) would need to be compared in detail both with the Institutio of 1539 (17 chapters)[41] and with the Institutio of 1543 (21 chapters).[42] A comparison will disclose a striking similarity between Zwingli and Calvin, not only in regards to the number, but also in regards to the content of the "loci." The restructuring of the sequence of the "loci" is not surprising; much more remarkable are the parallels in content.

- As one of these parallels one would need to take the

following into consideration: that from the year 1539 on Calvin adds to his Institutes under at least indirect influence of Zwingli, (- i.e. through Bullinger's De aeterno unico foedere seu testamento, 1534, and De scripturae sanctae authoritate, 1538 -) a new chapter entitled "De similitudine ac differentia veteris et novi testamenti" (1539: chap. VII; 1543: chap. XI).

- Finally it would be necessary to consider the question in which way the external situation of Calvin's life in the years 1534-1543 might have led to these parallels. By this I mean Calvin's time in Basel, Geneva and Strasbourg.

IV.

The third element of Zwingli's thought in the sense of an "essential constituent" concerns Calvin's idea of the "politica administratio", the understanding of civil government which is set forth in Institutes 1559 IV 20. However, it needs to be added immediately, that this famous chapter does not appear for the first time in the final edition of the Institutio, but in its basic content is already found in the edition of 1536. This means that it has its origin in the just mentioned political environment of the Upper Rhine valley and of Switzerland (Zurich, Basel, Strasbourg), in an environment for which the union of church and state was - as much as for France - an unquestioned matter of fact, and in a political context which was at that time endangered by the activities of the Anabaptists.

That this, too, actually is an essential element, is (once again) shown in a very convincing manner by Ford Lewis Battles in the introduction to his edition of the Institutes 1559: "The final chapter, 'Civil Government,' (Institutes IV 20) is one of the most impressive parts of the work. Like the Prefatory Address to Francis I at the outset, this chapter illustrates the vital contact of Calvin's thought with the world of political action. In the Address, the young scholar ventures to admonish a proud monarch against the evil advice of those who have suggested his policy of persecuting good Christians."[43]

Battles mentioned it himself in his introduction, but especially in his commentary, that Calvin composed this famous and much discussed chapter under the influence of the events in Münster in the year 1534, that is as a defense of the Reformation against the radical Anabaptists with their ideas of the "extermination of the political state." Taking this situation into account, it is of no surprise that the editors of the Opera Selecta, and especially Battles himself, have repeatedly referred to the works of Zwingli: to the Commentarius (especially chapter 27 on the magisterial office),[44] the Elenchus (against the Anabaptist tricks),[45] but also to The Defense of the Reformed Faith[46] and there especially to Articles 34-43 concerning temporal authority, to The Shepherd,[47] and the Exposition of the Christian Faith.[48] There are also references to the Schleitheim Confession of 1527[49] and

to the colloquium with the Anabaptists at Zofingen in 1532.[50] Beyond these references the English edition (Battles) explains why the Zurich theology can be found relatively often in Calvin's exposition concerning civil government: "The whole treatment of the Christian attitude to magistrates and to law and litigation (sections 4-23) reflects Calvin's apprehension of anarchy from the Anabaptist rejection of the state."[51]

All of this is true, but in my view it is a great understatement. Calvin knew very well that it was Zwingli who had put forth ideas on precisely this matter, which he could pick up. Therefore I would like to maintain: The whole treatment of the Christian attitudes to the magistracy, to law, and to obedience- i.e. the whole Chapter 20 - reflects Zwingli's political ideas. In this chapter Calvin does not add anything which Zwingli had not treated before: nothing at all- neither major problems involved nor matters of detail.

Concerning magistracy. Let me give you just one parallel. Calvin stated in section IV 20, 6 that "magistrates should be faithful as God's deputies:"[52] "For what great zeal for uprightness, for prudence, gentleness, self-control, and for innocence ought to be required of themselves by those who know that they have been ordained ministers of divine justice?"[53] On this issue Zwingli states: "Hence I declare, quite differently from what our friends hold, that a magistrate cannot even be just and righteous unless he be a Christian."[54]

Concerning law. It is best to limit ourselves to Calvin's statement in section IV 20, 16: "It is a fact that the law of God which we call the moral law is nothing else than a testimony of natural law and of that conscience which God has engraved upon the minds of men."[55] Also here the parallels to Zwingli are obvious. To be sure they are not so numerous, but they are unmistakably clear, e.g. to his treatise On Divine and Human Righteousness[56] and to his commentary on Matthew 7:12 on the "Golden Rule."[57]

Concerning obedience. The parallels between Zwingli and Calvin are again most obvious in this third and final part of Chapter 20. Here Calvin deals with the people, the Christian use of law (sections 17-21), "obedience, with reverence, due even unjust rulers" (sections 22-29), and finally with rules on how to behave towards tyrants (sections 30-32). In conclusion we will take only a short look at the especially interesting issue of "Resistance and Submission" (Dietrich Bonhoeffer) because there the elements of Zwinglian thought are more than obvious. This is the case in section 27 "The case of Nebuchadnezzar in Jeremiah, chapter 27."[58] The same is the case in section 30, where Calvin writes: "Here are revealed his goodness, his power, and his providence. For sometimes he raises up open avengers from among his servants, and arms them with his command to punish the wicked government and deliver his people, oppressed in unjust ways, from miserable calamity. Sometimes he directs to

this end the rage of men with other intentions and other endeavors."[59]

As is well known Calvin considers a third option concerning obedience to bad kings. Though he emphasises that vengeance belongs to God, and that the open avengers are therefore the servants of God and that private persons have to be very careful not to despise or violate that authority of magistrates, Calvin also clearly states: "For if there are now any magistrates of the people, appointed to restrain the willfulness of kings (as in ancient times the ephors were set against the Spartan kings, or the tribunes of the people against the Roman consuls, or the demarchs against the senate of the Athenians; and perhaps, as things now are, such power as the three estates exercise in every realm when they hold their chief assemblies), I am so far from forbidding them to withstand, in accordance with their duty, the fierce licentiousness of kings, that, if they wink at kings who violently fall upon and assault the lowly common folk, I declare that their dissimulation involves nefarious perfidy, because they dishonestly betray the freedom of the people, of which they know that they have been appointed protectors by God's ordinance."[60]

It would be impossible to quote here all the parallels to this extremely interesting and "powerfully influential" passage in Zwingli's works. Let me refer you to Alfred Farner's chapter on Zwingli's understanding of the right of resistance[61] and limit

myself to two remarks. First: In the exposition of Article 42 ("Should they become unfaithful and act not according to the precepts of Christ they may be deposed in the name of God"), Zwingli allows for any kind of constitutional deposition of a king, be it by the magistrates of the people or by the people themselves.[62] And secondly, what is even more surprising, in his sermon "The Shepherd: (March 1524!), Zwingli uses the very same examples of resistance to a tyrant by the magistrates of the people which Calvin employs, i.e. the ephors in Sparta, the tribunes of the people of Rome, and then, however, instead of the demarch in Athens "the chief guildmasters in many German cities today."[63]

To end with Ford Lewis Battles; he noted that this parallel is of special interest: "This passage may have been known to Calvin, though indirectly, since it was in German."[64] In any way: here I end, because this is the beginning of another chapter.

Translated by Christoph J. Weichert

NOTES

[1] The Latin Works and The Correspondence of Huldreich Zwingli, edited, with Introduction and Notes, by Samuel Macauley Jackson, Vol. 1. New York: Putnam's Sons 1912, p. viii (=Latin Works).

[2] Reinhold Seeberg, Lehrbuch der Dogmengeschichte, Vol. IV/II, 3. Auflage. Leipzig: A. Deichertsche Verlagsbuchhandlung Dr. Werner Scholl 1920, pp. 556f, n. 3. (own translation)

[3]Cf. OS 1 16.

[4]August Lang, "Die Quellen der Institutio von 1536", in: Evangelische Theologie, Vol. 3, 1936, pp. 100-112, esp. p. 107.

[5]Fritz Blanke, "Calvins Urteile über Zwingli", in: Zwingliana, Vol. XI, 1959, pp. 66-92.

[6]Ibid., p. 86

[7]Alexandre Ganoczy, Le jeune Calvin. Genese et evolution de sa vocation reformatrice. Wiesbaden: Steiner 1966, pp. 156-166. (=Veröffentlichungen des Instituts für europäische Geschichte, Mainz, Vol. 40, Abteilung abendländische Religionsgeschichte)

[8]Ibid., p. 158.

[9]Ernst Saxer, Calvins reformatorisches Anliegen, Eine Untersuchung über Calvins Gebrauch der Begriffe 'Aberglaube', 'Heuchelei' und 'Frömmigkeit', Diss. theol. Zürich: Zwingli Verlag 1970, passim.

[10]Tjarko Stadtland, Rechtfertigung und Heiligung bei Calvin. Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag 1972, pp. 65-69. (=Beiträge zur Geschichte und Lehre der Reformierten Kirche, Vol. 32)

[11]As defined in: The Standard Dictionary of the English Language, International Edition, Vol. 1. New York: Funk & Wagnalls 1974, p. 408.

[12]OC 1 27.

[13]LCC XX 35.

[14]Ibid., p. 36, n. 3.

[15]Paul Wernle, Der evangelische Glaube nach den Hauptschriften der Reformatoren, Vol. III: Calvin. Tübingen: Mohr 1919, p. 4; August Lang, "Die Quellen der Institutio von 1536," in: Evangelische Theologie, Vol.

3, 1936, p. 107; Fritz Blanke, "Calvins Urteile über Zwingli," in: Zwingliana, Vol. XI, 1959, pp. 66-92; Fritz Blanke, in the introduction to his German translation of the Commentarius, in: Zwingli Hauptschriften, Vol. IX. Zurich: Zwingli Verlag 1941, p. viii; Gerhard Ebeling, "Cognitio Dei et hominis," in: Geist und Geschichte der Reformation. Festgabe Hanns Ruckert zum 65. Geburtstag. Berlin: de Gruyter 1966, pp. 271-322; here quoted acc. to Gerhard Ebeling, Lutherstudien, Vol. 1. Tübingen: Mohr 1971, pp. 221-272); Christof Gestrich, Zwingli als Theologe, Diss. theol. Zürich. Zurich: Zwingli Verlag 1967, pp. 94ff; Ernst Saxer, Calvins reformatorisches Anliegen, Eine Untersuchung uber Calvins Gebrauch der Begriffe 'Aberglaube', 'Heuchelei' und 'Frömmigkeit', Diss. theol. Zürich, Zurich 1970, p.; J. Samuel Preus, "Zwingli, Calvin and the Origin of Religion", in: Church History, Vol. 46, 1977, pp. 186-202; Gottfried W. Locher, Die Zwinglische Reformation im Rahmen der europäischen Kirchengeschichte. Göttingen and Zurich: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht 1979, p. 627.

[16] Latin Works Vol. III, p. 58; Z III 640.25f. Cf. Ebeling, Lutherstudien, Vol. I, p. 232: "Aber es erscheint mir als ungereimt, dass Calvin den entscheidenden Anstoss von einer ziemlich entlegenen Bemerkung seines Gegners empfangen haben sollte, während in Zwinglis Schrift, die er bei Abfasssung der Institutio kannte, der Gesichtspunkt der cognitio Dei et hominis bereits eine Rechenschaft über den christlichen Glauben im reformatorischen Verständnis als Leitgedanke eröffnete. Wenn also überhaupt neben der Tatsache eines breiteren Traditionshintergrundes ein bestimmter Autor als Vermittler zu Calvin hin namhaft gemacht werden darf, kommt kaum ein anderer als Zwingli in Frage. In jedem Fall aber bietet er in sachlicher Hinsicht den nächstliegenden Vergleichstext."

[17] Latin Works, Vol. III, pp. 56-58; Z III 639.11-640.19.

[18] Latin Works, Vol. III, p. 58; Z III 640.20-26.

[19] Latin Works, Vol. III, pp. 58-75; Z III 640.27-654.26.

[20] Latin Works, Vol. III, pp. 75-87; Z III 654.27-665.6.

[21] Latin Works, Vol. III, pp. 87-98; Z III 665.7-674.31.

[22] John Calvin, Institution of the Christian Religion ... Basel MDXXXXVI, Translated and Annotated by Ford Lewis Battles. Atlanta: John Knox Press 1975, p. 20 (quoted as Battles, Institutes 1536) L OS I 37.8-29.

[23] Battles, Institutes 1536, pp. 20-22; OS I 37.30-41.23.

[24] Latin Works, Vol. III, p. 57; Z III 639.15-22.

[25] Ebeling, Lutherstudien, Vol. I, p. 238.

[26] Ibid., p. 242.

[27] Ibid., p. 254.

[28] "Scriptor est varius, copiosus, purus; ... neque scio an quicquam huius generis extet, perfectius ad docendam religionem, ad corrigendos mores, et tollendos errores." OC I xxxiv.

[29] LCC XXX 4f; OS III 61.8-22, 26-28.

[30] LCC XX 5, n. 5; OS III 63.1-33.

[31] Cornelis Augustijn, Erasmus von Rotterdam, Leben-Werk-Wirkung. Munich: C.H.Beck 1986.

[32] Ibid., esp. pp. 163ff (chap. XV: Erasmus und sein Einfluss).

[33] LB V, col. 75-138.

[34] "Id est huiusmodi, ut locos aliquot Theologicos aut tibi pares ipse, aut ab alio quopiam traditos accipias: ad quos omnia quae legeris, velut in nidulos quosdam digeras ... His in ordinem compositis, iuxta rerum pugnantiam aut affinitatem (ut in Copia quoque nostra quondam indicavimus) quidquid usquam insigne est, in omnibus Beteris Instrumenti libris, in Euangeliis, in

Actis, in litteris Apostolorum, quod conveniat, vel dissonet, ad hos erit redigendum." LB V, col. 130f.

[35]cf. William Walker Rockwell, Preface, Latin Works, Vol. III, p.iii: "The earliest truly comprehensive treatise on Protestant theology is here presented in English for the first time. To be sure, Melanchthon's famous Loci Theologici of 1521 antedates by four years Zwingli's De Vera et Falsa Religione, but it does not deal with the full-orbed Protestant faith, emphasizing rather special points then in controversy. A venerated teacher of mine, the late Professor Wilhelm Herrmann of Marburg, once declared that he could predict most of the arguments that would be employed in a new book on systematic divinity by merely analyzing the sequence of topics in its table of contents. By this test, Melanchthon is seen to have been influenced by the sequence used by St. Paul in the Epistle to the Romans; whereas Zwingli presents an original and far more comprehensive plan of arrangement and, therefore, justifies the claim that among Protestant system-builders he is the pioneer." Cf. also Fritz Büsser, "Zwingli, der Exeget," in: Neue Zurcher Zeitung, No. 254, 1./2.November 1986, pp. 69f.

[36]Z II 1-457; Latin translation by Leo Jud with preface by Heinrich Bullinger, March 1535; English Translation: Huldrych Zwingli Writings, Vol. I: The Defense of the Reformed Faith, translated by Edward J. Furcha. Allison Park, Pennsylvania: Pickwick Publications 1984. (-Pittsburgh Theological Monographs, New Series, Vol. 12)

[37]Latin Works, Vol. III, pp. 43-343; Z III 590-911.

[38]Z VI/I 450-492.

[39]Latin Works, Vol. II, pp. 33-61: "An Account of the Faith"; Z VI/II 753-817.

[40]Latin Works, Vol. II, pp. 235-293: "'A Short and Clear Exposition of the Christian Faith;" Z VI/IV (to be published soon); S IV 42-78.

[41]Cf. OS III xiv.

[42]Ibid., pp. xxf.

[43]LCC XX lxv.

[44]Latin Works, Vol. III, pp. 293-318; Z III 867-888.

[45]Samuel Macauley Jackson, Selected Works of Huldreich Zwingli. Philadelphia: University of Philadelphia 1901, pp. 123-258; Z VI/I 1-196.

[46]Huldrych Zwingli Writings, Vol. I; Z II 1-457.

[47]Huldrych Zwingli Writings, Vol. II, pp. 77-125; Z III 1-68.

[48]Latin Works, Vol. II, pp. 235-293; Z VI/IV (to be published soon); S IV 42-78.

[49]Quellen zur Geschichte der Täufer in der Schweiz, Vol. II, edited by Heinold Fast. Zurich: Theologischer Verlag Zürich 1973, pp. 26-36; "The Schleitheim Confession of Faith," Translated into English and edited with an Introduction, by J. C. Wenger, in: Mennonite Quarterly Review, Vol. XIX, 1945, pp. 243-253.

[50]Quellen zur Geschichte der Täufer in der Schweiz, Vol. IV, edited by Martin Haas. Zurich: Theologischer Verlag Zürich 1974, pp. 67-256; first print Zurich 1532.

[51]LCC XXI 1500, n. 30.

[52]LCC XXI 1491.

[53]LCC XXI 1491 // Battles, Institutes 1536, p. 288; OS V 476.1-23.

[54]Latin Works, Vol. III, pp. 295f; Z III 868.7-39.

[55]LCC XXI 1504, incl. n. 38 // Battles, Institutes 1536, p. 298; OS V 488.3-7.

[56]Huldrych Zwingli Writings, Vol. II, p. 17f; Z II 492.10ff.

[57]S VI/I 241ff.

[58]LCC XXI 1514f // Battles, Institutes 1536, p. 307; OS V 497.30-498.13.

[59]LCC XXI 1517 // Battles, Institutes 1536, p. 309; OS V 500.14-19.

[60]LCC XXI 1519 // Battles, Institutes 1536, p. 310; OS V 501.16-27.

[61]Alfred Farner, Die Lehre von Kirche und Staat bei Zwingli. Tübingen: Mohr 1930, pp. 62-67.

[62]Huldrych Zwingli Writings, Vol. I, p. 279; Z II 344.17-27.

[63]Huldrych Zwingli Writings, Vol. II, p. 102; Z III 36.7.

[64]LCC XXI 1518, n. 54.

SENECA AND CICERO AS POSSIBLE SOURCES OF JOHN CALVIN'S VIEW OF DOUBLE PREDESTINATION: AN INQUIRY IN THE HISTORY OF IDEAS

Egil Grislis

The decisive headline on the sources of the doctrine of double predestination has been provided by John Calvin himself. Unwaveringly and clearly, he always pointed to the Holy Scriptures, and wrote repeatedly statements such as these:

> "If this thought prevails with us, that the Word of the Lord is the sole way that can lead us in our search for all that is lawful to hold concerning him, and is the sole light to illumine our vision of all that we should see of him, it will readily keep and restrain us from all rashness. For we shall know that the moment we exceed the bounds of the Word, our course is outside the pathway and in darkness, and that we must repeatedly wander, slip, and stumble. Let this, therefore, first of all be before our eyes: to seek any other knowledge of predestination than what the Word of God discloses is not less insane than if one should purpose to walk in a pathless waste (cf. Job. 12:24), or to see darkness."[1]

By and large, Calvin scholarship has taken this injunction very seriously but not literally, at least not as far as the study of Calvin himself is concerned. While acknowledging that John Calvin was a scriptural theologian, it has not neglected to explore Calvin's vast learning--both secular and sacred--and its impact on his theology. In the words of Professor N. T. Van der Merwe: "Calvin was a scholar with an immense wing-

span."[2]

I

While St. Augustine has been the most commonly recognized source for many insights of Calvin's theology,[3] he was not the only important thinker that influenced Calvin. The list of major influences is a lengthy one. Hans Scholl has not hesitated to designate him: "Der Platoniker Calvin."[4] Similar claims have been made by Boisset and Babelotzky.[5] In addition, contemporary scholarship has often pointed to Duns Scotus, John Major, Thomas Bradwardine, Gregory of Rimini,[6] and Martin Bucer.[7] Last, but not least, Stoicism in general and Seneca, with Cicero in particular, have been often regarded as influential for Calvin's thought. The contemporary Sebastian Castellio (1515-1563) already had charged that Calvin's view of predestination coincided with the Stoic view of fate.[8] This should come as no surprise. Josef Bohatec reminds us that "the charge of fatalism is as old as Calvin's theology itself. It has been made not only by his enemies (Pighius, Tilemann Hesshusius, S. Castellio and Bolsec), but also by his friends"[9] -- most notably Philipp Melanchthon.[10] Even in modern scholarship there have been heard references to Calvin's views as "baptized Stoicism."[11]

More commonly, however, modern scholarship has spoken of the influence that Stoicism has exerted on the thought of Calvin. Thus Ford L. Battles has noted in regard to Calvin's commentary on Seneca's <u>De Clementia</u>:

"If Seneca is the 'second pillar', Cicero is for Calvin the 'first pillar of Roman philosophy and literature".[12] Battles elaborates: "This is not surprising in an age of Ciceronians. He is cited far more than any other author. Not counting unmarked quotations, one finds about 60 references to the Letters, 95 to the Speeches and to their Commentator, Asconius Pedianus; 15 to the rhetorical writings: and some 80 to his philosophical treatises. Unquestionably, by sheer bulk, this total is impressive. Even where he is unmentioned, Cicero speaks through Calvin both in direct quotation and in paraphrase".[13] Similarly, Gerd Babelotzky generalizes: "Calvin has drawn from the entire richness of Cicero's work".[14]

As a rule, such observations assume that Calvin has carefully transformed some of the borrowed material. Thus Quirinius Breen observes: "However, recognizing what is unique in Calvin, he nevertheless moves in the Ciceronian tradition." Having said that, Breen immediately amplifies: "But it is a dynamic Ciceronianism. He follows the principle of Cicero's 'reform,' to wit, that wisdom must go hand in hand with eloquence. This kind of Ciceronianism need not be anxious to use only Cicero's vocabulary and sentence structure; it leaves one free to emulate any style, to emulate none, and to develop one's own".[15] Occasionally a very specific influence on Calvin is noted explicitly. Thus B. J. Van der Walt observes that the "influence of the Stoa can be detected on Calvin's idea of a lex

naturalis and, concurrently, his idea of a semen religionis and conscientia (conscience)."[16]

At the same time it may be noted that the linkage with Stoicism--particularly of the more simplistic kind--has also evoked a notable backlash, namely denials, that Stoicism plays any constructive part in Calvin's theology. For example, Leontine Zanta has flatly claimed that Calvin's thought was Stoic.[17] And Charles Partee -- while rejecting the verdict -- acknowledges that it is "commonplace that Calvinism and Stoic determinism are virtually synonymous."[18] Emile Doumerge, in contrast, asserted that Calvin was strictly anti-Stoic.[19] And Jean Cadier was convinced that the accusation of Stoicism was completely groundless.[20] Of course, it is true that Calvin was not, strictly speaking, a Stoic. Yet the issue can hardly be settled in such a wholesale manner.

Nor is it sufficient to point to isolated occasions where Calvin criticizes and rejects Stoicism. Of course, it is true, as Hans Engelland has noted, that Calvin does reject the "blind instinct of nature" and the "linkage of perpetual causes" as well as, consequently, "the principle of causality as a Stoic doctrine and puts in its place the will of God".[21] Likewise useful, and correct, is Josef Bohatec's careful and detailed account of the various Stoic insights which Calvin rejects.[22] But the more significant point is whether Calvin, in the very act of rejecting, has nevertheless retained some Stoic insights and

perspectives.

Words of caution are spoken by those scholars who are basically sympathetic to some positive encounter between Calvin on the one hand and Seneca and Cicero on the other. Thus François Wendel, while admitting that "it is quite possible that the importance that he afterwards attributed to this notion of providence was at least partly of Stoic origin,"[23] also cautions: it is "a misconstruction to present Calvin, even in the epoch of the Commentary on the De Clementia, as a blind admirer of Stoicism."[24] Calvin "knew", insists Wendel, "how to keep his distance".[25] In regard to predestination, suggests Edward A. Dowey, Jr., this meant personalization through Christ, viz.: "Without Christ, predestination would simply be a foreordained fate in which a man would know his destiny to be fixed, but would not know what it is".[26] Similarly, when in his later study Josef Bohatec acknowledges that with the use of "first cause" and "intermediate causes" Calvin has "incorporated in his system the metaphysical categories of the ancient world", he immediately hastens to qualify. Calvin "fills them, however, with lively personal content" since to Calvin God is a "personal Spirit".[27] And Battles/Hugo observe that already in the Commentary on Seneca's De Clementia "there is not a trace ... [o]f any special pleading for Stoic thought".[28] "In short, the Commentary shows its author to have been as free from any sectarian adherence to Stoicism as he was free from all narrow partisan

adulation of Seneca.'[29] Such observations, nevertheless, are not intended to dissociate Calvin from all classical thought. The opposite is true. Battles/Hugo point out that in the way Calvin accepts the idea of providence and opposes fortune as well as he rejects the Epicurean views of divine non-interference in human affairs, he is displaying his dependence on Cicero: "Calvin has read his Cicero with profit".[30]

A somewhat more detailed overview is offered by Victor L. Nuovo (who accents Calvin's dependence on classical thought) and Charles Partee (who stresses Calvin's Christian stance). Namely, Victor L. Nuovo points out that Calvin criticized the Stoic doctrine of providence "not because he regarded it as essentially wrong, but because it did not go far enough."[31] That is, unlike the Stoics, Calvin believed that "it was precisely the individual's awareness of God's special care and favour (grace) that constituted the greatest value of the doctrine of providence."[32]

Moreover, according to Nuovo, Calvin differed from the Stoics in regard to the endurance of hardships: "Christians were to endure, because all God's actions are just, because it is impious to question his righteousness, because these events were of value for the accomplishment of his salvation and of his eternal good."[33] At the same time Calvin was prepared to see hardships as means for character formation.[34]

Charles Partee, closely looking at the same issues, also acknowledges a definite affinity: "It is not

surprising that Calvin approves of certain Stoic doctrines. Calvin approves of the Stoic belief in the existence and sovereignty of God, their praise of nature, and their view of man's rational and social nature." Moreover, notes Partee further: "According to an unsubstantiated tradition, Calvin read through Cicero every year. Calvin's first book deals with Seneca, and he continues to be interested in Seneca's ethics". Likewise, Partee admits: "The all-encompassing providence of God which Calvin teaches, on the surface at least, resembles the Stoic doctrine."[35] Having said this, Partee is nevertheless more concerned to spell out the authentic differences. And these he views as quite significant. While fate is seen by the Stoics as "merely a causative principle", in the Christian understanding of providence "men deal directly with God as revealed in Jesus Christ."[36] The same distance between Christianity and Stoicism is further seen in Calvin's rejection of the Epicurean doctrine of chance, which--just as the Stoic fate--denies "the providence of God revealed in Scripture as the Lord of history".[37] Moreover, instead of proclaiming "the freedom of God", the Stoics, as Calvin sees them, "constructed a labyrinth out of complex causes, so that God himself was bound by the necessity of fate, and was violently carried along with the heavenly machine."[38] Hence it is only appropriate, acknowledges Partee, that "Calvin dissociates his doctrine of providence from that of the Stoics by insisting on the free causality of the loving

God revealed in Jesus Christ rather than on a God who is himself identical with the necessity of fate." In addition, "Calvin rejects the notion that God is responsible for man's evil because man's activity is fated."[39] Partee concludes: "Those who search the history of ideas for similarities may indeed find parallels between Calvin's doctrine of providence and that of the Stoics, but it is extremely one-sided to appeal to the similarities as if the differences did not make any difference. Calvin states quite clearly that his view of providence is not Stoic because his doctrine of God differs from theirs and it does not issue in passive and reasoned resignation but in responsible and loving service. These points should not be ignored nor dismissed."[40]

Partee's warning is significant and, no doubt, should not ever be forgotten. Yet the fact remains that modern Calvin scholarship has not tended to overstate Calvin's indebtedness to Stoicism. Rather, it has been generally recognized that Calvin's Christian concerns did not perish even when Calvin did draw into his thought certain Stoic fragments.

II

What needs to be explored more centrally is whether the presence of some Stoic insights served to sharpen Calvin's theology. Namely, although Calvin's unwavering commitment to the Holy Scriptures as the ultimate and complete source of truth prevented him from utilizing

Stoic insights to enhance scriptural truth, did Seneca and Cicero stimulate Calvin's Christian thinking?

Here it may be useful to make two observations. First, it is necessary to acknowledge that Cicero certainly was not a doctrinaire Stoic. Familiar with Stoicism, he at times accepted, at times sharply criticized, and often merely sought to record Stoic views. Therefore, while the theory of Stoicism and the theology of Christianity may very well be irreconcilable, the actual practice and application of both movements may be far less antagonistic.[41] At the same time, secondly, instead of all attention being paid to broad generalizations, some attention needs to be directed to specific texts and actual positions.

Therefore, to begin with, we shall note that classical thought provided vivid examples of authentic human despair. While the New Testament acknowledges the reality of fear, pain, forlornness, and even despair-it does not offer a detailed and lengthy profile of the ordinary human experience of the despair dimension of life. (The Passion narratives, with the increasing celebration of the divinity of Christ, may seem to be more above rather than a part of ordinary existence!) Seneca, by contrast, took time to record a harrowing analysis of the universal human situation--and Calvin resonated with it. Seneca had written:

> "What is man? A vessel that the slightest shaking, the slightest toss will break. No mighty wind is needed to scatter you abroad; whatever you strike against, will be your

> undoing. What is man? A body weak and fragile, naked, in its natural state defenceless, dependent upon another's help, and exposed to all affronts of Fortune; when it has practised well its muscles, it then becomes the food of every wild beast, of everyone to prey; a fabric of weak and unstable elements, attractive only in its outer features, unable to bear cold, heat, and toil, yet from mere rust and idleness doomed to decay; fearful of the foods that feed it, it dies now from the lack of these, and now is burst open by their excess; filled with anxiety and concern for its safety, it draws its very breath on sufferance, keeping but a feeble hold upon it--for sudden fear or a loud noise that falls unexpectedly upon the ears will drive it forth--and fosters ever its own unrest, a morbid and a useless thing. Do we wonder that in this thing is death, which needs but a single sigh? Is it such a mighty undertaking to compress its destruction? For it, smell and taste, weariness and loss of sleep, drink and food, and the things without which it cannot live are charged with death. Withersoever it moves, it straightway becomes conscious of its frailty; unable to endure all climates, from strange waters, a blast of unfamiliar air, the most trifling causes and complaints, it sickens and rots with disease...."[42] "To this add fires and falling houses, and shipwrecks and the agonies from surgeons...."[43]

From such occasions of despair Seneca found solace by pointing beyond despair to the inward fortitude of the wise man, who, in losing all that he had possessed, nevertheless had not lost everything, as long as his virtue remained intact.[44] Such a solution, of course, could not be acceptable to Calvin. As a Christian believer and theologian, he sought solace in the overarching divine providence. Yet an authentic point

of contact remained: Calvin reflected on the meaning of salvation by contrasting it with despair in the midst of existence--and did so by paraphrasing and enlarging upon Seneca:

> "Hence appears the immeasurable felicity of the godly mind. Innumerable are the evils that beset human life; innumerable, too, the deaths that threaten it. We need not go beyond ourselves: since our body is the receptacle of a thousand diseases--in fact holds within itself and fosters the causes of diseases--a man cannot go about unburdened by many forms of his own destruction, and without drawing out a life enveloped, as it were, with death. For what else would you call it, when he neither freezes nor sweats without danger? Now, wherever you turn, all things around you not only are hardly to be trusted but almost openly menace, and seem to threaten immediate death. Embark upon a ship, you are one step away from death. Mount a horse, if one foot slips, your life is imperiled. Go through the city streets, you are subject to as many dangers as there are tiles on the roofs. If there is a weapon in your hand or a friend's, harm awaits. All the fierce animals you see are armed for your destruction. But if you try to shut yourself up in a walled garden, seemingly delightful, there a serpent sometimes lies hidden. Your house, continually in danger of fire, threatens in the daytime to impoverish you, at night even to collapse upon you. Your field, since it is exposed to hail, frost, drought, and other calamities, threatens you with barrenness, and hence, famine. I pass over poisonings, ambushes, robberies, open violence, which in part besiege us at home, in part dog us abroad. Amid these tribulations must not man be most miserable, since, but half alive in life, he weakly draws his anxious and languid breath, as if he had a sword perpetually hanging over his neck? You will say: these events rarely

> happen, or at least not all the time, nor to all men, and never all at once. I agree; but since we are warned by the examples of others that these can also happen to ourselves, and that our life ought not to be excepted any more than theirs, we cannot but be frightened and terrified as if such events were about to happen to us. What, therefore, more calamitous can you imagine than such trepidation? Besides that, if we say that God has exposed man, the noblest of creatures, to all sorts of blind and heedless blows of fortune, we are not guiltless of reproaching God. But here I propose to speak only of that misery which man will feel if he is brought under the sway of fortune."[45]

A further literary dependence may be noted in the fact that Calvin, having recorded the frightful precariousness of human life, raises the same question as Seneca--why?! Of course, their respective answers differ, and differ radically. Seneca counsels Stoic resignation, while Calvin trusts God who is past human understanding on account of the love that has been revealed in Jesus Christ.[46] Yet the difference in their religious perspective ought not so mislead us as to overlook the shared bafflement and the so intensively perceived pain of existence.

According to Seneca, firmly yet unaccountably Fate rules over all life. Hence Seneca counsels: "Therefore everything should be endured with fortitude, since things do not, as we suppose, simply happen--they all come. Long ago it was determined what would make you rejoice, what would make you weep, and although the lives of individuals seem to be marked by great

dissimilarity, yet is the end one--we receive what is perishable and shall ourselves perish. Why, therefore, do we chafe? Why complain? For this we were born."[47] Thus, according to Seneca, the wise person will submit to Fate.[48] Yet having said this, the good Stoic is aware that others will not be entirely satisfied with his explanation. Therefore, Seneca continues to reflect on the issue at hand. He writes: "'Why, however,' do you ask, 'was God so unjust in his allotment of destiny as to assign to good men poverty, wounds, and painful death?'"[49] Seneca's answer is as follows: "Fire tests gold, misfortunes brave men. See to what a height virtue must climb!"[50] Such an explanation allows Seneca to account for all the various levels of difficulties that one may experience: "'But why', you ask, 'does God sometimes allow evil to befall good men?' Assuredly he does not. Evil of every sort he keeps far from them--sin and crime, evil counsel and schemes for greed, blind lust and avarice intent upon another's goods. The good man himself he protects and delivers: does any one require of God that he should also guard the good man's luggage? Nay, the good man himself relieves God of this concern; he despises externals. Democritus, considering riches to be a burden to the virtuous mind, renounced them. Why, then, do you wonder if God suffers that to be the good man's lot which the good man himself sometimes chooses should be his lot? Good men lose their sons; why not, since sometimes they even slay them? They are sent into exile; why not, since

sometimes they voluntarily leave their native land, never to return? They are slain; why not, since sometimes they voluntarily lay hand upon themselves? Why do they suffer certain hardships? It is that they may teach others to endure them; they were born to be a pattern."[51]

Cicero, well-versed in Stoic thought, did not accept the proffered solution, which he regarded as too facile and superficial. According to Cicero, the question "why?" must remain unanswered, as life is too baffling to be explained. Cicero's anguish in dealing with this problem is existentially intense. He records:

"Telamo dispatches in a single verse the whole topic of proving that the gods pay no heed to man:

'For if they cared for men, good men would prosper
And bad men come to grief; but this is not so.'

Indeed the gods ought to have made all men good, if they really cared for the human race; or failing that, they certainly ought at all events to have cared for the good. Why then were the two Scipios, the bravest and noblest of men, utterly defeated by the Carthagians in Spain? Why did Maximus bury his son, a man of consular rank? Why did Hannibal slay Marcellus? Why did Cannae prove the ruin of Paulus? Why was the person of Regulus surrendered to the cruelty of the Carthagians? Why was not Africanus shielded by the walls of his home? But these and numerous other instances are of long ago; let us look at more recent cases."[52] We shall not do that

here, but only look at Cicero's conclusion: "Do you see then that the verdict of the gods, if they do regard men's fortunes, has destroyed all distinction between them?"[53]

Admittedly, Cicero has presented here only one of the philosophical positions which he is recounting. Yet, while Cotta's academic scepticism was not necessarily identical with Cicero's own views, the latter were often open-ended and included in his eclectic account the issues which he regarded as relevant. In any case, the reader of Cicero was exposed to the entire range of the various positions which he outlined. Calvin, we note, appears to have found Cicero's formulation of the question "why?" both insightful and useful. Having shared Seneca's anguish over the "why?" of human existence, Calvin did not settle for Seneca's solution, but seems to have accepted Cicero's analysis, namely, that the existential cry "why?!" finds no human answer. However, where Cicero reflected only on the calamities experienced in this life, Calvin intensified the inquiry by looking at the possible permanent misery in eternity. Namely, the height of potential despair is reached when one asks the awesome "why?!" in regard to reprobation! Thus, like Seneca, Calvin asserted that the pattern of experienced calamities is meaningful. Like Cicero, however, Calvin admitted that the meaning is beyond natural human grasp and known only to God. Clearly, in accord with Seneca and Cicero, Calvin was not afraid to raise such ultimate

issues. At times, admittedly, Calvin sought to settle for penultimate answers. For example, to the inquiry why a good God would create some for eternal felicity and others for eternal damnation, Calvin responded by utilizing the Augustinian principle of plenitude: variegated levels of happiness are constitutive of creation as a whole. Calvin challenged: "Let them answer why they are men rather than oxen or asses.'[54] More often, however, Calvin pointed to the ultimate and unexplainable will of God. Calvin wrote:

"When, therefore, one asks why God has so done, we must reply: because he has willed it. But if you proceed further to ask why he so willed, you are asking something greater and higher than God's will, which cannot be found";[55] "Why from the beginning did God predestine some to death who, since they did not exist, could not yet have deserved the judgement of death?";[56] "...why he so willed, it is not our reason to inquire, for we cannot comprehend it";[57] "...profane tongues chatter thus: Why should God impute those things to men as sin, the necessity of which he has imposed by his predestination?";[58] "Why, then does he bestow grace upon these but pass over the others?"[59]

Calvin was, of course, fully aware that he was being charged with holding Stoic views. Calvin observed: "Those who wish to cast odium upon this doctrine defame it as the Stoics' dogma of fate."[60] The difference, proclaimed Calvin, was decisive: "We do not, with the Stoics, contrive a necessity out of the

perpetual connection and intimately related series of causes, which is contained in nature; but we make God the ruler and governor of all things, who in accordance with his wisdom has from the farthest limit of eternity decreed what he was going to do, and now by his might carries out what he has decreed. From this we declare that not only heaven and earth and the inanimate creatures, but also the plans and intentions of men, are so governed by his providence that they are borne by it straight to their appointed end."[61] While obviously disagreeing with the Stoics, Calvin had not disagreed with everything that they had said. That is, Calvin did not dissociate himself from the Stoics on account of their determinism, but rejected their nature-oriented, causal form of determinism which did not include the affirmation of a personal God. Instead of a series of causes,[62] Calvin pointed to "the free will of God" which "disposes all things".[63] Therefore, Calvin was quite accurate, although limited, in his denial: "The comparison which they spitefully throw at us does not apply. For who is such a fool as to assert that God moves a man just as we throw a stone?"[64] Yet despite differences, there is also agreement, as Calvin wrote: "What necessarily happens is what God decrees, and is therefore not exactly or of itself necessary by nature."[65]

Although the Holy Scriptures knew of God "repenting" and changing his mind and traditional theology operated with the distinction between

predestination to felicity in heaven and a "permission" to fall away from God,[66] Calvin rejected the ancient distinction with a counter-question of his own: "But why shall we say 'permission' unless it is because God so wills?"[67] Thus the absolute firmness of God's predestining will, in the final analysis remains as unexplainable as the Stoic fate. Hence Calvin ordinarily calls it "hidden" or "secret" and exhorts the reader: "...we should not investigate what the Lord has left hidden in secret;"[68] "we must always at last return to the sole decision of God's will, the cause of which is hidden in him;"[69] "God by his secret plan freely chooses whom he pleases, rejecting others."[70]

The theological difficulty having been solved by pointing to Jesus Christ,[71] what remains now is to settle the practical problem: how to account for the need of human initiative and activity in a world which is so thoroughly under the determinative control of God. To accomplish this task, Calvin turned for help to the Stoics. Cicero had reported:

> "'Nor shall we for our part be hampered by what is called the "idle argument"--for one argument is named by the philosophers the Argos Logos, because if we yielded to it we should live a life of absolute inaction. For they argue as follows: 'If it is fated for you to recover from this illness, you will recover whether you call in a doctor or do not; similarly, if it is fated for you not to recover from this illness, you will not recover whether you call in a doctor or do not; and either your recovery or your non recovery is fated; therefore there is no point in calling the doctor.' This mode of

> arguing is rightly called 'idle' and indolent, because the same train of reasoning will lead to the entire abolition of action from life'".[72]

Cicero explains that such a "captious argument" can be readily refuted, namely: "'You will recover whether you call in a doctor or do not' is captious, for calling a doctor is just as much fated as recovering."[73] Calvin's version of the ancient argument reads as follows:

> "... he who has set the limits to our life has at the same time entrusted to us its care; he has provided means and helps to preserve it; he has also made us able to foresee dangers; that they may not overwhelm us unaware, he has offered precautions and remedies. Now it is very clear what our duty is: thus, if the Lord has committed to us the protection of our life, our duty is to protect it; if he offers helps, to use them; if he forewarns us of dangers, not to plunge headlong; if he makes remedies available, not to neglect them. But no danger will hurt us, say they, unless it is fatal, and in this case it is beyond remedies. But what if the dangers are not fatal, because the Lord has provided you with remedies for repulsing and overcoming them? See how your reckoning fits in with the order of divine dispensation. You conclude that we ought not to beware of any peril because, since it is not fatal, we shall escape it even without taking any precaution. But the Lord enjoins you to beware, because he would not have it fatal for you. These fools do not consider what is under their very eyes, that the Lord has inspired in men the arts of taking counsel and caution, by which to comply with his providence in the preservation of life itself. Just as, on the contrary, by neglect and slothfulness they bring upon themselves the ills that he has laid upon them. How does it happen that a prudent man, while he takes care of himself, also disentangles himself from

> threatening evils, but a foolish man perishes from his own unconsidered rashness, unless folly and prudence are instruments of the divine dispensation in both cases? For this reason, God pleased to hide all future events from us, in order that we should resist them as doubtful, and not cease to oppose them with ready remedies, until they are either overcome or pass beyond all care. I have therefore already remarked that God's providence does not always meet us in its naked form, but God in a sense clothes it with means employed."[74]

While Calvin has thus supplied a practical defense of meaningful action, the theoretical and thus theological dimension remains in tension. This may be most poignantly seen in regard to the sacraments. To take an example, while on the one hand baptism is proffered as universally efficacious, on the other hand Calvin needs to admit that baptism is effective only for the elect among the infants that are being baptized.[75] Hence it may be stated that Calvin's overarching concern is to witness to the powerful acts of God. The freedom of the Christian, obtainable by grace in the Christian community, is thus dependent rather than autonomous freedom.[76]

Now in underscoring the efficaciousness and universal range of divine activity, Calvin records an understanding of providence, that very broadly coincides with the perspective defended by Cicero against Epicurus. Cicero had written:

> "... there are and have been philosophers who hold that the gods exercise no control over human affairs whatever. But if their opinion is

> the true one, how can piety, reverence or religion exist? For all these are tributes which it is our duty to render in purity and holiness to the divine powers solely on the assumption that they take notice of them, and that some service has been rendered by the immortal gods to the race of men. But if on the contrary the gods have neither the power nor the will to aid us, if they pay no heed to us at all and take no notice of our actions, if they can exert no possible influence upon the life of men, what ground have we for rendering any sort of worship, honour or prayer to the immortal gods? Piety however, like the rest of the virtues, cannot exist in mere outward show and pretense; and with piety, reverence and religion must likewise disappear."[77]

Calvin formulates in this way: "... let my readers grasp that providence means not that by which God idly observes from heaven what takes place on earth, but that by which, as keeper of the keys, he governs all events."[78] Here Calvin reflects opposition to the position of Epicurus, clearly recorded--and opposed-- by Cicero: "God is entirely inactive and free from all ties of occupation; he toils not neither does he labour...."[79]

In regard to morality, Cicero had emphasized that it was the obligation of each individual to fulfil one's moral duty. Eloquently, Cicero appealed to the example of Pythagoras, who "bids us stand like faithful sentries and not quit our post until God our Captain gives the word."[80] Calvin restates the point: "Therefore each individual has his own kind of living assigned to him by the Lord as a sort of sentry post [quasi statio] so that

he may not heedlessly wander about throughout life."[81]

It should be noted that Calvin's perception of such a dutiful Christian existence included vulnerability and therefore sharply diverged from Stoic stalwartness. Cicero in his Tusculan Disputations[82] had sharply criticized the Stoics, who "construct foolish syllogisms to prove that pain is not evil." Calvin concurred with Cicero, but, as a Christian, recorded his position in terms of bearing the cross: "You see that patiently to bear the cross is not to be utterly stupefied and to be deprived of all feeling of pain. It is not as the Stoics of old foolishly described 'the great-souled man': one who, having cast off all human qualities, was affected equally by adversity and prosperity, by sad times and happy ones--nay, who like a stone was not affected at all."[83] Yet even though Calvin had criticized the Stoics, he could also make some use of their insights precisely at this point. Having spelled out at some length how the bearing of the cross serves to train in patience and obedience, Calvin noted the following classical precedent: "...Seneca recalls that it was an old proverb, in exhorting any man to endure adversities, to say, 'Follow God'." This exhortation Calvin now explained as follows: "By this the ancients hinted, obviously, that a man truly submitted to God's yoke only when he yielded his hand and back to His rod."[84]

Thus, as the above examples indicate, from the more theoretical concerns with the overarching presence of

the divine, determinating will to the existential attention to human response, Calvin had found repeated occasions to utilize numerous insights from Seneca and Cicero.

III

But what decisive effect has such use had for Calvin's theology? Or, more precisely, how may such an effect be assessed?

First, we have not noticed that Calvin (would have) added theological or philosophical insights from Seneca and Cicero to his biblical theology. Hence it must be underscored that Calvin's theologizing was not an exercise in synthesis. We must continue to label Calvin a biblical theologian. Most of all, however, this assessment ought to be on the positive grounds that his deepest wrestling was undertaken with biblical ideas. Namely, at times Calvin reflected on double predestination in an infra- or sub-lapsarian perspective. Then he viewed the elect as having been graciously singled out of the larger mass of sinners who stand guilty and condemned on account of their participation in original sin. Calvin explained: "We admit the common guilt, but we say that God's mercy succors some."[85] And he could illustrate in a similar vein: "For what creditor is not permitted to extract debt from one and to remit it for another?"[86] More often, however, Calvin wrote in a supralapsarian perspective, no longer attempting to provide any

rationale for a double predestination. That is to say, Calvin stated that the ultimate decision by God concerning either election or reprobation was made even before the Fall of Adam and Eve. Now Calvin explained: "By saying that they were 'elect before the creation of the world' [Eph. 1:4], he takes away all regard for worth. For what basis for distinction is there among those who did not yet exist, and who were subsequently to be equals in Adam?"[87]

Similarly, at times Calvin could reflect on the reprobates in an infralapsarian perspective, viz.,: "those whom God passes over, he condemns;"[88] and "all the reprobate are justly left in death, for in Adam they are dead and condemned."[89] But most of the time we encounter a supralapsarian perspective: "the reprobate are raised up to the end that through them God's glory may be revealed."[90]

The centrality of supralapsarian perspective is further supported by Calvin's repeated insistence that the ultimate rationale for double predestination is unknown and unknowable. From this insight Calvin never departed:

> "...let them remember that when they inquire into predestination they are penetrating the sacred precincts of divine wisdom. If anyone with carefree assurance breaks into this place, he will not succeed in satisfying his curiosity and he will enter a labyrinth from which he can find no exist. For it is not right for man unrestrainedly to search out things that the Lord has willed to be hid in himself, and to unfold from eternity itself the sublimest

> wisdom, which he would have us revere but not understand that through this also he should fill us with wonder. He has set forth by his Word the secrets of his will that he has decided to reveal to us. These he decided to reveal in so far as he foresaw that they would concern us and benefit us."[91]

Once the matter has been put in this way[92] that the double predestinarian decision is in principle higher than what the human mind can grasp, Calvin had in effect ruled out any explanation of the rationale for such predestination. It would be, however, too simplistic to assume that Calvin himself had never looked for such an explanation. It is obvious only that he did not find it, and in fact reported a decision which he had made in principle, that an explanation for the double predestination could not be found! There is no "danger" therefore that Calvin's use of classical sources would suddenly supply it!

Second, there is a real interplay between Calvin and his sources. Seneca and Cicero do not serve as mere space-fillers of classical illustrations for those who in the hey-day of humanism would have desired to find such even in theology. Rather, Calvin incorporated the insights of Seneca and Cicero in accord with his own programmatic perception of the role of natural theology.[93] Broadly coinciding with the first and second use of the Law, nature's order confronts the sinner with a norm which demands fulfillment in obedience and at the same time constrains him through

godly fear from freely submitting to sin.[94] Both order and a sense of despair for not having followed this order are in themselves divine gifts which profit the Christian believer. With good conscience Calvin could therefore draw on classical sources which supplied him with these helpful insights. The application of his theological methodology to a doctrine that is so central in his thought further enhances the significance of his use of Seneca and Cicero.

Third, although the doctrine of double predestination is no longer seen as Calvin's central theological insight, it can nevertheless be observed that it is centrally located in Calvin's thought.[95] For example, the Scriptures cannot be truly understood without the internal testimony of the Holy Spirit, whose central sphere of activity are the elect. The doctrine of creation is dependent on a thorough understanding of providence, which is only the creating and persevering side of the same God who also elects and reprobates. And what was traditionally called "the doctrine of man" cannot be explained except by close attention to original sin, which, of course, is tied up with predestination. Most notably, in atonement Christ is able to merit salvation, because he is predestined for that task. Grace, salvation, and Christian life also closely depend on a full grasp of predestination. The list need not be continued, as the case may be made easily that double predestination is closely connected with every doctrine in the theology of John Calvin. The

far-reaching differences between Calvin's double predestination and Stoic fate already acknowledged, we may therefore safely observe that there is, nevertheless, a definite symmetry with the location of Fate in classical thought in general and Stoicism in particular. This symmetry may serve to account why Calvin found Seneca and Cicero so congenial even though he was able to disagree with them on numerous occasions.

NOTES

1. Institutio Christianae religio, 1559, 3:21:2; Opera Selecta, ed. by Petrus Barth and Guilelmus Niesel, München, Chr. Kaiser, 3rd, rev. ed., 1967, 4:37 [hereafter abbreviated as CO]; The Library of Christian Classics, vols. 20 - 21, trans. Ford Lewish Battles, ed. John T. McNeill, Philadelphia: Westminster, 1960, p. 923 [hereafter LCC].

2. Calvinus Reformator: His contribution to Theology, Church and Society, Potchefstroom University for Christian Higher Education, 1982, p. 69.

3. Luchesius Smits, Saint Augustin dans l'oeuvre de Jean Calvin, Assen: Van Gorcum, 2 vols. 1957 and 1958.

4. Calvinus Catholicus: Die katholische Calvinforschung im 20. Jahrhundert, Freiburg-Basel-Wien: Herder, 1974, p. 149.

5. Jean Boisset, Sagesse et saintete dans la pensee de Jean Calvin: Essai sur l'humanisme du reformateur francais, Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1959, p. 221: "Platon est le philosophe le plus cité--et presque toujours avec faveur." Cf. also pp. 285-314. Gerd Babelotzky, Platonische Bilder und Gedankengänge in Calvins Lehre vom Menschen, Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner, 1977.

6. Karl Reuter, Das Grundverständnis der Theologie Calvins unter Einbeziehung ihrer geschichtlichen Abhängigkeiten, Neukirchen: Neukirchener Verlag des Erziehungsvereins, 1963, pp. 147-148. Kilian McDonnell, John Calvin, the Church and the Eucharist , Princeton University Press, 1967, pp. 8, 11-20, 164.

7. François Wendel, Calvin: Origins and Development of His Religious Thought, trans. by Philip Mairet, New York and Evanston: Harper & Row, 1963, pp. 137-144, 264-282. Heribert Schützeichel, Die Glaubenstheologie Calvins, München: Huber, 1972, p. 215.

8. Jaroslav Pelikan, The Christian Tradition: A History of the Development of Doctrine, 4. Reformation of Church and Dogma (1300-1700), Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1984, p. 227.

9. Calvinstudien: Festschrift zum 400. Geburtstage Johann Calvins ... mit Beiträgen von J. Bohatec, W. Hollweg, W. Kolfhaus, J. Neuehaus, H. Strathmann, Th. Werdermann, Leipzig: Rudolf Haupt, 1909, p. 415.

10. Corpus Reformatorum, ed. Carolus Gottlieb Bretschneider, vol. 7; Philippi Melanthonis [sic!] Opera Quae Supersunt Omnia, Halle: C.A. Schwetschke, 1840, rpr. New York and London: Johnson Reprint Corporation, 1963, p. 930, in a personal letter to Camerarius, dated Feb. 1, 1552: "Ac vide seculi furores, certamina Allobrogica (=Genevensia de praedestinatione) de stoica necessitate tanta sunt, ut carceri inclusus sit quidam, qui a Zenone dissentit." Reference to "Zenon" is meant to point to Calvin.

11. Ford Lewis Battles and André Malan Hugo, Calvin's Commentary on Seneca's De Clementia with Introduction, Translation and Notes, Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1969, p. 46, ftn. 1.

12. John Calvin: Courtenay Studies in Reformation Theology 1, Appleford, Abingdon, Berkshire: The Sutton Courtenay Press, 1966, p. 49.

13. Ibid., pp. 49-50.

14. op. cit., p. 42.

15. Christianity and Humanism: Studies in the History of Ideas, Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1968, pp. 112-113.

16. Calvinus Reformator, p. 90.

17. La Renaissance du Stoicisme au xvie siècle, 1914, rpr. Genève: Slatkine Reprints, 1975, p. 52, cf. pp. 47-73.

18. "Calvin and Determinism," Christian Scholar's Review 5(1975):123.

19. Emile Doumergue, Jean Calvin, les hommes et les choses du son temps, Lausanne: Georges Bridel, 1899, vol. I, ch. 10.

20. "Le pretendu Stoïcisme de Calvin," Etudes theologiques et religieuses, 41(1966):217-226.

21. Gott und Mensch bei Calvin München: Chr. Kaiser, 1934, p. 127, referring to Inst., 1:16:6, 25, 26.

22. Calvinstudien, pp. 417-432.

23. op. cit., p. 29.

24. Ibid., p. 31.

25. Ibid., pp. 31-32.

26. The Knowledge of God in Calvin's Theology, New York: Columbia University Press, 1952, p. 188.

26. The Knowledge of God in Calvin's Theology, New York: Columbia University Press, 1952, p. 188.

27. Bude und Calvin: Studien zur Gedankenwelt des französischen Frühhumanismus, Graz: Hermann Böhlaus, 1950, p. 359.

28. op. cit., p. 60.

29. Ibid., p. 62.

30. Ibid., p. 131.

31. Calvin's Theology: A Study of Its Sources in Classical Antiquity, New York: Columbia University Ph.D. dissertation, 1964, p. 152.

32. Ibid., p. 154; cf. Charles Partee, Calvin and Classical Philosophy, Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1977, p. 105.

33. op. cit., p. 157.

34. Ibid., pp. 160-161.

35. Ibid., p. 120.

36. Ibid., p. 121.

37. Ibid., p. 122.

38. Ibid., p. 123, quoting Calvin's Commentary on Acts 17:28; C.O. 48:405-406.

39. Ibid., p. 124.

40. Ibid., pp. 124-125.

41. William D. Nietmann, "Seneca on Death: The Courage To Be or Not To Be," International Philosophical Quarterly, 6(1966):81: "Tertullian called the Spaniard [i.e. Seneca] "ours," St. Augustine remarked about him, "What more could a Christian say than this pagan has said?" and Dante located him in the favored First Circle

et dans l'oeuvre de Saint Augustin, Paris: Études Augustiniennes, 1958.

42. De Consolatione ad Marciam, 11:3-4; Moral Essays, Loeb ed., II:32-35.

43. Ibid., 22:3; Loeb II:78-79.

44. Seneca's approach has been often labelled "insensitive," cf. S.J. Boal, "Doing Battle with Grief: Seneca, Dialogue 6," Hermathena, 116(1973):50.

45. Inst., 1:17:10; OS 3:214-215; LCC 223.

46. To obtain this certainty Calvin does not merely point to the Scriptures in general (cf. 3:24:4), but refers specifically to Jesus Christ as a personal Saviour. Calvin explains: "... if we seek God's fatherly mercy and kindly heart, we should turn our eyes to Christ, on whom alone God's Spirit rests [cf. Matt. 3:17]. If we seek salvation, life, and the immortality of the Heavenly Kingdom, then there is no other to whom we may flee, seeing that he alone is the fountain of life, the anchor of salvation, and the heir of the Kingdom of Heaven" (3:24:5; OS 4:415; LCC 970). The advice is to the point, since the elect are said "to have been chosen not in themselves but in Christ [Eph. 1:4]" (ibid.). Here the argument parallels Calvin's exposition of justification. Namely, there was no absolute righteousness to be found within the believer while yet in this life. Hence the believer turned to Christ, was assured by Him of the acceptance on account of the victory in the atonement, now made available by the Holy Spirit. Similarly now in regard to predestination: "if we have been chosen in him, we shall not find assurance of our election in ourselves...." Therefore the situation, insisted Calvin, was clear: "Christ, then, is the mirror wherein we must, and without self-deception may, contemplate our election" (3:24:5; OS 4:416; LCC 970). This is a highly personal and existential situation. In the Scriptures I read Christ's proffer of reconciliation to me. I know that I in no way deserve it or can earn it. But I am

told that Christ calls me into salvation not on account of my merits, past or foreseen, but on the basis of the eternal election through Christ. Thus the only route to discover one's status is Christ-oriented, and the only way to proceed on it is by faith. It is such faith that Calvin now seeks to nurture by assurance and clear invitation: "Therefore, if we desire to know whether God cares for our salvation, let us inquire whether he has entrusted us to Christ, whom he has established as the sole Savior of all his people. If we still doubt whether we have been received by Christ into his care and protection, he meets that doubt when he willingly offers himself as a shepherd, and declares that we shall be numbered among his flock if we hear his voice [John 10:3]. Let us therefore embrace Christ, who is graciously offered to us, and comes to meet us. He will reckon us in his flock and enclose us within his fold" (3:24:6; OS 4:417; LCC 971-972). Admittedly, this existential emphasis is only one among other major themes and cannot be said to predominate. Nevertheless, it is a clear statement. In the De Aeterna Dei Praedestinatione, C.O., pp. 306-307 (Concerning the Eternal Predestination of God, trans, by J.K.S. Reid, London: James Clarke, 1961, p. 113) Calvin spells out with clarity and rigour: "But I do not merely send men off to the secret election of God to await with gaping mouth salvation there. I bid them make their way directly to Christ in whom salvation is offered us, which otherwise would have lain hid in God."

47. De Providentia, 5:7-8; Moral Essays, Loeb I;38-39.

48. Ibid., 5:8; Loeb I:38-39.

49. Ibid., 5:9; Loeb 38-39.

50. Ibid., 5:10; Loeb I:40-41.

51. Ibid., 6:1-3; Loeb I:40-43.

52. De Natura Deorum, 3:32:79-81; Loeb 364-367.

53. Ibid., 3:33:82; Loeb 368-369.

54. Inst., 3:22:1; OS 4:380; LCC 933.

55. Ibid., 3:23:2; OS 4:396; LCC 949.

56. quoting from St. Augustine's Unfinished Treatise Against Julian 1:48, 2:8; PL 45:1069-1070, 1145; Inst., 3:23:3; OS 4:396; LCC 950.

57. quoting from St. Augustine, Letters, 186:7:23; PL 33:824; FOC 30:207; Inst., 3:23:5; OS 4:398; LCC 952.

58. Inst., 3:23:6; OS 399; LCC 953.

59. Ibid., 3:24:13; OS 4:407; LCC 979.

60. Ibid., 1:16:8; OS 3:198; LCC 207.

61. Ibid., 1:16:8; OS 3:198-199; LCC 207.

62. cf. above, f.n.s. 36-39.

63. De Aeterna Dei Praedestinatione, p. 354; Concerning the Eternal Predestination of God, p. 170.

64. Inst., 2:5:14; OS 3:314; LCC 334.

65. De Aeterna Dei Praedestinatione p. 354; Concerning the Eternal Predestination of God, p. 170.

66. St. Thomas Aquinas, Summa Theologiae, 1:23:3.

67. Inst., 3:23:8; OS 4:402; LCC 956.

68. "in occulto recondita" -- Inst., 3:21:4; OS 4:373; LCC 925.

69. "in ipso abscondita" -- Inst., 3:23:4; OS 4:397; LCC 951.

70. "occulto consilio" -- Inst., 3:21:7; OS 4:377; LCC 930.

71. cf. above ftn. 46.

72. De Fato, 12:28,29-13:30; Loeb 224-225.

73. Ibid., 13:30; Loeb 226-227.

74. Inst., 1:17:4; OS 3:207; LCC 216.

75. Egil Grislis, "Calvin's Doctrine of Baptism", Church History, 31(1962):46-65.

76. For a powerfully persuasive statement, see Jane Dempsey Douglas, "Christian Freedom in Calvin's Theology: The Foundation and Significance of Christian Freedom," The Princeton Seminary Bulletin, 4(1983):69-83.

77. De Natura Deorum, 1:2:3; Loeb 4-7; cf. 2:30:76-2:38-98; Loeb 196-219.

78. Inst., 1:16:4; OS 3:192; LCC 201-202.

79. De Natura Deorum, 1:19:51; Loeb 50-51.

80. De Senectute, 20:73; Loeb 84-85.

81. Inst., 3:10:6; OS 4:181; LCC 724.

82. 2:12:20; Loeb 176-177.

83. Inst., 3:8:9; OS 4:167-168; LCC 709.

84. Ibid., 3:8:4; OS 4:164; LCC 705; cf. Cicero, De Finibus, 3:22:73; Loeb 292-293 and Seneca, De Beata Vita, 15:5; Loeb 138-139; Inst., 3:8:11.

85. Inst., 3:23:11; OS 4:405; LCC 959.

86. De Aeterna Dei Praedestinatione, p. 317; Concerning the Eternal Predestination of God, p. 126.

87. Inst., 3:22:2; OS 4:381; LCC 934; cf. Inst., 3:23:10.

88. Ibid., 3:23:1; OS 4:394; LCC 947.

89. De Aeterna Dei Praedestinatione, p. 314; Concerning the Eternal Predestination of God, p. 121.

90. Inst., 3:22:11; OS 4:393; LCC 947.

91. Inst., 3:21:1; OS 4:370; LCC 922-923.

92. "If, then, we cannot determine a reason [rationem assignare] why he vouchsafes mercy to his own, except that it so pleases him, neither shall we have any reason for rejecting others, other than his will" (Inst., 3:22:11; OS 4:393; LCC 947); "... the reason of divine righteousness is higher [alteriorem] than man's standard can measure, or than man's slender wit can comprehend" (3:23:4; OS 4:398; LCC 951-952); "Monstrous indeed is the madness of men, who desire thus to subject the immeasurable [immensum] to the puny measure of their own reason" (3:23:4; OS 4:398; LCC 952); "Would he wish God's might so limited [sic limitatam] as to be unable to accomplish any more than his mind can conceive?" (3:23:5; OS 4:398; LCC 952).

93. Egil Grislis, "Calvin's Use of Cicero in the Institutes I:1-5--A Case Study in Theological Method," Archiv fur Reformationsgeschichte, 62(1971):5-37.

94. Inst., 2:7:6,7,10; OS 3:332,334-336; LCC 354-355,357-358.

95. Jürgen Moltmann, Prädestination und Perseveranz: Geschichte und Bedeutung der reformierten Lehre "de perseverantia sanctorum," Neukirchen: Neukirchener Verlag, 1961, pp. 31-37; cf. Max Scheibe, Calvins Pradestinationslehre: Ein Beitrag zur Würdigung der Eigenart seiner Theologie und Religiosität, Halle: Max Niemeyer, 1897; Paul Jacobs, Prädestination und Verantwortlichkeit bei Calvin, Neukirchen: Buchhandlung des Erziehungsvereins Neukirchen Kreis Moers, 1937; Heinz Otten, Calvins theologische Anschauung von der

Prädestination, München: Chr. Kaiser, 1938.

BULLINGER AS CALVIN'S MODEL IN BIBLICAL EXPOSITION: AN EXAMINATION OF CALVIN'S PREFACE TO THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS

Fritz Büsser

I mentioned in my Birks Lecture that in the preface to the Institutes of 1539 Calvin announced that he would turn now to work on commentaries on the various books of the Bible. In the "Preface to the Reader" he said: "After this road [i.e. the Institutes as a collection of 'loci communes theologicae'] has, as it were, been paved, I shall publish any interpretations of Scripture; I shall always condense them, because I shall have no need to undertake long doctrinal discussions, and to digress into commonplaces... The Commentaries on the Letter to the Romans will furnish an example."[1] In the 1559 edition one reads at the same place: "... the program of this instruction is clearly mirrored in all my commentaries." At what one could call the mid-point between these two editions Calvin wrote in his dedicatory epistle of the Catholic epistles to Edward VI of England (Jan. 24, 1551): "I have determined to give the rest of my life, however much may still remain to me, chiefly to this study, if I can find leisure and freedom for it."[2]

With these words the reformer stated the value which he himself attributed to his exegetical work within the context of his theology. He strongly desired

not to be considered as author of only one book, the Institutio, as Luchesius Smits for example has described it.[3] Alongside the Institutio and in numerous ways related to it stand Calvin's commentaries on many writings of the Old and New Testaments. Credit for pointing to the significance of these goes first of all to T. H. L. Parker (Durham).[4]

Credit goes secondly to the Catholic theologian Alexandre Ganoczy whose publications include many important contributions on the exegesis and hermeneutics of Calvin.[5] In addition to the Englishman Parker and the German-Hungarian Ganoczy, four French speaking authors have dealt with our theme recently: Benoît Girardin, Gilbert Vincent, Richard Stauffer and Rodolphe Peter.[6]

I.

Our investigation shall start with the second part of our title. I presuppose that you are familiar with the most important dates. For details about the formation and the different editions of the commentary I refer to the critical edition published by Parker in 1981.[7] Calvin revised his Commentarius in Epistolam Pauli ad Romanos three times. The first edition was published in Strasbourg in the year 1540, the second in 1551, and the third in Geneva in 1556. After the first edition the Latin version was not again printed separately, but only in collected editions, i.e. together with the rest of the Pauline letters and the

Letter to the Hebrews in 1551, and in addition to them with the Catholic Letters in 1556. The same is the case with the following five editions published in the 16th century in 1557 (1563), 1565, 1572, 1580, 1600 respectively. As was the case with the Institutes, the Latin editions were followed - except for the first one - by translations into French. But now to Calvin's preface!

Calvin dedicated his Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans to an old friend. During his stay in Basel in the years 1535/1536, he had become acquainted with the famous classical philologist Simon Grynaeus. As Calvin mentioned in his preface, they had also discussed questions of exegesis from time to time. "I recall that once three years ago we spoke confidentially on the best method by which to interpret the Scriptures. The method which pleased you the most also seemed to me to be better than any other. For both of us were of the opinion that the most noble virtue of an exegete is transparent conciseness," and further, "So both of us desired that there be one among the number of scholars who nowadays endeavour to further theology in this field whose aim would be transparency and who at the same time would be careful not to overtax the students by prolix commentaries."[8] What then corresponds to these wishes? Why did Calvin himself undertake the task of writing an exposition on the Letter to the Romans? What were his aims?

All three questions (and their answers!) are, of

course, closely interrelated. Calvin began with the remark that many commentaries had been written on this letter in particular by "multi veterum, multi recentiorum." He offered no criticism of the older works, i.e. the Church Fathers. "Their reliability, learnedness, holiness and finally their age bestow upon them such an authority that we may not despise anything which has come from them."[9] But then he continued,- speaking of his contemporaries: "But also to list those by name who live today is of no value. I will state my opinion concerning those who have completed superb works. Philip Melanchthon has shed much light on the matter by his extraordinary knowledge, his industry and his adeptness, which distinguish him in all disciplines above all others who have gone public before him. But since it was his apparent intention to only treat that which occupies the most noteworthy place he has in so doing purposely omitted much which will fatigue the spirit of most readers. He is followed by Bullinger who also rightly received much praise. For he adds to scholarship the quality of being at the same time easily understood, which he has proven in many works. Finally, Bucer has brought it to completion through the publication of his industrious studies. This man, who, as you will know, is hardly surpassed in these days in regard to his wide learning and rich knowledge of many disciplines, penetrating intellect, vast reading and many other virtues, who is to be compared only with a few who by far outstrips most scholars in performance:

he deserves above all to be praised for the fact that no one - as far as memory can recall - has dealt more diligently with the interpretation of Scripture than he."[10] If one compares the qualities which Calvin attributed to the works of Melanchthon, Bullinger and Bucer, one finds that at first all were equally praised for their particular gifts: Melanchthon for his extraordinary knowledge, industry and adeptness, Bullinger for the combination of erudition with clarity and Bucer for his wide learning, penetrating intellect and mastery of letters. If one continues, however, to read Calvin's Preface one's attention is drawn to the fact that - in what one might call a second series of qualifications - Calvin did not mention Bullinger further. He did, however, criticize Melanchthon and Bucer on certain points. To wit, that Melanchthon may have omitted much which ought not be neglected and that Bucer may have been too detailed and too sophisticated.[11] Much more striking, however, is another deficiency: Besides Melanchthon, Bullinger and Bucer, Calvin mentioned no other exegetes whom we would expect to have been mentioned in light of the rebirth of Paulinism in European Humanism and the Reformation. He mentioned neither Valla, Ficino, Colet, Lefévre d'Etaples, Erasmus nor Luther, Zwingli, Oecolampadius!

This is even more surprising if one - continuing to read the Preface - takes into further consideration what Calvin wrote about his own intentions, plans, and ideas. Immediately following the evaluation of the three

reformers just mentioned he states that he desires to help in finding the correct interpretation among the multitude of voices:

> "I was of the opinion that I should not shrink from the work of facilitating the difficult task of decision making - by referring to the best interpretation - for those who are not firm enough in their own independent judgement. Especially since I made plans to put everything forward in such a way that the reader would be able to read in my commentary without a great loss of time what is contained in the works of the other. To put it shortly, I tried to write it in such a way that no one should complain that there is much in my book which is superfluous."[12]

In this way, Calvin continued, his work would be of value. Insofar as he was able not to distort or delete from the Word of God by his exposition, he considered his commentary, at any rate, as only one voice among many others.

> "For God never considered any of his servants to be worthy of such a blessing that he would have bestowed upon any full and complete insight into all things. And without doubt he kept it so, in order to keep us, firstly, in humility, and secondly in a community of brotherly endeavour. Since we cannot hope in this life - which, however, would be very much desirable - that there will be an abiding consensus in regard to all passages of the Bible, we need, therefore, to take great pains not be tempted by a mania for innovation, nor to be pushed by the desire for sharp polemics nor to allow ourselves to be incited by any maliciousness, nor to be titillated by any ambitions. Rather, we deviate from the opinion of the Fathers only where we

> are forced by necessity and by no other intention than to be of use."[13]

With this we are coming to the proper concern of this lecture.

II.

After the examination of Calvin's Preface we now turn to the main theme: Bullinger as Calvin's model in biblical exposition. What does this mean?

1. The first answer is of a quantitative nature: Bullinger as Calvin's model means, first of all, obviously, that in 1539/40, at the time of publication of Calvin's first commentary, there already existed an extensive exegetical work by Bullinger. Among Calvin's contemporaries there were none who had dealt so extensively and intensively with exegetical work as Bullinger. This is true in a twofold way, both practically and theoretically. On the one hand, Bullinger had composed two series of commentaries on the letters of the New Testament in the years 1525-1537 which differed with regard to scope and content: the first series he wrote in Kappel in the years 1525-1527 on the Pauline Letters and the Letter to the Hebrews, the second in Zurich in 1532-1537 on all the letters of the New Testament. On the other hand, he had written during the same time several theoretical treatises on questions of exegesis and hermeneutics in addition to these exegetical works. The lectures of Kappel have remained virtually unknown to this day. This is due to

the fact that they are available only in manuscript, even though they furnish extremely valuable information about Bullinger's development as a leading Reformed theologian. The only exception are the Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans and the Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews which are available now in Heinrich Bullinger Theologische Schriften, Vol.I.[14] His Zurich commentaries were published immediately: First they were published individually, and always with corresponding dedicatory letters:[15] 1532: Hebrews; 1533: Romans; 1534: Acts, 1./2.Peter, 1.Corinthians; 1535: 2.Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians; 1536: 1./2.Thessalonians, 1./2.Timothy, Titus, Philemon. After the completion of this series the publication of In omnes apostolicas epistolas commentarii,[16] the first complete edition including all Apostolic and Catholic Letters followed immediately in 1537. It was succeeded not only by six more editions in the years 1539, 1544, 1549, 1558, 1582 and 1602, but by very voluminous commentaries on the Gospels (Matthew 1542; John 1543; Mark 1545; Luke 1546) and finally in 1557 - a task unparalleled by any reformer - by one hundred sermons on the Apocalypse, which appeared in a total of thirty editions.[17] Today these and all other printed works of Bullinger are easily made available in the microfiche edition: Reformed Protestantism, Sources of the 16th and 17th Centuries on Microfiche, 1. Switzerland, A. Heinrich Bullinger and the Zurich Reformation (Inter Documentation Company AG, Zug,

Switzerland).

2. "Bullinger as Calvin's model in biblical exposition." Bullinger as an exegete. The answer to this main question can not be limited, however, to these impressive statistics. Of more relevance is the question of Bullinger's conception, which preceded Calvin's, of exegetical work. Who were Bullinger's models? What ideas did Bullinger have about his exegetical work? Which methodologies did he use? What were his aims? Or, to formulate if differently in view of Calvin's remarks in the dedicatory letter to Grynaeus: can we find in Bullinger the "perspicua brevitas" which Calvin had called for in principle,- the praise of Bullinger's work by Calvin that it joins erudition with clarity?

To answer these crucial questions we must begin with Bullinger himself: firstly, with his Preface to the Reader which he placed at the beginning of the complete edition of the commentary on the Letters in 1537, and second with the theoretical treatises on exegesis and hermeneutics, mentioned before, which he composed in closest connection with his practical work as exegete.

a) First then to Bullinger's preface of 1537. It begins with a clear differentiation of commentary from biblical text. "First of all we clearly acknowledge that we have not written laws but commentaries."[18] They are not final divine oracles, but human products subject to the possibility of error. "For I confess freely that

nothing human is alien to a human being and that it also belongs to our humanity to err and to be subject to delusion."[19] This differs fundamentally from the Bible itself: as "scriptura canonica spiritu sancto inspirata" -- "canonical Scripture inspired by the Holy Spirit". It is "a reliable and absolute rule by which to live and to judge according to truth, a rule which cannot err nor lead into error, and on the basis of which everything written, proclaimed and done by any human being must be weighed and examined."[20]

Having set these presuppositions Bullinger then deals in the further course of his preface with the history of exegesis, the Reformation principle of Scripture (including the principle of "scriptura sacra sui ipsius interpres"), the reason which moved him to become an exegete himself, the guidelines which he set, and the use of other commentaries. In regard to the Reformation principle of Scripture, postulated by Luther and Zwingli, Melanchthon and Bucer, in general(but, for the first time by Erasmus); in regard to the closely related assertion of the "certainty and clarity of Scripture," and in regard to the principle of the interpretation of Scripture, as such, Bullinger, too, asserts: "ex ipsa sola esse petenda, ut ipsa interpres sit sui," "of herself alone it is required, that she be her own interpreter."[21] To this Bullinger adds, however, "charitatis fideique regula moderante,"[22] an addition which we still will have to deal with. We need first, however, to note that at this point he stresses

once again with full emphasis the difference between Scripture and commentary, both in looking at the Fathers, and in view of his own work. In regard to the Fathers he says: "In so far as the Holy Fathers have not digressed from this kind of interpretation, I have not only recited them as interpreters of the Scriptures but have venerated them as elected tools of God."[23] And in view of his own work he affirms, with reference to the degeneration of theological work in the Middle Ages (which we do not have to treat here):

> "Because I am afraid that through the abuse of our commentaries the same might happen to posterity - and I say this without malevolence- which we can see has happened to our forefathers, therefor I stress at this point even more how I want them to be understood. Holy Scripture must always and above all be seen by us as the absolute rule of truth; this must never be abandoned; in it the singularity of religion must be discovered; through it everything must be examined; one must never put it out of one's hands. When one writes commentaries and lets oneself be helped by it in one's study, then one receives, so to say, special guidelines, like the statues of Mercury and signposts; by relying on them you will arrive where you wanted."[24]

What motivated Bullinger to write commentaries? What guidelines did he apply? Concerning his motivations he stated - and I continue to quote verbatim:

> "Certainly God is my witness that I entered this field moved by a real zeal and not by carnal motivations. This is what motivated me, to

> proclaim first of all the glory and the truth of Christ. And then I started this with zeal, and not in order to display my very tiny means, or to catch the approval of the public, or to condemn or to obscure the writings of others."[25]

With regards to the guidelines, the principles, the "ratio commentariorum nostrorum" he says:

> "First I tried to express myself briefly through the entire work though I went into details much more than I wished to do." "Then I spent as much effort as possible on restoring for you in good faith the words of the apostles. Here, however, I followed primarily the edition of Erasmus of Rotterdam whom I hold in best remembrance. But several times, I have compared it with the Greek truth, in all my limitations, as often as it seemed to be more plain and evident."[26]

Furthermore, Bullinger continues, he applied the "rhetorica methodus" to the text. in doing so he sometimes also gave notice of "loci communes illustriores" "for special purposes, but did not really deal with them," "not infrequently" ("and primarily") he battled heretics, errors and abuses in the Church and described the "ecclesiae nostrae ritus." This, however, not only always with the required brevity, but also as simple as possible: "in simple and peasant-like style, as you can see. For I do not dwell on flattery and rhetorical ornaments. I believe it to be sufficient, when language expresses our thoughts in an easy way."[27]

In conclusion Bullinger makes mention of his own use of other commentaries, both of the old and the

contemporary: "I also have taken over much from the ancient and the modern writers. And I have not hidden this."[28] He says he did it on purpose: not in order to be accused of plagiarism but for the purpose of proving that his teachings are not heretical or new but ancient and orthodox.

b) As mentioned earlier, in regard to "Bullinger as Calvin's model in biblical exposition" we, secondly, need to take a look at some of Bullinger's theoretical treatises on questions of exegesis and hermeneutics. Even though they are not completely unknown they still deserve to be briefly introduced at this point. This is necessary for the simple reason that he composed them in close relationship to his practical work as an exegete. But it is also necessary since these treatises influenced Calvin, both directly and indirectly, not only in the writing of his commentaries but even more in the writing of the different editions of the Institutes since 1539. To call your attention to these treatises and some important complementary secondary literature may, in addition, be of some relevance for today's exegetical and theological work.

1. First we ought to mention Bullinger's De propheta libri duo[29] of the year 1525. Fighting on two fronts, on one side against Rome, but, primarily, on the other, against the Anabaptists, Bullinger pleaded for the use of rhetoric as the only acceptable method for the interpretation of Scripture. This was, of course, not the invention of the twenty-one year old teacher at

the monastery of Kappel. It is, nonetheless, a sign of the clarity with which he had recognized the problematical nature of a kind of preaching which was either dictated by Rome or which was limiting itself to the work of the Holy Spirit alone. In other words, he clearly rejected any interpretation of Scripture which renounces the use of reason and of science.

2. A second treatise from Bullinger's time in Kappel, the Studiorum ratio, sive hominis addicti studiis institutio[30] points in the same direction,- now, however, much more extensively. Already in 1971 T. H. L. Parker emphasized the importance of this work[31] which Bullinger probably composed in the year 1527, but which only appeared in print in the year 1594. It will be republished, by the way, next year in a critical Latin - German edition with an exhaustive commentary by Peter Stotz. I do not need to report here the content of this writing in detail, but I want to stress that already in the Ratio studiorum are found all the fundamental marks of Bullinger's theology in general and his exegesis and hermeneutics in particular, namely: a wide foundation in general knowledge (history and philosophy), a knowledge of the original languages of Hebrew and Greek as prerequisites to theology, an emphasis upon the fundamental importance of exegesis, and upon the central position of the covenant as ultimate "scopus" of the Old and New Testaments. Then comes the rhetorical method for the interpretation of Scripture, which is expounded in detail, as involving

the necessity of taking the context into account, (i.e. the authors and their times), and of observing in particular the "causa, locus, occasio, tempus, instrumentum and modus" of the biblical writings and of their parts, and especially of the so-called "status," i.e. of the "'summa,' 'caput,' 'constitutio,' on which everything hinges, which is the chief subject under discussion, and on which the 'argumenta' depend."[32] Of interest is another of T. H. L. Parker's observations:

> One pleasant feature of these commentaries is the quite frequent quoting of hymns from the early Church -something we do not remember to have met in other writers of the period. Where other Reformers charged their cannons with 'articula' from Councils and 'sententia' from Fathers, Bullinger recited with open affection the ancient hymns."[33]

3. I just mentioned that in his Ratio studiorum of 1527 Bullinger had called the "covenant" the ultimate goal of the Holy Scriptures. Allow me to quote verbatim from Chapter 20:

> "In our times there are some, who reduce everything to law and gospel. For the moment I do not disapprove of it but neither do I desire to elevate it by praise. This much is certain: All the books of the Holy Scriptures have one goal in common. What it is, this we now want to take into consideration: The God of heaven, this God Almighty has established a testament, a treaty, or a covenant with mankind for eternity."

After some quotations from Genesis 17 and 22, Bullinger continues: "But two things are contained in this

covenant. Firstly, God binds himself to us, he promises and shows us, who he is and how he wants to be in relation to us. Thereafter he determines, what he demands from us."

As you all know, Bullinger devoted in September 1534 an entire treatise to this topic: De Testamento seu foedere Dei unico et aeterno[34] which was to become the basis of the later Reformed covenant theology. That this could become such a basis, functioning as Bullinger himself cautiously indicated in the immediately preceding quotation as a feasible counterposition to the Lutheran distinction between Law and Gospel (in other words, that Bullinger's covenant theology was able to prevail in the Reformed Churches and finally also in so-called "Calvinism"), is due, according to my judgement, to a circumstance which has until now not been given appropriate attention as yet. With the exception of the first Latin edition and a corresponding German and Dutch translation, Bullinger spread this text, so central to his theology, by adding it to all editions of his New Testament commentaries. He could not have stressed these two things more clearly: the central position of Holy Scriptures (the New Testament, the Letters) for his theology, and the covenant as a simple but comprehensive summary of the gospel.

4. This impression becomes stronger when we consider a second "additamentum" to his commentaries on the Epistles of the New Testament. It is the Utriusque in Christo naturae tam divinae quam humanae, contra

varias haereses, pro confessione Christi catholica, Assertio orthodoxa,[35] which was published only one month later in October 1534. Let me add at this point one further remark: What Bullinger said in this writing concerning the two natures of Christ can already be found in his expositions on Romans 1:3f. in 1525, and in more detail in 1533.

5. Typical for so-called "Calvinism," and therefore also identifiable in the editions of the Institutio since 1539, is finally a treatise, which Bullinger wrote in 1538 and which also belongs, due to the topic, to the context of his commentaries: De scripturae sanctae autoritate, certitudine, firmitate, et absoluta perfectione, deque Episcoporum, qui verbi dei ministri sunt, institutione et functione, contra superstitionis tyrannidisque Romanae antistites, ad Serenissimum Angliae Regem Heinrychum VIII ... Libri duo."[36]

Bullinger himself maintained that he composed this treatise at the special request of some English students who studied in Zurich at that time and who lived in his house. Due also to the material, the addressees and the time of publication this treatise needs to be considered as a valuable addition to his commentaries. The material reveals that Bullinger opposes Rome's claim to be the ultimate authority in regard to Scripture and the interpretation of Scripture, i.e. its claim to stand above Scripture. We indicated above that Bullinger had stated that beside rhetoric he was also going to observe

the "charitatis fideique regula." He deals in detail with this principle in De scripturae sanctae autoritate. Robert C. Walton showed in a detailed analysis, entitled "Heinrich Bullinger und die Autorität der Schrift"[37] that in De scripturae sanctae autoritate Bullinger did not speak against a correctly understood Catholic Church, but only against the claim of the Roman Church, and in particular only against a certain aspect of her claim, i.e. against the Roman interpretation of the famous saying of Augustine: "Ego vero evangelio non crederem, nisi me catholicae ecclesiae commoveret auctoritas."[38] For Bullinger the catholicity of the church correctly understood is, with express reference to Johannes Gerson and Marsilius of Padua, the "coetus sive congregatio fidelium," the community of the saints, the community of those who have received their faith from hearing the Gospel (Romans 10:17:fides ex auditu):

> "When faith comes through the Holy Spirit out of the Word of God, and when faith brings into being the faithful, then the congregation of the faithful, the Church exists. From this it follows that the Gospel or the Word of God is prior to the Church, that the Church is born out of the Word of God, and that the Word of God has priority and is of greater magnitude."[39]

Bullinger's De scripturae sanctae autoritate is of further interest because of its date of publication and because of its addressees. It was published in 1538, i.e. after the schism between England and Rome and in time for the coming council. Not only was it addressed to Henry VIII himself, but also (indirectly) to Luther

and, of course, to Rome. From it resulted an exchange of papers with Johannes Cochlaeus.

III.

We end our investigation by asking some practical questions: To what degree was Bullinger a model for Calvin, not only in theory but also in practice, not only for the Preface but also for the content of the Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans itself? It should be clear that the basis of such a comparison must be a detailed overall examination. While such a study has not yet been written, I think, nevertheless, that it is possible to share with you some of my preliminary observations as stimulus to further research. First of all, there are three general findings which deserve attention. Despite the mutual declaration of intended conciseness, Bullinger's commentary is considerably shorter than Calvin's. For the whole commentary the ratio between Bullinger and Calvin is approximately 1 : 1.6; for Chapter One (this is an exception!), 1 : 0.85; for Chapter Two, 1 : 1.17; for Chapter Five, 1 : 1.5. In regards to the basis of their text Bullinger relies- following his intention - almost exclusively on the Novum Testamentum of Erasmus. Calvin also follows Erasmus in part, but he uses the Vulgata as well, and this particularly at those points where Erasmus digresses, where he brings paraphrases, or where one finds, so to speak, classical formulations, widely familiar, especially when they are citations from the

Old Testament (e.g. in chap. 9). Beyond that he adds his own translations. I once again refer you to T. H. L. Parker's essay "The Sources of the Text of Calvin's New Testament," and also to the extraordinarily thorough work of Girardin Rhéthorique et Théologique - a piece of research, which in my view, must be undertaken in similar fashion for Bullinger before any further comparisons can be drawn. Finally, our attention is drawn to the fact that in comparison with Calvin, Bullinger uses by far more quotations, and quotes more extensively and more carefully. This is true for direct quotes from paraphrases of the Bible, as much as for quotations from the Church Fathers or from the commentaries of his contemporaries. Furthermore, we also find in Bullinger by far more quotations from classical antiquity and from the humanists (Erasmus, Valla, Budaeus, etc.).

Both the parallels and the differences between the two commentaries can be seen even more obviously, if one compares specific sections. I choose three (well-known) passages from Chapter One:

a) Verse 1 "From Paul, servant of Christ Jesus, apostle by God's call, set apart for the service of the Gospel"[40] reads exactly the same both in Bullinger and in Calvin with the exception of one word: Bullinger reads that Paul is "segregatus in Evangelium Dei," while Calvin reads "selectus." In the exposition of the verse one immediately finds, however, even more dissimilarities. Both of them adhered primarily to the

exact wording of the text and offered explanations of the name Paul and of the calling of Paul as "servus Dei" and "apostolus." Whereas Calvin found it necessary to explain in this context that this "selection" "must not be confused, as some exegetes do, with the election to life eternal."[41] Bullinger added an explanation of the term "euangelium". Above all, Bullinger added a whole series of additional information, e.g. that also the Romans (Cicero, Plinius) used to call a letter according to the name of the sender, that in Acts 9 and 13 there are detailed reports about the calling of Paul to be a "servus Dei" and a missionary, that for the use of the words "vocatus" and "segregatus" Oecolampadius, Tertullian and Erasmus, but also Hebrews 5:4 need to be consulted. And for the explanation of the term "euangelium" Bullinger called 'tà euangélia' a payment, a 'bottenbrot' <i.e. in English a 'messenger's fee'>, for those who proclaim good news. So did Cicero in the Letter to Atticus. Oh sweet letters to whom I owe good tidings!"[42]

b) Example No. 2: Romans 1:16f:

> "For I am not ashamed of the Gospel. It is the saving power of God for everyone who has faith- the Jew first, but the Greek also - because here is revealed God's way of righting wrong, a way that starts from faith and ends in faith; as Scripture says, 'he shall gain life who is justified through faith.'"

It should suffice to observe here that both Calvin and Bullinger stressed with equal intensity, that in

these verses Paul summarizes the core of the entire Gospel. Both of them immediately touch upon the cross and underline that the content of the Gospel is participation in the justice of God and that this justice is not gained by works but by faith alone. Let me give you only two quotations about the content of the "Gospel of Christ" of which Paul is not ashamed: Calvin says:

> "If we want to magnify the power of God then we find it clearly in the Gospel. If the goodness of God is worthy to be asked and to be loved, the Gospel is the means of this goodness. Right, therefore, it is to be both cherished and honored if indeed the power of God deserves veneration"[43]

Bullinger who added here the marginal note "The Gospel, what it is and what its nobility is," says on the other hand:

> "But we want to see in which sense it is said that the Gospel is the virtue or power of God. The virtue of God, the 'dynamis theou,' is the power of God, his strength, majesty, truth, justice, and mercy. And to such an extent is his son Jesus Christ, our Lord, the arm of God that he announced through him ... life eternal."[44]

c) As a very enlightening third example I have chosen the beginning of the first part of the Letter to the Romans: Romans 1:18ff, i.e. the passage in which Paul, according to the view of many authors, deals with the question of the natural revelation of God:

> "For all that may be known of God by men lies

> plain before their eyes; indeed God himself has disclosed it to them. His invisible attributes, that is to say his everlasting power and deity, have been visible, ever since the world began, to the eye of reason, in the things he has made." (Verses 19, 20a).

In the exposition of these words Calvin did not at all deny the possibility of a natural knowledge of God- holding a position which according to many scholars Calvin never held. Let me give you as a proof the following passages:

> "When it is said that 'God has revealed himself,' it means that the human being was created for considering the skillful conception of the world. For this reason he was given eyes so that by looking at the beauty of it he could be guided to the author himself."

And with regard to "his invisible being" he said:

> "God as such is invisible. But since his majesty becomes apparent in all his works and things created, the human being must, therefore, know him, because they clearly give witness of the creator."[45]

After these sentences Calvin immediately proceeded, in close dependence on the wording of Paul, to stress the inexcusability of the human being. Totally differently, however, Bullinger, not in his commentary on verse 20, but in his commentary on verses 21-23, added a broad religio-historical excursus. Even if the pagans cannot ultimately excuse themselves, because "they have ignored the manifestation of God,"[46] still there exists "a differentiation between true and false religion"[47]

> "Firstly God manifests his truth to us not only through oracles of godly people but also through the beauty and the creation of things created.... But secondly, those who recognize him, attribute all glory to God. They adore him, they call upon him, they worship only him, in short, they give him thanks.... Out of this is born the love of God and of his will...."[48]

According to Bullinger this knowledge of God by the pagans did not always decay into "exchanging the splendour of immortal God for an image shaped like mortal man, even for images life birds, beasts, and creeping things,"[49] but expressed itself also in highly respectable conceptions that many names are attributed to God, but that only he is <u>one</u> ('natura' in Plinius, 'fatum' in Homer, 'sol' in Macrobius, 'opifex' in Lamblich) and that, "teste Erasmo," the ancient people considered God to be all that which is of help to the human being about which Cicero wrote "plura" in "libris de natura dedeorum."[50]

I must conclude. In the preface to the English edition of Bullinger's <u>Decades</u>, London 1577 the English editor wrote:

> "questionlesse, no writer yet in the hands of men can fit them better than maister Bullinger in these his Decades; who in them amendeth much Calvins obscuritie with singular perspicuitie."[51]

Is this not also the case for the comparison of Bullinger's and Calvin's commentaries? And much more, is it not even more the case when one compares

Bullinger's and Calvin's commentaries with those which are nowadays generally considered to be exegesis?

Translated by Christoph J. Weichert

NOTES

[1]LCC XX 4f; OS III 6.

[2]OC XIV 37.

[3]Luchesius Smits, Saint Augustin dans l'oeuvre de Jean Calvin, Vol. 1. Assen: van Gorcum 1957, p. 1.

[4]I am thinking here, in chronological sequence of their publication, of the following titles: 1. "The Sources of the Text of Calvin's New Testament," in: Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte, Vol. 73, 1962, pp. 272-298; 2. "Calvin the Biblical Expositor," in: Courtenay Studies in Reformation Theology, Vol. 1: John Calvin. Abingdon, Berkshire: The Courtenay Press Appleford 1966, pp. 176-189; incl. Appendix 1: Chronological List of the Commentaries; Appendix 2: Chronological Chart of Lecons and Congregations; 3. Calvin's New Testament Commentaries. London: SCM Press 1971; 4. "Calvin the Exegete: Change and Development," in: Calvinus Ecclesiae Doctor. Die Referate des International Congress on Calvin Research ... 1978 in Amsterdam, Edited by W.H. Neuser. Kampen: J.H. Kok 1980; 5. Johannis Calvini Commentarius in Epistolam Pauli ad Romanos. Leiden: Brill 1981. (=Studies in the History of Christian Thought, Vol. 22)

[5]1. "Calvin als paulinischer Theologe. Ein Forschungsansatz zur Hermeneutik Calvins," in: Calvinus Theologus. Die Referate des European Congress on Calvin Research, edited by W.H. Neuser. Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag 1976, pp. 39-69; 2. "Hermeneutische Korrelationen bei Calvin," in: Reformatio ecclesiae, Beiträge zu kirchlichen Reformbemühungen der Alten Kirche bis zur Neuzeit. Festgabe für Erwin Iserloh,

edited by R. Bäumer. Paderborn: Schöningh 1980, pp. 615-627; 3. (together with Stefan Scheld) Die Hermeneutik Calvins. Geistesgeschichtliche Voraussetzungen und Grundzüge. Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag 1983. (=Veröffentlichungen des Instituts für europäische Geschichte Mainz, Abteilung für abendländische Religionsgeschichte, edited by Peter Manns, Vol. 114)

[6]Benoît Girardin, Rhétorique et Théologie. Calvin. Le Commentaire de l'Epître aux Romains. Paris: Editions Beauchesne 1979. (=Théologie historique, Vol. 54) Gilbert Vincent, Exigence éthique et interprétation dans l'oeuvre de Calvin. Genève: Labor et Fides 1984. (=Histoire et Société, Vol. 5) Richard Stauffer, Interprètes de la Bible, Etudes sur les Réformateurs de XVIe siécle. Paris: Editions Beauchesne 1980. (=Théologie historique, Vol. 57) Rodolphe Peter, "Rhétorique et prédication selon Calvin," in: Revue d'histoire et de philosophie religieuses, Vol. 55, 1975, pp. 249-272.

[7]Johannis Calvini Commentarius in Epistolam Pauli ad Romanos, edited by T.H.L. Parker. Leiden: E.J. Brill 1981. (=Studies in the History of Christian Thought, Vol. XXII) (quoted as: Parker)

[8]"Memini, quum ante triennium de optimo ennarrandae Scripturae genere inter nos familiariter commentaremus, eam quae plurimum tibi placebat, rationem mihi quoque prae aliis probatam tunc fuisse. Sentiebat enim uterque nostrum, praecipuam interpretis virtutem in perspicua brevitate esse positam" and further: "Itaque cupiebamus ex eorum numero, quibus in hoc laboris genere theologiam iuvare hodie propositum est, unum aliquem extare qui et facilitati studeret, et simul daret operam ne prolixis commentariis studiosos ultra modum detineret." Parker, 1.5-9,12-15.

[9]"quibus pietas, eruditio, sanctimonia, aetas denique tantum authoritatis fecit, ut nihil quod ab ipsis profectum sit, contemnere debeamus." Ibid., p. 2.41-43.

[10]"Ac eos etiam qui hodie vivunt, nominatim omnes commemorare nihil attinet. De iis qui praecipaum operam navarunt, dicam quod sentio. Philippus Melanchthon pro singulari et doctrina, et industria, et dexteritate qua in omni disciplinarum genere pollet, prae iis qui ante ipsum in publicum prodierant, multum lucis intulit. Sed quia illi propositum modo fuisse apparet, quae in primis essent animadversione digne, excutere: in iis dum immoratur, multa consulto praeterit quae vulgare ingenium fatigare nonnihil possint. Sequutus est Bullingerus, qui et ipse magnam suo merito laudem adeptus est, habiut enim coniunctam cum doctrina facilitatem, qua se magnopere approbavit. Tandem Bucerus, lucubrationibus suis emissis, veluti colophenem imposiut. Siquidem vir ille (ut nosti) praeter reconditam eruditionem, copiosamque multarum rerum scientiarum, praeter ingenii perspicaciam, multam lectionem, aliasque multas ac varias virtutes quibus a nemine fere hodie vincitur, cum paucis est conferendus, plurimos antecellit: hanc sibi propriam laudem habet, quod nullus hac memoria exactiore diligentia in Scripturae interpretatione versatus est." Ibid., p. 2.43-59.

[11]Cf. Ibid., p. 2.69-3.79.

[12]"Putavi hunc quoque laborem non poenitendum fore, si optimam interpretationem indicando, sublevarem eos a iudicandi molestia, quibus non satis firmum est a seipsis iudicium: praesertim quum ita omnia succincte perstringere instituerem, ut non magnam temporis iacturam facturi essent lectores, apud me legendo quae in aliis habentur. In summa, dedi operam nequis iure conqueratur multa hic supervacua esse." Ibid., p. 3.86-92.

[13]"Nunquam enim tanto beneficio servos suos dignatus est Deus, ut singuli plena perfectaque omni ex parte intelligentia praediti essent, nec dubium quin eo consilio, ut nos in humilitate primum, deinde communicationis fraternae studio retineret. Ergo quum sperandum in praesenti vita non sit, quod maxime alioqui optandum esset, ut in locis Scripturae intelligendis

perpetua sit inter nos consensio: danda est opera ut nulla novandi libidine incitati, nulla suggillandi alios cupiditate impulsi, nullo instigati odio, nulla ambitione titillati: sed sola necessitate coacti, nec aliud quaerentes quam prodesse, a superiorum sententiis discedamus." Ibid., p. 3.7-4.15.

[14]Heinrich Bullinger Werke, 3.Abteilung: Theologische Schriften, Vol. 1: Exegetische Schriften aus den Jahren 1525-1527, bearbeitet von Hans-Georg vom Berg und Susanna Hausammann. Zurich: Theologischer Verlag Zürich 1983.

[15]Cf. the detailed list of dedicatory letters in: Fritz Büsser, Wurzeln der Reformation in Zürich, Zum 500. Geburtstag des Reformators Huldrych Zwingli. Leiden: E.J. Brill 1985, pp. 178ff. (=Studies in Medieval and Reformation Thought, Vol. 31)

[16]Heinrich Bullinger Werke, 1.Abteilung: Bibliographie, ed. by Fritz Büsser, Vol. 1: Beschreibendes Verzeichnis der gedruckten Werke von Heinrich Bullinger, bearbeitet von Joachim Staedtke. Zurich: Theologischer Verlag Zürich 1972 (quoted as HBBibl 1), No. 84ff.

[17]Ibid., No. 327-356.

[18]"non Leges..., sed commentarios scripsisse." Bullinger, In omnes apostolicas epistolas commentarii, fol. aaa 2r.

[19]"Ego enim engenue fateor, nihil humani esse alienum ab hominibus, adeoque nihil perinde humanum esse atque errare et hallucinare." Ibid., fol. aaa 2r.

[20]"Certa absolutaque veritatis recteque vivendi et iudicandi regula, quae nec erret ipsa neque quenquam in errorem abducat, ad quam sint expendenda et examinanda omnia omnium hominum scripta, dicta et facta." Ibid., fol. aaa 2r.

[21]Ibid., fol. aaa 3r.

[22]Ibid.

[23]"A quo interpretationis genere quatenus sancti Patres non discessere, eos non solum interpretes scripturae me recipere, sed ut organa dei delecta venerari." Ibid., fol. aaa 3r.

[24]"Metuens vero ne forte id abusu Commentariorum nostrorum posteris (absit verbo invidia) accidat, quod prioribus usubenisse videmus, accuratius invulco quo loco haec nostra haberi velim. Scriptura Canonica semper et unice nobis spectanda est in omnibus ut absoluta veritatis regula; haec nuspiam amittenda; ex hac petenda religionis singula; ad hanc omnia examinanda; illa nunquam ponenda ex manibus. Quod si iuvandi studio ad hanc scribuntur Commentarii, habentur ut indices, ut Mercuriales statuae et viae duces, mox reliquendi, ubi eo veneris quo volebas." Ibid., fol. aaa 3r.

[25]"Certe deum habeo testem, quod studio non libidine in hunc campum descenderim, hoc est, quod promevendi in primis gloriam veritatemque Christi, deinde et iuvandi studio haec coeperim, non ut opes istas meas perexiguas ostentarem, aut captarem auram popularem, aut aliorum scripta vel damnarem vel obscurarem." Ibid., fol. aaa 3v.

[26]"Principio per integrum opus brevitati studui, quamvis non raro etiam praeter animi institutum fuerim prolixio". "Deinde quanta potui diligentia curavi, ut bona fide recitarem tibi apostolorum verba: qua quidem parte potissimum sequutus sum beatae memoriae D. Erasmi Roterodami aeditionem. Aliquoties vero hanc, pro mea tenuitate, contuli cum veritate Graecanica, quoties videlicet haec videretur vel planior vel evidentior." Ibid., fol. aaa 4r.

[27]"Stilo simplici, ut vides, et agresti. Lenocinia enim ac phaleras nihil moror. Satis esse credo, si mentis cogitata exprimat oratio facilis." Ibid., fol. aaa 4v.

[28]"plurima quoque mutuatus sum ex scriptoribus vetustis

ac neotericis. Neque hoc dissimulavi." Ibid., fol. aaa 4v.

[29]Joachim Staedtke, Die Theologie des jungen Bullinger. Zurich: Zwingli Verlag 1962, p. 275f.; cf. Heinrich Bullingers Diarium (Annales vitae) der Jahre 1504-1574, edited by Emil Egli. Basel: Basler Buch- und Antiquariatshandlung 1904, p. 6; cf. Susi Hausammann, "Die Rhetorik im Dienst der reformatorischen Schriftauslegung", in: Kerygma und Dogma, Vol. XX, 1974, pp. 305-314.

[30]Joachim Staedtke, Die Theologie des jungen Bullinger. Zurich: Zwingli Verlag 1962, p. 288f.; HBBibl 1, No. 712f.

[31]T.H.L. Parker, Calvin's New Testament Commentaries. London: SCM Press 1971, p. 38.

[32]Ibid., p. 40.

[33]Ibid., p. 41, n. 1.

[34]HBBibl. 1, No. 54-61.

[35]Ibid., No. 62-68.

[36]Ibid., No. 111f.

[37]In: Text - Wort - Glaube. Studien ... Kurt Aland gewidmet, hg. von Martin Brecht. Berlin: de Gruyter 1980, pp. 274-297.

[38]CSEL, Vol. 25, p. 197.

[39]"Nam si fides per spiritum sanctum est ex verbo domini, et fides efficit fidelem, fidelium autem coetus ecclesia est; consequens est, quod evangelium sive verbum domini sit ante ecclesiam, aut quod ecclesia nascatur ex verbo dei, atque hoc ideo prius sit et maius." Bullinger, De scripturae sanctae autoritate fol. 17r.

[40]New English Bible.

[41]"Neque enim iis assentior qui eam de qua loquitur, vocationem ad aeternam Dei electionem referunt." Parker, p. 12.58-59.

[42]"Vetusti enim 'tà euangélia' vocarunt praemium quod dabatur fausta nuncianti, ein bottenbrot. Sic Cicero ad Atticum. O suaves epistolas quibus evangelium daberi fateor." Bullinger, In omnes apostolicas epistolas commentarii, p. 4.

[43]Calvin: "Primum si magnifieri debet a nobis Dei potentia, ea elucet in Euangelio. Si bonitas digna est quae expetatur et ametur, Euangelium est eius bonitatis instrumentum, merito ergo et colendum, et honorandum est, si quidem potentiae Dei debetur veneratio." Parker, p. 25.76-79.

[44]"Evangelium quid sit et quae eius nobilitas." "Sed videamus quo sensu dixerit Evangelium esse virtutem sive potentiam dei. Virtus itaque dei, 'dynamis theou,' potentia dei est, robur, maiestas, veritas, iustitia, misericordia, adeoque brachium illud dei ipse filius Iesus Christus dominus noster, per quem declaravit .... vitam aeternam." Bullinger, In omnes apostolicas epistolas commentarii, p. 7f.

[45]"Quod dicit, Deum manifestasse, sensus est, ideo conditum esse hominem ut spectator sit fabricae mundi: ideo datos ei oculos, ut intuitu tam pulchrae imaginis, ad authorem ipsum feratur". "Invisibilia enim ipsius. Deus per se invisibilis est: sed quia elucet eius maiestas in operibus et creaturis universis, debuerunt illinc homines agnoscere: nam artificem suum perspicue declarant." Parker, p. 29.33-38.

[46]"Dei manifestationem contempserunt." Bullinger, In omnes apostolicas epistolas commentarii, p. 11.

[47]"Gradus verae et falsae religionis." Ibid.

[48]"Primo enim veritatem suam manifestat nobis deus, non

modo oraculis divinorum hominum, sed et pulchritudine et opificio rerum creatarum ... Deinde vero qui deum cognovere, deo omnem gloriam tribuunt, hunc adorant, hunc inovocant, hunc unice colunt, illi denique grati sunt ... Hinc nascitur amor dei et voluntatis eius ..." Ibid.

[49]Rom 1:23, New English Bible.

[50]Bullinger, In omnes apostolicas epistolas commentarii, p. 12.

[51]Bullinger, Fiftie Godlie and Learned Sermons. London 1577, p. iv (HBBibl 1, No. 218).

HISTORY AS RHETORICAL WEAPON: CHRISTIAN HUMANISM IN CALVIN'S REPLY TO SADOLETO, 1539

James R. Payton, Jr.

Preliminary Considerations

The title of this paper assumes answers to two important and related questions of 16th-century historiography. Time does not permit a detailed defense of these answers but it may be worthwhile to mention those questions and articulate the answers to them--answers which reflect the growing consensus of historiographical scholarship.

The first question is that of the relationship of the Renaissance to the Reformation, or, put more precisely, of the relationship of Christian Humanism to the Reformation. The second question pertains to John Calvin's relation to Christian Humanism. With regard to the first question, the hoary postulate of an unmitigated antithesis between a man-centred Renaissance and a God-centred Reformation, of a man-glorifying humanism (such that "Christian" Humanism is virtually a contradiction in terms) and a God-glorifying Reformation, has not stood the test of careful historical inquiry. Jacob Burckhardt's assertion of nascent individualism as the philosophical core of the Italian Renaissance[1] still has its defenders,[2] to be sure; nevertheless, the preponderance of recent Renaissance scholarship moves in quite a different

direction, one which leads the attentive traveller to a destination far removed from that irreconcilable antithesis.[3] Through the studies of Paul Oskar Kristeller and a host of scholars indebted to him, the unifying core of the Renaissance has come to be recognized, not in a philosophical orientation, but in a pedagogical one.[4] According to this growing consensus, Italian Renaissance humanism was, as is presupposed in the term, concerned with the humaniora, those humane studies which cultivate responsible manhood and citizenship. The distinctive element of that pedagogy, however, was the shared opinion that this could be best attained by the study of and intense involvement with antiquity--Greek, Roman and, especially for Northern Europe, Christian.[5] Unquestionably, such a pedagogical perspective could be put to the service of attitudes toward humankind, the world, God and the Church, inimical to those espoused in the Protestant Reformation. However, it is just as unquestionable that such perspectives could well be used in the service of the Evangelical movement. Recent scholarship has shown that the majority of those who joined Luther's cause in the early years of the Reformation were steeped in the Christian Humanism of Northern Europe.[6] Further, scholarly assessments of the subsequent careers of these allegedly erstwhile Christian humanists serving in leadership roles in the Protestant Reformation, in general, and of their curricular innovations and instructional objectives, in particular, demonstrate an

unmistakable and continuing adherence on their part to the enthusiasms of the Christian humanist movement.[7] Clearly, these 16th-century leaders discerned no radical antithesis between their Christian Humanism and their Protestantism; leading scholars of the 20th century have shown that we should agree with them. Whatever questions about the relationship between the movements still remain, it has become historiographically irresponsible to assert a radical antithesis between the Renaissance and the Reformation, or between Christian Humanism and Protestantism.[8]

In regard to the second question, and tying in to the assessment just given, this essay assumes the viability of recognizing a strong Christian humanist vein in Calvin's thought and writing.[9] While no careful historical monograph has yet appeared to update the study of Quirinus Breen[10] in light of the more penetrating evaluations of Christian Humanism which have appeared in the last two generations,[11] these evaluations offer much that could corroborate, sharpen, and improve on Breen's assessment of Calvin's humanism. Drawing upon some of these evaluations, the author hopes that his essay will contribute to a better appreciation and understanding of Calvin's Christian humanism by elucidating his rhetorical use of history in the 1539 Reply to Sadoleto.

With regard to the point of concentration in this paper, converging on Calvin's rhetorical use of history is neither a gratuitous focus nor a fortuitous discovery

of elements in the text of Calvin's reply. Historical scholarship of the last generation has cogently shown that the humanism of both Italy and Northern Europe diligently pursued rhetorical expertise.[12] The ideal of the orator as personified by Cicero and Cato in ancient Rome, as set forth in the instruction offered in Cicero's De Oratore and Quintilian's Institutio oratoria, and as literarily embodied preeminently in the writing of Cicero, was so compelling to the humanists that one scholar of the era has categorized the Renaissance as "the pursuit of eloquence".[13] This eloquence, however, carried for the humanists none of the negative connotations sometimes associated with the term rhetoric in the present day. Rather, in concert with their pedagogical goal, the study of rhetoric purposed after the development of a winsome, refined, articulate, clear-thinking and consequently effectual spokesman for the wisdom with which men should conduct all their affairs.[14]

Rhetoric provided a compelling and attractive form for the presentation of wisdom. That wisdom, however, was for the humanists bound up with the material of a budding historical awareness unknown to the medieval chronicler but fundamental in shaping humanism's outlooks. The sense of historical distance that dawned with Petrarch and Boccacio[15] enlightened the humanists who followed them with a sensitivity for historical anachronism.[16] That is to say, the humanist movement was endowed from the beginning with a perspective on

history which no only legitimized their rejection of the medieval period and espousal of antiquity, but which also invited curricular renewal.[17] Recent Renaissance scholarship has affirmed the significance of this new sense of history for the whole humanist movement. Within that movement, some humanists were more alert to the implications of that sense and the possibilities it offered for their rhetorical pursuits than were others, of course,[18] and the very sense of history itself demanded much further development than could be expected at that point in its nonage.[19] Nevertheless, humanism found in this budding historical sensitivity both a new way of looking at the world and a potent weapon for the assault on things medieval.

Given these scholarly assessments of the fundamental humanist enthusiasms, if it can be demonstrated that Calvin deliberately manifested rhetorical finesse while developing an historical argument in the defense he offered of the Evangelical movement in his Reply to Sadoleto, then the conclusion will seem incontrovertible that Calvin embodied the ideals of Christian Humanism as he sought the welfare of the Protestant Reformation. If that can be shown, then a suggestive inference regarding the thrust of Calvin's reply arises.

Introduction to the Reply

Jacopo Cardinal Sadoleto was well-known among learned men in his day: he was one of the leading

humanists in Italy, an accomplished Ciceronian Latinist, a respected scholar and author, a would-be reformer of the Church from within the College of Cardinals, and a biblical commentator/theologian of some note.[20] Recognizing all these qualities, the Council of Geneva sought someone of stature to answer him. It was a daunting task but offered Calvin an inviting opportunity, to which he responded with a restrained but unmistakable élan. Calvin never intended his 1539 Reply to Sadoleto to be a piece of private correspondence. He saw to it that his work was published along with the cardinal's letter as a public defense of his and Farel's labours in Geneva and, by extension, of the whole Protestant movement.[21]

The text of the reply indicates that Calvin had a particular reading public especially in mind. The opening words refer to the contemporary society doctorum hominum, "of learned men," and are quickly followed by Calvin's recognition that he was addressing Sadoleto publice inter eruditos, "publicly among the well-informed." The third sentence already expresses a certainty that this work will become well known apud omnes literatos, "among all the liberally educated."[22] Throughout the reply, Calvin addresses that audience, writing always in the style of contemporary learned discourse--namely, a refined and elegant Ciceronian Latinity.[23] In his presentation, he adopts the posture of an adroit lawyer, whose skillful defense ends up indicting the prosecution as well.[24] When one recalls

that Calvin's formal humanist training lay in the study of civil law at Orleans, when one keeps in mind that the emulation of Cicero's Latin style was a goal of the humanist movement, and when one recognizes that, at least in the minds of the humanists of the period, the society of Christian Humanism, the conclusion seems abundantly warranted that Calvin directed his 1539 Reply to Sadoleto to a Christian humanist audience, whoever else may have ended up reading it as well. By publishing his reply along with the text of Sadoleto's letter, Calvin gave a Christian humanist readership, which was at the time divided in its loyalties between the Romanist and Protestant obediences,[25] much to consider.

Rhetorical Finesse

Calvin was much less well-known in the scholarly world of his day than his opponent. Calvin's 1536 Institutio had, of course, occasioned considerable interest in the religious world. His more technical study of Seneca's De Clementia had not, however, captured the interest of the scholars.[26] Consequently, in the matter of esteem among his intended readership, Calvin was at a considerable disadvantage. He respectfully acknowledged Sadoleto's outstanding reputation numerous times in his reply. The first sentence of the work speaks of the cardinal's "excellent learning and distinguished eloquence" which served to distinguish him among the "great abundance of learned

men whom our age has produced," such that Sadoleto was "among the few whom all, who want to be considered studious of liberal arts, honour and respect."[27] Shortly thereafter, Calvin described the Italian humanist as a man qui de bonis disciplinis sit optime meritis, a man "who deserves the highest respect for his excellent learning."[28] This deferential acknowledgment of Sadoleto's eminence showed considerable respect for the Italian humanist, to be sure; it also indicated that Calvin shared with Sadoleto and with his intended readership a concern for the eloquence and the liberal arts which were the enthusiasms of the humanist movement.

In regard to the matter of eloquence, Sadoleto's letter to the Genevans actually fell considerably short of his reputation, however. Acknowledged by many in his own day as a master of Latin style, the Italian humanist's previous letters to Melanchthon and Johann Sturm had been elegant treatises. Neither had produced the positive effect intended by Sadoleto. His letter to the Genevans, the third of his forays into Evangelical circles, lacked the stylistic polish for which he was otherwise renowned.[29] It has often been observed that Calvin's reply, in contrast, was one of the most eloquent literary masterpieces of a man who has been widely recognized by subsequent scholarship as one of the best Latinists of the 16th century.[30] Was this literary difference lost on the man who saw to it that the two pieces were published together? This can hardly

have been the case; rather, writing as he was for a learned public, Calvin made full use of his literary abilities and contrasted his composition with the feebler effort of the renowned Italian humanist, as a subtle but significant element in Calvin's defense of the Evangelical movement. For those who prized eloquence--as the Christian humanists of his day unquestionably did--, Calvin produced a work of literary artistry to be appreciated and which, consequently, already in its elegant style served as a defense of the Protestant movement for the intended readership.

In the course of his reply, Calvin frequently referred to the liberales artes which the Christian humanists prized and to the effects such a course of study would have on those who mastered it: the opening sentence already mentioned many in that day who were bonarum artium studiosi and was soon supplemented by a reference to the humanist goal, hominem liberalibus omnibus doctrinis expolitum, "a man refined by all kinds of liberal learning."[31] Calvin contrasted such training with that of the scholastics, styling them "sophists,"[32] referring with disgust to the "kind of doctrine being taught in the schools to candidates for ecclesiastical ministry, "instruction which as "mere sophistry, [so] contorted, involved, tortuous and perplexing that scholastic theology deserved to be called a species of secret magic."[33] With such criticism of scholastic learning and, especially, scholastic theology, Calvin joined in the common Christian humanist disdain for the

intellectual training proffered in scholasticism, of course. He also thereby clearly identified both himself and the Protestant movement he was defending with the humanist program of liberal arts which would enhance genuine doctrinae, prudentiae, gravitatis.[34] This gave Calvin the opportunity for an oblique but devastating attack on Sadoleto's humanism and afforded a subtly powerful appeal to the humanist movement. By affirming the liberal arts and their expected benefits, and by tarring the Italian humanist with the brush of the scholastic theology which the cardinal never criticized in his call to the Genevans to return to the Roman obedience (where such theology was still taught), Calvin gave the learned world of his day to understand that Christian Humanism's rejection of scholasticism found a more welcome home in Protestantism than it could even with renowned Christian humanists as leaders in the Roman obedience. As a subtle rhetor, Calvin did not need to draw out that implication explicitly; no Christian humanist could possibly miss it.

Calvin did explicitly draw out another criticism of Sadoleto which raised further questions about the cardinal's faithful adherence to humanist emphases--namely, to the canons of humanist discourse. As over against the disputation mentality of scholastic training, with its openness toward invective and misrepresentation for the purpose of winning a disputation, humanism placed the winsomeness of the orator who, dealing fairly with his opponent, won him to

agreement rather than vanquishing him in battle.[35] Consequently, Calvin's protest against misrepresentation and against unseemly invective on the cardinal's part was not merely the vigorous defense of a wounded opponent but more importantly an appeal to the genteel audience of Christian Humanism. Calvin eschewed the ill will, harshness, and hostility[36] with which Sadoleto had assailed Farel and him. He further accused the cardinal of "calumnious accusation," of failing to maintain "mildness and restraint" but instead engaging in "intemperance, violent passion, and harshness," of "the bitterest expressions," of "many other violent reproaches," and of "pouring out the venom of your bitterness."[37] In addition to the spirit and tone of the cardinal's letter, Calvin objected to Sadoleto's "futile slander," his failure to deal "truly and candidly," his seeking to generate "extreme and malicious ill-will," and his attempt "to prejudice our cause."[38]

By such conduct, Calvin averred, the Italian humanist had ad illiberalem usque calumniandi licentiam descendas ("descended to an indulgence in false accusation unbecoming to one trained in the liberal arts").[39] Sadoleto's presentation had been indecorum, ne dicam illiberale ("unseemly, not to say illiberal") and was cadere non videtur in hominem liberalibus omnibus doctrinis expolitum ("unworthy of one who has been refined by all kinds of liberal learning").[40] It was Sadoletum, ista doctrinae, prudentiae, gravitatis

existimatione, vehementer dedecet ("exceptionally unbecoming to Sadoleto, considering his reputation for learning, prudence, and gravity").[41] Altogether apart from his response to it, Calvin asserted, the cardinal's letter was existimationem tuam apud probos et graves viros, nobis quoque tacentibus, vehementer laesura est ("extremely injurious to your [Sadoleto's] reputation with honorable and serious men").[42] Calvin's repetition of this assessment made unmistakably clear for his readers what the self-inflicted injury of Sadoleto was: the Roman cardinal had failed his humanism and had conducted himself like a medieval scholastic.

By way of contrast, Calvin declared,

> "I will conduct myself so that all may perceive that I have the great advantage over you, not only in the goodness and justice of the cause, in conscientious rectitude, sincerity of heart, and candour of speech, but have also been considerably more successful in maintaining mildness and restraint."[43]

Gentleness and moderation, indeed, did not keep Calvin from making the numerous objections to Sadoleto's presentation cited above, but he declared that he would not dwell on these points as much as might have been warranted.[44] Calvin basically lived up to his declaration in his often sharp responses to the cardinal, avoiding the humanist litany of rhetorical sins just cited.

Of the two men, it had to be consequently clear to the Christian humanist reader of Calvin's reply that the

young Protestant had been much more faithful to the humanist orientation of how men in disagreement should interact. Again the esteemed Italian humanist had appeared in the unwelcome role of the scholastic in whom Christian Humanism found its foil, and in the young Evangelical leader seemed embodied the refined humanist rhetorical attitude and procedure.

Finally in this regard, it should be noted that the argument as Sadoleto had developed it in his letter to the Genevans fell considerably short of the ideal of carefully and winsomely reasoned assertion which the humanist movement prized in an orator. It has been noted that Sadoleto's was not a terribly logical or consequential mind; in contrast, Calvin is known for his logical mind.[45] In regard to the argument as presented in the two documents, where Sadoleto's presentation was loose, verbose and meandering, Calvin's was taut, measured and deliberate in direction.[46] This was a difference which any humanist would readily observe as he read the two pieces which had been published together. Even so, Calvin took the opportunity to expose Sadoleto's failure. He expressed disappointment in Sadoleto's unskillful argument, rhetorically addressing the cardinal in astonishment, "O, Sadoleto, who could ever have expected such a statement from you?"[47] The pointedness of Calvin in this regard was clear when he asserted that the cardinal's argument was utterly implausible.[48] As the skilled young humanist lawyer, Calvin could hardly have been more suggestively

critical than when he declared to the Italian humanist, iactum est abs te defensionis meae fundamentum ("the foundation of my defense was laid by you").[49]

Sadoleto had again failed his reputation as a humanist. His argument had been inept and had provided his opponent with the weapons for defense. Calvin, on the other hand, manifested in his argument--to which this study shall turn more explicitly below--the measured, careful, articulate, elegant, and cogent argument prized by the practitioners of ancient rhetoric in the 16th century, the Christian humanists.

In summary, it can be seen that Calvin's presentation in his 1539 Reply to Sadoleto appealed to the rhetorical enthusiasms of the Christian humanist movement. His literary style was the Ciceronian elegance they prized; his anti-scholastic educational orientation and his concomitant preference for the humanist curriculum of liberal arts which culminated in the development of an effective orator were hallmarks of Northern Christian Humanism; his treatment of his opponent in debate manifested the expected attitude of a faithful Christian humanist engaged in this rhetorical pursuit; and, finally, his opposition to poor argument alongside his own presentation of a careful legal defense were aspects of the rhetorical tradition as it had developed among Northern Christian Humanists, especially among the lawyers. In all of this, by way of contrast, Jacopo Cardinal Sadoleto, the Italian humanist of some renown, came in for considerable implicit and

explicit criticism. Calvin came forth as a polished and accomplished rhetorician in the name and for the sake of Protestantism.

Historical Argument

This examination of Calvin's Reply to Sadoleto must now turn from the rhetorical form in which the author cast his defense to the historical argument he incorporated in it. This is not, of course, turning from mere packaging unessential to the defense to the truly substantial in the argument, if one appreciates the orientation of the Christian humanist movement. For its practitioners, rhetorical finesse was an essential aspect of convincing argument,[50] and Calvin manifested considerable expertise in this fine art as he wrote for them, as has been seen. Even so, in order fully to appreciate the embodiment of Christian humanism's ideals in Calvin's 1539 defense of the Evangelical movement, consideration must now be given to the use he made of history in this reply.[51]

In examining Calvin's defense, it is hardly surprising to find the Protestant leader taking his stand first of all on the Scriptures. He criticized Sadoleto's urging the people of Geneva simply to follow the Church's tradition when confronted with a question as to which way to go; instead, the people of God were to follow the instruction of the Word of God, by which the Spirit of God would guide the Church. That is what Sadoleto should have advised the Genevans to do, urged

Calvin[52] in the manner to be expected of a Protestant spokesman.

However, Calvin pressed this basic Evangelical point with a subtle twist: when he returned to it a few pages later, he used the language of tradition to describe the responsibility of pastors to be guided by the Word of God in all that they do and teach. He said that their office non quae a se ipsis placita temere excuderint, confidenter ingerere, sed quae ex ore Domini oracula acceperint, religiose ac bona fide proferre, "is not boldly to set forth teachings devised on their own, but religiously and in good faith to deliver the oracles which they have received at the mouth of the Lord" (emphasis added).[53] Calvin was quite unwilling to relinquish the cherished conception of tradition: it simply had to be the proper tradition, that of faithfulness toward the Word of God. This was for him no ahistorical and unattainable ideal; rather, it had demarked the Church, in the main, during the course of her history and found its contemporary embodiment among the Protestants. He argued that the church is, properly, only that societatem ... per omnes aetates dispersa, una tamen Christi doctrina et uno spiritu colligata, "the society which ... existing in all ages, nevertheless [is] bound together by the one doctrine and the one Spirit of Christ."[54] In thus describing the way of the Church through history, Calvin focused the understanding of tradition in a manner allowing both for historical and theological criticism of the Church in

any particular era, on the one hand, and for an historical and theological continuity of the Church, on the other. He went on to declare, Cum hac esse nobis quidquam dissidii negamus, "with this [Church] we deny that we are in disagreement."[55] More specifically, in the two particulars Sadoleto had addressed in his letter to Geneva--the question of pure worship and of true doctrine--, Calvin stated that Protestant worship entailed no departure ab ea colendi Dei ratione, quam semper observavit ecclesia catholica, "from that method of worshipping God which the Catholic Church always observed,"[56] and that dogma ... nostrum ... in ecclesia semper habitum pro confesso fuerit, "our doctrine ... has always been confessed in the Church as an acknowledged point."[57]

For all their criticism of the medieval period and their preference for Christian antiquity, the Christian humanists nonetheless believed as Christians that the Church had never ceased to exist, even in the darkest medieval night. In some fashion still undefined in relationship to their sense of historical distance, there had to be an essential continuity, a true tradition. According to Calvin--and the same could be said of Philip Melanchthon and Martin Bucer--, that tradition had been preserved and then existed among the Protestants, and not in the Roman obedience.[58]

Calvin not only reclaimed the prized conception of tradition, however; as has already been seen, he affirmed the place of preeminence held by Scripture

within it. For a Christian humanist readership, sensitive to the claims of tradition but especially enthused for Christian antiquity, this would occasion no particular difficulty, for, if nothing else, the Scriptures were, indeed, a monument from antiquity. However, Christian humanism also looked upon the writings of the ancient Church Fathers and the decisions of the ancient ecumenical councils with special reverence as sharing in the authority inhering in Christian antiquity. Calvin identified with that enthusiasm when he declaimed against the Roman church's persecution of omnes religionis nostrae sanctionis, et quae Dei oraculis sunt proditae, et quae sanctorum quoque patrum libris sunt consignatae, et quae priscis conciliis approbatae, of "everything sanctioned by our religion, both as delivered by the oracles of God, and vouched for in the books of the holy fathers, and established by ancient councils" (emphasis added).[59] By way of contrast, the Protestant opposition to Roman teaching and practice was non divini verbi modo virtute, sed sanctorum etiam patrum praesidio armati sumus, "armed not only with the power of the divine Word, but with the support of the holy fathers also" (emphasis added).[60] More will be noted about Calvin's appeal to Christian antiquity below, but it is essential here to notice that his Protestant stance upon the Word of God was not of such a nature as to require him to posit a huge disjunction between the ancient Word of God and other written monuments of Christian antiquity. He

recognized and forthrightly presented a distinction, indeed, declaring, Tametsi enim solum Dei verbum extra omnem iudicii aleam constituimus, conciliis vero et patribus ita certam demum autoritatem constare voluimus, si ad eius normam respondeant: eo tamen honore locoque concilia et patres dignamur, quem obtinere sub Christo par est, ("although we hold that the Word of God alone lies beyond all judgement, we genuinely maintain that councils and fathers certainly have an indubitable authority if they accord with its rule; we still deem councils and fathers worthy of the honour and rank which it is appropriate for them to hold under Christ").[61] Their authority operated, for Protestantism, on different levels, with Scripture the ultimate and only unquestioned authority, to be sure.[62] For all the distinction, however, Calvin gave a place to the ancient fathers and councils which he accorded to no other claimant to religious authority, and that place was so close that he could readily connect the ancient Scriptures, on the one hand, and the ancient fathers and councils, on the other, simply with a coordinating conjunction.[63] Here was a possibly modified, but nevertheless unmistakably recognizable, Christian humanist orientation on religious authority. According to Calvin, that perspective had been abandoned within the Roman communion but was held by the Protestant movement.

Calvin fleshed out his claim to antiquity with citations from Cyprian, Ambrose, Basil the Great,

Chrysostom, Augustine, and by a general reference to "the testimonies of the Fathers."[64] Calvin could have marshalled a host of other citations, had he chosen to do so: his 1539 Institutio was distinguished from the 1536 edition by, among other things, extensive patristic references.[65] Although the citations he offered were not plentiful, given the audience he was addressing, they were more than adequate, in the circumstance, to carry the point, for Sadoleto's letter--a letter from a humanist enthusiast for Christian antiquity--had offered no explicit citation of any Church Father![66]

Furthermore, extensive references to the fathers proved unnecessary, inasmuch as Calvin went on to cite the authority of the ancient Church numerous times as he continued his defense of the Protestant movement. Speaking to the heart of humanist desires for the rebirth of classical antiquity, Calvin declared that the Evangelicals' efforts had been endeavors ut instauretur aliquando vetusta illa ecclesiae facies, "to restore at last that ancient form of the Church" which had been defaced by later developments in the Roman communion under the papacy.[67] Protestants had been antiquae pietatis ac sanctimoniae studio, "zealous for ancient piety and holiness," leading them to attempts restituere in pristinum nitorem," "to restore it [the Church] to pristine splendour."[68] Neque vero in doctrinae dubitamus ad veterem ecclesiam provocare, urged Calvin: "Neither in regard to our doctrine do we hesitate to appeal to the ancient church."[69] Although he admitted

that the Evangelicals still had some way to go before they could claim to embody faithfully the wise discipline of the Church in antiquity, he could state that more veteris ecclesiae ("the practice of the ancient church") was the pattern they sought to emulate and which they urged locum hodie ... diligenter ac bona fide custodiatur, "should be in place in the present day and be carefully and faithfully observed."[70]

To be sure, Calvin did not allow that the ancient church was "without spot or wrinkle or any such thing," as St. Paul had stated the church would ultimately be (Ephesians 5:27). Calvin pointed out, "we admit that in times past seeds of superstition [semina ... superstitionum] were sown, which detracted somewhat from the purity of the Gospel."[71] He noted that the ancient church included nonnullam in precibus mortuorum mentionem ("some mention of the dead in their prayers"), but he urged that it was infrequent, soberly done, included only a few words, and was meant as an expression of affection for those who had departed this life.[72] Further, the church in antiquity had some requirements of penitential satisfactions, through which unfeigned repentance was demonstrated.[73] These were the only two semina superstitionum Calvin mentioned, and it is significant to notice that he offered mitigating explanations for their presence in Christian antiquity. Neither of them was, in itself, objectionable, in Calvin's estimation.

According to him, the actual corruptions had only

developed later on: what was objectionable was the misuse subsequently made of them within the Roman communion to elaborate the doctrines of purgatory and of the expiation of sins by the offering of penances and satisfactions, respectively.[74] In a striking architectural image incorporating the humanist sense of historical anachronism, Calvin said to the cardinal, At nondum nati erant architecti, a quibus purgatorium istud vestrum construeretur: qui postea in tantam amplitudinem illud dilaturunt, in tantam extulerunt altitudinem, ut potissima regni vestri portio ipso fulciatur ("But the architects were yet unborn by whom your purgatory was constructed: who subsequently extended it to such a breadth and raised it to such a height, that it secures the principal section of your kingdom").[75] This all took place after the close of Christian antiquity quum mundus ignorantia et hebetudine, velut alto sopore, oppressus esset ("when the world was overcome with ignorance and dullness, as in a very deep sleep")[76] and the Church was led by hominibus indoctis ("unlearned men"). These medieval developments found their source in pontifice romano et eius factione, "the Roman pontiff and his party," who had achieved and now protected the ruin of the ancient form of the Church[77]: contemptuous disregard of ancient ecclesiastical discipline, destruction of the ancient understanding of ministerial service, and a host of errors medieval in origin all had to be credited to them.[78] In a stinging judgement of the medieval papacy

and the subsequent occupants of the papal throne, Calvin declared, prostratum denique fuisse Christi regnum, quum erectus fuisset hic principatus, (the kingdom of Christ was prostrated when this primacy [of the pope] was erected.)[79]

Roman expostulations such as Sadoleto had made against supposed Protestant departures from antiquity in all this were consequently vacuous, since Rome practiced none of it herself.[80] With regard to the areas of controversy in that day, Calvin wrote to the cardinal, in istis omnibus non obscurare a nobis stare veterem ecclesiam: vobisque nihilo minus, quam nos ipsos, adversare, (in all these points, the ancient Church clearly stands by us and not at all with you, to oppose you as we ourselves do).[81] He claimed that Sadoleto knew this but had disguised the fact that longe meliorem nobis cum antiquitate consensionem esse quam vobis, (our agreement with antiquity is far closer than yours).[82] Calvin summed up this repeatedly and powerfully made point clearly when he declared non fecimus, nisi suffragante nobis veteris ecclesiae consensu: cuius umbra frustra conaris ... obtegere, (we have not acted without the unanimous support of the ancient Church, under whose shadow you endeavour in vain to hide ...)[83]

In writing for a Christian humanist readership, Calvin could hardly have coordinated a more telling indictment than the one he offered, for two reasons. First, Calvin's criticisms of Christian antiquity were limited, actually, not to the ancient practices

themselves, but to their subsequent medieval abuse under the aegis of the papacy. His adherence to the ancient Church and, by implication, that of the Protestant movement he was defending, could hardly have been suggested any more broadly. Secondly, in thus criticizing developments within the Roman Church, Calvin affirmed the sense of historical distance foundational to humanism's perspectives and, in so doing, artfully situated the distinctives of the Roman obedience firmly within the medieval period to which humanism professed such unmitigated opposition. In thus assessing these historical developments, the judgments of Christian humanism upon the medieval period issued unchanged from the lips of a leader of the Protestant movement as he criticized the Roman Church. By thus expressing the case, Calvin gave the scholarly world of his day to understand that the Protestant objection to Rome was the Christian humanist objection to the medieval period.

In summary of this point, it can be seen that Calvin developed a significant historical argument in the defense he offered of Protestantism. There are four main aspects to that historical argument.

First, while he stressed the preeminence of Scripture as a religious authority for the Evangelical movement, he did so in a twofold historical context. On the one hand, in speaking of Scripture he utilized the language of tradition, thereby appropriating for the Protestant movement a fundamental concern for the Church's continuity. On the other, he treated Scripture

as a part--preeminent to be sure, but nevertheless a part--of Christian antiquity. His presentation of religious authority was such that he could connect a reference to Scripture with that to the Church Fathers or the ancient Church with a coordinating conjunction (or the converse, with a neither/nor connection of Scripture and elements of Christian antiquity). Had he learned this from Martin Bucer? Living in Strasbourg and in close contact with Bucer, he had already been influenced in various ways by their collaboration. By this time, the use of a coordinating conjunction to connect Scripture with various elements of Christian antiquity was virtually a mark of Bucer's theological style.[84] Whatever be the case in this regard, Calvin's view of Scripture as presented in this reply, and as representing that of Protestantism, tied Scripture to Christian antiquity.

In the second place, Calvin dealt substantively with the question of tradition. The answer to that question was still undefined for the Northern Christian Humanists. Obviously, it posed a significant problem for them. They could, on the one hand, criticize the medieval period cogently; on the other, as Christians, they held to an historical continuity of the Church. For his part, Calvin tried to define that tradition in terms that were at once Protestant and Christian humanist. Thus Calvin addressed the question of continuity, and was one of the first Christian humanists to do so in a significant and compelling fashion.[85]

Thirdly, with regard to that antiquity which Christian Humanism so highly prized, Calvin made a wholehearted and virtually undifferentiated claim of it as support for the Protestant movement. With regard to the Church Fathers, Calvin offered citations in his reply, whereas Sadoleto had offered none in his letter. With regard to the ancient Church, more generally, Calvin urged that the Protestants were zealous for the repristination of Christian antiquity in the present day. By way of glaring contrast, Calvin affirmed, Sadoleto sought to conceal Rome's multifarious violations of Christian antiquity. Thereby Calvin indicated that Rome could stake no legitimate claim to the prized heritage of Christian Humanism.

Fourthly, while Calvin recognized the failures still within Protestantism, he urged that the problems within the contemporary Church were medieval in origin and Roman in provenance. Thereby Calvin appealed to the opposition to things medieval, on the one hand, and to the sense of historical distance, of discontinuity, essential to Christian Humanism's outlooks, on the other, in defending Protestantism and accusing Rome.

From the above, it can be seen that Calvin certainly propounded a powerful historical argument for his Christian humanist readership in his Reply to Sadoleto, 1539.

Conclusion

I have demonstrated that Calvin, as he sought the welfare of the Protestant Reformation in the document

examined, embodied the ideals of Christian Humanism, as those ideals have been articulated by recent scholarship. He deliberately manifested a rhetorical finesse as he offered a significant historical argument in the Reply to Sadoleto, 1539. In so doing he offered a defense of the Evangelical movement which became a powerful indictment of the Roman obedience, and that along specific lines which suggest a further inference regarding the thrust of Calvin's response.

Calvin's treatment both explicitly and implicitly brought wide-ranging criticism of Sadoleto as a humanist and of the Roman Church he represented as medieval. In contrast, his defense of Protestantism represented the Evangelical movement as holding to and being the contemporary embodiment of Christian Humanism's deepest interests. Bound together as the two aspects of the defense were (and as the two writings in publication were), Calvin's presentation suggested that Sadoleto had failed his humanism as a Roman churchman and that Calvin had embodied Christian Humanism as a Protestant. Written to a Christian humanist audience, still divided in its loyalties between the Roman and the Protestant obediences, is it too much to deduce that Calvin intended that inference to be drawn by the readers? Given the concern for persuasive subtlety in the rhetorical tradition, is it too much to infer that Calvin wanted the Christian humanists to understand that they would either entirely lose or else irreparably modify their Christian Humanism if they stayed with

Rome, and that if they wanted to find that Christian Humanism fulfilled they should identify with Protestantism? More pointedly--and this in utter contradiction to the old conception of an irreconcilable antithesis between Christian Humanism and Protestantism--is not Calvin implying to his readers that if they wanted to stay Christian humanists, they should become Protestants?

This type of pregnant insinuation on Calvin's part would fit well with the rhetorical tradition of seeking to persuade by allowing one's audience themselves to come to a conclusion broadly indicated but not explicitly stated. With the clear evidence of Calvin's rhetorical expertise everywhere evident in this 1539 reply, this inference seems warranted.

Whether this suggestion moves entirely in the right direction or not, however, it has been seen that in his Reply to Sadoleto, Calvin embodied what recent scholarship has shown to be the ideals of Christian Humanism as a leader and a defender of the Protestant movement.

Notes

[1]Burckhardt urged this in his influential Die Cultur der Renaissance in Italien: Ein Versuch (Basel, 1860).

[2]Steven Ozment has recently pointed out that proponents of Burckhardt's approach still constitute one of the schools of Renaissance research in his "Humanism,

Scholasticism, and the Intellectual Origins of the Reformation," in F. Forrester Church and Timothy George, eds., Continuity and Discontinuity in Church History: Essays Presented to George Huntston Williams on the Occasion of his 65th Birthday, Studies in the History of Christian Thought, vol. 19 (Leiden, 1979), p. 136.

[3]Heiko A. Oberman, "Quoscunque Tulit Foecunda Vetustas," in Itinerarium Italicum: The Profile of the Italian Renaissance in the Mirror of its European Transformations, eds. Heiko A. Oberman and Thomas A. Brady, Jr., Studies in Medieval and Reformation Thought, vol. 14 (Leiden, 1975), pp. xviii-xxviii.

[4]Kristeller encapsulated his perspective when he wrote, "Renaissance humanism as such was not Christian or pagan, Catholic or Protestant, scientific or antiscientific, civic or despotic, Platonist or Aristotelian, Stoic or Epicurean, optimistic or pessimistic, active or contemplative, although it is easy to find for any of these attitudes, and for many others, a certain number of humanists who favored them. What they all have in common is something else: a scholarly, literary and educational ideal based on the study of classical antiquity" in his "Studies on Renaissance Humanism during the last Twenty Years," Studies in the Renaissance 9 (1962):22. A more expanded treatment can be found in his Renaissance Thought: The Classic, Scholastic, and Humanist Strains (New York, 1961). For the widespread influence of Kristeller's position among Renaissance scholars, cf. Oberman, pp. xviii-xx,xxviii, and William J. Bouwsma, The Interpretation of Renaissance Humanism (Washington, D.C., 1959), pp. 12-13.

[5]Kristeller, Renaissance Thought, p. 10; Myron P. Gilmore, The World of Humanism 1453-1517 (New York, 1962), pp. 204-206.

[6]Bernd Moeller, "The German Humanists and the Reformation," in Imperial Cities and the Reformation: Three Essays, trans. H.C. Erik Midelfort and Mark U. Edwards, Jr. (Philadelphia, 1972), pp. 25-26, 35-36; see

also Lewis W. Spitz, "The Third Generation of German Humanists," in The Reformation: Basic Interpretations, 2d ed., ed. Lewis W. Spitz, (Toronto, 1972), pp. 46-47. Spitz notes, "Of the two dozen leaders (of the Reformation movement) at the time of the Diet of Augsburg in 1530 all except Luther and Nicholas von Amsdorf (1483-1565) had come to the Reformation from humanism.... The leadership of the Reformation was in the hands of the young men with a humanist experience...."(p. 57).

[7]Among these are, for Martin Bucer, the study by Friedhelm Krüger, Bucer und Erasmus: Eine Untersuchung zum Einfluss des Erasmus auf die Theologie Martin Bucers (bis zum Evangelien-Kommentar von 1530), Veröffentlichungen des Instituts für Europäische Geschichte, vol. 57 (Wiesbaden, 1970): cf. Ernst-Wilhelm Kohls, Die Schule bei Martin Bucer in ihrem Verhältnis zu Kirche und Obrigkeit, Pädagogische Forschungen: Veröffentlichungen des Comenius-Instituts, vol. 22 (Heidelberg, 1963); for Philip Melanchthon, in his Melanchthon zwischen Humanismus und Reformation (Forschungen zur Geschichte und Lehre des Protestantismus, vol. 15 [Munich, 1959]), Adolf Sperl notes that the study of Melanchthon in the twentieth century has been dominated by the attempt to understand the influence of humanism upon Melanchthon's teaching and practice as a reformer and an educator (p. 9); a further helpful tool for Melanchthon research in this regard is the survey by Peter Fraenkel and Martin Greschat, Zwanzig Jahre Melanchthonstudium: Sechs Literaturberichte (1945-1964) (Geneva, 1967); studies of other reform leaders, such as Johann Sturm, Johann Bugenhagen, and Joachim Camerarius, while not as numerous as those on Bucer and Melanchthon, nonetheless move in the same direction; for the general educational pattern among the Protestant leaders, cf. Ozment, pp. 136,141.

Consequently, when Bernd Moeller describes these reformers as "former humanists" (p. 35), he exposes a predilection on the nature of humanism by which his otherwise stimulating study of the German humanists is

nonetheless historiographically vitiated--namely, to treat it as rooted, not in a pedogogical orientation, but in a philosophical one. He nevertheless recognizes that these men all "came to differ with Luther on certain theological questions and ... unconsciously formed a common front against him" (p. 37), but without noting that these other men sensed neither incongruity nor unfaithfulness in doing so. The humanistic background they shared led them to perspectives and practices which reflected their continuing humanistic orientation.

[8]Heinz Liebing has pointed out that a wide variety of nuanced interrelationships between Christian Humanism and Protestantism can be discerned in the sixteenth century in his "Die Ausgänge des Europäischen Humanismus," in Geist und Geschichte der Reformation, eds. Heinz Liebing and Klaus Scholder (Berlin, 1966), p. 360. After reviewing recent developments in the understanding of both the Renaissance and the Reformation, Lewis W. Spitz vigorously excoriates the notion that there was irreconcilable opposition between the two movements in his "The Course of German Humanism," in Itinerarium Italicum (p. 379); a recent example of the dated perspective opposed by Spitz is offered by the forthright declaration of W.F. Dankbaar in his Hervormers en Humanisten (Amsterdam, 1978), "Er loopt een principiële sceiding tussen het anthropocentrische Humanisme en het theocentrisch bijbels-reformatorisch geloof" (p. 18).

[9]François Wendel has argued that Calvin's humanism is evident throughout the course of his life in his method of thought and of writing (Calvin: The Origins and Development of his Religious Thought, trans. P. Mairet [London, 1969], pp. 31-34).

[10]Quirinus Breen, John Calvin: A Study in French Humanism (Grand Rapids, 1931).

[11]The studies of Kristeller (and, of course, those who have learned from or advanced beyond him) have all appeared in the approximately two generations since the

publication of Breen's work.

[12]The outstanding presentation of this is by Hanna H. Gray, "Renaissance Humanism: The Pursuit of Eloquence," in Renaissance Essays, eds. Paul Oskar Kristeller and Philip P. Wiener (New York, 1968), pp. 199-216.

[13]Hanna H. Gray (n. 12 above).

[14]Gray, pp. 200-201.

[15]Denys Hay, Annalists and Historians: Western Historiography from the Eighth to the Eighteenth Centuries (London, 1977), p. 90.

[16]E. Harris Harbison, The Christian Scholar in the Age of the Reformation (New York, 1956), p. 35; Hay, p. 91.

[17]Myron P. Gilmore, Humanists and Jurists (Cambridge, Mass., 1963), p. 20; cf. also his The World of Humanism p. 202.

[18]Hay, p. 92.

[19]William Harrison Woodward, Studies in Education during the Age of the Renaissance 1400-1600 (Cambridge, 1906), p. 17; cf. Hay, p. 110.

[20]Richard M. Douglas offers a biography of Sadoleto in his Jacopo Sadoleto, 1477-1547: Humanist and Reformer (Cambridge, Mass., 1959). In his Studies in Education, Woodward states, "Sadoleto himself was amongst the greater scholars of his time" (p. 168) and that he was "the most learned and most respected member of the Sacred College" (p. 169).

[21]T.H.L. Parker, John Calvin: A Biography (Philadelphia, 1975), pp. 78-79; R.J. Mooi, Het Kerk- en Dogmahistorisch Element in de Werken van Johannes Calvijn (Wageningen, 1965), p. 60.

[22]Corpus Reformatorum, vol. 33, eds. William Baum, Edward Cunitz, and Edward Reuss (Braunschweig, 1866),

column 385. (Hereafter in this essay, references to this work will be rendered as CR, followed immediately by the volume number and the column number where the citation is to be found.) Calvin's Reply to Sadoleto is found at CR 33:385-416.

The English translation done by Henry Beveridge and published in John Calvin, Tracts and Treatises on the Reformation of the Church, vol. 1 (Edinburgh, 1844; subsequently reprinted in 1958 and 1983), is badly in need of revision, in view of the many advances in understanding the thought and terminology of the sixteenth century. The author of this essay has noted several places where the full force of Calvin's usage is lost in the Beveridge translation. Consequently, where English translations appear in the text of the essay, they are the responsibility of the present author (who freely acknowledges his debt to the preliminary labours of Beveridge).

[23]Parker, pp. 78-79; Wendel. p. 35.

[24]Parker, p. 79.

[25]Moeller, pp. 30-31; cf. Spitz, "Third Generation," p. 58.

[26]Parker, pp. 25-28.

[27]The relevant section of Calvin's lengthy first sentence is, Quum in magno doctorum hominum proventu, quos tulit nostra haec aetas, id sis, quum excellentis doctrinae tuae, tum vero insignis facundiae merito assequutus, ut te inter paucos colant ac suspiciant quicunque videri volunt bonarum artium studiosi.... (CR 33:385).

[28]CR 33:385.

[29]E.T. Campagnac, in his "Introduction" to Sadoleto on Education: A Translation of the De Pueris Recte Instituendis, (trans. E.T. Campagnac and K. Forbes [Oxford, 1916]), points out Sadoleto's distinguished

reputation as a genuine follower of Cicero in the matter of Latin style (p. xxiii). Douglas deals with the cardinal's letters to Melanchthon (pp. 117-124), to Johann Sturm (pp. 131-135), and, most extensively of the three, to the people of Geneva and Calvin's reply (pp. 143-150). In describing the cardinal's letter, Douglas says that it "shows signs of fatigue and was clearly less substantial than that of his thirty-year-old antagonist" (p. 147).

[30]Parker, pp. 78-79.

[31]CR 33:385,388.

[32]CR 33:415.

[33]CR 33:396.

[34]CR 33:390.

[35]Gray, pp. 202-203.

[36]... invidiae et acerbitatis ... hostiliter (CR 33:385).

[37]... calumniosas tuas criminationis (CR 33:387); lenitate et modestia (CR 33:387); intemperiem ... impotentiam ... asperitas (CR 33:387); acerbissima ... verborum (CR 33:388); plurima alia ... convicia (CR33:390); virus tuae acerbitatis (CR 33:414).

[38]... futili maledicto (CR 33:389); vere ac candide (CR 33:394); At tu perquam maligne hic invidiam nobis facies (CR 33:397); ad gravandam causam nostram (CR 33:416).

[39]CR 33:394.

[40]CR 33:391,388.

[41]CR 33:390.

[42]CR 33:394.

[43]Calvin stated, Faciam enim ut omnes intelligant, non causae modo bonitate et aequitate, conscientiae rectitudine, cordis sinceritate, sermonis candore me esse multo superiorem: sed etiam in retinenda lenitate et modestia aliquanto constantiorem, (CR 33:387).

[44]Nolo tamen in singularis immorari (CR 33:391).

[45]Douglas, p. 79; Parker, pp. 78-79.

[46]Douglas, p. 147.

[47]....vide quam imperite ratiocineris....O Sadoleto, quis abs te unquam talem vocem exspectasset? (CR 33:399).

[48]CR 33:416.

[49]CR 33:392.

[50]Gray, pp. 199-200.

[51]It should be noted at this point that the argument being developed in this essay does not require that history was necessarily the only or even the main rhetorical weapon wielded by Calvin.

[52]CR 33:392-394.

[53]CR 33:404.

[54]CR 33:394.

[55]CR 33:394.

[56]CR 33:392.

[57]CR 33:400.

[58]James R. Payton, Jr., "Sola Scriptura and Church History: The Views of Bucer and Melanchthon on Religious Authority in 1539," (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Waterloo, 1982), pp. 103,178-180.

[59]CR 33:395.

[60]CR 33:402.

[61]CR 33:415.

[62]Cf. Payton, pp. 176,188.

[63]Calvin can argue the converse, as well: neque Christi mandat, nec veteris ecclesiae instituto fuisse traditam (CR 33:400).

[64]References to Cyprian, Ambrose, Basil the Great, Chrysostom, and Augustine occur at CR 33:394, with an additional reference to Chrysostom at CR 33:393 and one to Augustine at CR 33:400, the patrum ... testimonia citation occurs at CR 33:401.

[65]Mooi, p. 347; Wendel, p. 115.

[66]Sadoleto's letter has been reproduced in CR 33:369-384; it is remarkable that no citation of any of the Church Fathers occurs in the letter.

[67]CR 33:394; Calvin repeated this claim when he had the Protestants affirm before the judgment seat of God that the Evangelical movement had brought the Church ad suum fontem reduceret, et velut a faecibus repurgatam suae puritati restitueret (CR 33:412).

[68]CR 33:394.

[69]CR 33:395.

[70]CR 33:395,390,406.

[71]CR 33:402.

[72]CR 33:401.

[73]CR 33:399.

[74]CR 33:401-402,399.

[75]CR 33:401.

[76]CR 33:412.

[77]CR 33:394.

[78]CR 33:395,406-407, 402.

[79]CR 33:413.

[80]CR 33:406-407, 402,395.

[81]CR 33:402.

[82]CR 33:394.

[83]CR 33:400.

[84]Cf. Payton, pp. 157-158.

THE SOCIAL CONTEXT OF THE 1536 EDITION OF CALVIN'S INSTITUTES

David Willis

Introduction

In the dedicatory preface to the 1536 edition of the Institutes, Calvin tells Francis I,

> "Your mind is now indeed turned away and estranged from us, even inflamed, I may add, against us; but we trust that we can regain your favour, if in a quiet, composed mood you will once read this our confession, which we intend in lieu of a defence before your majesty. Suppose, however, the whisperings of the malevolent so fill your ears that the accused have no chance to speak for themselves, but those savage furies, while you connive at them, rage against us with imprisonings, scourgings, rackings, maimings, and burnings. Then we will be reduced to the last extremity even as sheep destined for the slaughter. Yet this will so happen that in our patience we may possess our souls; and may await the strong hand of the Lord, which will surely appear in due season, coming forth armed to deliver the poor from their affliction and also to punish their despisers, who now exult with such great assurance. May the Lord, the King of kings, establish your throne in righteousness, and your dominion in equity, most illustrious king. At Basel, on the 1st August, in the year 1536"[1]

Whatever else the Institutes was, it was a confession identifying the faith of a particular movement. It was a manifesto for a movement, an impassioned and serious effort to persuade men and women caught up in the tumultuous events of the 1530's in France. It sought to persuade them of the truth of the evangelical faith and its importance in forming a just society.

In order to understand that movement, and so to understand the content of the faith being confessed, we are immensely helped by locating the social context out of which this writing emerged. In the brief remarks of this present paper, I will say something about the identity of the group Calvin calls "we" in his letter to Francis I. Then I will make some suggestions about what this means for interpreting the Institutes' development through successive editions as a confession of this particular movement, whose continuity in a given society is an index of the justice and equity for whose service a ruler is maintained in power by the King of kings. My central contention - not a novel but an underestimated one - is that the Institutes is a confession which identifies not just the beliefs but the societal and personal direction of living arising out of those beliefs - the pietas - of the reforming movement of the catholic church in France at the time. That is to say, the Institutes are a descriptive confession which identify the pietas of those united to Christ by the bond of the Spirit to form the Church living under the

conditions which called forth this particular "summa pietatis", a term Calvin retained throughout subsequent editions of the Institutes.

The two audiences Calvin sought to persuade are indicated by the two purposes he specifies in the opening of his dedicatory epistle to the King: those evangelicals who are being persecuted for their faith, and the King whom Calvin assumes would support the evangelicals if he were better informed about what those evangelicals actually believed (including their view of the Church's relation to the State).

> "When I first set my hand to this work, nothing was further from my mind, most glorious King, than to write something that might be offered to your Majesty. My purpose was solely to transmit certain rudiments by which those who are touched with any zeal for religion might be shaped to true godliness. And I undertook this labour especially for our French countrymen, many of whom I saw hungering and thirsting for Christ; very few who had been imbued with even a slight knowledge of him. The book itself witnesses that this was my intention, adapted as it is to a simple and, you may say, elementary form of teaching.
>
> But I perceived that the fury of certain wicked persons has so far prevailed in your realm that there is no place in it for sound doctrine. Consequently, it seemed to me that I should be doing something worthwhile if I both gave instruction to those I had undertaken to instruct and made confession before you with the same work."[2]

The title of the book indicates this same twofold audience and purpose: "Institution of the Christian

Religion, Embracing almost the whole sum of piety, and whatever is necessary to know in the doctrine of salvation: A work most worthy to be read by all persons zealous for piety, and recently published. Preface to the most Christian King of France, whereas this book is offered to him as a confession of faith. John Calvin of Noyon, Author. At Basel. 1536."

We can get at the social setting of this work by identifying, first, some of the most prominent preoccupations of Francis I, and, then, some of the main components of the movement for which Calvin spoke.

Most Christian King of France

Francis I, head of the Valois dynasty and King of France from 1515 to 1547, was only one of the quartet of exceptionally strong and durable rulers which dominated European history in the first half of the sixteenth century. The others were: the Tudor Henry VIII, King of England 1509-1547; the Hapsburg Charles V, King of Spain 1515-1556 (d. 1558) and Holy Roman Emperor from 1519 (unless one dates that with his much delayed papal coronation); and the unavoidable Turc Suleiman I, Sultan 1519-1566. The other power of notable longevity though of less political power was Philip of Hesse who ruled 1518-1567. The major popes with whom Francis had to contend were Clement VII (1523-34), Julius Medici (to whose "niece", Catherine de Medici, Francis married his second son Henry [II] in 1534) and Paul III, Farnese, 1534-1549. During Francis' rule every possible

combination of alliance among these six powers (Valois, Hapsburg, Tudor, Turc, Papal, and Lutheran Territorial) was in effect.[3]

Francis (or rather his military genius, Bourbon) had been victorious over the Hapsburg forces at Marignan in 1515. But by 1524 Francis had confiscated Bourbon's lands and the latter served now as military leader for Charles. The result was that Francis suffered a disastrous loss at Pavia, and was taken prisoner and kept in a cell in Madrid until he - the Most Christian King of France - agreed to forfeit his claims in Italy and, above all, agreed to yield his two sons as hostages in his place. The two successors to the throne of France were kept in deplorable conditions in a cell in Madrid, and were released only upon the payment of an enormous ransom fee drawn from taxes imposed on French nobility and peasant alike. By 1536 Francis had already set about with even greater determination to thwart the power of the Hapsburgs and reassert the power and dignity of the Valois.

Francis' record is not brilliant for its military successes, but it is remarkable for the support he gave personally to the advance of the Renaissance within his realm.[4] His attachment to his claims to domains in Italy is part of his admiration of the architecture, sculpture, painting, banking, medicine, philosophical currents which flourished in the Italian Renaissance. One of the features of the Renaissance in France is its diffuse and varied character, unified perhaps only by a

robust confidence in the viability of recovering wisdom of the ancients. Not the least of the wisdom thus recovered was that of the early Church, so that Lefevre d'Etaples' battle cry represented a broadly held ideal in Francis' court: "Christum praedicare ex fontibus". This is not to say that everyone at the court shared the Christian humanist's piety or learning. But it is to recognize that men and women of sixteenth century France were motivated by religious convictions, and indeed were convinced that their claim to political power involved their furthering the well-being of society which for them included the well-being of Christianity within their realm. In Francis' case this furtherance of the well-being of Christianity included two components which fit nicely with his nationalist aims: the claims of Gallicanism over against Papal power, and the influence of Christian humanism which challenged the "Sorbonnistes" who usually minimized the claims of the King in ecclesiastical appointments and finances.

This mixture of Christian humanism, desire to reform the Church and society, and national aims under the protective umbrella of a tolerant King was a diffuse movement which included many different groups which only later were to fall out into separate camps. Although tenets selected from Luther's writings had been condemned by the Sorbonne in 1521, much of Luther's theology was influential in reforming circles, including Roman Catholic circles, until well into the 1560's. But what at least unified these disparate voices was a kind

of common consent about who were the chief opponents of the reform of the Church, namely the Sorbonnists who bore special blame for the widespread ignorance of the priests and who feared the new learning as a threat to their own hold on the ignorant priests and parishioners.[5] There were two especially prominent centers where this reforming Christian humanism flourished besides Francis' own perambulating court: Meaux, whose bishop, Briconnet, encouraged scholarship in the service of Christian piety and Church reform: and the court of Margarite d'Angouleme, Francis' sister. There, among others, Clement Marot was a poet in residence, and there he began the translation of the Psalms into verse which, when set to the music of Louis Bourgeois and Claude Goudimel, became the incomparable songs of the Genevan Psalter.[6]

I have primarily identified Francis with the reforming party in France; but this has to be qualified to say that within his own court there were those who encouraged reforms which excluded evangelicals. On the eve of the polarizing events I shall presently describe, Francis' court was itself divided into two main intriguing camps competing for Francis' attention, political and amorous.[7] The camp which opposed reforms that would make room for evangelicals consisted of Montmorency and his two nephews Chatillon-Coligny (who later became leaders of the reform); Diane of Poitiers, the mistress of Francis' second son Henry; Henry's wife, Catherine de Medici; the Guises of Lorraine, the Duc and

the Cardinal; and the Queen Elenore, who was linked to this first party mainly because the leader of the other, reforming party, was Francis' mistress Madame d'Etampes. The other camp, in addition to Madame d'Etampes, consisted of Margarite of Navarre, Admiral Brion, and other "seigneurs" whom later the nephews of Montmorency, the brothers Chatillon-Coligny, would join.

This Most Christian King was therefore holding together within his realm and household forces which threatened to become polarized. He needed to hold them together if France was to remain united over against the diplomatic and military pressures from without. Three events succeeded in accomplishing that polarization.

The first was the takeover of Muenster by radical reformers in 1533, which those opposed to the evangelicals pointed to as the inevitable outcome of opening their realms to anything other than the strictest Roman Catholicism. Francis was able to hear and observe the Lutheran princes' objection to the radical reformers. Besides, he needed the Lutheran princes in his opposition to Charles.

The second event was more a reminder of the power of the opposition at the Sorbonne while the king was absent from Paris. The convocation speech delivered by the rector Nicholas Cop (in whose writing Calvin had a decisive hand) caused Cop and Calvin to be pursued from the realm.

The third event, however, was the one which finally brought things to a head, the disastrous "Affair des

Placards" of August 15, 1534.[8] What was so damaging about the event was not the content of the placards, extreme as it was, but the facts that one was posted on the door of the King's chamber - an act of lèse majesté - and, above all, that it was an act coordinated through other parts of France, posted elsewhere at the same time. Such a coordinated, apparently nationwide act of lèse majesté called forth the reprisals of the arrest, solemn procession and burning alive of six accused of this act - this time with the King's approval. The party which opposed the evangelicals seemed vindicated in their warnings that what they identified as the new teachings were not only heretical (about which Francis had no particular zeal) but were seditious (about which he had a great deal of zeal).

John Calvin of Noyon

Calvin's intellectual and spiritual formation was in this heady political and reforming culture. That is simply to say that he went through a pilgrimage which brought him into close contact with Christian humanists and reformers who at one time or another were allies but who found themselves in different patterns of support or opposition as the above described process of polarization unfolded. His studies at the Collège de Montaigu were done in a context shaped by ideals of the Brethren of the Common Life and scholasticism. While a student in Paris, he formed his early ties with such leaders as Guillaume Budé and Lefevre d'Etaples. How

much direct contact he may have had with them is obscure, but at least he was among the circle of students caught up in the excitement of their brand of Christian humanism. His legal training was not in what we think of "law school" today, much less that which is invoked when persons painting with a huge brush make a connection between what they call Calvinistic legalism and Calvin's legal studies. Those studies were in phases of the Renaissance's growth in France. His Commentary on Seneca and his early association with the circle of evangelicals simply placed Calvin among those who were studying the scriptures and the early Church fathers with fresh eyes, who had support among the leaders encouraged by the circle of Meaux,[9] and who could find refuge and exciting company in the King's own sister's court at Angoulême.

The lines of conflict had already been clearly enough drawn, with the Sorbonnes' condemnation of Luther, the execution of the evangelical Etienne de la Forge, and the condemnation of the teachings of the Lefevre d'Etaple (who took refuge at the court of Anloulême). It was, however, the threat on his and Nicholas Cop's life, upon the occasion of the rector's address, that constituted the decisive break in Calvin's life. There is a tradition of locating that break with his conversion, and then trying to pin that down chronologically. Actually, there were numerous such conversions among Christian humanists like the one Calvin describes in his preface to the Psalms

Commentary: from primarily studying the ancient pagan texts to studying Scriptures and joining circles tainted with Lutheran ideas. There had been more than a decade of reformers in France who had survived under Francis' toleration of such ideas. It was only when the King was in the south of France (returning from Marsailles where the pope gave the hand of his "niece" Catherine in marriage to Henry)[10] that the forces in Paris, notably the Parliament and the Sorbonnists, dared take the measure of threatening the life of the rector of the university and his young accomplice. That Cop and Calvin had to flee, and that they were actually among the most moderate reformers and that their loyalty to the king was unquestioned, meant that a decisive new step in the escalating violence against reforming humanists and evangelicals had been taken. Francis' realm was no longer safe for even this kind of teaching.

That is why Calvin is just being descriptive in his words to Francis from the prefatory letter and can expect a sympathetic ear from the ruler, since he, the ruler himself, had so long sought to make room for a breadth of teaching which would make his realm safe for the likes of Cop and Calvin.

> "For this reason, most invincible King, I not unjustly ask you to undertake a full inquiry into this case, which until now has been handled with no order of law and with violent heat rather than judicial gravity. And do not think that I am here preparing my own personal defense, thereby to return safely to my native land. Even though I regard my country with as

> natural affection as becomes me, as things now stand I do not regret being excluded. Rather, I embrace the common cause of all believers, that of Christ himself - a cause completely torn and trampled in your realm today, lying, as it were, utterly forlorn, more through the tyranny of certain Pharisees than with your approval."[11]

There were powerfully influential people whom Calvin had good reason to believe had misinformed Francis about the nature of the doctrine which was being chased from his realm. Bohatec[12] is correct, I think, in identifying them as persons who had been associated with movements of reform and were Christian humanists to whom Francis would listen, not just the Sorbonnists about whom he had little but disdain. Three individuals are the most likely persons Calvin has in mind.

The first is Robert Ceneau (Cenalis), bishop of Avranches, one of the court preachers and the chaplain to the Queen Mother. In 1534 he wrote a work entitled Appendix ad coenam dominicam..., in which, among other things, he calls upon Francis to impose the death penalty on opponents of the Roman Catholic mass. This is the same work which Bucer names in the title of his Defence Against the Catholic Axiom..., December, 1534.[13]

The second Christian humanist now an opponent of the evangelicals is Jacob Sadoleto. He dedicated his 1535 Commentary on Romans to Francis. In his dedicatory epistle, Sadoleto writes to the King,

> "For although you have been graced with ancestors who deemed it their duty to do and endure all thing for the protection and defense

> of the faith and religion, in coping with the overwhelming and extraordinary conditions of these times you surpass even their most illustrious courage....Although in the past there were often grave disturbances and times rendered unsafe by conflicts among many persons, yet never did there exist in the Christian faith such dissension as exists today, nor did we meet with such a great mass of forces as you are warding off perils from the many nations which are under your rule, and are healing their misfortunes."[14]

The third was none other than Guillaume Budé. His alienation was the most devastating to those Christian humanists who openly espoused the evangelical cause (i.e., were not "Nicodemites").[15] For Budé, apparently, the Affair of the Placards was the last straw, deeply offending his eucharistic piety. He also dedicated his work to Francis in 1534, entitled De Transitu Hellenismi ad Christianum....It was Budé who was one of the most influential figures in Calvin's own Christian humanism, Budé who was a staunch opponent of the Sorbonnists represented by Noel Beda, Budé who was the founder of the royal lectureships which were at the basis of what was to become the later Collège de France - this is the person, of a profound combination of Augustinian piety and Renaissance sympathies who praises Francis for his defense of orthodoxy against the evangelicals by ordering the public procession of repentance of January 21, 1535, after the Affair of the Placards.

When Calvin addresses his dedicatory epistle to Francis, therefore, he is seeking to counter the

arguments not of just those who had opposed the new learning from the beginning but especially those who sided with the new learning but now praised the king for the harsh measures by which the evangelicals were being killed or driven from the realm. It is as a loyal refugee that Calvin addresses his King, as Jean Calvin of Noyon. It is as a loyal citizen that he feels compelled, no less than men like Sadoleto, Ceneau and Budé, to encourage and exhort the King to do those things which belong to his office and his venerable title as the successor to Saint Louis, "Most Christian King." All these parties agreed, as did the King himself, that his office included supporting true religion in his realm, fostering the true Church. Hence their respective instructions to the King, and hence Calvin's efforts to persuade the King, and members of his court, that the true Church flourishes with the reforming party for which he spoke.

It came down to which group most served the unity and well-being of the realm by being the true Church the King was called to foster. If the King supported a group which was either apostate or seditious, his legitimate power would be taken from him. Calvin's contention is that the evangelical party for whom he speaks is really the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church - and that this party is not seditious, precisely because it seeks to have Francis be what his title claims, "Most Christian King."

"It will then be for you, most Serene King, not to close your ears to such a just defense (of the true church as the paupercula ecclesia as opposed to false church with pomp but where the Word is not rightly heard and the sacraments not rightly administered), especially when a very great question is at stake: how God's glory may be kept safe on earth, how God's truth may retain its place of honour, how Christ's Kingdom may be kept in good repair among us? Worthy indeed is this matter of your hearing, worthy of your cognizance, worthy of your royal throne! Indeed, this consideration makes a true king: to recognize himself a minister of God in governing his kingdom [Rom.13:3 f]. Now, that king who in ruling over his realm does not serve God's glory exercises not kingly rule but brigandage. Furthermore, he is deceived who looks for enduring prosperity in his kingdom when it is not ruled by God's scepter, that is, his Holy Word; for the heavenly oracle that proclaims that 'where prophecy fails the people are scattered' [Prov. 29:18] cannot lie, and contempt for our lowliness ought not to dissuade you from this endeavor."[16]

Confession and Sum of Piety

Farel's Sommaire et Briefve Declaration..., first published in 1525, was reissued in 1534.[17] Calvin uses some of the same language to describe his work in 1536; but the Institutes' first edition was directed to those in the schools and courts who were versed in rather elegant Latin. Whereas he acknowledges that his work is as confession submitted to the King (he also uses the term "apology" and "defence"), his original intent, so he says, was to provide "certain rudiments by which those who are touched by any zeal for religion might be

shaped to true godliness", to provide "a simple and, you may say, elementary form of teaching." In these various ways of describing the work, the most prominent theme is that of instruction for true piety. There is true doctrine which must be known, affectively known, as an essential ingredient of true piety. It is the desire to communicate the necessary rudiments of this doctrine of piety that determines the order and style of the first edition of the Institutes.

Enough has been done on the term pietas not to require detailed treatment in this paper. The term "piety" has undergone such devolution in English that it is worthwhile repeating that "pietas" means just about the opposite of the individualistic devotion which "piety" has too often come to mean. Pietas has a classical rooting, in which it means precisely that worship of the true God, or gods, which belongs to the well-being of the society. That society is ordered to the greatest possible felicity which is governed by the just ruler who supports the worship and obedience to the true gods or God. Augustine's quarrel with Cicero was not over this basic contention, but over who is the true God and the nature of true felicity and in what community that was to be found.[18] True felicity is found, according to Augustine, only in the City of God and ultimately only in the heavenly form of that City.

This conviction, which Calvin shared with his former allies turned adversaries, made it essential to any persons, and especially the King, to be well

instructed in what was necessary to know for true piety to flourish. That had centrally to do with acknowledging and being freely, spontaneously (by grace and not out of work's righteousness) continually reformed and ruled by Christ's scepter, the Word. Where that Word's free proclamation was suppressed, there the true Church was being persecuted, not only to the suffering of that Church but to the eventual demise of the government which would allow and even encourage such suppression.

The format of the Institutes will change in successive editions, first by including more and more discussion of questions in dispute with opponents of the evangelicals, then by rearranging the material into the four books of the 1559 and 1560 editions. That is to say that Calvin's theology developed as he continued to seek to rearticulate the content and shape of the pietas of the true Church facing successive needs and crises.[19] For him this meant above all the continued process of being corrected and freed in the life of union with Christ who rules by his Word and Spirit. It is striking that right on through the final edition, Calvin still kept the dedicatory epistle to the Most Christian King Francis I. It would have been quite natural for him to dedicate subsequent editions to others who proved to be more supportive of the Genevan form of the evangelical movement. That he did not do so is attributable not only to his "natural affection" for his country of birth, and not only to his recognition that

it was under Francis that the new learning was encouraged in which the evangelical movement first took root in France. The dedicatory epistle unmistakable set forth a statement of the conditions for right rule of any person who inherited the title "Most Christian King."

Notes

[1]J. Calvin, Institutes of the Christian Religion, ed. J.T. McNeill, Library of Christian Classics, Philadelphia, Westminster, 1960, 2 vol. (henceforth "LCC"), p. 31; Opera Selecta Calvini, ed. W. Niesel and P. Barth, Munich, Chr. Kaiser, 1936 ff. (henceforth "OS"), vol. 3, p. 30.

[2]J. Calvin, Institutes of the Christian Religion, 1536 edition, transl. and annotated by F.L. Battles, Atlanta, John Knox (henceforth "Battles 1536"), 1975, p. 1.

[3]P. Erlanger, La Monarchie francaise de 1515 à 1715: du roi chevalier au Roi-Soleil, Paris, Tallandier, 1971; E.G. Leonard, Histoire generale du protestantisme, Paris, Presses Universitaire, 1961. For discussions on the interplay of theological and non-theological factors in this and later period, cf. J.H.M. Salmon, The French Wars of Religion: How Important Were Religious Factors?, Boston, Heath, 1967.

[4]Cf. Levis Mirepoix, Francois Ier, Paris, 1931.

[5]There was a wide range of persons included under this label of Sorbonnistes, for which see A.A. La Vallee, "Calvin's Criticism of Scholastic Theology", Ph.D. Thesis, Harvard, Cambridge, 1967.

[6]H. Heller, "Marguerite of Navarre and the Reformers of Meaux", Bibliothèque d'humanisme et renaissance, 1971

(33,2) pp. 271-310; J. Boisset, "La Religion de Clement Marot," Societé de l'histoire de protestantisme francaise, Bulletin 114, 1968, pp. 487-506; N.L. Roelker, "The Role of Noblewomen in the French Reformation," Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte, 1972 (63), pp. 168-195.

[7]See J. Orieux, Catherine de Medici, Paris, Flammarion, 1986, pp. 112-120 for a quick-moving treatment of these intrigues.

[8]R. Hari, "Les Placards de 1534", in Aspects de la Propaganda Religieuse, 1957, translated as Appendix I in Battles 1536, op. cit.

[9]On this early period of Calvin's life, see two particularly helpful responses to the suggestive work of A. Ganoczy (Le jeune Calvin, Wiesbaden, Steiner, 1966): B. Roussel, in Revue d'histoire et de philosophie religieuses, 1968 (48:1), pp. 54-59, and J. de Senarclens, in Revue de théologie et de philosophie, 1967 (16:1), pp. 56-60. Of the extensive literature on Calvin's humanism, see: Q. Breen's standard John Calvin: A Study in French Humanism, Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1931, and "John Calvin and the Rhetorical Tradition," Church History, 1957 (26), pp. 3-21; J. Bohatec, Budé und Calvin, Graz, Böhlaus, 1950; D. Willis, "Rhetoric and Responsibility in Calvin's Theology," in The Context of Contemporary Theology, ed. A.J. McKelway and D. Willis, Atlanta, John Knox, 1974, pp. 43-63; F. Wendel, Calvin et l'humanisme, Paris, Presses Universitaires, 1976; W. Bouwsma, "Calvin and the Renaissance Crisis of Knowing," Calvin Theological Journal, 1982 (17), pp. 190-211; (and for some of the implications of Calvin's particular Christian humanism) F.L. Battles, "God Was Accomodating Himself to Human Capacity" and D.K. McKim, "Calvin's View of Scripture," chapters 2 and 3 respectively of Readings in Calvin's Theology, ed. D.K. McKim, Grand Rapids, Baker, 1984; and the works in progress of W. Bouwsma.

[10]On the interpretations of Calvin's conversion, see P. Sprenger, Das Raetsel um die Bekehrung Calvins,

Neukirchen, Erziehungsvereins, 1960; also, J. Le Maire, "De l'influrence de l'Universite d'Orleans sur la conversion de Calvin", Bulletin, Societé archéologique et historique de l'Orleannais, 1959-60 (1), pp. 328-332.

[11]Dedicatory Epistle, Battles 1536, pp. 2,3. Cf. pp. xxvii-xxxii, Battles' Introduction, for comparison of Calvin's and others' apologetic writing, and pp. 313-317.

[12]Cf. Bohatec, op.cit., p. 127 and Battles, Ibid.

[13]Ibid.

[14]Ibid.

[15]Cf. F.M. Higman, "The Question of Nicodemism," Calvinus Ecclesiae Genevensis Custos, ed. W. Neuser, Frankfurt-am-Main, Lang, 1984, pp. 165-70.

[16]Dedicatory Epistle, Battles 1536, p. 3.

[17] Cf. the Resumé sommaire de la doctrine chrêtienne, texte établi et tr., F. Wendel, Paris, Presses Universitaire, 1951; J.J. Heitz, Etude sur la formation de la pensée ecclésiologique de Bucer d'après les traites polémiques et doctrinaux des années 1523-38, Thesis, Strasbourg, 1947.

[18]Cf. E. Grislis, "Calvin's Use of Cicero in the Institutes, I:1-5..." Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte, 1971 (62:1), pp. 5-37; F.L. Battles, "True Piety According to Calvin," Readings in Calvin's Theology, ed. D. Kim, op.cit., pp. 192-211.

[19]This is not to argue that there is no doctrinal organizing principle to Calvin's theology, such as the meaning of our union with Christ, the trinitarian structure of the creed, the duplex gratia (cf. C. Venema, Duplex Gratia, Ph.D. Thesis, Princeton Theological Seminary, 1985), the duplex cognition, or Christian freedom, to name only some examples. (Cf. E. Dowey, "The Structure of Calvin's Thought as Influenced

by the Twofold Knowledge of God", Calvinus Ecclesiae Genevensis Custos, ed. W. Neuser, Frankfurt-am-Main, Lang, 1984, pp. 135-148). It is however to underline the importance of successive theological, political, and pastoral crises in shaping the selectivity of the material, and the ordering of its treatment, in the development of subsequent editions of the Institutes. Cf. J.D. Benoit, "D'une édition a l'autre de l'Institution; comment Calvin travaillait," La Révue Réformée, 1960 (11:2), pp. 39-51; J. Hesselink, "Development and Purpose of Calvin's Institutes," Reformed Theological Review, 1965 (24), pp. 65-72; J.J. Leith, "Calvin's Theological Method and the Ambiguity in His Theology," Reformation Studies in Honor of R.H. Bainton, ed. F. Littell, Richmond, John Knox, 1962, pp. 106-116.

RENAISSANCE IN THEOLOGY: CALVIN'S 1536 INSTITUTIO - FRESH START OR FALSE?

Joseph C. McLelland

The first edition of the Institution of the Christian Religion by John Calvin appeared at a time of ferment in the life and letters of Europe. The year 1536 marks the official beginning of Reformation in Geneva, as the city-state publicly decreed the abolition of the Mass of the Roman rite and the formalization of a presbyterian form of government (the episcopal form had vanished with the Bishop some years before). By that time Luther's reform movement was almost twenty years old, while Zwingli's last systematic work, Exposition of the Faith was published posthumously that very year, along with the Confessio Helvetica. In Italy the Oratory of Divine Love was pushing for reform- the Cardinals' prescription Consilium ... de emendanda ecclesia was published 1538.

Method in Theology

Once it was commonplace (in Protestant seminaries at least) to regard medieval Christendom as a vast monolithic aberration, against which Martin Luther raised the banner of truth, even if preceded by a few forerunners such as Wyclif and Hus; by now it is commonplace to recognize the complex texture of medieval faith and theology, including those strands which fed the reforming zeal of Luther, Bucer and Zwingli. These

three, I will suggest, provide the key to the question of my title: is Calvin's 1536 Institution a fresh start or false?

Contemporary scholarship in every field seems preoccupied with the problem of method, usually - though wrongly - called "methodology". In part this reflects a scientific age when technique represents the justification for knowledge: verification consists in use. Bernard Lonergan suggests (in Method in Theology, 1972) that two sorts of age entail two attitudes toward method: when culture is in its "classical" phase, method is settled and truth advances; when culture is alienated, method moves to the foreground as a question to be established. Thus in medieval Europe we note the confidence of classical theism in its knowledge, its harmonious system built on twin pillars of natural and revealed theology, or philosophy and theology. The great Summae were duly considered to be the normal foundation, worthy of commentary upon commentary. This sat well with the method of "disputed questions", a dialectic by which competing opinions were sorted out and arranged so that the priority is assigned to the true statements which agree with the twofold authority of reason and revelation.

But a variety of developments, notably the school of Nominalists or Terminists, questioned the very method of questioning, and turned the confidence in true statements into the novel problem of testing propositions as to their language and logic. This was

reinforced by the new scientific development, with roots in the same nominalist approach. Thus our modern philosophical attention to language was born, far from the first historical era which attended to words, but the first in which truth seemed to lie in the logic of language itself, rather in that to which words refer, or that upon which propositions terminate.

John Calvin's method has been analyzed almost ad nauseam, and with conflicting conclusions: a method utterly systematic, boldly dialectical, badly confused, deliberately paradoxical. Personally, I find it most helpful to locate him within the "Rhetorical Tradition" as Quirinus Breen has done, or more properly the dialectico-rhetorical tradition as identified by Cesare Vasoli and others. Thus we may see him following roughly the method of arranging topics or common places, so that one's system is directed by the choice as to what comes first and last - and how things are arranged in between. (When Fritz Busser notes the topical method of Erasmus and Zwingli (the 1518 (ratio), I note further that behind both stands the Humanist tradition of Lorenzo Valla). To take familiar examples, how does one handle the vexed questions of sin and free will, and in turn providence and predestination? Are the trinitarian schemata adequate to denote the distinction of such doctrines? Is the weight to fall on one or the other among the personae and their work or is Karl Barth correct in thinking that one has to repeat every doctrine thrice to allow it to show its face in a

multi-dimensional model?[1]

Calvin's method has little to build on in this transition period from summae to loci, insofar as composing a basic theological treatise of both explanation and apology is concerned. There was Melanchthon's Loci Communes (1521) based on lectures on Romans with systemic but little systematic order; Zwingli's De vera et falsa religione of 1525, in a sense the first theological treatise of the Reformation; two little Summaires, by William Farel in 1525 and Lambert of Avignon in 1529. These were positive and constructive attempts; but surely the Institution represents not only a fuller statement but also a masterful creation of Reformation theology. One relatively unsung hero in all this may well be Farel, whom David N. Wiley compares with Calvin, judging both to be "Lutheran" at this stage.[2]

From Literary Critic to Theologian

Calvin comes on the 16th century scene as what we would call today in recommending graduate students "a promising young scholar". His first published work was quite in the Humanist tradition, a commentary on the De Clementia of Seneca. This Stoic document was an excellent foil to show off the youthful reading of classical and humanist authors. After all, it was 1532 and Calvin was but 23 years old. He knows Cicero and Seneca well, calling them his two "pillars" of classical learning, as Budé and Erasmus are of modern. He quotes

"74 Latin and 22 Greek authors", although as A.M. Hugo and Ford Lewis Battles have shown in recent analyses, the more interesting question is where this familiarity came from, and what it means insofar as scholarly direction is concerned. Hugo suggests that the book was Calvin's "throw of the dice" to stimulate debate and to make a place for himself in humanist circles. It was a career move, a disappointing one in fact since the movement "was already on the wane" and the response was little and feeble.[3]

More significant than the early humanist tour de force are the other early writings preceding the Institution. These number three. One is the Rectorial address of Nicolas Cop at Paris, 1533. (The Cop brothers were part of the reformist circle centred in Meaux and inspired by Lefèvre d'Etaples). How far Calvin shared in writing this reforming speech, or whether in fact he was its ghostwriter, remains inconclusive. But it occasioned his flight from France and shows his religious stance clearly. A second is his Preface to Robert Olivétan's French translation of the New Testament, 1535. Third is his first substantive theological Treatise, the Psychopannychia or refutation of the Anabaptist doctrine of the "soul-sleep" of the righteous between death and resurrection. This existed in manuscript as early as 1534, but Calvin bowed to the judgment of Martin Bucer and Wolfgang Capito that if published it would reinforce the official view that Reformation leads only to dissension. What was needed was a work of positive

apologetic, and this advice was surely a chief influence to turn the young man's considerable gifts to composing a work of exposition of the faith.

A major question provided grist for debating mills a generation ago, notably among the editors of the Opera Selecta and French scholars, as to whether our First Edition was first prepared in French and then translated into Latin. A small point, perhaps, but a nice one. We know, for instance, that the first French edition of 1541, although ostensibly a translation of the 1539 Latin revision of the Institutes, contains lengthy passages which by-pass 1539 and seize on the 1536 material. And we can see that Calvin found time to do an impressive amount of theological work while seeing his Seneca book through the press, including the Psychopannychia. Yet while data have been found - by Jacques Pannier and Peter Barth most notably - no final conclusion is justified. Before leaving the question, however, we should note the Instruction in Faith of 1537, written in French as a brief summary of doctrine for his compatriots. We might well conclude that in effect the 1536 Institution is replaced not by the 1539 second edition but by the Instruction, along with the first Geneva Catechism.[4]

First Edition

The little work we are attempting to bring into focus was a volume of 520 pages octo. published in March 1536 at Basel by Platter and Lasius (house of the Black

Bear).[5] The Epistle Dedicatory is dated the previous August and indicates an even earlier completion of the work itself:

> "When I first set my hand to this work, nothing was farther from my mind, most glorious king, than to write something that might be offered to your Majesty. My purpose was solely to transmit certain rudiments by which those who are touched with any zeal for religion might be shaped to true godliness. And I undertook this labour especially for our French countrymen, very many of whom I saw to be hungering and thirsting for Christ; very few who had been imbued with even a slight knowledge of him. The book itself witnesses that this was my intention, adapted as it is to a simple and, you may say, elementary form of teaching."[6]

The author himself continued to refer to it as "his little book", libellus, and to underplay its intention - in the 1539 revision preface, and in the famous preface to his commentary on the Psalms (as close to autobiography as this most private person ever gets): "When it was then published, it was not that copious and labored work which it now is, but only a small treatise, containing a summary of the principal truths of the Christian religion".

A modest proposal; an essai in catechetics and apologetics by a young scholar doubtless proud of his Humanist reputation, but even at this first stage struck by the miracle of the grace that has laid on him so heavy a vocation as to defend his new-found faith before his King. (The distance he has come so quickly can be measured by the idea of clemency: his De Clementia is a

scholarly analysis of Seneca but hardly intended as moral influence on Francis or anyone else; the Institution opens with a bold appeal for royal clemency, backed by massive argumentation). As the work will grow from revision to revision until the definitive text of 1559, this early zeal for apology and defence will remain with our Reformer. For in his theology, grace -even its hardest corollary predestination -never leaves us in idleness or complacency, but ever drives us to an active vocation of witness and service.

Our purpose is not to analyze the work itself, but it may be in order to note its six chapter headings: 1. De lege, quod Decalogi explicationem continet. 2. De fide, ubi et Symbolum (quod Apostolicum vocant) explicatur. 3. De oratione, ubi et Oratio Dominica enarratur. 4. De sacramentis, ubi de baptismo et coena Domini. 5. Quo sacramenta non esse quinque reliqua, quae pro sacramentis hactenus vulgo habita sunt, declaratur, tum qualia sint ostenditur. 6. Delibertate Christiana, potestate ecclesiastica et politica administratione.

Calvin the Lutheran

We are arguing that the young Calvin was essentially Lutheran, as shown in the work under review. In this sense it was a "false start" before properly "Reformed" theology. The very title Institutio is borrowed from Luther's introduction to his Large Catechism of 1529 (Praesentis huius opusculi sermonem elaboravimus, ut esset institutio puerorum atque

simplicium. Hinc apud veteres lingua Graeca catechismus dictus est, quae vox puerilem institutionem significat). Moreover, the parallel between Calvin's order and that of Luther's Small Catechism has long been recognized for the first four chapters: law, faith, prayer and sacrament. The last two chapters, on sacraments falsely so called, and on Christian liberty (church and state) were added to attack disputed questions.

There is also Melanchthon's model to consider. Several striking examples were noted by August Lang, more recently reinforced by Battles' invaluable endnotes to his edition. These include the handling of the Decalogue and its issue in the command to love, the relationship among faith, love and hope, the treatment of Penance, the judgement on Zwingli's sacramental teaching, and the distinctions within Christian liberty. The Lutheranism of the early Calvin is evident also from the ordering of two crucial points, later to divide Calvinist from Lutheran. On these, Calvin is not yet Calvinist. I refer to the teaching that law precedes gospel, and that predestination and providence belong together. The first Genevan Catechism will reverse the order of law and faith, while predestination will be distinguished from providence as early as the 1539 edition and separated thereafter.[7]

What happened in between? Why did Calvin move so quickly and firmly away from Lutheran distinctives to certain positions which would characterize his theology from that day forward, and would name him founder of a

school distinct from Lutheranism as well as from both Rome and the Radicals? Before attempting an answer, let us note some points in the 1536 book relevant to a reply and significant in themselves.

Polemic

Calvin began work on the book in 1534 while in Angoulême, completing it in Basle the following year. Thus he was writing his prefatory letter to Francis I in the year of the publication of two Humanist works--1535 -- which condemned the Protestants as heretics and sectaries. The attacks by Sadoleto and Budé reinforced the young Frenchman's conclusion that the Protestant cause required a sound apologetic, with a direct appeal to the King. The time was momentous and the cause precarious. France was a scene of intolerance; Calvin's friend Etienne de la Forge was burned at the stake in Paris on 15 February, 1535. The persecution was sparked by "l'affaire des Placards" of October 17-18, 1534. Posters were put up in Paris (including the royal bedroom door) and elsewhere: "Articles sur les horribles, grands et insupportables abus de la Messe papale". The preacher Marcourt was responsible, but the view that Protestants were really Anabaptists was growing, as this and other events seemed to suggest. The Anabaptist kingdom at Münster was besieged and toppled in June 1535. In his negotiations with the German electors, Francis justified his persecution by identifying the French Protestants not with Lutherans

but with Anabaptists. He called them "a pack of enthusiasts".

Thus the context for Calvin's Letter to Francis, in which he credits Satan with stirring up dissension: "he aroused disagreements and dogmatic contentions through his Catabaptists and other monstrous rascals in order to obscure and at last extinguish the truth" (15f). He appeals to the King not to confuse them with the Radicals, nor to believe the stories of their political sedition or moral promiscuity. "And we are unjustly charged, too, with intentions of a sort such as we have never even given the least suspicion. We are, I suppose, contriving the overthrow of kingdoms - we from whom not one seditious word was ever heard .... We are, I suppose, wildly chasing after wanton vices!"(17f).

Twin in Error: Roman and Radical

Walter Köhler first clarified the significance of Anabaptism for Calvin's first edition in his essay of 1936. More recently Willem Balke has provided a substantial monograph which illustrates the extent of Calvin's concern with 'Anabaptist Radicals' in 1536 and later.[8] Allusions to the Münster experiment include rejection of antinomianism and of consumer communism. In a word, Calvin thinks their danger lies in the "confusion" which they introduce into the social order willed by God. Similarly, his ecclesiology in 1536 has regard to both Roman and Radical alternatives.

Here let me interject a thesis. Calvin and his

fellow Reformers - notably Peter Martyr Vermigli on ecclesiology and sacramental theology - make a significant point in their view of the two opponents, Roman and Radical. These are not seen as extremes on a spectrum so much as two forms of one phenomenon. It is a sort of Aristotelian logic at work, according to which the midpoint is not a medium between two alternatives, but the true centre between two errors, of excess and defect of the virtue at issue. Thus they see Roman and Radical as two forms of the same subjectivism, human works-righteousness. In his reply to Sadolet (1539) Calvin states: "We are assailed by two sects, which seem to differ most widely from each other. ... [but] the principal weapon with which they both assail us is the same." The one suffers from excess and the other defect of the priestly nature of human institutional religion. But both come to the same grief: identifying their own structures and personnel with divine agency. Thus both continue that "legal repentance" of medieval school teaching which poses the chief enemy for the Reformers.

The logic at work here is a form of analogical predication: Roman thinks in univocal and Radical in equivocal terms about their relation to divine priesthood. The one is ecclesia deformata, the other ecclesia perfecta. Indeed, as I have argued elsewhere,[9] the concept of analogy led them to posit similar critiques on issues sacramental and scriptural: transubstantiation is the univocal doctrine and spiritualism the equivocal. One should note also in this

context that Calvin and Co. stress the mystical union of believers with Jesus Christ, and thus the crucial weight to be given to their "participation" in his own priestly, prophetic and kingly offices. Without this dynamism their ecclesiology and entire theology falls into its own kind of arrogance and false righteousness.

Calvin Turns Calvinist

Our thesis is that the young Calvin was Lutheran - acknowledging the inappropriateness of applying such an adjective at this early stage - until 1539. During the short period between the first two editions of the Institutes, other influences served to cause rethinking of Luther's position and to re-order his own theology in a quite different way. It was Theodore Beza who originated the assertion that from 1536 to the definitive edition of 1559 the work is the same in substance, differing only in the accidents of additions and elaborations. But scholars of "the literary history of the Institutes" correct this simplistic (and propagandist) view, discerning three distinct phases. The 1536 edition stands alone, followed by a period from the 1539 to the 1550 editions, a thorough revision as to order and content, in which the original six chapters grew to seventeen and then to twenty-one, "somewhat artificially ordered" (Warfield). Finally the definitive edition of 1559 consists of the familiar four books of new arrangement and new chapters, the whole corresponding to a trinitarian scheme and reflecting the

matter of the Apostles' Creed.[10]

The 1539 revision thus initiates a new phase, intended to equip theologues to read Scripture with understanding, rather than to offer a summary and apology for the Reformed faith. If 1536 is a modest catechism, 1539 is a handbook in dogmatics, which by 1559 has turned into a complete sum of doctrine aimed at theological students. Calvin now addresses a new audience, but also a new question, which will distinguish his approach from medieval problematics of being. The Schoolmen inquired as to divine essence, and whether essence and existence in this sole instance are the same. Calvin warns against such speculative probing, calling us instead to a humble following of that question which is derived from its answer already given in revelation: what is God like? (That is, Qualis deus sit? rather than whether God is, Utrum deus sit?) This approach leads Calvin into the happy thought (to be lost in "classical Calvinism", and then revived by the Mercersburg theologians)[11] that it is the humanity of Jesus Christ that supplies the "ladder" to divinity; and its corollary, that in Christ we are given a twofold knowledge, a duplex cognitio in which it is impossible to separate divine and human being as object, or better, "subject".

In the 1536 work the opening gambit is simple: "Nearly the whole of sacred doctrine consists in these two parts: knowledge of God and of ourselves".[12] The second stage, 1539 to 1550, changes the formula from

"sacred doctrine" to "our wisdom" (sapientiae nostrae summa), and expands it somewhat to provide brief accounts of divine and then human attributes, showing the contrast between the two, and setting the stage for the drama of redemption. But by 1559 the idea has become an overture to the entire work, developed into the sophisticated and rich concept of a unitary cognition, and phrased in a cliché borrowed from classical literature: "True and substantial wisdom principally consists of two parts, the knowledge of God, and the knowledge of ourselves. But, while these two branches of knowledge are so intimately connected, which of them precedes and produces the other, is not easy to discover". This insight about the inseparability of humanity and divinity repeats itself most notably in Book Three, on God the Sanctifier, leading to a significant reversal of the usual order of justification and sanctification. The distinctively Reformed package is now well advanced: the divine-human unity shows itself in covenant, in Old Testament revelation, in Incarnation, in the sanctifying work of Holy Spirit, in infant baptism and Lord's Supper, indeed as the new architectonic of Calvin's mature theology. Little wonder that Karl Barth, who dubbed Calvin the "theologian of sanctification", as Luther was of justification, adopts this same principle of interpretation in his turn. (By the way, I consider this theme close to that of Thomas Aquinas, whose "man as tending to God" makes for the sort of theo-anthropology

of the Calvinist tradition).

I submit that this striking shift is accounted for by the strong influence of the southern Reformers who formed a new society for our promising young scholar. In particular, the Swiss city-states were emerging as several centres of Reform moving toward recognition of their common wealth in theological terms. Zwingli, of course, remains even today the enigmatical figure who is more than merely Luther's foil at Marburg, more than the simple Sacramentarian of Roman polemic, more even than the left-winger on the Reformed team who played suspiciously like an Anabaptist. The papers from the Zwingli symposium held here two years ago suggest some of the ways in which he is gaining a better press.[13] In the present context, his death five years before the 1536 Institution meant that his successor Henry Bullinger was now the Zürich antistes, a growing influence from Helvetia to England. Calvin was clearly attracted to the biblical and patristic foundation of this teaching; the next decade would see an official pact binding Geneva and Zürich to the same doctrine of sacrament (the Consensus Tigurinus of 1549).

But perhaps Martin Bucer at Strasbourg is the key to the complex interplay of personalities and politics which constituted the historical context for the movement of Reform. I once appealed for the rescue of Melanchthon and Bucer from the role of mere "straight men of the Reformation". I mean, there is Bucer, indefatigable in attending conferences, single-minded as

matchmaker in getting single Reformers married to respectable ladies, especially former nuns, and tireless in composing irenical tracts and drafts of possible documents of union. For his efforts he has been regarded as a second-rate mind, a church politician, one who bent the truth in order to achieve harmony. But I suggest that he deserves a better report. We know that soon Calvin would sojourn in Strasbourg, an exile from Geneva from 1538 to 1541, just as Peter Martyr Vermigli will spend five formative years there, 1542-1547. In both cases there is a clear Bucerian influence, best seen in the definition of faith as union with Christ, providing a dynamic turn to sacramental teaching and an emphasis on the role of the Holy Spirit.

Bucer's Gospel commentaries, Enarrationes perpetuae, 1530, have been compared with the 1536 Institutio (Op. Sel. IV) to show the affinity of the two men on such points as the Lord's Prayer, even as to technical terms, and especially on the doctrine of election. Calvin's original twinning of predestination with providence is lost as the latter is restricted to sublunary affairs, while the former becomes too eschatological for its own good, or for ours, for that matter. There is unity on the order of salvation: election, vocation, justification, glorification; while there is no attempt to balance this with a negative order, leading to the later so-called horrible decree, decretum absolutum. Indeed, the same year, 1536, Bucer's Commentary on Romans appeared, with a full doctrine of

predestination, which in turn affected Calvin's revision of 1539. This second edition also shows much more in common between the two on the church visible, mother of the faithful for instance, and the stress on covenant and the unity of the two Testaments in support of infant baptism.[14]

We may conclude, then, that a growing sense of respect for Zwingli's teaching, as interpreted and revised by Bullinger, along with a dose of Bucer's positive and pragmatic theology, helped Calvin to move from Luther (and somewhat from Melanchthon too) to positions that would prove decisive in producing a distinctive Reformed theology. I suggest that some of these positions were already present in embryo, perhaps from the lectures of the Scots professor John Mair (Major) who moved from St Andrews to Paris in 1523, in time to have students such as Calvin and probably Loyola in his classes. One of Mair's strengths was his epistemology, a modification of Gabriel Biel in the direction of the moderate realism of Aquinas, in which propositions terminate on reality. Here, I submit, are the proper clues to his own "fresh start", rather than the 1536 volume.

Today we enjoy a vantage point in a happier age of ecumenism and more objective scholarship; we may well conclude, therefore, that the move from Lutheran to Reformed was not so very far after all. If so, the debates, the persecutions, even the warfare should not lead us to forget the happy issue of a theological

science renewed and advanced by a generation of thinkers and actors committed to Reform in both ideas and manners.

Notes

[1] cf John Leith, "Calvin's Theological Method and the Ambiguity of His Theology" in Reformation Studies, ed. F.H. Littell (Richmond: John Knox, 1962); W. Niesel, The Theology of Calvin (Phila.: Westminster, 1956) on "The Present State of Critical Studies"; Q. Breen, "John Calvin and the Rhetorical Tradition" in Church History, March 1957, pp3-21, reprinted in Christianity and Humanism (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1968). C. Vasoli, Ladialettica e la retorica dell'Umanesimo: "Invenzione" e "Metodo" nella cultura del XV eXVI secolo (Milan, 1968) and "Loci Communes and the Rhetorical and Dialectical Traditions" in J.C. McLelland, ed. Peter Martyr Vermigli and Italian Reform (Waterloo: WLU Press 1980)17ff.

2. David N. Wiley, "Farel, Calvin, and the 1536 Institutes", address to the ASRR Spring Meeting, May 8, 1986. cf Francois Wendel, Calvin, Sources et Evolution de sa Pensée Religieuse (Paris 1950) 79ff.

3. F.L. Battles and A.M. Hugo, Calvin's Commentary on Seneca's De Clementia (Leiden: E.J. Brill 1969) 30f. Cf Battles, "Sources of Calvin's Seneca Commentary" in G.E. Duffield, ed. John Calvin (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans 1966) 38-66. Among the vast resource material on this period, I mention François Wendel, op., cit.; A. Ganoczy, Le Jeune Calvin: Genèse et Evolution de sa Vocation Reformatrice (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner V. 1966); and Jacques Pannier, "Recherches sur l'évolution religieuse de Calvin jusqu'a sa conversion", Revue d'histoire et phil. rel., Strasbourg 1925 (Paris 1926).

4. cf J. Pannier, "Une prèmière 'Institution' française dès 1537?" in his John Calvin: Epitre a tous amateurs de Jésus-Christ, Preface to the Olivétan N.T. (Paris: Lib. Fischbacher 1929).

5. The Editio Princeps is entitled Christianae religionis institutio. Then follows what reads like a publisher's blurb: totam feré pietatis summa, et quicquid est in doctrina salutis cognitu necessarium, complectens: omnibus pietatis studiosis lectu dignissimum opus, ac recens editum. Praefatio ad Christianissimum Regem Franciae, qua hic liber pro confessione fidei offertur. -Ioanne Calvino Noviodumensi autore. Basileae, MDXXXVI. (pp 5-41 Epistola Nuncupatoria,42-514 Institutio, 5pp Index). Colophon: Basileae, per Thomam Platterum et Balthasarem Lasium, Mense Martio, Anno 1536. Sm. 8vo., 260 leaves, 10 cm X 15 cm. It is reprinted in the Corpus Reformatorum (Brunswick 1863) Vol. XXIX (Calv. Op. I) and in the Joannis Calvini: Opera Selecta, Vol. I (1533-41), ed. Peter Barth & W. Niesel (München: Chr. Kaiser 1926). cf W.G. Hards, A Collation of the Latin Texts of the First Edition of Calvin's Institutes (Baltimore, MD 1958). Some twenty copies of the First Edition are extant in Europe and one at Princeton Theological Seminary.

6. I use the translation of Ford Lewis Battles, Institution of the Christian Religion .... (Atlanta: John Knox Press 1975). His 'Introduction' (pp v - lviii) is a good resource, while in Appendices he gives Bucer's comments on the Lord's Prayer from the Enarrantiones Perpetuae in Evangelia (441-61),and the Academic Discourse of Nicolas Cop (462-71). Battles also left us An Analysis of the Institutes ... (Pittsburgh, 1972). cf Albert Autin, L'Institution Chrétienne de Calvin (Paris: Malfère 1929) for the literary and historical context, and Jacques Pannier, Epitre au Roi François Ier (Paris 1927), text of the 1541 edition with Introduction and Notes.

7. Parallels with Luther and Melanchthon are noted in the Opera Selecta III and IV. cf A. Lang, "Die Quellen der Institutio von 1536", EvTh 3 (1936) 100-12; A. Ganoczy Calvin, theologien de l'église et du ministère (Paris: Ed. du Cerf 1964) 45ff: "l'influence luthérienne semble donc prédominer". This is not to deny the influence of Zwingli - cf Ganoczy, Le Jeune Calvin 156ff

(Zwingli) and 166ff (Bucer).

8. Köhler, "Das Täufertum in Calvins Institutio von 1536", Mennonitische Geschichtsblätter 2 (1936) 1-4. Willem Balke, Calvin and the Anabaptist Radicals, ET by William Heymen (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans 1981), esp. pp 15-95.

9. J.C. McLelland, The Visible Words of God: The Sacramental Theology of Peter Martyr Vermigli (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd 1956; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans 1965) e.g. 79ff, 228f.

10. cf Benjamin Warfield, "The Literary History of the Institutes" in John Allen, ed. and trans.. Institutes of the Christian Religion by John Calvin (Phila., 1936) I.xix. See also Calvin's own Preface to the 1559 edition, p 17.

11. Especially John Nevin, The Mystical Presence, 1846, opposed by the Princeton school, particularly Charles Hodge. Nevin's thesis was reinforced by Ebrard's Das Dogma vom heiligen Abendmahl und seine Geschichte Vol. 2 (1847?), which argued that after the 1536 Wittenberg Concord a third sacramental theology emerged, neither Lutheran nor "Zwinglian", and advocated chiefly by Calvin and Melanchthon.

12. Cf. Commentary on True and False Religion, ed. Jackson and Heller (Durham NC: Labyrinth Press, 1981) p 58 [2]: "since it is God towards which religion reaches out and man who by means of religion reaches out toward Him, religion cannot be duly treated of without first of all discerning God and knowing man."

13. Huldrych Zwingli, 1484 - 1531: A Legacy of Radical Reform, ed. E.J. Furcha (Montreal: ARC Supplement #2, McGill University 1985).

14. cf Lang, op.cit., 139f; A. Mitchell Hunter, The Teaching of Calvin (London: James Clarke 1950) 93ff, 135ff.

THE IMAGE OF GOD IN HUMANITY: A COMPARISON OF CALVIN'S TEACHING IN 1536 AND 1559

Jane Dempsey Douglass

It is a very great pleasure to participate in the Birks Lectures, and in this celebration by McGill University and the Presbyterian College of the 450th anniversary of the publication of the first edition of Calvin's Institutes. It seems appropriate that the two Birks Lectures this year focus directly on the 1536 edition in its own right, allowing us to stop and admire the accomplishment of a young humanist scholar in creating a catechetical work for the new reforming movement, before we move on to the later writings.

I have chosen to look at Calvin's teaching on the image of God in humanity because this is a significant aspect of Calvin's theology for which the material from the 1536 edition of the Institutes has been largely passed over. Classical treatments of this topic in the Calvin literature conflate materials from the final edition of the Institutes and from the various biblical commentaries, particularly the one on Genesis, of course, paying little attention to the 1536 edition.

For example, in the four chapters on the image of God in T.F. Torrance's book, Calvin's Doctrine of Man, copiously footnoted with references to the original sources, I have located only two references to the 1536 edition of the Institutes.[1] Since Calvin's treatment of the image of God in humanity in 1536 is not merely shorter than in the later editions, but also distinctive, we will look first at the 1536 edition, then compare it with the final 1559 edition. To sharpen our focus, we will include only two passages from biblical commentaries, both necessary to the discussion of the Institutes. At each step we will ask how Calvin deals with the image of God in women as well as in men, a question rarely dealt with in the literature.

The 1536 edition of the Institutes is a small volume, quite likely modeled on the outline of Luther's Small Catechism and other similar Reformation works.[2] The six chapters deal with the Law, explaining the Decalogue; faith, explaining the Apostles Creed; prayer, explaining the Lord's Prayer; the sacraments; the five "false sacraments"; and finally Christian freedom, ecclesiastical power and political administration.

It is at the opening of the first chapter on the law that we find a discussion of human creation. The context is Calvin's opening argument that "Nearly the whole of sacred doctrine consists in these two parts: knowledge of God and of ourselves."[3] Immediately Calvin shows us the parallelism between what we need to know about God and what we need to know about ourselves.

This tendency to set the divine and the human side by side, showing both a tension and a positive relation between them, is characteristic of the whole work.[4]

What must we know about God? We must

> "hold with sure faith, first, that he is infinite wisdom, righteousness, goodness, mercy, truth, power, and life. And all of these things, wherever seen, come from him. Secondly, that all things in heaven and on earth have been created for his glory. To serve him for his nature's sake alone, to keep his rule, accept his majesty, and in obedience recognize him as Lord and King--all this is due him by right. Thirdly, that he is himself a just judge, and therefore, is going to take harsh vengeance upon those who have turned aside from his precepts...Fourthly, that he is merciful and gentle, ready to receive the miserable and poor that flee to his mercy and put their trust in him..."[5]

The list of attributes in the first point is not a typical Reformation list: infinite wisdom, righteousness, goodness, mercy, truth, power, and life. We pause to wonder why Calvin selected just these. Following the list, references have been inserted in the text to Baruch 3 and James 1, not the commonest books cited in Calvin's works. Contained within the third chapter of the book of Baruch, from the Apocrypha, is instruction to Israel:

> "Hear the commandments of life, O Israel; listen, and learn wisdom. Why is it, Israel, that you are in the land of your enemies, that you have grown old in a strange land, that you are counted among those in Hades? You have

> forsaken the spring of wisdom. If you had walked in the way of God, you would have lived in peace forever. Learn where wisdom is, where strength is, where understanding is, so that you may at the same time learn where length of days and life are..." (Bar. 3:9-14)

Here are themes relating law to wisdom, and wisdom to God, relating law to life and disobedience to death, relating wisdom to power or strength. Again the second reference, James 1, points to God as the giver of wisdom, indeed of every good and perfect gift, who "brought us forth by the word of truth that we should be a kind of first fruits of his creatures." According to James, the righteous God who generously gives wisdom to those who ask in faith also expects believers and hearers to be doers of the word, persevering in the perfect law, the law of liberty, and therefore to be blessed. We see now how Calvin's list of attributes of God: infinite wisdom, righteousness, goodness, mercy, truth, power, and life, underlies the other affirmations Calvin makes in his summary about God: that God rightfully expects obedience and service, that God is a just judge of disobedience, and that God is merciful and gentle to those who trustingly beg for mercy.

What now must we know about ourselves? First we must know that "Adam, parent [parens] of us all, was created in the image and likeness of God. That is, he was endowed with wisdom, righteousness, holiness or sanctity and was clinging by these gifts of grace to God in such a way that he could have lived forever in Him,

if he had stood fast in this integrity of nature which he had received from God."[6] To be made in the image of God is to be endowed with God's wisdom, righteousness, holiness, life, for these gifts come only from God. But the emphasis here is not on the endowment itself but on Adam's relationship to God and Adam's resemblance to God--"image and likeness." Adam's nature reflects God's nature.

Calvin continues his story: "But when he that is, [Adam] fell into sin, this image and likeness of God was cancelled and effaced, that is, he lost all the benefits of divine grace, by which he could have been led back into the way of life. Moreover, he was far removed from God and became a complete stranger. From this it follows that he was stripped and deprived of all wisdom, righteousness, power, life, which--as has already been said--could be held only in God. As a consequence, nothing was left to him save ignorance, iniquity, impotence, death, and judgment. These are indeed the 'fruits of sin.' This calamity fell not only upon Adam himself, but also flowed down into us, who are his seed and offspring. Consequently, all of us born of Adam are ignorant and bereft of God, perverse, corrupt, and lacking every good."[7]

After repeating once again this litany of the life-giving qualities of God from which sinners are cut off by their broken relationship with God, and the death-dealing qualities which remain in ruined humanity, Calvin adds that God has "stamped the law upon the

hearts of all" as conscience so that humanity will not be ignorant of these things. God has provided further a written law to teach people "what perfect righteousness is and how it is to be kept: that is, firmly fixed in God..."[8] The law is also a mirror, one in which humanity can see its sinfulness and reflect on its inability to do God's will.[9] What fallen humanity is to learn from the law is not mere morality but that "God is the Creator, our Lord and Father. For this reason we owe him glory, honour, and love."[10] Here again the emphasis falls on the proper relationship of humanity to God.

Before going on to explain the Decalogue, Calvin inserts a section on God's love in Christ, who, "even though he was one God with the Father, put on our flesh, to enter a covenant with us and to join us (far separated from God by our sins) closely to God." Having paid the debt to God's justice, Christ redeemed humanity from God's judgement. "Descending to earth, he brought with him all the rich heavenly blessings and with a lavish hand showered them upon us. These are the Holy Spirit's gifts."[11] Through Christ's work believers are renewed and enabled to obey the law and live for righteousness.[12] God is to be asked to lead us back to a knowledge of ourselves and a knowledge of God's gentleness and sweetness shown in his Christ who will lead us into eternal life.[13]

At this point we may pause to ask what happened to Eve. Calvin's story of the creation and fall in 1536 is

the story of Adam, certainly understood as humanity. Adam is called "parent of us all," not father. Eve is nowhere to be found. On the one hand this silence concerning Eve must reflect the traditional assumption that women are to be understood as included where the men's names are mentioned.[14] But on the other hand, for the sixteenth century, it is a new kind of silence. Calvin feels no need to differentiate the situation of men and women with relation to the image of God. The traditional discussions about limitations of the fullness of the image of God in women are missing. Also missing is the traditional denunciation of Eve for leading Adam into sin.

What sorts of limitations has the tradition placed on the fullness of the image of God in women? After all, no mainstream Christian theologian has denied that women are made in the image of God, or that they will have full equality with men someday in heaven when earthly bodies are transformed at the resurrection.

Augustine, for example, argues that "...the wife with her husband is the image of God, so that the totality of human substance forms a single image; but when woman is considered as man's helpmate, a state which belongs to her alone, she is not the image of God. By contrast, man is the image of God by being solely what he is, an image so perfect, so whole, that when

defective male. This understanding of nature reinforces his theological view of the hierarchical relationship of men to women. "The image of God exists in man [vir] in a way that is not found in woman: as a matter of fact, man is the beginning and end of woman as God is the beginning and end of all creation."[16] Thomas thinks the image of God may be more perfect in man than woman just as there is a difference in perfection between higher and lower angels, though he notes that women and men belong to the same species, whereas the angels represent different species.[17]

Calvin makes no such distinctions in the 1536 Institutes. Rather he emphasizes the solidarity of humanity. In Calvin's discussion of the Decalogue, he points out that the sabbath laws served the purpose of preserving equity among human beings. "We are to have regard for equity today also, not out of any servile necessity, but according as love dictates."[18] The commandment to honour father and mother is taken as just that, without any attempt to build on it, as others often did, a justification for patriarchal households and societies.[19] The command against fornication is addressed to both men and women, with advice to spouses to treat one another soberly and modestly.[20] As in Luther's catechism, the commands not to kill or steal or bear false witness are turned into positive requirements to be just and helpful to all human beings, protecting their lives and sharing goods to meet their needs.[21] Comments on the last commandment against covetousness,

however, reveal a hierarchical society of masters and servants, rulers and ruled, pastors and flock, parents and children which Calvin in no way fundamentally criticizes; he merely calls for its more loving humanization and for just relationships. But it is interesting that Calvin omits the traditional advice for women to be properly subject to men. And he reminds masters that servants are to be recognized as "their brothers, co-servants of the same Lord, who is in heaven, whom they ought to love mutually and treat humanely."[22]

Elsewhere Calvin insists that neighbors include enemies and persons very far away, anyone to whom we could be useful.[23] The commentary on the Lord's Prayer stresses the significance of the fact that Christ taught us to pray to "our father."

> "...we are not so instructed that each one of us should individually call him his father, but rather that all of us in common should call him our father. From this fact we are warned how great a feeling of brotherly love ought to be among us who are the common children of such a father. For if one father is common to us all and every good thing that can fall to our lot comes from him, it befits us to have nothing divided among ourselves that we are not prepared with great eagerness of heart to share with one another, as need demands."[24]

Christian freedom must be exercised for the upbuilding of the neighbor, never in a way which is harmful to others.[25]

There is recognition that believers in Christ have

a special relationship as children of God, one in which unbelievers do not share.[26] But the bonds of humanity are not limited to Christians.

> "...though ecclesiastical discipline does not permit us to live familiarly or have intimate contact with excommunicated persons, we ought nevertheless to strive by whatever means we can, whether by exhortation and teaching or by mercy and gentleness, or by our own prayers to God, that they may turn to a more virtuous life and may return to the society and unity of the church. And not only those are to be so treated, but also Turks and Saracens, and other enemies of religion. Far be it from us to approve those methods by which many until now have tried to force them to our faith, when they banish them, when they deny to them all offices of humanity, when they pursue them with sword and arms."[27]

We see then that even since the fall, when sin obliterated and nearly destroyed the image of God in humanity, there is some vestige of the image of God which creates a common humanity to which all have ethical obligations.

Calvin understands that the image of God is most clearly seen in Christ, the Son of God. Down through the centuries even before the incarnation, what knowledge of God existed among humanity was due to the reflection of God in his Son.

> "...holy men knew God only by beholding him in his Son as in a mirror. Nor have the prophets prophesied concerning God in any other way than by the Spirit of the same Son...God has never manifested himself to humanity in any other way than through the Son, that is, his sole wisdom,

> light, and truth. But this wisdom, even though it had manifested itself formerly in various ways, was not as yet shining forth fully. But when it was at length revealed in the flesh, it declared loudly and clearly to us whatsoever can be comprehended and ought to be pondered concerning God by the human mind."[28]

Christ alone must be heard as teacher because in him "the Heavenly Father has willed all the treasures of knowledge and wisdom to be hidden."[29] We hear now echoes of that description of God's attributes with which the 1536 edition of the Institutes began: infinite wisdom, righteousness, goodness, mercy, truth, power and life. Christ can reveal them because Christ is the Son of God by nature, not adoption, begotten of the Father from eternity.[30] "God's son became for us Immanuel...God with us,"[31] fully reflecting God's image.

Calvin believes that at the creation, God's "consultation": "Let us make humanity in our image and likeness," is evidence of the action of the whole trinity in creation. God was addressing his Wisdom and Power. Thus the second person of the trinity shared in the creation of humanity in God's image. Now, since the fall, the eternal Son of God was sent as mediator to dwell with humanity in intimacy. As Christ had joined his divinity to us in the creation of humanity, now he also joined our humanity to his divinity in the incarnation. He was human; he was "our flesh."[32]

> "No common thing it was that the Mediator was to accomplish: to make children of God out of children of human beings; out of heirs of

> Gehenna to make heirs of the heavenly kingdom. Who could have done this had not the Son of God become the Son of a human being, and had not so taken what was ours as to impart what was his to us, and to make what was his by nature ours by grace? This therefore is our hope, that we are children of God, for God's natural Son fashioned for himself a body from our body, flesh from our flesh, bones from our bones, that he might be one with us...This is our hope, that the inheritance of the heavenly kingdom may be ours, because God's only Son, whose perfect inheritance it was, has adopted us as his brothers. 'For if brothers, then also fellow heirs with him.' ...It was his task to swallow up death. Who but life could do this? It was his task to conquer sin. Who but very Righteousness could do this? Indeed, who is life or righteousness but God alone? Therefore our most merciful Lord, when he willed that we be redeemed, made himself our Redeemer."[33]

Calvin here has linked together creation and redemption, the image of God in Christ to the very nature of God and to human nature. Echoing Ephesians 5, Calvin uses the language of the Genesis 2 account of woman's creation from man, "flesh of our flesh and bone of our bones," to describe the identity of Christ's humanity with ours.

Calvin can also speak of Christ putting himself forward as our pattern or exemplar in order that we may follow in his footsteps.[34] Elsewhere he describes Christ in our flesh acting for our benefit. Christ died "the same death that other human beings die by nature," and "he rose again to life, a true human being, yet now not mortal but incorruptible." By his ascension he opened heaven to us, though it had been closed to all by

Adam. "Indeed he entered heaven in our flesh, as if in our name, that already in him we may possess heaven through hope..." And he will descend "in the same visible form" to judge the living and the dead.[35]

Christ is both the reflection of God because of his divinity, which permits humanity to know what God is like, and also the true humanity in the image of God because of his incarnation, which tells human beings what humanity was intended to be. But Christ brings more than wisdom and knowledge. His life and death bring liberation from sin and death. Through the church, the whole number of the elect, believers called to faith by the Holy Spirit, are knit together into the one body of Christ, its Lord, leader, and ruler, and reborn into newness of life. They are assured by their adoption as Christ's brothers and companions that they are also adopted as children of God, his father, and will share in Christ's inheritance.[36]

Christ is reflected in a different way through the images of the sacraments. When Calvin explains the sacraments, he points out that they, too, are "mirrors in which we may contemplate the riches of God's grace, which he lavishes upon us. For by them he manifests himself to us...as far as it is given to our dullness to perceive, and attests his good will toward us."[37] Calvin reminds his readers that Augustine calls the sacraments "visible words" because they portray graphically, in the manner of images, like painted pictures, God's promises to us.[38] The sacraments as

images represent Christ and make him known.[39] Though this use of the term "image" is certainly distinct from that which we have been discussing, there is more than a semantic linkage. Again and again Calvin describes the comfort of the sacraments as confirming the promise that we are engrafted into Christ's body, the body that truly nourishes us forever.[40] In the context of the Lord's Supper, he repeatedly uses images of the mystical exchange where Christ is made a sharer in our human mortality in order to make us partakers in his divine immortality.[41]

Calvin speaks of the image of God one last time in the 1536 Institutes when he refers to wicked rulers. He admits that people often cannot recognize the image of God in evil rulers, and so they fail to give them the dignity due them according to Scriptural teaching.[42] Calvin argues that even when the image of God is difficult to see because the righteousness which belongs to that image is lacking, still those in authority bear a divine stamp of dignity which calls for obedience: princes over subjects, parents over children, husbands over wives.[43] One wonders whether there may be implicit behind this discussion the view of Chrysostom and others that dominion or ruling is part of the image of God: the calling of humanity to be God's vice-regent in governing the world.

Let us turn now to the 1559 edition of the Institutes to see how the discussion has been developed. We notice immediately that the discussion of the

knowledge of God has expanded from a paragraph to fourteen chapters. So the brief sketch from 1536 of what it is important to know about God has disappeared, and with it the list of God's attributes. Therefore the parallel structure of the discussion of God's nature and of human nature, with its very explicit focus on humanity's reflection of God's nature, has been lost. In 1559 Calvin is far more preoccupied at the opening of the description of humanity with the "sad ruin" of human nature, stressing the need to distinguish original nature from fallen nature so that God will not be blamed for present evils of humanity [I,xv,2].

First Calvin argues that all should agree that a human being has both a soul and a body. Both conscience and the knowledge of God point to the immortality of souls. The "...nimbleness of the human mind in searching out heaven and earth and the secrets of nature, and when all ages have been compassed by its understanding and memory, in arranging each thing in its proper order, and in inferring future events from past, clearly shows that there lies hidden in humanity something separate from the body" [I,xv,2].

Still another proof of the distinction of body and soul, Calvin says, is the fact that humanity was created in God's image. Calvin is willing to admit that humans are separated from the animals in bodily form, so that our physical nature may bring us closer to God. He will not object greatly to including under the image of God the uplifted face of the human being gazing at the stars

in contrast to animals bent down to the ground, so long as it is agreed that the image of God which may glow in outward marks, in the body and the physical world, is spiritual. Calvin also rejects the traditional sorts of distinctions between "image" and "likeness" of God, e.g. a distinction between the intellectual powers of reason and freedom and the moral righteousness lost in the fall; he argues that the two terms simply represent Hebrew parallelism. Though a human being with respect to the soul can be called God's image, Calvin wants to extend the likeness of God to "the whole excellence by which human nature towers over all the kinds of living creatures" [I,xv,3]. "...[A]lthough the primary seat of the divine image was in the mind and heart, or in the soul and its powers, yet there was no part of the human being, not even the body itself, from which some sparks did not glow" [I.xv.3] Adam in his original integrity "had full possession of right understanding, when he had his affections kept within the bounds of reason, all his senses tempered in right order, and he truly referred his excellence to exceptional gifts bestowed upon him by his Maker" [I,xv,3]. In other words, he was grateful.

A little farther along Calvin clarifies that the human soul consists of understanding and will; humanity in its beginning was so excellently endowed with these two faculties that reason, understanding, prudence and judgment were adequate not only for earthly life but for eternal life. Adam could have remained in a state of integrity had he chosen to do so; his choice of good and

evil was free [I,xv,7-8].

Though Calvin in his discussion has rejected as mere speculation many of the medieval arguments about the image of God, even Augustine's theory that the soul reflects the trinity because it contains the understanding, will, and memory [I,xv,4], it seems that Calvin's new presentation of the image of God in humanity has more in common with scholastic discussions than that of 1536. You will remember that there he defined the image of God in Adam in relation to the endowment with wisdom, righteousness, and holiness, gifts that can only come from God because they are reflections of God's own nature, and in relation to Adam's clinging to God by the gifts of grace. Though it has become commonplace to describe Calvin's view of the image of God in humanity as "dynamic," focusing on its character as reflecting God rather than as a static endowment, we must recognize that Calvin also sometimes seems to be interested in more traditional formulations of the matter.[44]

In 1559 Calvin moves from his discussion of the nature of the image of God in humanity directly to the renewal of the image of God in Christ. Far more sharply than in 1536, Calvin here points out that we cannot, since the fall, see "plainly those faculties in which humanity excels, and in which the human being ought to be thought the reflection or mirror of God's glory. That indeed, can be nowhere better recognized than from the restoration of his corrupted nature....Consequently,

the beginning of our recovery of salvation is in that restoration which we obtain through Christ, who also is called the Second Adam for the reason that he restores us to true and complete integrity" [I,xv,4]. Christ's purpose in regeneration is to reform us to God's image [I,xv,4]. "...Christ is the most perfect image of God; if we are conformed to it, we are so restored that with true piety, righteousness, purity, and intelligence we bear God's image" [I,xv,4]. What was implied by Calvin's repeated emphasis in 1536 on Christ's taking our human nature in order to give us new life is now clearly spelled out as the restoration or renewal of the image of God.

New in this context in 1559 is yet another attack on Osiander's too bodily view of the image of God, followed by a puzzling little insertion: "But the statement in which man alone is called by Paul 'the image and glory of God' and woman excluded from this place of honour is clearly to be restricted, as the context shows, to the political order" [I.xv.4]. The reference is certainly to 1 Cor. 11:7: "For a man ought not to cover his head, since he is the image and glory of God; but woman is the glory of man." Only rarely, it seems, have modern commentators tried to make sense out of Calvin's use of this reference. One scholar who examined the commentary on 1 Corinthians sees the issue of dominion as central to this passage, including the natural order of man ruling over woman, yet concluded that Calvin implies that "it is as man and woman are one

in a mutual society that they image the glory of God."[45] It is entirely possible that Calvin believed that, since he talks a great deal about mutuality and mutual subjection between men and women. But that does not seem to be Calvin's point here in discussion that text. His comment in the Institutes, which we have quoted, assumes that 1 Cor. 11 appears to give to men and women very unequal places before God, and Calvin is uneasy about this. Calvin here argues that bodily differences do not exclude women from being made in the image and glory of God. Rather, women's subordinate status belongs only to the political order. And what for Calvin is the political order? It is the whole realm of human governance where human beings are free to order their lives on the basis of reason and divine guidance, the realm of human law rather than divine, eternal law.[46]

If we turn briefly to Calvin's commentary on 1 Cor. 11, we see that he understands this chapter, including the discussion on women covering their heads and speaking in church, to be advice by Paul on seemliness in worship. The traditions Paul is handing down here, Calvin says, are not matters dealing with salvation but rather order and policy. "We know that each church is free to set up the form of polity that suits its circumstances, and is to its advantage, since the Lord has not given any specific directions about this."[47] Calvin puzzles over the apparent inconsistency between Gal. 3:28: In Christ ...there is no male nor female"

and Paul's statement here that "man is placed in an intermediate position between Christ and the woman, so that Christ is not the head of the woman."[48] Calvin decides that the difference is the context. The context in Galatians has to do with the spiritual kingdom of God, where outward characteristics and matters of human interactions are not at issue.[49] But Calvin comments on 1 Cor. 11: "...both sexes were created according to the image of God, and Paul urges women, as much as men, to be re-formed according to that image. But when he [Paul] is speaking about image here, he is referring to the conjugal order. Accordingly it has to do with this present life, and, on the other hand, has nothing to do with conscience."[50] Calvin here assumes that in the social order women are subordinate to men, and he does not challenge that sixteenth-century fact of life. Indeed, in this context he encourages women's subordination as proper behaviour or decorum. But he does refuse to claim eternal divine law to support it. Women's subordination falls in the realm of social arrangements which are humanly created and which change to meet new circumstances. Therefore we can conclude that Calvin's intent in introducing his brief comment on 1 Cor. 11 into the 1559 edition of the Institutes, in the context of discussion of the image of God in humanity, was to affirm that women as well as men are fully created in the image of God and to limit the application of Paul's advice to the realm of human governance.

Such a position by modern standards seems very conservative. But in Calvin's day it must have been rather radical. Medieval theologians and canon lawyers, relying on biblical texts like 1 Cor. 11 and "scientific" arguments like that of Aristotle that females are "misbegotten males", regularly restricted the fullness of the image of God in women. Calvin was helped in his thinking by renaissance exegetes and by renaissance physicians who were then discarding Aristotle's physiology. Calvin and some other Reformed theologians seem to have defended the new views of physiology against attacks by other theologians. Calvin was also helped by his acquaintance with a late medieval and renaissance literary debate in France about the nature and role of women, the "querelle des femmes," in which both men and women writers took part. Some of these writers challenged the assumption that a proper understanding of the Scriptures requires women's subordination. Calvin must also have been helped by his personal acquaintance with several French-speaking women rulers in renaissance circles to whom he offered pastoral advice and on whom he depended for the furthering of the evangelical movement. In the light of his relationship to the ferment of renaissance thought, it is comprehensible that he might take a somewhat less than traditional view of women's nature and role.[51]

Obviously Calvin had for some time been bothered by 1 Cor. 11, because he had already taken up that issue in his commentary on Gen. 1. Here he posed the problem as

a conflict between Moses' view that man and woman alike are created in the image of God and Paul's comment that woman is not. His solution here also is to claim that Paul alludes only to the domestic relation, to government. In Genesis, however, "...the question is respecting that glory of God which peculiarly shines forth in human nature, where the mind, the will, and all the senses, represent the divine order."[52]

The commentary on Genesis 1:27 understands that God created humanity, male and female, as a commendation of marriage. Man alone was incomplete, "half a human being," and God added a woman to him "as a companion."[53] Man and woman together are seen as one human being.[54]

But when Calvin moves on to Gen. 2:18, he faces the second creation story. Calvin understands that God intended humanity to be social, and he highly recommends marriage as God's intent. In this context Calvin notes that woman was created as a help to man; therefore he concludes that the order of nature implies that the woman should help the man. "Certainly it cannot be denied, that the woman also, though in the second degree, was created in the image of God; from this it follows, that what was said in the creation of the man belongs to the female sex."[55] In interpreting the description of the woman as "fit for him" [Adam], Calvin understands the phrase as implying similitude. He approves of those translators who have understood that

> "Moses intended to note some equality. And hence is refuted the error of some, who think

> that the woman was formed only for the sake of propagation, and who restrict the word good...to the production of offspring...The explanation given by others...'Let her be ready to obedience,' is cold; for Moses intended to express more..."[56]

When Eve finally appears, Calvin explains that God chose to create all humanity from the same source; human nature was created in the person of Adam, from which Eve was formed. "In this manner Adam was taught to recognize himself in his wife, as in a mirror; and Eve, in her turn, to submit herself willingly to her husband, as being taken out of him."[57]

If Calvin seems inconsistent, vacillating between seeing man and woman as equals and also seeing woman as subordinate to man, we can sympathize with his problem of exegeting these two biblical creation stories without benefit of modern textual criticism. What is most interesting is that after repeated exegetical struggles to understand women's relation to the image of God, the final edition of the Institutes contains the interjection limiting women's subordination to the realm of human governance, and that it contains no discussion of women's inferiority.

In the 1559 Institutes we see evidence of evolution of Calvin's thought on still another issue which is probably related. You may remember that we asked in relation to the 1536 Institutes whether Calvin's discussion of the image of God in the wicked ruler assumed that dominion is part of the image of God.

In the Genesis commentary Calvin makes abundant use of the idea that humanity is entrusted with the governance and care of the world, the concept of stewardship. But when he asks whether dominion is part of the image of God, as Chrysostom believes, Calvin replies that it is part, but only a very small part of the image of God.[58] In the 1559 edition of the Institutes, Calvin rejects outright the idea that dominion constitutes the image of God: "Nor is there any probability in the opinion of those who locate God's likeness in the dominion given to humanity, as if in this mark alone a person resembles God, and was established as heir and possessor of all things; whereas God's image is properly to be sought within a human being, not outside the person; indeed, it is an inner good of the soul" [I,15,4]. This position seems consistent with that of Calvin's 1559 insert concerning the image of God in women which we have discussed. In the sixteenth-century world, an insistence on dominion in relation to the image of God would have seemed to require placing limitations on its fullness in women.

One final example can be given of the process of development in Calvin's thought. We noticed in the 1536 Institutes an emphasis on human solidarity that implied an ethical obligation resulting from the image of God. In 1559 the implicit is explicit:

> Therefore whatever human being you now meet who needs your aid, you have no reason to refuse to help the person. Say, "He is a stranger;" but the Lord has given him a mark that ought to be

> familiar to you, by virtue of the fact that God forbids you to despise your own flesh. Say, "He is contemptible and worthless;" but the Lord shows him to be one to whom he has deigned to give the beauty of his image. Say that you owe nothing for any service of his; but God, as it were, has put him in his own place in order that you may recognize toward him the many and great benefits with which God has bound you to himself...The image of God, which recommends the person to you, is worthy of your giving yourself and all your possessions...Assuredly there is but one way in which to achieve what is not merely difficult but utterly against human nature: to love those who hate us...It is that we remember not to consider people's evil intentions but to look upon the image of God in them, which cancels and effaces their transgressions and with its beauty and dignity allures us to love and embrace them [III,vi,6].

Though Calvin often describes the damage inflicted by sin on the image of God in humanity as obliterating or cancelling or destroying it, in fact the image remains even in the most decadent persons. This image of God in all humanity is, however, clearest in the Church, the household of faith, where the image is being restored in Christ.

Though one can move on to Calvin's commentaries to find a rich development of Calvin's view of the image of God, the Institutes, beginning with the beautiful exposition of 1536, provides us with the outlines of his thought. If, as Calvin tells us, most of Christian doctrine consists of knowledge of God and of ourselves, then indeed the doctrine of the image of God in humanity

is an important key to the whole of Calvin's theology.[59]

NOTES

[1]T.F. Torrance, Calvin's Doctrine of Man (London: Lutterworth Press, 1952), p. 65, n. 5; p. 71, n.6.

[2]See Alexandre Ganoczy, Le Jeune Calvin: Genèse et évolution de sa vocation réformatrice (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag GMBH, 1966), pp. 139-150.

[3]O.S. I, 37.

[4]Ganoczy, p. 196.

[5]O.S. I, 37.

[6]O.S. I, 38.

[7]O.S. I, 38.

[8]O.S. I, 38-39.

[9]O.S. I, 39.

[10]O.S. I, 40.

[11]O.S. I, 40.

[12]O.S. I, 40.

[13]O.S. I, 41.

[14]See 1559 edition of Institutes, II, xiii, 3, where Calvin makes this point explicitly.

[15]De trinitate xii, 7; C.C.50, 363-4.

[16]S.T. I, 93, 4 ad 1.

[17]Kari Elisabeth Børresen, Subordination and Equivalence: The Nature and Role of Woman in Augustine and Thomas Aquinas, trans. Charles H. Talbot (Washington, D.C.: University Press of America, 1981), p. 168. In this work the quotations above from Augustine and Thomas are placed in the proper broader theological context.

[18]O.S. I, 48.

[19]O.S. I, 49.

[20]O.S. I, 50-1.

[21]O.S. I, 50,51.

[22]O.S. I, 52-3.

[23]O.S. I, 54-55.

[24]O.S. I, 106.

[25]O.S. I, 229-231.

[26]O.S. I, 106-7; 113.

[27]O.S. I, 91.

[28]O.S. I, 236.

[29]O.S. I, 236-7.

[30]O.S. I, 77.

[31]O.S. I, 78.

[32]O.S. I, 77-8.

[33]O.S. I, 78-9.

[34]O.S. I, 66.

[35]O.S. I, 83-4.

[36]O.S. I, 86, 88.

[37]O.S. I, 119.

[38]O.S. I, 119.

[39]O.S. I, 125.

[40]O.S. I, 137, 128-9.

[41]O.S. I, 137, 138, 140, 142.

[42]O.S. I, 275.

[43]O.S. I, 277-8. This passage should be added to my list of the very rare references to women's subordination in the Institutes. See Jane Dempsey Douglass, Women, Freedom, and Calvin (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1985), pp. 46, 62.

[44]See for example Charles Partee, Calvin and Classical Philosophy (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1977)m chap. 2 for discussion with Torrance.

[45]Torrance, p. 44.

[46]See Douglass, Women, Freedom, and Calvin, chap. 2.

[47]Com. 1 Cor., C.O. 49, 473.

[48]Com. I Cor., C.OP. 49, 474.

[49]Com. I Cor., C.O. 49, 474.

[50]Com. I Cor., C.O. 49, 476.

[51]See Douglass, Women, Freedom, and Calvin, chap. 4.

[52]Com. Gen., C.O. 23, 27.

[53]Com. Gen., C.O. 23, 28.

[54]Com. Gen., C.O. 23, 28.

[55]Com. Gen., C.O. 23, 46.

[56]Com. Gen., C.O. 23, 47-8.

[57]Com. Gen., C.O. 23, 48-9.

[58]Com. Gen., C.O. 23, 26.

[59]In quoting from Calvin, I have drawn at times on the following published translation, freely altering them all, however, where clarity required: Institution of the Christian Religion [1536], trans. Ford Lewis Battles (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1975); Calvin: Institutes of the Christian Religion [1559], trans. Ford Lewis Battles (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1960); John Calvin, A Commentary on Genesis, trans. John King (London: Banner of Truth Trust, 1965); Calvin's Commentaries: The First Epistle of Paul The Apostle to the Corinthians, trans. John W. Fraser (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1960).

CALVIN'S AWARENESS OF THE HOLY AND THE ENIGMA OF HIS THEOLOGY

John H. Leith

Calvin's theology appears to be simple, logical, consistent and in the language of ordinary discourse. Some have found it such, but for others it is a puzzlement which they have sought to unravel by uncovering some central dogma from which it is deduced or the precise method by which Calvin did his theological work.

The diverse conclusions reached by Calvin research raise the question whether Calvin can be understood in terms of the methods most familiar to theologians of the last two centuries. Calvin himself regarded theology as a practical science designed for the edification of the church. He explicated the intensely personal relationship of God and man in the light of the Scripture, and he did this "before God" and under a powerful awareness of the Holy. Calvin's Institutes is more a practical achievement than a theoretical work. The recognition of Calvin's intense sense of the Holy and the practical determination of his theological work opens up new possibilities for understanding his theology.

I

In 1909 William Adams Brown, one of the most competent of American theologians, undertook to speak on

Calvin's influence upon theology and was embarrassed for lack of anything original to say. He found it impossible to approach Calvin's theology in the spirit of an explorer, for the latter's teaching was already commonplace knowledge. Further study of the Reformer's theology, he felt, offered no chance of a new discovery.[1]

The persistence and number of Calvin studies in the seventy-seven years since Brown's assessment indicate that his judgment was not correct. The search for the key to Calvin's thought continues, and there are those who believe that once that key is found vast new insights into his theology will be uncovered. The intensity of Calvin studies in the last decade and in particular studies which are focused on the clue to or the nature of his theology indicates that this continues to be a lively theme.

Three comments concerning Brown's judgment may be made in a preliminary way. First, Brown was right in a fundamental sense. Calvin wrote his theology for ordinary Christian believers. In every generation since Calvin, Christians have been persuaded that they understood his theology. As disconcerting as it may be for scholars who are always searching for something new, the simple fact is that responsible interpretations of Calvin today and in the future are not likely to vary very much from those in the past.

Second, continuing studies of Calvin do uncover aspects of his theology or traits of his character which

have been obscured in particular times and places. In our reading of Calvin we are continually covering up as well as uncovering what he actually said and did. Hence, the study of Calvin must go on to uncover what is still hidden and also what we have in our time forgotten or distorted. Yet, the search for something new in Calvin's thought may be counterproductive, if it becomes a passion. A certain modesty in Calvin research is appropriate. Greater emphasis upon the explication of Calvin's theology for the life of the church in our time and less stress upon highly sophisticated efforts to make new discoveries or to uncover what no one else has known may be more useful and also more in accord with Calvin's own way of doing theology.

A third observation is also appropriate. Contemporary theologians are far more concerned with method than was Calvin. The observation of Joseph Sittler on theological method can be applied to Calvin.

> "My own disinclination to state a theological method is grounded in the strong conviction that one does not devise a method and then dig into the data; one lives with the data, lets their force, variety, and authenticity generate a sense for what Jean Daniélou calls a 'way of knowing' appropriate to the nature of the data. An enduring memory is an evening spent with a group of graduate students who had invited Professor Paul Tillich, then in his seventy-third year, for a round of discussion. To the aggressive demand of several students that he state forthwith his theological method, Professor Tillich replied that the student was asking that something be supplied at the beginning of the sentence that could only come

> at the end! He added that he himself had not even raised the methodological question until he was two-thirds of the way towards the completion of his Systematic Theology!"

Every theologian, Professor Sittler argues, has a theological method, but the clarity and the permeative force of it is likely to be disclosed even to himself only in the course of his most mature work. When that method does become clear it may be seen to have been a function of a disposition toward the evaluation of data in their living historical force, and not an imposition of abstract norms for 'truth,' or 'authenticity' arrived at early and exercised consistently.[2]

Calvin was deliberately concerned with language and with the careful expression of human thought, with the power of the spoken and written word to persuade. Nevertheless, the dominating force in his theology was his own convictions, the expression of his own understanding of the faith which had grown in his experience of the living God. To put it another way, the mastery of method never creates the theologian. The personal apprehension of the Christian message in one's life and experience comes first and method is very much subordinate to that. The final word about method or about the nature of a theology is finally hidden in the mystery of the self of the theologian.

II

The persistence of Calvin scholars in searching out the precise nature of Calvin's theology for at least 150

years must, however, be taken seriously. From these studies, we can learn a great deal about Calvin the theologian. We will also learn there is no one clue or insight which will unlock Calvin's theology.

Modern Calvin research received its initial impetus from the efforts to unite the Reformed and Lutheran churches in Germany in the first part of the 19th century. This effort toward church union naturally raised the question of Calvin's place in the history of Christian doctrine and especially of his relation to Martin Luther. The first study attempted to point out the importance of the personalities and cultural background of the first Reformers in accounting for the differences which arose in the various theologies of the Reformation.[3]

A more fruitful type of research approached the problem of Calvin's theology from the viewpoint of a system and asked what is the fundamental dogma from which the system is deduced. A well-known effort in this direction was made by Alexander Schweizer. He found that the feeling (Bewusstsein) of the absolute dependence of all creatures upon God is a peculiar material principle of Reformed theology. This principle is reflected in the strong protest of the Reformed church against all paganism in the medieval church, whereas the Lutheran church protested primarily against Judaistic relapses into Pelagian work-righteousness.[4]

F.C. Baur, who defended the superiority of the Lutheran Church against Schweizer, saw value in

Schweizer's designation of the material principle of Reformed theology. According to Baur, the distinguishing feature of the Reformed theology is the idea of the absolute causality of God.[5] Schneckenberger took issue with Baur as well as with Schweizer and vigorously maintained that Calvin did not deduce his theology from any objective idea of God.[6a] The distinction between Lutheran and Reformed theology, according to Schneckenberger, lies in the difference of religious and ethical psychology. For the Lutheran, the decisive point is faith, the experience of justification. For Reformed theology, the decisive point is the origin of faith itself.[6b]

F.W. Kampschulte, who made a real contribution to Calvin scholarship by his biography of the Reformer, also regarded Calvin's theology as a system which was deduced from predestination.[7] Another notable attempt to interpret Calvin in terms of one doctrine was made by Martin Schulze. He found that eschatology of an other-worldly sort is a central doctrine and the basis for the interpretation of the whole of Calvinism.[8]

Studies on Calvin and his theology received a tremendous impetus from the publication of the Opera Calvini in the Corpus Reformatorum in 1863-1897.[9] And they reached a climax in 1909 when the 400th anniversary of Calvin's birth was celebrated. By no means do all these studies follow the pattern of the central dogma research. In a study published as early as 1868, Köstlin maintained that Calvin's theology can be

regarded as a system only if the word is duly qualified. While the Institutes reveal a tendency toward systematization, there is an increasing hesitancy in the various editions to draw the conclusions which a systematic approach demands.[10]

The most exhaustive work on Calvin was done by Emile Doumergue when he incorporated a lifetime of research in his Jean Calvin, Les Hommes, et Les Choses de Son Temps. This collection of material is monumental, though it is marred by the hagiographic tendency of the author. In the study of Calvin's theology Doumergue underscores the importance of the honour of God, but at the same time he rejects the thesis that Calvin's theology is a system which is deduced from material principles. Doumergue describes Calvin's procedure as a méthode des contrariétés.[11]

Another landmark in Calvin studies occurred in 1922 when Hermann Bauke published an important analysis of Calvin's theology.[12] The Calvin research of the previous century had produced a confusing medley of contradictory interpretations and evaluations. And Bauke asked the question, "What is the peculiar character of the theology which makes all these contradictory opinions possible?" He was convinced that the experience of the preceding century had proved the inadequacy of every attempt to solve these problems by the study of any one doctrine or even the content of the whole theology. The solution of the problem, he felt, may be found in a study of the Formgestaltung and not of

the content of the theology. Three characteristics of the Formgestaltung provide an explanation of the contradictory conclusions of Calvin research and offer a key for a true consideration of his theology.

The first is a formal, dialectical rationalism. This does not mean that Calvin's theology is rationalistic in the Stoic or 18th century sense. It is not a rationalism of material but of form in which the dogmatic materials appear, by which they are bound together and in which they are expressed and systematized. This fact accounts for the difference between theologies of Calvin and Luther, which, in regard to content, are very much the same. It also accounts for the fact that the German who thinks in terms of content rather than form has difficulty understanding Calvin's theology.

The second characteristic of the form of Calvin's theology, according to Bauke, is the complexio oppositorum. Calvin's theological method is not the deduction of a system from one or two central doctrines. He does not seek to find some diagonal or Stammlehre or central doctrine or material principle from which individual dogmatic teachings can be deduced and developed. On the contrary, he seeks to bind existing individual dogmatic teachings which were in logical and metaphysical contradiction into a systematic coherence. This characteristic in turn explains the existence of many contradictory interpretations, for interpreters have concentrated on one doctrine and neglected others

which are equally important.

The third characteristic is biblicism, by which Bauke meant a law which governed the pattern of Calvin's thought. The reformer sought not merely to take the materials of his theology out of the Bible, but also to make his theology a complete and consistent representation of the Bible.

Bauke's study contains many useful insights, for it made plain that every attempt to interpret the Institutes must consider the form as well as the content. He dealt a devastating blow to the notion that Calvin was a speculative systematizer who deduced the system of theology from one or two principles. Subsequent Calvin scholars are in agreement with Bauke's conclusion in this regard or at least they take his work seriously. However, his study did not put an end to contradictory interpretations.

The development of the New Reformation theology following Karl Holl's essay on Luther's understanding of religion in 1917 stimulated a new body of Calvin research, particularly under the influence of the theologies of Karl Barth and Emil Brunner.[13] This new theological development raised interesting questions as well as conflict between students of Brunner and Barth and conflict between the traditional interpretation of Calvin and the interpretation that was informed by the New Reformation theology. Even the controversy over whether Calvin knew about Copernicus became the occasion for this type of conflict between Pierre Marcel and

Richard Stauffer.[14]

The most comprehensive treatment of Calvin's theology which the crisis theology produced was Wilhelm Niesel, The Theology of Calvin.[15] Niesel rejects Bauke's thesis that the problem of Calvin's theology can be solved by the study of its form. The true genius of this theology is found in the recognition of its Christocentric character. Calvin has but one subject in all of his teaching, which is God made flesh. "Jesus Christ rules not only the content but also the form of Calvin's thought." In regard to form, Niesel points out two predominant characteristics. The first is Calvin's use of the Chalcedonian formula as a guide for his thought on many important doctrines. The second characteristic is that the activities of God in all their diversity must be considered as a unit in regard to their execution. While Niesel's study is very suggestive it completely ignores those aspects of Calvin's thought which are not Christocentric. This means that a good amount of material in Calvin's writing cannot be accounted for on the basis of Niesel's thesis.

The problem of Calvin's theology continues to be the theme of studies published since 1950. Edward Dowey argued for the importance of the distinction between knowledge of God as creator and knowledge of God as redeemer.[16] Benjamin C. Milner, Jr. has argued "that it is not the duplex cognitio Domini which underlies the final organization of the Institutes," but Calvin's conception of order which appears "when the work of the

Spirit is correlated with those manifestations of the Word."[17] Alexandre Ganoczy noted the dialectical structure of Calvin's thought[18] but Raymond K. Anderson found support for a living and organic unity, not for "an eclectic or dialectic, combination of diverse principles."[19] For David Willis and Heiko Obermann the "extra Calvinisticum" becomes a key to understanding Calvin.[20] Ford Lewis Battles after a life of Calvin studies argued that Calvin's theology is a via media "between the Scylla of aberrant Romanism and the Charybdis of the radical tendencies of his time, whatever name he might give to them." Calvin's work is done in a field of tension in which the true-false principle is at work. Yet for Calvin the expression of truth never exhausts in this life the possibility of falsehood. Unfaith is always present in faith. Theology is the work of "fractioning off" the false from the true, and it works under limits in which the fractioning is never complete.[21] Carlos M.N. Eire in a study of Calvin's position on idolatry emphasizes as Battles did the tension between the true and false in Calvin's writings and work.[22] Charles Partee has recently argued that union with Christ is the central dogma, a conclusion that is related to the proposal made in this paper.[23]

Two recent studies relate the secret of Calvin's theology to his personality and to his relation to Renaissance humanism. These studies are relevant for the analysis of Calvin's theology which follows with its

emphasis on the role of the believing self in theology.

Suzanne Selinger, in a very comprehensive discussion of Calvin's theology in terms of its psychological origins, relates Calvin's love of polarities and contrarieties as well as his doctrine of predestination to peculiarities in his personality. Many conclusions seem somewhat tenuous to one who is not learned in psychological studies, but the net impact of her investigation is simply to indicate that theology, Calvin's in particular, is deeply rooted in human personality.[24]

William Bouwsma finds many indications in Calvin's writing that he was afflicted with the general anxiety of the age and that in particular he had to struggle with serious doubt. These factors help to shape his theology.

Bouwsma in an essay entitled "Calvinism as Renaissance Artifact" writes:

> He saw himself as a biblical theologian, working with and following texts, not coercing them with logic. He contrasted what he described as 'the most beautiful economy of the Scriptures' with the philosophical discourse favored by the Schoolmen, noting with some irony that the Holy Spirit 'did not adhere so exactly or continuously to a methodical plan.' On the other hand, his repudiation of system had its positive corollary in his recognition of the 'paradoxes' at the heart of the gospel, which, he noted, 'are contemptuously rejected by the common understanding of men.' and which he listed with something like defiance: 'That God became a mortal man, that life is submissive to death, that righteousness has been concealed

under the likeness of sin,' etc.[25]

Calvin, Bouwsma emphasizes, took over the rhetorical style of humanism with its strong intent to transform human life and society and this intention shaped his theology.

A survey, however cursory, of the studies during the past 150 years which have sought to uncover the secret of Calvin's theology raises important questions some of which had been asked by Bauke in 1921. The very diversity of the conclusions about Calvin's theology indicates that these studies may have asked a question for which there is no adequate data or a question that cannot be answered because of the final mystery of the self who theologizes.

Theology is not a mechanical process but a personal activity and the real nature of theology must remain hidden, as every human personality is finally a mystery to every other person.

No great theology is ever simply the product of a method. Every living theology has its origin in the experience and vision of a self. Theologians themselves frequently cannot describe how they came to an insight or a conclusion. All theology has its origin in the self and its judgments are intuitive and tacit as well as disciplined and critical.

III

The purpose of this paper is to suggest another way of understanding Calvin which, on the one hand, throws

light on Calvin's theology and, on the other, enables us to make abundant use of the many studies of the past century. No claim is made that this is the only way to understand Calvin's theology. It is claimed that this way of looking at his theology is descriptive and that it helps us to understand Calvin as well as his work.

This approach to Calvin's theology is based upon the opening words of the Institutes. "Nearly all the wisdom we possess, that is to say, true and sound wisdom, consists of two parts: the knowledge of God and of ourselves. But while joined by many bonds, which precedes and brings forth the other is not easy to discern." (I,i,1) Calvin then goes on to say that "it is certain that man never achieves a clear knowledge of himself unless he has first looked upon God's face." (I,iii,2) Here Calvin's words suggest that the theme which holds together his theology is the relationship of God and man--God's relationship to man and man's relationship to God. In theology everything has to do with God and with God's relationship to man. This theological rubric appearing in every edition of the Institutes sets the limits and the conditions for understanding what Calvin will write. The particular formula that true wisdom consists of knowledge of God and knowledge of man and their interrelationship had been used by other theologians, but Calvin gives it a decisive place at the very beginning of his theological work.

This same theme also runs through Calvin's

understanding of Christian existence and of the Christian life.

"...Now the greatest thing is this; we are consecrated and dedicated to God in order that we may hereafter think, speak, meditate and do nothing except to his glory.

"We are not our own: let not our reason nor our will therefore sway our plans and deeds. We are not our own: let us therefore not set it as our goal to seek what is expedient for us according to the flesh. We are not our own: insofar as we can, let us therefore forget ourselves and all that is ours.

Conversely, we are God's: let us therefore live for him and die for him. We are God's: let his wisdom and will therefore rule all our actions. We are God's: let all the parts of our life accordingly strive toward him as our only lawful goal." (III,7,1)

For Calvin the presupposition of the Christian life is the vivid awareness that the chief end of life is having to do with the living God.

His theology can best be understood as the explication of this intensely personal, or, as many would say today, existential relationship between God and man and between man and God.[26]

Calvin's theology may be compared to a wagon wheel without the rim. There is a centre hub of the wheel which holds it together and from which spokes extend, but there is not outer rim which brings the spokes into a self-contained order.[27] As the explication of the

intensely personal relationship of God and man, the hub of the wheel is the personal relationship, or to put it more theologically, faith. The spokes represent the various attempts to explicate this relationship according to particular themes which are developed as far as Calvin can take them but which are never fully related to other particular truths. Hence, you have the unity of Calvin's theology in the relationship of God and man which is explicated in numerous ways.

The unity consists in the fact that theology explicates the relationship of man and God as God has revealed himself in Jesus Christ. The various explications are not systematized. For example, Calvin says all he can on human responsibility and on God's lordship in the world. But he does not put them together in systematic unity.

Calvin's explication of the personal, existential relationship of God and man must also be interpreted in the light of Calvin's intense and vivid awareness of the holy or the presence of the living God. The church is a community of faith which stands in the presence of the wholly other, creator of heaven and earth. In the church and in all of its activities there is a sense of the numinous, of the mysterium tremendum, at once frightening and fascinating but in whose presence we stand in awe and devotion. The writing and teaching of theology in the church begins with this awareness and with this sensitivity.

One difficulty all modern interpreters have in

understanding Calvin arises at this point. Everything Calvin wrote presupposes the presence and activity of the living God in immediacy and power. This awareness now has grown dim for those who are heirs of the Enlightenment. The New Yorker on July 7, 1986, published a poem in which Lorge Luis Borges speculates on his death:

> Which of my cities
> Am I doomed to die in?
> Geneva,
> Where revelation reached one
> from Virgil and Tacitus
> (certainly not from Calvin)?[28]

We are all children of the Enlightenment. The dogmas of a post Enlightenment culture, though not the spirit of the Enlightenment, may hinder our understanding of Calvin more than the complexities of his theology. Calvin's awareness of the immediacy of the divine presence and activity cannot be translated without remainder into the language and experience of our time. Yet a recovery of an awareness of the Holy God, who works personally in the created order,without doing violence to facts or the mind's integrity is the precondition for understanding Calvin.

Recent studies have emphasized that theology bears the mark of those who write it. Preachers and bishops, monks, university professors in Christendom and university professors in secular universities and societies all leave the marks of their vocation on their theology. Calvin was very much the preacher whose

pastoral responsibilities included a geographically widespread Christian community. Sermons and letters comprise more than half his writings. Roman Catholic theologians have always been dismayed at Calvin's failure to define his theological terms with precision, a failure in part due no doubt to his busyness as a pastor, to the perspective of a pastor, and in part to his endeavour to put theology in the language of ordinary human discourse.[29]

The audience for whom theology is written also influences the form and content of theology. Theology may be written for university professors or for intelligent readers, for "despisers" of the faith or for the church. Calvin did not write theology for university professors. He did not even write it for other preachers or at least not for them exclusively. He wrote theology, as Reinhold Niebuhr in our time wrote theology, for intelligent readers, and he wrote theology for persons who were authentically involved in the life of the Christian community. He did not have the agenda which most historians and theologians have today.

Calvin's theological work is not consistently an exposition of the personal relationship between God and man. He continually allows the Bible, the law, the ecclesiastical structure or theological speculation, as for example about predestination, to become substitutes for the divine presence. This inconsistency in Calvin's work runs throughout his theological endeavors and the practice of the faith, yet it does not seem to be

intentional. It derives in part at least from Calvin's intense concern to maintain the glory of God in Geneva and the temptation which every churchman has known to use the force of structures, of morals, or of theological orthodoxy to achieve what can only come as a gift of the Holy Spirit.

Calvin does not indicate much concern about what would today be regarded as theological method. The method grew out of his work, though there is his own testimony that he struggled with the arrangement of the Institutes, a concern which as William Bouwsma points out is more pedagogical and practical than systematic. His theology was a commentary on Scripture, directed to Christian experience and living, in the light of the theological reflection of the Christian community. Calvin wrote his theology to persuade, to transform human life, and to this end he endeavored to write with transparent clarity. He also wrote out of the intensity of his own personal experience and theological commitment. For this reason, the method of his theology is finally hidden from us in the mystery of his own Christian experience.

IV

The central unity in Calvin's theology is in the explication of the personal relation between God and man. Yet, within this explication there are (1) ways of doing theology and (2) theological perspectives which give a coherence to all of Calvin's writings and which

frequently have deceived people into finding in the Institutes a logical unity it does not have.

Calvin's theology is unified by certain ways of theologizing.

(1) All of Calvin's conscious theological activity was subordinate to the authority of the Bible as the revelation of God. Theology is the coherent explication of Scripture in the language of ordinary discourse. This involved bringing the disparate texts and themes of scripture into some coherent whole. Calvin never elaborated the point, but it is clear he had a ground plan of the Bible in the light of which he organized his theology. (It is worth noting that Calvin never wrote a chapter on the interpretation of Scripture as Bullinger did in the Decades.)

Calvin read Scripture at least in part as the church had read it before him. He counted it theological wisdom to take seriously the judgment of great theologians and more particularly the great church councils, however subordinate they were to the authority of Scripture.

The most important perspective which governs Calvin's theology is the authority of Scripture as the norm of all theological thinking and speaking.[30]

(2) A second concern which governs Calvin's theological work is the role of experience and the concreteness of the situation in which he wrote. Over and over again Calvin subjects what he has written theologically to the common sense wisdom of experience.

Revelation may go beyond human experience but it cannot and does not contradict the clear facts of human experience or common sense. Calvin's theology is not an explication of Christian experience, but it never takes place apart from it and from the demands of the concrete situation. Calvin intends to explicate the relationship of God and man in light of Word of God always with reference to experience and to the concrete situation.

(3) For Calvin, theology is a practical, not a theoretical science. When Thomas Aquinas raised the question of whether theology was a practical or theoretical science, he answered that it was both but he gave the greater weight to theory. For Calvin, theology was overwhelmingly a practical science and he showed little interest or concern for theoretical questions. The purpose of theology is to glorify God, to save human souls, to transform human life and society. Questions and issues which do not directly bear upon these practical concerns receive very scant attention from Calvin. One significant test of the authenticity of any doctrine is the power of that doctrine to edify.

William Bouwsma speaks of Calvin's "rhetorical theology," directed to practical results rather than a systematic theology intended for the ages.[31] Calvin understood the Reformation as a great effort, mediated by language, to transfuse the power of the Spirit into human beings. Bouwsma finds the most succinct statement of the principle that governs Calvin's theology in his commentary on Matthew 3:7. "It would be really a frigid

way of teaching if the teachers did not determine carefully the needs of the times and sense the people concerned, for in this regard nothing is more unbalanced than absolute balance." This means that in a particular situation theology must be expressed in an unbalanced way to be balanced.

In a very remarkable passage, Calvin expressed his desire for an ecumenical council. However, he believed that an ecumenical council was an impossibility and therefore he dismissed it from his mind. "In regard to the whole body of the church, we commend it to the care of its Lord! Meanwhile, let us not be either slothful or secure. Let each do his best. Let us contribute whatever is in us of counsel, learning and abilities, to build up the ruins of the church."[32] Theoretical interests or ideal possibilities must not be allowed to undermine what is possible and close at hand.

(4) Calvin's theological work is also unified by style of expression. He attempted to write and to express theology simply without ostentation, with transparent clarity, and in the language of ordinary discourse. He despised the pompous, the artificial, the contrived.

Other themes unify Calvin's theological work which are more directly theological; that is, they are basic theological decisions which govern Calvin's thinking. (1) One theological perspective is Calvin's way of relating the transcendence and immanence of God. His profound awareness of the sharp distinction between

creator and creature reflects itself in his doctrine of the person of Christ which is Antiochene rather than Alexandrian, in his doctrine of the presence of Christ in the sacrament, however concerned he was to emphasize the genuineness of our participation in the reality of Christ, and in his doctrine of the church which he never confused with an extension of the incarnation. Calvin radically desacralized created existence as the contemporary idiom puts it. He emphasized the immediacy of God's presence and activity in the world, but he always jealously guarded the integrity of the creator and the creature allowing for no confusion or mixture.

(2) A second unifying theme in Calvin's theology is his understanding of God primarily in terms of energy, activity, power, moral purpose, intentionality. God is the sovereign Lord of heaven and earth. Every doctrine in the Institutes reflects Calvin's insistence on the immediacy of the divine presence and upon the activity of God in his creation. David Wiley has persuasively argued in a Duke University dissertation on Calvin's doctrine of predestination that while predestination is not the central dogma in Calvin, it impinges upon everything Calvin wrote, emphasizing the immediacy of God's activity and the initiative of divine grace.

(3) A third unifying theological perspective is Calvin's way of putting together nature and grace or the way knowledge of God the creator and God the redeemer are related to each other. Creation and redemption cannot be opposed to each other. Yet, they cannot be

identified, for redemption is more than creation not simply as its completion but in the light of sin as its transformer. The practical priority is on redemption. Calvin refused to discuss the possibility whether the Word would have become flesh, if man had not sinned (II,12,4).

(4) A fourth unifying theological perspective is Calvin's way of relating gospel and law, justification and sanctification. Gospel and law cannot be separated, for the gospel is in the law and the law is in the gospel. Yet they are different and must not be confused. Likewise, salvation as God's mercy, justification by grace through faith, and salvation as God's power, sanctification, must never be separated or confused. Calvin knew that justification is the "principal hinge" on which religion depends, but he also knew that it is the presupposition of sanctification which is the end toward which salvation moves on the human level.

(5) Calvin's theology is also unified by a vision of the human community under the authority of God. Calvin wished to maintain the independence of church and state. He was not (at least intentionally) a theocrat in the sense that he gave divine authority to any human personage. Yet, he had a profound awareness that the world is God's creation, and he saw it as the theatre in which God's glory is revealed and where God's people received the divine blessing and lived together as the Christian community. In his preaching Calvin sought, as

he said in a sermon on II Timothy 2:16-19: "To draw the world to God and to build a Kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ that he may rule among us." He never defined the Christian life simply in terms of personal piety.

This paper wishes to argue (1) that Calvin's theology can best be understood as the explication of the very personal, existential relationship of God to man and man to God, (2) that this theology finds its unity in this relationship and that the various facets of the relationship are explicated to the best of Calvin's ability without a final attempt to bring them in a unity on the circumference, (3) that while Calvin's explication does not issue in a theology that is fully unified as to details there is a unity and a distinctive character provided by certain ways of doing theology and certain theological perspectives. These ways of doing theology and these theological perspectives give an easily recognizable identity to Calvin's theological writings in sermons, letters, church polity and theological tracts as well as the Institutes.

NOTES

[1]William Adams Brown, "Calvin's Influence upon Theology," Three Addresses Delivered by Professors in Union Theological Seminary (New York, 1909), p. 20: "It is difficult to say anything original about Calvin.... There are certain great thinkers whose systems it is possible to approach in the spirit of the explorer,

conscious as one turns each page, of the chance of some new discovery, but with Calvin it is not so. What he believed and what he taught has long been a matter of common knowledge."

[2]Joseph Sittler, Essays on Nature and Grace (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1972), p. 20.

[3]E.G. Ullmann, "Zur Charakteristik der reformierten Kirche, Mit Beziehung auf neuere litterarische Erscheinungen," Theologie Studien und Kritiken, XVI (1843), pp. 749ff.

[4]Die Glaubenslehre der Evangelisch - Reformierten Kirche dargestellt und aus den Quellen belegt, (Zurich: Orell, Füssli und Co., 1844), I, 45.

[5]F.C. Baur, "Ueber Princip und Charakter des Lehrbegriffs der reformierten Kirche in seinem Unterschied von dem der lutherischen, mit Rücksicht auf A. Schweizer's Darstellung der reformierten Glaubenslehre," Theologische Jahrbücher, VI (1847), 333.

[6a]"Die neueren Verhandlungen, betreffend das Princip des reformierten Lehrbegriffs," Theologische Jahrbücher, VII (1848), 74.

[6b]"Recensionen: Schweizer, Die Glaubenslehre der evangelisch-reformierten Kirche," Theologische Studien und Kritiken, XX (1847), 960-961.

[7]Johann Calvin, Seine Kirche und sein Staat in Genf, (Leipzig: Duncker & Humblot, 1869), p. 263.

[8]Meditatio futurae vitae; ihr Begriff und ihre beherrschende Stellung im System Calvins (Leipzig: T. Weicher) 1901.

[9]Among the more important works were the following:
Ellis Gauteron, L'autorité de la Bible d'après Calvin (Montauben, 1902).
Williston Walker, John Calvin (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1906).

Calvinreden aus dem Jubiläumsjahr 1909 (Tubingen: J.C.B. Mohr <P. Siebeck>, 1909).
Calvinstudien, ed. J. Bohatec (Leipzig: Rudolf Haupt, 1909).
Schulze, op. cit.
Willy Lüttge, Die Rechtfertigungslehre Calvins und ihre Bedeutung für seine Frömmigkeit (Berlin: Reuther & Reichard, 1909).
A. Lang, Johannes Calvin (Leipzig: Verein für Reformationsgeschichte, 1909).
Abel Lefranc, La jeuness de Calvin (Paris: Librairie Fischbacher, 1888).
Hermann Strathmann, Calvins Lehre von der Busse in ihrer späteren Gestalt (Gotha, 1909).
Max Scheibe, Calvins Prädestinationslehre (Halle: M. Niemeyer, 1897).
Gisbert Beyerhaus, Studien zur Staatsanschauung Calvins, mit besonderer Berücksichtigung seines Souveränitätsbegriffs (Berlin: Trowitzsch & Sohn, 1910).

[10]D.J. Köstlin, "Calvins Institutio nach Form und Inhalt," Theologische Studien und Kritiken, XLI (1868), 475.

[11]Emile Doumergue: Jean Calvin, Les Hommes, et Les Choses de Son Temps. 7 vols. Lausanne. 1899-1927.

[12]Die Probleme der Theologie Calvins (Leipzig: J.C. Hinrichs, 1922).

[13]John T. McNeill, "Fifty-years of Calvin Study" in Williston Walker: John Calvin (New York: Schoeken Books, 1969)m pp, XVII-LXXVII.

[14]Pierre Marcel, La Prédication de Calvin, à propos du livre de M. Richard Stauffer, La Revue Reformée, No. 117, 1979.
Richard Stauffer, "Calvin et Copernic," Revue de l'Histore des Religions, 179 (1971), 37ff.

[15]Wilhelm Niesel, Die Theologie Calvins (1938) E.T. 1956, 1980.

[16]Edward A. Dowey: The Knowledge of God in Calvin's Theology, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1952). Edward A. Dowey: "The Structure of Calvin's thought as Influenced by the Twofold Knowledge of God" in Wilhelm Neuser, Ed., Calvinus Ecclesiae Genevensis Custos, 1984.

[17]Benjamin C. Milner: Calvin's Doctrine of the Church, Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1970, p. 4.

[18]Alexandre Ganoczy, Calvin Theologien de l'eglise et du ministere (1964), p. 59.

[19]Raymond K. Anderson, Love and Order: The Life Structuring Dynamics of Grace and Virtue in Calvin's Ethical Thought (1973), p. 395.

[20]E. David Willis: Calvin's Catholic Christology. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1966.
Heiko Oberman, "The 'Extra" Dimension in the Theology of Calvin." The Journal of Ecclesiastical History, January, 1972.

[21]Ford Lewis Battles, "Calculus Fidei" in W.H. Neuser, Editor, Calvinus Ecclesiae Doctor, Kampen: J.H. Kols B.V., 1979.

[22]Carlos, M.N. Eire: War Against Idols, The Reformation of Worship From Erasmus To Calvin, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986.

[23]Charles Partee, "Calvin's Theological Method: The Question of a Central Doctrine." A paper delivered at III Colloquium on Calvin Studies, Davidson College, 1986.

[24]Suzanne Selinger: Calvin Against Himself, An Inquiry in Intellectual History. (Hamden, Connecticut: Archor Press, 1984).

[25]William Bouwsma, "Calvinism as Renaissance Artifact" in Calvin Studies, II. Papers presented at a colloquium on Calvin Studies at Davidson College Presbyterian Church and Davidson College, 1985. See Professor

Bouwsma's studies, "Calvin and the Renaissance Crisis of Knowing," in Calvin Theological Journal, November 1982 and "The Quest for the Historical Calvin" in Archiv für Reformationgeschichte, 1986. John Calvin's Anxiety," Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society, Vol. 128, No. 4, 1984.

[26]This position was argued by the writer in his dissertation, "A Study of John Calvin's Doctrine of the Christian Life" (Yale University, 1949). In this study the centrality of the existential and gracious relationship between God and man is abundantly documented as well as Calvin's inability to maintain the freedom and the graciousness of this relationship, sometimes substituting the signs of God's gracious presence for that presence.

[27]I first heard the model of the wheel with spokes but no rim used by John Dillenberger. This model has been very useful in my thinking about Calvin.

[28]The New Yorker, July 7, 1986.

[29]Kilian McDonnell, John Calvin, The Church, The Eucharist (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1967).

[30]Institutes: I, 13, 3.

[31]William Bouwsma, "Calvinism as Renaissance Artifact".

[32]Final paragraph of "Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent with the Antidote." Calvin's Tracts (Edinburgh: 1851), Vol. III, p. 188.

CALVIN'S VIEW OF NATURAL SCIENCE

W. Stanford Reid

The sixteenth century witnessed the commencement of radical changes in natural philosophy or science, which were to have their effects through the succeeding centuries. At the same time, the Protestant Reformation brought with it radical changes in Christian thought and theology, which affected the whole world-and-life view prevalent during the Middle Ages. The question which has interested many historians, particularly historians of science, is whether there was any relation between the two developments. On this topic there has been no consensus, as historians have differed in their views of the relationship of the two movements. Some have largely ignored any influence of the Reformation on the scientific thought of the period, others have denied it, while others again have maintained that the Reformation exercised a strong and positive influence on the scientific development.[1]

One of those around whom this discussion has recently taken place is John Calvin and how he regarded Copernicus's heliocentered universe. In 1971 the late Richard Stauffer cited a comment in one of Calvin's sermons on 1 Corinthians in support of the view that Calvin rejected Copernicus's theory. In this he was following the line of thought of historians such as Quirinius Breen and A.D. White, who held that Calvin was fundamentally medieval in his thinking concerning nature

and could not possibly accept Copernicus's views. This in turn reflected his whole approach to science which was beginning to change and develop in the sixteenth century.[2]

Others, however, have rejected this interpretation of Calvin's approach. In 1960 Edward Rosen showed that supposed references of a medieval character by Calvin to science were not in fact correctly interpreted. Shortly after Stauffer's views appeared in print, Pierre Marcel, a leading French Reformed theologian replied in a work which took up a whole issue of La Revue Reformée. In it he sought to show that Calvin agreed with Copernicus. More recently, C.B. Kaiser has shown quite conclusively that Stauffer's interpretation of Calvin's remarks in his sermon is wrong, for Calvin was not dealing in the field of religion, which would result in the contravention of divinely revealed moral law. This view also has the support of Richard Hooykaas and J. Dillenberger. Thus, a considerable number of historians believe that Calvin was certainly not opposed to the new developments in the field of science.[3]

The Background of Calvin's Thought

In order to understand Calvin's views with regard to natural science, it is necessary for us to glance at the background to his thought. In so doing one must remember that the medieval science inherited by the sixteenth century was not scientific in the modern sense of the term. On the one hand, it was largely based on

the philosophy of Aristotle who, from 1250 on, had dominated academic thought as "the philosopher." Thomas Aquinas, for instance, depended on him for much of his theological interpretation. On the other hand, as one observed the heavens one could see that the Bible set forth a proper explanation of their character which agreed with Aristotle and Ptolemy. Furthermore, the church which was the intellectual guide of the day accepted the views of Aristotle, Ptolemy and other exponents of natural philosophy as being correct. This rational approach to nature and its investigation was still dominant in the sixteenth century.[4]

The late fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, however, had seen some changes taking place. Aristotle remained, even in humanist circles, the dominant authority, but the development of Nominalism with its stress upon individual phenomena had its influence. At the same time, a wider reading of the Greek and Roman classics such as the writings of Pythagoras, Cicero and others also tended to give a different picture of reality leading to a rebellion among some humanists against Aristotle's dominance. A further factor was the development of new technology, such as printing, which had an important impact. Yet Aristotle could not be dethroned until someone would produce a comparable system to take the place of his philosophy. Certainly medieval theology could not accomplish this, for as Butterfield comments on Dante's picture of the universe, "there is more of Aristotle than of Christianity" in

it.[5]

The signs of the change which was taking place seem to have appeared in 1543 with the publication of Vesalius's De humani corporis fabrica and Copernicus's De Revolutionibus Orbium Coelestium. Vesalius's work was what one has described as basically the work of a reporter, who popularized the empirical method and broke with Galenic views of medicine. Copernicus, on the other hand, approached his study with a more theoretical point of view, contrary to the generally accepted theories of his day. He sought for a much simpler universe than that of Ptolemy, but did not obtain his answers by observation, but rather by use of classical writers such as Pythagoras, and mathematical and geometrical calculations. In so doing, while he provided a neater picture of the heavens, he at the same time struck at the foundations of Aristotelian natural philosophy. Yet when his book appeared Andreas Osiander's introduction indicated that it was a mathematical hypothesis which scholars could discuss.[6]

While Osiander and Rheticus, both Lutherans, were prepared to support the ideas which Copernicus had set forth, others were not. This was not surprising, for everything seemed to support the old Ptolemaic system. No celestial phenomena were not accounted for by the system. The testimony of the senses supported it, and on this basis there was a fairly complete system of thought about the universe.[7] For example, it is easier for the observer to believe that the sun moves around

the earth, than that the earth moves around the sun. It is not surprising, therefore, that the Copernican view of the universe was not generally accepted. Luther ridiculed the idea as did Melanchthon: they were not alone, of course. Later in the century Guillaume du Bartas, Jean Bodin in France and others rejected the new picture of the universe, and until the days of Galileo in the following century it received little acceptance. Even so, it is possible that the Protestant Reformers, not being tied rigidly to an Aristotelian philosophy and with their views of creation and providence, could well have accepted the helio-centered universe.[8]

As for Calvin, who probably had never heard of Copernicus' theory, there was no question as to the validity of the accepted theory of an earth-centered universe. In his comments on Old Testament passages such as Psalm 93:1 or 119:90 he obviously held to an Aristotelian-Ptolemaic understanding of the universe. Yet at the same time, it must be kept in mind that he did not accept the radical difference between nature and grace which characterized medieval thought. Rather, he thought in terms of divine grace exercised towards the world of nature, with the covenant of grace embracing the whole of nature. Consequently he could without any difficulty have accepted the Copernican interpretation.[9]

In view of this historical background to his thinking, where then can one place Calvin with regard to his view of natural science? He certainly did not accept the Anabaptist position, as he explained in his

comments on Psalm 71:19:

> As in the present day, the Anabaptists have no other pretext for boasting of being spiritual persons, but that they are grossly ignorant of all sciences.[10]

Rather, as Bohatec and others have pointed out, Calvin's stand was midway between two extremes. On the one hand, he did not accept the common medieval idea that nature was seductive and posed an obstacle between God and man, while, on the other, he would not agree with those who in his own day and later held that nature, as God's book, was a better revelation than the Scriptures, for it was contemporary and more accessible to all. Instead, he held that since nature was God's creation man must study it, but always in the light of biblical teaching.[11]

Before we can see how he applied this, we need to examine his theological presuppositions.

Calvin's Presuppositions

The basic presupposition of Calvin was that the Bible was the divinely revealed Word of God. And although this Word had as its purpose the revealing of God's saving grace to sinful humankind, in doing so, it also spoke of various other matters: creation, providence, history etc., thus giving God's human creatures an understanding of many and various subjects. Moreover, it provides the true interpretation of all things. Therefore, if we are to understand the universe

in which we live, the Bible must be our basic guide. This means that when one works in a field such as natural science, although one may discover many wonderful things and become extremely proud of one's own accomplishments, sin can blind the eyes to a true, ultimate interpretation. It is then that one needs the assistance of the Scriptures to give a true perspective on nature, for only then will one see nature as the handiwork of God the Redeemer.[12]

Yet it must not be thought that Calvin believed that the scientist must turn to the Bible for scientific knowledge. He was no literalist. He followed an ancient tradition, holding the view that the Scriptures were written so that the ordinary individual could understand. For instance in commenting on Genesis 1:15,16 he says:

> Moses wrote in a popular style things which, without instruction, all ordinary persons, endued with common sense, are able to understand. Therefore, a strict literalism in matters peripheral to the primary purpose of Scripture, the revelation of God's grace in Jesus Christ, was not required. God accommodated his revelation to the capacity of his creatures. As we shall see a little later, this was to be an important aspect of Calvin's thought.[13]

Based on his view of the Scriptures, Calvin steered a middle course between deism and pantheism. As he put it "the chief thing in philosophy is to have regard to God." But God is not a god who is far away, nor weak and uncertain, nor subject to human whims or

investigations. He is "of an incomprehensible essence, infinite magnitude or sublimity, irresistible power and unlimited immutability." He is the one who had foreordained whatsoever comes to pass, but when we listen to the Gospel he accommodates himself to our capacity.[14]

> We must therefore admit in God's individual works-but especially in them as a whole - that God's powers are actually represented as in a painting.

Yet the sinner is so beclouded by sin that God remains outside the range of human vision. It is only those who have truly accepted his offer of salvation who see God as the ultimate source of knowledge.[15]

Yet God does reveal himself to all mankind by means of the character of the universe. We cannot fully comprehend him, even in his self-revelation in the Scriptures, but we can see something of his glory in the creation which he has made out of nothing. The one who was the agent of creation was the Son, Jesus Christ, who made all things according to the divine plan and purpose.[16] Thus in contemplating creation we see the amazing variety of creatures all in their place and order, with humanking as the supreme example of his works. As Calvin puts it

> ...this skilful ordering of the universe is for us a sort of mirror in which we can contemplate God who is otherwise invisible.

Nor is there any idea of evolution by natural forces or

chance, for God has set forth each creature with its own nature, function, places and stations and provided for their preservation to the Last Day. Even all natural law is the result of the plan and creative act of God. In this way God guarantees the continuance of the covenant of grace by pointing to the natural law which he created in the beginning and which will remain unchanged to the end.[17]

Yet God has not simply created all things and left them to operate by their own natural laws. By the Holy Spirit he rules over and preserves all things, otherwise the whole of nature would fall into chaos. Calvin can thus speak of the "orderliness or constancy of God's will within nature." One could quote many examples of Calvin's thinking on providence, but he seems to sum it up in one statement:

> ...there is no erratic power or action or motion in creatures, but ... they are governed by God's secret plan in such a way that nothing happens except what is knowingly and willingly decreed by him.

In commenting on Acts 17:28 he states that God gives us life by the indwelling of the Spirit and adds,

> For the power of the Spirit is spread abroad throughout all parts of the world, that he may preserve them in their state, that he may minister unto the heavens that force and vigour which we see, and motion to all living creatures.

The universe, therefore, is governed by law, created and maintained by God who controls all of nature, including

mankind.[18]

Yet Calvin, while emphasizing divinely created and sustained natural law did not deny the possibility of miracles. As he put it in the Institutes, God governs nature sometimes through an intermediary, such as natural law, sometimes without and sometimes contrary to the intermediary. But he usually does use the intermediary. However, in his special providence he may bring drought or a flood upon a country, "for not one drop of rain falls without God's sure command." Thus when Peter walked on the water to meet Christ, the secret power of God made the water solid. Other miracles were also performed by the direct action of God.[19] But they are unusual and take place for special reasons. Normally nature acts according to the laws which have been created and are maintained by God.

Calvin on Natural Science

When we turn to an examination of Calvin's approach to natural science we find that he has the same approach as he has to the Bible, that is an empirical-inductive method. Christians should not pass over in ungrateful thoughtlessness those gifts God shows forth in his creatures. We should not merely run over the phenomena of nature cursorily, "but we should ponder them at length, turn them over in our minds seriously and faithfully and recollect them repeatedly."

> For there are innumerable evidences both in heaven and on earth that declare his wonderful

> wisdom; not only those more recondite matters for the closer observation of which astronomy, medicine and all natural science are intended, but also those which thrust themselves upon the sight of even the most untutored and ignorant persons.[20]

At the same time, because of his doctrine of creation, Calvin never thought of nature as being divine. Like mankind it was a creation subject to all the limitations of the creature. Therefore, if one wanted to know anything about nature, the only method was to examine nature itself.[21]

In holding this view Calvin did not think that investigators should turn to the Scriptures for an explanation of physical phenomena and their actions. When discussing the formation of the firmament in Genesis 1:6 he comments: "He who would learn astronomy and other recondite arts let him go elsewhere." The Bible to Calvin is not a scientific textbook, but speaks rather in language which even the rude and dullest could understand. Thus David in Psalm 19 "confines himself to the ordinary appearances of the eye." At the same time, Calvin did not believe that Scriptural statements concerning nature were untrue. They were true as far as they went, but they were not presented for scientific purposes "but in a style suited to the common capacities of man."[22]

What then was the scientist's vocation? First of all, he had the duty of recognizing the beauties of nature, which Calvin never wearied of praising. In so

doing the scientist would contemplate God in his works by which he reveals himself to us. At the same time, the scientist cannot use the knowledge derived from scientific research to gain an understanding of the "secret essence" of God. In nature God reveals himself as Lord of Creation, but this does not permit the scientist to become a theologian on the basis of a knowledge of nature.[23]

But what about the non-Christian scientist? Can he actually reach true knowledge of nature? To this question Calvin answered in the affirmative. The Holy Spirit enables even the unbeliever to gain a true knowledge of nature, although he lacks any true understanding of its ultimate character. His knowledge is limited solely to the imminent character and operation of natural phenomena. In commenting on Thomas's confession as recorded in John 20:29 he pointed out that one must look beyond the empirical facts to see their ultimate meaning. Fallen man cannot do this without the teaching of Scripture enlightened by the Holy Spirit. Yet the Holy Spirit who is the regenerator and sanctifier of the Christian continues to work in the non-Christian in order to enable him to ascertain true knowledge of the material universe.[24]

The question then arises as to how the Christian scientist differs from the non-Christian. To Calvin, since even the non-Christian is guided by the Holy Spirit in the study of nature, the methods of the two scientists will not differ. The Christian does not seek

to solve scientific problems and questions by going to the Bible for scientific information. For, as we have pointed out above, Calvin held that biblical references to nature were for all men and women, even those without any scientific knowledge. But, and this was the important point, only the Christian understood the ultimate meaning of natural phenomena, for he did so in the light of Scriptural revelation.[25] This resulted in the Christian having the only adequate understanding of nature as over against pagan doctrines of chance and materialism. It also prevented any idea of the ultimacy of purely scientific interpretations of nature. As he says:

> .... if any smatterer of philosophy, with a view to ridicule the simplicity of our faith, contend that such a variety of colors is the natural result of the refraction of the solar rays on an opposite cloud, we must immediately acknowledge it, but we may smile at his stupidity in not acknowledging God as the Lord and Governor of nature, who uses all the elements according to his will for the promotion of his own glory.[26]

To Calvin, however, there is always the danger that even the Christian scientist may become so much involved in scientific investigation that the recognition of the ultimacy of the providence of God is forgotten. The purely objective, empirical approach which does not go beyond the phenomena will weaken any awareness and appreciation of God's activity in the natural order. In this way God is forgotten so that nature is not recognized as manifesting the divine glory. Thus,

Calvin held that "a knowledge of all the sciences is mere smoke where the heavenly science is wanting."[27]

The best example of Calvin's approach to natural science is shown in his view of astronomy. This was appropriate for his time because of the questions which Copernicus raised, although Calvin probably did not know about them. But he no doubt had contemplated the heavens from the mountains which surround Geneva. As he comments when expositing Psalm 96:5:

> The heavens are mentioned- part for the whole- as the power of God is principally apparent in them, when we consider their beauty and adornment.

His comments on Psalm 19 reflect the same view of God's manifestation of his glory in the heavens by which we are "ravished with wonder at his infinite goodness, wisdom and power."[28]

To Calvin, the heavens were the supreme witness to God's sovereign rule over nature. He accepted the geocentric, Ptolemaic view of the universe, holding that the world and its attendant planets and stars occupied but a small part of the void. But the ultimate power behind and governing the universe was the power and activity of the Holy Spirit. Thus God not only sustains the heavens and enables both the fixed and moving stars to continue in their places and courses, he also at times intervenes in the heavens, as when he led the wise men by means of the Star of Bethlehem to Christ's manger. Consequently it is little wonder that he wrote

a very strong attack upon the theories of judicial astrology, insisting that it was not the stars which determined events upon earth, but God who ruled over and determined the movement of the heavens.[29]

In Calvin's day the term "astrologer" covered all those who studied the heavens. There were those who, like modern astrologers, thought to determine the influence of the movement of the stars on human beings, and these Calvin simply rejected. There were, however, those who would be known as simply studying the heavens, as for instance in the case of Copernicus. It was concerning the latter group that Calvin said:

> one cannot praise too much the labour which they have taken to make known the secrets of the heavens, so that it truly glorifies God and we are able to employ it to our advantage.

What was more, since

> this art unfolds the admirable wisdom of God, wherefore, as ingenious men are to be honored who have expended useful labour on this subject, so they who have leisure and capacity ought not to neglect this kind of exercise.

Thus Calvin held the vocation and work of the astronomer in very high esteem as he sought to discover and explain the way in which God directed all things in their courses.[30]

In summing up Calvin's view of natural science, therefore we see that he believed that we are called upon to understand nature and its operations by an inductive-empirical method. Furthermore, he believed

that there were certain people who were called to do this work. In this way God's creative and providential activity would be made apparent to mankind. At the same time, to have a true and proper understanding of nature it was necessary that both the scientist and those who learned from the scientist's investigations should keep always in mind that nature was not self-existent, eternal or the product of accident, but that behind all of nature was the creative and providential activity of the sovereign God who not only originated nature, but constantly ruled over and sustained it.

The Influence of Calvin's View of Science

The revolutionary aspect of the scientific revolution of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries was the use of empirical induction as over against the medieval rationalistic deduction. The new scientific method did not seek an understanding of nature by determining and explaining qualitative characteristics, but by determining natural and mechanical causations and relationships. Thus measurement of one kind or another became an important technique.[31] Yet this did not mean that a purely materialistic outlook dominated the scientists' thinking. Protestants, and it was in Protestant circles especially that scientific studies developed, held that nature could be understood only in the light of the Scriptures and when properly investigated would lead to Christianity, for natural revelation and special revelation could not be

separated.[32]

In the development of such thinking Calvin played a significant role. His stress upon the idea that nature is a mirror of God gained support among many people, both scientists and those without scientific training. And this was not limited to the citizens of Geneva, for many Protestants found refuge in that city, so that when they returned home to England, Scotland, Holland, France, Hungary and other countries, they carried with them these ideas. Thus it is not surprising that many of Calvin's followers became leaders in scientific activities.[33]

In France a number of men who had come under the influence of Calvin became well-known in the scientific field in the sixteenth century. Probably the most outstanding of them all was Pierre de la Ramée or Peter Ramus. In the 1540s he had broken with the Aristotelian philosophy, insisting that an empirical approach was the only one to be used in the study of nature. In 1563 he was converted to Protestantism and combined his religion and his scientific methodology with such effect that his ideas were taken up in various countries such as England, Holland and even in America.[34] Another of the French Calvinist scientists was Bernard Palissy who was originally a potter in Saintes, but who later moved to Paris to become hydrographer for the king of France. Eventually, however, he was executed for his Protestantism.[35] A third Calvinist was Ambrose Paré, a leading physician who followed much the same methods as

Ramus and Pallisy.[36]

One of those apparently most influenced by Calvin's view of science was the Italian, Jermone Zanchius. After he had become a Protestant he spent some time in Geneva, whence he moved on to Heidelberg where he became a professor in the university, and was the colleague of Kaspar Olevianus and Zacharias Ursinus, authors of the Heidelberg Catechism. In 1577 he and Ursinus moved to Neustadt. Having thoroughly imbibed Calvin's views on nature and natural science he wrote a book entitled: De Operibus Dei infra spacium sex diebus creatis,[37] in which he set forth a very thorough exposition of a Christian view of science. He obviously did not reject the Ptolemaic view of the universe, nor did he entirely reject Aristotle's views, but he modified and criticized them whenever he felt that they conflicted with Scripture. His stress was, however, upon the doctrines of divine sovereignty manifested in creation and providence, by which God revealed himself to mankind. Yet God has revealed himself even more clearly in the inspired Scriptures, that one might know him in his saving work. Thus, a true knowledge of nature can be obtained only as one studies nature in the light of the Scriptures.[38]

Across the Channel, England was also influenced by Calvin's views. During the reign of Mary Tudor a considerable number of English Protestants found refuge in Geneva, and when they returned home they brought their ideas with them. From this group came a large

number of those called Puritans, whether they remained in or separated from the Church of England. By the teaching of these men the thinking of Calvin was brought into the universities, particularly Cambridge. And it would seem that his ideas influenced such men as Thomas Digges and William Gilbert. However, the greatest exponent of Calvin's type of thinking was Francis Bacon, who, according to one historian became the climax of the scientific thought of the period. Although he agreed with Ramus in many ways, he carried the latter's ideas somewhat farther. As one reads Bacon's scientific works such as the Novum Organon or The Advancement of Learning, one soon sees the influence of Calvin. As Bacon put it, there are two books by God, one is nature and the other is the Bible, but they both must be studied, for nature must be seen in the light of divine revelation.[39] In this thinking Bacon was followed by others such as John Napier of Merchamstoun, the inventor of logarithms, by Robert Boyle and others. As Peter Barth has stated;

> When we look at Calvin's consideration of nature nowadays, it is striking to us with what unrefracted self-evidence the theistic-optimistic explanation remains in effect. Here we meet in its characteristic principles that theological understanding of nature that made up the undoubted background of the whole classic period of natural scientific-philosophical thought from Kepler, Galileo and Descartes to Newton, Leibnitz and Kant.[40]

Thus, although he never thought of himself as having the

calling of a scientist, Calvin undoubtedly played a considerable part in laying the basis for new developments. Although he did not develop a specific scientific system, in his theological work he provided a basis for bringing together science and Christianity, while at the same time reinforcing the empirical-inductive approach to the study of nature.

NOTES

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[2]Cf. R. White, "Calvin and Copernicus: The Problem Reconsidered," Calvin Theological Journal, 15 (1980), 223-243; C.B. Kaiser, "Calvin, Copernicus and Castellio," Ibid. 21 (1986), 5, 14ff, 21.

[3]Ibid.' R. Hooykaas, "Humanisme, Science et Reforme," Free University Quarterly 5 (1958). Cf. also, J. Dillenberger, Protestant Thought and Natural Science (London, 1961), 48.

[4]A.S. Nash, The University and the Modern World (N.Y. 1944), 51ff; P.O. Kristeller, Renaissance Thought (New York, 1961), 24ff; Bernal, 1:198ff.

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[6]Ibid., chap. 2; Hooykaas, 171, 230; Butterfield, 22ff;

E.A. Burtt, The Metaphysical Foundations of Modern Science (New York, 1931, rev.ed.), 38ff.

[7]Ibid., 36f; Boas, 91ff.

[8]Ibid., 78, 101, 126; Dillenberger, 37; Hooykaas, 177; N.W. Gilbert, Renaissance Concepts of Method (New York, 1960), 127.

[9]Dillenberger, 26f, 38, 48; Kaiser, 5ff; T.F. Torrance, "The Influence of Reformed Thought on the Scientific Method," Dialog: A Journal of Theology, 2 (1963), 42.

[10]Calvin, Commentary on the Psalms, J. Anderson, ed. (Grand Rapids, MI. 1949) 3:90.

[11]J. Bohatec, Budé et Calvin (Graz, 1950), 268; Calvin, "Avertissement contra l'Astrologie Judicaire," Opera Omnia, G. Baum et al, ed. (Brunswick, 1568), 7:516; A. Lecerf, Etudes Calvinistes (Paris, 1949), 117f.

[12]Dillenberger, 29; Calvin, Institutes of the Christian Religion J.T. MacNeill, ed., F.L. Battles, tr. (Philadelphia, 1960), 1:6:1; Idem, Instruction in the Faith P.T. Fuhrmann, ed. (Philadelphia, 1949(, 20; W.Krusche, Das Wirken des Heiligen Geistes nach Calvin (Göttingen, 1957), 106.

[13]Dillenger, 32, 60.

[14]Dillenberger, 36; Calvin, Insts, 1L4L17; 3:20:40; Idem, Commentary on 1 Corinthians (Grand Rapids, MI., 1948) 1:104; Idem, Commentary on the books of Jeremiah and Lamentations (Grand Rapids, MI. 1950), 36; E.A. Dowey, The Knowledge of God in Calvin's Institutes (New York, 1952), 73.

[15]Calvin, Insts., 1:5:10.

[16]Bohatec, 267f; Krusche, 15.

[17]Insts., 1:5:1; 1:14:20; 2:5:1; Comm. on Jer., 33:25; Lecerf, 122.

[18]Insts., 1:16:1ff; Idem, Instruction, 19; Dowey, 66; Hall, xvi; Krusche, 15f.

[19]Insts. 1:16:5,9; 17:1; Commentary on the Harmony of the Evangelists (Grand Rapids, 1949), Matt 14:30.

[20]Insts., 1:5:2; 14:20f.

[21]Ibid., 1:14:4; W.A. Whitehouse, Christian Faith and the Scientific Attitude (Edinburgh, 1952), 27; Dowey, 73.

[22]Comm. on Jeremiah, 2:3; Hooykaas, 118ff; Bohatec, 270; Lecerf, 123.

[23]Insts., 1:5:9; Comm on the Psalms, Ps. 104:1-4; Hooykaas, 274ff; Dowey, 139.

[24]"Avertiss't contra Astrolg.," 529f; Insts. 2:2:16; Dowey, 74ff; Krusche, 96ff; T.H.L. Parker, The Doctrine of the Knowledge of God (Edinburgh, 1952), 28; Hooykaas, 117.

[25]"Avertiss't", 529; Commentary on the Gospel according to John (Grand Rapids, 1949), 20:29; Dowey, 139ff.

[26]Insts., 4:14:18; Comm. on Genesis, "Argument"; Dowey, 77; Krusche, 108

[27]Comm. on Genesis, "Argument"; Comm. on 1 Cor. 1:20; Dillenberger, 35.

[28]Cf. also Insts. 1:14:12; Comm. on Genesis, 1:15.

[29]Comm. on Gen. "Argument"; "Avertiss't contre l'Astrolog.", 532; Bohatec, 269f.

[30]Insts. 1:5:5; "Avertiss't", 523; Dillenberger, 32ff.

[31]Crombie, 274ff; Hall, xvii.

[32]Dillenberger, 61; Lecerf, 118ff; Torrance, 42.

[33]Lecerf, 118; Hooykaas, 263f.

[34]C. Waddington, Ramus, sa view, ses ecrits (Paris, 1855), 346; Hooykaas, 182ff; 220, 266f; W.J. Ong, Ramus Method and the Decay of Dialogue (Cambridge, Mass. 1958), 30ff.

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[37](Hanover, 1597, 2nd.ed.).

[38]Ibid., Dedicatory Epistle, 28ff, 302, 318, 328.

[39]H. Haydn, The Counter-Renaissance (New York, 1960), 267f; Gilbert, 226; Torrance, 43; S.F. Mason, A History of the Sciences (London, 1953); Bacon, Philosophical Works, J. Spedding, etal, ed. (London, 1870), 4:47ff; Idem, The Advancement of Learning, G.H. Kitchin, ed. (London, 1915), 36, 211.

[40]Quoted in Dowey, 73, n. 142; cf. P. Barth, Das Problem der Natürlichen Theologie bei Calvin (Munich, 1935), passim.

CALVIN, THE JEWS AND THE JUDAIC LEGACY

Calvin Augustine Pater

Introduction

Most Protestant Reformers lived in isolation from Jews as a consequence of the medieval history of expulsions. England had expelled all Jews in 1290, France in 1394, and the Jews of Geneva had fled by 1490. In the sixteenth century, German Jews were tolerated in only a diminishing number of imperial cities. Thus Calvin could have met Jews in Strasbourg, but they spoke German and Calvin did not. However, the dialogue Answer to the Questions and Objections of a Certain Jew, which Calvin never published, may have been written, following correspondence.[1]

Christians relate to Judaism differently from the way Jews relate to Christians, quite apart from the problem of direct relations, for it is incontestable that Christian origins and the biblical canon are derived from Judaism in a way that Judaism is not dependent on Christianity. Another factor is that Christian anti-Jewish polemic or Jewish anti-Christian polemic was intended for home-consumption and not to convince one's opponents. Modern Jewish concern centres on concrete historical relations between Jews and Christians, but most Christians have never really known Jews. Thus Christians have tended to view Jews in terms of dogma (as in the Middle Ages) or in terms of how they relate to their own Judaic scriptural legacy (as in the

Reformation). In view of this, our topic centres on the Judaic legacy, but even then it is too complex to be treated here fully.

In considering the Judaic legacy, Calvin's covenantal theology is crucial. First, however, Calvin appropriated, within Christian limits, the Law of Israel, a concern that is already evident in 1536, whereas covenantal theology emerges in 1539. Ultimately, Calvin's view of covenant embraces Law, for the giving of the Law on Mount Sinai is then seen as a ratification of the single covenant struck between God and Abraham, the Father of All Believers, that is both ancient Jews and Christians. But for Calvin the Law came first. To illustrate Calvin's growing acceptance of Mosaic Law, his characteristic prohibition of images and observance of the Sabbath are here chosen.

Jews and the Early Reformation

Following a long and bitter history of strife, the Reformation brought hope to some Jews, but just as Christians tend to make theological constructs out of Jews they do not know, Jews may do the same to Christians. In Jerusalem, the kabbalist R. Abraham ben Eliezer Halevi did not know the real Luther, and, as Carl Cohen has shown, Luther merely filled a gap in Ben Eliezer Halevi's own theology. Thus Luther was seen as an iconoclast who inspired Christians to follow the Law of Moses, and who planned to lead his proselytes to Judaism before the coming of the Messiah. More accurate

(but he was closer to the scene) was David Gans when he asserted:

> Luther broke the laws of the pope, destroyed the unity of Christians, and prepared to destroy and burn their statues. He believed one should not pray to Mary, the mother of their Messiah, nor to the twelve apostles.[2]

Gans tended to confuse Luther and Karlstadt. Indeed, Luther had adopted Karlstadt's opposition to the intercession of the saints.[3] And although Luther was not an iconoclast, Gans rightly noted that Luther had favoured the removal of some images. Luther also had cast the canon law into a bonfire. Unintentionally, Luther had fragmented western Christendom, and in denying churchly infallibility, he sealed this accomplishment, which was also beneficial for Jewry.

Late-medieval Christian interest in the study of Hebrew had also stimulated Jewish hopes, often in vain. For example in 1505, the Hebraist Reuchlin published a missive Why the Jews have Suffered For So Long. Reuchlin used a catena of rabbinical argument to establish that grievous suffering is punishment for grievous sin. Accepting this, Reuchlin then regarded Jewry's fifteen hundred years of exile as unprecedented suffering that requited unprecedented sin. Now the greatest sin, according to the Rabbis, is blasphemy, and since Jewry was dispersed after the crucifixion of Jesus, Reuchlin concluded that even by rabbinic standards, the Jewish dispersion was God's punishment for blasphemy against Christ.[4]

Similarly, although Luther devoted himself especially to the study of the Old Testament, it did not profit contemporary Jews that Luther upheld tradition in drawing a stark line between 'the ancient, true Jews' (die alten rechten Juden) and the 'modern, strange Jews' (die newen frembden Juden). Likewise Martin Bucer applied Old Testament promises to Christians ('the Jews of election and blessing'), rather than contemporary Jews ('the Jews of the flesh').[5]

A new obstacle between some Protestants and Jews was the fact that Luther's discovery of salvation by grace rather than 'monkish' works could create a lasting aversion towards law. Monks, rather than Jews, had provoked this feeling, but Luther and some of his followers, like Martin Bucer, could turn it against the Jews as well.

The Jews, wrote Bucer, as enemies of Christ, were to be equated with the Turks and Romans. Apart from the Roman veneration of images and verbal profession of Christ, 'the faith and religion of Papists and Jews is one and the same,' namely a religion of law, characterized by self-justification and ceremonies.[6]

Protestants, therefore, might transfer to the Jews the Reformers' critique of medieval legalism, but the Reformers' attacks on so-called Jewish ceremonies should not be taken literally. Luther had introduced and defined this notion:

> Of such a sort are our ceremonies under the rule of the pope, dreamed up after the example of the

> Mosaic ones. Since they lack the commanding word of God, by which they would become serious and meaningful, they are nothing but cheap and laughable apings of the Jews.[7]

Christ's final sacrifice had abrogated temple ritual; Paul repealed the requirement of circumcision; dietary laws had been dismissed in Acts. Thus the primitive church expunged much ritual. Now the principle of equity required for Calvin and his predecessors in the Reformed faith, that if Jews should not retain old ceremonies, no longer sanctioned by God, neither should Christians.

Despite the rhetoric against 'Jewish ceremonies' Protestants were closer to the Jews here than was the medieval church. Neither Jews nor Protestants perpetuated temple ritual; nor did Protestants claim for themselves a right denied the Jews with regard to unbiblical ceremonies. Thus the attacks on 'Jewish ritual" obscure what Protestants and Jews had in common. In fact, Jews would have agreed with Luther that anachronistic appeals to precedents in temple ritual for the rituals of the Mass, were 'laughable apings.' It was those 'apings' that had provoked the polemic against 'Jewish ceremonies,' not an attack against the Jews. Calvin once connected monasticism to Jewish ceremonial and legalism.[8] Here 'Jewish' does not refer to a historical connection, but is a simple way of referring to the legalism that can be found among certain Jews and Christians alike.

In retrospect the terminology 'Jewish ceremonies'

is unfortunate, but it well illustrates how Jews often lived in the fallout from inter-Christian strife. Polish Jews recognized this phenomenon with the proverb 'Wies christelt, judelts sich,' or 'As Christians go achristianing, so Jews go ajewing.'

Having been liberated from the indefectible magisterium of the church, Protestants had more room for disagreement, also over the treatment of Jews. Such controversial Lutherans as Andreas Osiander and Johannes Agricola, sympathized with the Jews. In the case of Agricola, this is remarkable, in view of his reputation for antinomianism. Osiander also rebuked Luther in a private letter, for having published On the Jews And Their Lies.[9]

There was also Thomas Müntzer who in 1523 erected in his church the Tablets of the Law upon what was formerly the high altar. This symbolized Müntzer's own rejection of what he called Luther's 'honey-sweet Christ,' in favour of the Law. Invoking the Law to defend the oppressed, he organized his fellow covenanters to smite the 'ungodly Moabites,' and joined the Peasant Revolt. When the 'ungodly Moabites' beheaded him, Müntzer's career was foreshortened. This event confirmed Luther's suspicions of legalism.

Luther would not compromise with legalism, since the Law never lost its sting for him, and was semper accusans. Moses' Laws as such are worthless. The Ten Commandments are not Moses' Laws, but mix natural law with Mosaic ceremonial chaff that should be sifted out.

Among the chaff in the Ten Commandments, Luther found the prohibition of images as well as Sabbath observance. According to Luther, even the moral, natural law, though observed by decent people simply as a civic duty, has nothing to do with salvation and eternal life.[10]

Luther's colleague Karlstadt, however, held a dual doctorate in canon and civil law from Rome, as well as a theological doctorate from Wittenberg. Luther defamed Karlstadt as a legalist and 'Jewish saint.'[11] Indeed, Karlstadt felt provoked by his colleagues, 'who sit in the chair of Moses [i.e. they teach] but work against Moses' Laws.'[12] Still, Karlstadt retained Luther's emphasis on salvation by grace rather than merit, but in harmony with the Law.

Karlstadt valued the Mosaic Law even in political matters, especially its underlying principle of equity. He held up Mosaic political legislation as a model for Christians, rather than the Sachsenspiegel, the contemporary law-code of Saxony, whenever Moses was more progressive in dealing with the oppressed. The Ten Commandments remained in force as divine law, binding on all believers, not to obtain merit, but to thank God for salvation freely offered in Christ, and appropriated by faith rooted in love. Thus, unlike Luther, Karlstadt tied the religious (faith) dimension to the moral (love) dimension. Even Israel's ancient ceremonies are not simply dated, but, though their outward observance has ceased, the original reason for their observance remains a valid expression of God's will:

> For, as with all commandments, the reason and meaning must be appropriated and nothing else; that is, only God who commands is to be taken to heart, and his will sought in the commandment.[13]

Karlstadt's sympathy for Law also influenced his view of the Jews. His work On the Removal of Images contained three references to Jews. One dealt with a biblical verse in which prophetic self-criticism of Israel occurs. Without implicating Jews, Karlstadt applied this to 'pretended Christians.' [14] Israel also had better rulers than Christendom:

> Would to God that our rulers were like the worldly pious kings of Jewry who are praised by the Holy Spirit.[15]

Finally, Karlstadt worried about what impressions sincere Christians and Jews would receive from Christian idolatry:

> I would very much like to see how we can respond to true Christians, or Jews who understand the Bible, or God who gave this doctrine to us through the Holy Spirit.[16]

Thus Karlstadt showed that respect for the Judaic scriptural legacy could improve one's attitudes towards one's Jewish contemporaries. Even Martin Bucer's advice that one may keep the Jews on Christian territory out of gratitude towards their forebears, or one may expel them to keep Christians from contamination, was relatively progressive, even though there was ancient precedent for it in the writings of Augustine and the law codes of

Justinian.[17] This view illustrates how the first generation of Reformers could be caught between tradition and new insight. There was nothing new in expelling Jews to keep Christians from contamination, but Bucer had another option.

Here love of Ancient Israel can benefit one's Jewish contemporaries. That Bucer considered toleration of Jews as an alternative is remarkable, for compared to Matthew and Katherine Zell's or Wolfgang Capito's attitudes towards the 'Anabaptists' for example, Bucer was the most intolerant of the Strasbourg Reformers.

Calvin and his Lutheran Background

Although what Calvin did is very similar to what Karlstadt had proposed to do with the Mosaic Law, there are few direct links between them. Calvin, too, had been trained in law, however, and Luther's abrogation of the Mosaic Law left him dissatisfied.

Gradually, Calvin's growing respect for the Judaic legal legacy was integrated with his theology, and thus the gap between him and Luther widened. But it was already there in 1536, when Calvin published the first edition of his Institutes. Luther's Latin lectures on Deuteronomy (1525) contained only excerpts, and did not even cover the Ten Commandments. Opposing Karlstadt, Luther had already excised the commandments prohibiting images and enjoining the hallowing of the Sabbath, as dated ceremonial:

> Such [invalid] laws are in the Ten Commandments, depend on it and belong there. And to indicate this, God himself has expressly introduced two ceremonial laws, namely concerning images and the Sabbath [Col 2:16-17; Gal 4:10-11].[18]

Luther claimed that there was only one commandment, the First, that retained religious validity. Then, characteristically and consistently, Luther chose as the First commandment only the preface in which no commandment occurred, for he cited 'I am the Lord your God' as the First commandment, noting its identity with the Shemah, 'Hear O Israel, the Lord our God is one God.' Then he subsumed all 'Thou shalts,' under it, and implicitly denied the need for the Ten Commandments by arguing that with the First Commandment in place, the rest would naturally follow.[19]

One may, of course, object that Luther did treat the Ten Commandments in his catechisms, but that was several years later, and one should assume that Luther treated them there because the Ten Commandments formed an integral part of the traditional catechisms. In his Larger Catechism Luther retained his claim that the other Commandments depend on the First, though he now chose 'Thou shalt not have any gods before me,' as was traditionally done.[20]

However, because Luther later reiterated the position that he had first staked out in Deuteronomy, his embrace of the traditional First Commandment in the Larger Catechism is best ascribed to public posturing. Luther also followed tradition in dividing the Ten

Commandments into two tables of three and seven commandments each, abrogating the commandment prohibiting images, and dividing the tenth commandment into two. He also spiritualized the Sabbath, and abolished it according to its outward 'Jewish' observance.

Calvin on Images

Calvin was determined to save the Ten Commandments. He began to divide the commandments differently, assigning four rather than three to the first table, and six, rather than seven to the second. As precedent Calvin cited Origen of Alexandria, who 'in a purer age set forth this division of ours.'[21] If Calvin had emulated Origen as a pure model, this argument would be persuasive, but Calvin appealed to Origen because his different tables of the Law involved more than simple rearrangement. For thus Calvin restored the prohibition of images as well as the Tenth Commandment which tradition had cut in two.

To support the prohibition of images, Calvin cited the crucial principle of Reformed worship, John 4:24: 'Adore God who is a spirit, in spirit and in truth.' This principle had an earlier history. It had first been enunciated by Karlstadt in his 1522 Disputation on Gregorian Chant, and, as Garside showed, had been adopted by Zwingli.[22] Next Calvin considered the worship of the Golden Calf. Unlike Calvin, Karlstadt had interpreted the worship of the Calf as a reversion

to crass idolatry:

> Learn from this example. God had let the Jews out of Egypt and redeemed them from the prison-hole of servitude. This goodness they now wanted to confer on an alien god. They fashioned a Golden Calf and spoke: 'These are the gods o Israel, that led you out of Egypt' (Exo 32). The calf was a strange god, which had not redeemed the Jews, and yet they said that it had led them out of Egypt. Thus all nations fashion alien gods, whenever they attribute received mercy to something other than the true God.'[23]

Note how a parallel is drawn from 'the Jews' to 'all nations,' so Karlstadt took the sting out of the sins of Israel. Calvin also made a parallel, but it was artificial and intended to deflect the excuse that, unlike the Jews or pagans, Christians can worship images without falling into idolatry. Calvin therefore credited the ancient Jews and pagans with knowing that images are not gods, so he can equally implicate Christians:

> 'Images,' [idolatrous Christians] assert, 'are not to be taken for gods.' Not so utterly unthinking were the Jews as to forget it was God by whose hand they had been led out of Egypt, before they fashioned the Calf! Not so senseless are we to deem the gentiles as not to have understood God to be something else than wood and stones!

But then, by process of inevitable devolution, 'all nations, having fixed their minds on statues, began to grow more brutish and to be overwhelmed with admiration for them, as if something of divinity inhered there.'[24]

Calvin rejected Pope Gregory's authoritative approval of images as 'books of the unlearned.'[25] The argumentation is reminiscent of Karlstadt, who had already influenced Zwingli here.[26] Images are used as 'books' only when the people have not been properly instructed.[27]

One original argument should not be overlooked, for Calvin charged the 'anthropomorphites' with immodesty:

> Indeed, brothels show harlots clad more virtuously and modestly than the churches show those objects that they wish to be seen as images of virgins.[28]

From which Church Father Calvin learned about the relatively virtuous attire of harlots, I do not know, but Calvin's feelings were not peculiar. His contemporary, Pope Paul IV (Giovanni Pietro Caraffa) ordered that Michelangelo's naked figures on the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel be painted over to be clad with loin cloths. At any rate, a Hebraic sense of modesty that humans be clothed after the Fall, triumphs here over the Renaissance.

Having set out to save the Ten Commandments, Calvin in 1536 still reveals his originally more Lutheran phase, in regarding the Ten Commandments as a clarification of natural law:

> Properly speaking, this very written Law is but a witness of natural law, a witness that quite often arouses our memory, and instills in us the things we had not sufficiently learned, when natural law was teaching within.[29]

But Calvin also progressed beyond Luther, for he regarded the whole Ten Commandments as clarifying natural law, including the prohibition of images and the observance of the Sabbath, which for Luther were merely Mosaic, hence outdated, appendages to the natural law that were abrogated in the New Testament.[30]

However, as long as it was but a witness, the Mosaic Law was serving natural law, and this apparently embarrassed Calvin later, for he struck this passage from the Institutes in 1541. Calvin finally stated:

> Thus the public worship of God that God once prescribed is still in force ... Now the inward law ... written, even engraved upon the hearts of all, in a sense asserts the very same things that are to be learned from the Two Tables. For our conscience does not allow us to sleep in perpetual insensible sleep.[31]

Thus in 1541 Calvin had not repudiated the notion of natural law, but by 1559 he had moved from natural law that is clarified by the Ten Commandments to a basic emphasis on God's Ten Commandments that 'in a sense' correspond to natural law, which merely arouses the conscience. For Luther all law is semper accusans, but Calvin now confined this threat to natural law, rather than the divine law that prescribes Christian no less than Jewish worship. Therefore believers are not free to invent patterns of worship that have not been sanctioned in God's word:

> Scripture's exclusive definition of God annihilates all the divinity that humans fashion for themselves out of their own opinion, for God

himself is the sole and proper witness of himself.[32]

Calvin's prohibitions of statues were gradually strengthened. In 1541, Calvin argued that 'a likeness no less than an image is forbidden,' now excluding icons.[33] In 1559, Calvin implicated symbols like that of the Holy Spirit as a dove. Matthew 3:16 shows that as soon as it came down as a dove, the Holy Spirit vanished to prevent superstition.[34] Now Matthew 3:16 does not support Calvin's point at all, but Calvin was fencing the Torah, and the use of symbols had been the intermediate phase through which the early church moved from primitive rejection to full acceptance of image.

Like Karlstadt, Calvin repudiated the traditional distinction between dulia (proper veneration) and latria (idolatry).[35] Strikingly, both Calvin and Karlstadt appeal to God's single name to show that God dissociates himself from images named after others.[36] However, in support, Calvin paraphrased Zechariah 14:9, while Karlstadt appealed to Acts 4:12.

The basic difference between Luther and Calvin also shows up in how they interpreted Deuteronomy 4:15, where God spoke, yet no one saw a body. Luther spiritualized this, and therefore he rejected images in the heart. Calvin interpreted the event literally; consequently he prohibited any outward likeness of God.[37]

Did Calvin's stance on images draw him closer to the Jews? Calvin had already elevated the deeds of the Jews in the case of the Golden Calf, so he could equally

implicate Christians. Later Calvin held that Christians had been worse idolaters than the Jews. In 1536 in reintroducing the Third Commandment (No graven images), he claimed support from Origen. In his final statement, however, Calvin, denounced all Christian tradition on this point:

> It was an act of diabolical madness to make away with one of the Ten Commandments ... They pretend that the Jews were formerly prohibited from idolatry with greater strictness, because they were too much disposed towards it, as if they themselves were not worse in this respect.[38]

Consequently, Reformed houses of worship were deprived of images: an aesthetical loss, not without moral compensations. Reformed Protestants never depicted the casting out of the synagogue. Neither did they preserve the image that objectified the essence of anti-Semitism, the Judensau or the gentile swine that defecated on the Torah.[39] In striving to obey the Law of God, Reformed Churches did not through imagery defame the Jews.

The Sabbath

In 1536, Calvin reclaimed the Judaic legacy with respect to images but not the Sabbath. Calvin did not explain this uneven development. However, Luther had argued:

> We can show that [images and Sabbath observance] are ceremonial laws that are also each in its way abrogated in the New Testament, so that one may see how Dr. Karlstadt deals about as wisely

> in his book with the Sabbath as with images. For Saint Paul [Col 2:16-17] speaks frankly and clearly, 'Therefore let no one pass judgment on you in questions of food and drink or with regard to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath. These are only a shadow of what is to come. 'Here Paul expressly abrogates the Sabbath and calls it a shadow now past, since the body, which is Christ himself is come. Also Gal 4 [:10-11], 'You observe days and months, and seasons ... and years. I am afraid I have laboured over you in vain.'[40]

Calvin virtually echoed this statement in 1536:

> But there is absolutely no doubt that this commandment [of Sabbath observance] was a foreshadowing and demanded of the Jews during the era of ceremonies, that under outward observance, it would represent to them the spiritual worship of God. At the coming of Christ, who is the light of shadows and the truth of figures, it was therefore abrogated like the remaining shadows of the Mosaic Law, as Paul clearly testifies [Gal 4:10-11, Col 2:16-17].[41]

Both Calvin and Luther appealed to Paul, citing identical texts. Both also distorted Colossians 2, where the shadows are related to a <u>future</u> event, whereas Calvin and Luther related them to a past event, viz. the incarnation of Christ. Luther could not appeal to the New Testament for the toleration of images, so he extended Paul's observations from the Sabbath to images. In contrast, Calvin refused to extend what Paul said about the Sabbath to images, thus resisting Luther here, but Luther did cite Paul in support of his view of the Sabbath, and Calvin at first accepted this argument:

hence the uneven development.

Even at this early stage, a further distinction should be made. Both Luther and Calvin referred to the shadows of the Mosaic Law, but they used the term differently. For Luther all law is basically shadow, compared to the light of Christ. Calvin was more traditional in distinguishing the shadows of the Mosaic Law from the intention of the Law itself, and thus when he changed his mind on the Sabbath, he had no need of revising the Law, for he only lifted the observance of the Sabbath from the realm of shadows to the realm of Law.

Calvin respected Jewish more than Christian ceremonial laws, because Jewish, unlike Christian, ceremony had once been sanctioned by God. Thus Calvin showed admiration for those Jews who had sacrificed their lives to defend even the letter of the law. They are an example for Christians:

> Let our example be Eleazar, mentioned in Maccabees together with the women with her seven sons (2 Mac 6:7). When all might have ransomed their lives by tasting a morsel of swine's flesh, they preferred to endure excruciating tortures rather than taste it with their tongues. It you look just at the thing in itself, you might be inclined to think that it was madness to rush towards death for such a cause. But if you consider it carefully, you will find a crucial reason why they would prefer to submit to the most cruel tortures, rather than contaminate themselves by tasting of forbidden fruit.

Unlike the original human pair, Eleazar and the woman

with her seven sons, had resisted the temptation to eat of the Tree of Knowledge. Calvin also supported Eleazar's refusal to save even his life by dissembling:

When friends of this saintly man were able to substitute and set before him other than swine's flesh, that he might eat it, he would not condone the disguise. He saw how he would surrender the same token of blasphemy to his enemies. 'To dissimulate is not befitting in my time of life. Many young men will thus be led to assume that Eleazar, in his ninetieth year, has gone over and embraced the life of strangers. Thus they would be deceived by my dissimulation to gain a short span of corruptible life. I would bring dishonour and cursing on my old age. And though I would meanwhile escape the punishment of men, neither living nor dead would I escape the hand of the Almighty.'

As Calvin noted:

> When a wicked tyrant, who wished not only to have the Law of God abolished, but even God's name eclipsed, urged them to testify by this sign that they abjured the observance of the Mosaic Law, they considered, and that rightly, that if they complied they would not just violate the Law in an unimportant ceremonial, but give evidence of having denied 'god and abjured the whole Law.[42]

Thus when a tyrant confused the fencing of the Torah with the Torah itself, Calvin admired Eleazar and the woman with the seven sons, for having sacrificed themselves on behalf of the Torah. Later, John Knox, no doubt for similar reasons, named his eldest son Eleazar.

Calvin's allusion to Eleazar as a 'saintly man,' reminds one also of the fact, that following Karlstadt, Zwingli, and Luther, Protestants rejected the intercession of the saints as a pagan notion. Another barrier between Christians and Jews had been removed, for traditional saints (and hence their powers of intercession) had not been drawn from the Old Testament. Thus the notion of 'saints' was inequitable.

One could of course renounce the notion of official 'saints,' as Protestants eventually did, or one could also occasionally challenge the containment of sainthood. Thus Luther once called Daniel Saint Daniel, and Calvin referred to Eleazar as a saintly man. Moreover, festivals to honour the saints, had detracted from the Judaic legacy of the Sabbath.

Here Calvin opposed Luther, who having sifted out the 'natural law,' concluded that after hard labour one needs a rest; otherwise one does not.[43] In contrast, Calvin emulated those who gave their lives for the Torah. But Calvin faced another problem: What in the Sabbath is divine law, and what is ceremonial? Anti-Roman, not anti-Jewish, polemic motivates Calvin in 1536:

> Thus will vanish the nonsense of the sophists [i.e. Schoolmen] who have infected the world with the Jewish [i.e. legalistic] notion that the ceremonial part of this commandment has been abrogated, but that the moral part remains, namely the observance of one day in the week. Yet this is nothing but changing the day to spite the Jews, while at the same time retaining

the observance of the day.[44]

The Lutheran origins of the younger Calvin are here disclosed insofar as the Sabbath, as a special day, had been reduced to a political expedient, for 'it is not by religion that we distinguish one day from another, but for the sake of the common polity.'[45]

Had Calvin stopped here, his early interpretation of the Sabbath would have been Lutheran, but Calvin also injected the notion of the eternal Sabbath. For Luther, Mosaic law was abrogated for purposes of religion, but for Calvin, the shadow of the law pointed to the eternal Sabbath. This notion had also been advocated by Karlstadt.[46] As eternal rest in God, Calvin regarded the Sabbath as divine law, and the cessation of servile works reveals the true Sabbath 'whose type and, as it were, shadow the Jewish Sabbath was. Thus is was assigned the seventh [!] day, a number signifying perfection in Scripture.'

By this perfection we are taught that God enjoined on us an eternal Sabbath, for which no limit is set. Secondly, its full and proper hallowing will never come to pass until the seventh day (Heb 4:1-11). Although all of us who are believers have in part entered into it, we have not fully reached it.[47]

A new commandment replaced the old, and in stead of hallowing the Jewish Sabbath, the younger Calvin partially hallowed the Christian Sabbath as divided between the earth and the realm of eternal rest.

Calvin's conception of the Sabbath as foretaste of

and participation in eternal rest had been aimed at the Schoolmen. Thus since God had appointed ceremonial only in the 'era of shadows,' Calvin was able to relieve Reformed Protestantism of the church calendar, which was inequitable, for its saints' days were all specifically Christian. Luther had Judaized this calendar by introducing a three-year cycle that allowed greater coverage of biblical materials, and confined its feasts to biblical events. However, Luther had not fully rid the calendar of bias. The Old Testament was never allowed to speak for itself, but was encumbered with often irrelevant materials from the gospels and epistles. Furthermore, with its festivals entirely confined to events from the New Testament, the calendar implied that in the Old Testament, there is nothing worth celebrating. Because they abandoned the medieval calendar, Zwingli, Karlstadt, and Calvin also got rid of such inequities, and the Reformed Churches allowed the Old Testament to speak for itself.

Also, by not having a calendar, there never was a Reformed version of the maddened flagellants, who having scourged themselves in the Good Friday procession, ran loose in the Jewish quarter to become a scourge to its inhabitants.

Consequently, Calvin's notion of the Sabbath as eternal rest proved fruitful as well as destructive. At first he turned this notion against the Judaic Sabbath, but not for long. Already in 1539 Calvin retracted his view of the Old Testament Sabbath as 'shadow' by

expanding it. His former notion that the Sabbath precept is shadow, followed by sections that proclaimed the New Law of God in relation to the eternal Sabbath was inconsistent. Since Calvin was about to clarify his notion of the single Abrahamic covenant established between God and the Old and New Israel, the new Sabbath could not just abolish the old.

In the second edition of the Institutes Calvin struck out his discussion of the shadows of the Sabbath, and apologetically blamed the early Fathers for having in part led him astray. This defence would have been more cogent, had Calvin earlier credited the Fathers with having led him down this path. At any rate, Calvin now argued:

> The early Fathers commonly called the commandment a foreshadowing, for it contains the outward keeping of a day, which, upon Christ's coming was abrogated with the other figures. This they say truly, but they touch on only half the matter. Therefore we must go deeper in our exposition, and ponder three conditions, in which, it seems to me, the keeping of this commandment consists.[48]

Now the Old Testament texts are no longer introduced as 'shadows' but under the rubric of 'The Sabbath Commandment as Promise.'[49] In From Shadow to Promise James Preus analyzed the notion of the Old Testament as 'shadows' in the Fathers, and Preus showed a breakthrough in Luther's early Psalms lectures towards the idea of the Old Testament as promise. Even if the

notion of 'promise' still contained a threat to Luther, it did not to Calvin, and in either case, it advanced beyond the notion of 'shadows.' In Calvin's case it broadened his conception of Sabbath.

Calvin also referred to the Sabbath as a mystery, but failed to explain why. He then treated the Sabbath as the day of spiritual rest (divine law), and as a stated day to assemble (a political law as Calvin stated earlier, but also a divine law in the Old Testament, a law that may still apply to Christians). Finally, Calvin referred to the Sabbath as a day of rest for servants and cattle (i.e. a divine clarification of a natural law). Quite possibly this reveals Calvin's independent application of some of the legal categories found in Melanchthon's Commonplaces, but by now he may also have known the contents of Karlstadt's On the Sabbath. Redolent of Karlstadt's blending of Rhineland mysticism with the celebration of the Sabbath is the following passage from Calvin:

> If our sanctification consists in mortifying our own will, then a very close correspondence appears between the outward signs and the inward reality (signi externi cum re ipsa interiori analogia). We must be wholly at rest, that God may work in us; we must surrender our will; we must resign our heart; we must give up all our fleshly desires. In short, we must rest from all activities of our own contriving, so that, having God work in us [Heb 13:21], we may repose in him [Heb 4:19] as the Apostle also teaches.[50]

Even more striking than the mystical language, is Calvin's reference to the 'outward sign' and the

'inward reality' of the Sabbath. Now the traditional Augustinian distinction between signum and res applies to and defines a sacrament. And Calvin, in explaining the sacraments, had offered not only his own definition, but he also cited with approval two definitions drawn from Augustine, including the one that refers to a sacrament as a sacred sign corresponding to an inward reality.[51]

If we then assume that Calvin secretly believed the Sabbath to be a sacrament, two other points in Calvin's treatment of the Sabbath suddenly are clarified. First, Calvin's brief reference to the Sabbath as a 'mystery' is now explained, for Calvin knew that the Greek Fathers used the term mysterion for sacrament.[52] Also, the rubric for the Sabbath as a 'promise' takes on added meaning, for Luther coupled the notion of sacrament with a divine promise.

But, if Calvin really believed that the Sabbath is a sacrament, why would he have concealed this? He was not normally afraid of controversy. Yet had Calvin openly propagated this notion, a well-nigh universal chorus would have accused him of Judaizing. None the less, the idea that Calvin concealed such a conviction is too shocking. Therefore, although Calvin implied that the Sabbath was a sacrament, I shall only maintain that Calvin had imbued the Sabbath with sacramental meaning. Even this is remarkable. The Reformers, unlike their predecessors, found sacraments in the Old Testament. The Fathers found mostly 'signs,' while Thomas Aquinas

further devalued the Old Testament on this point, by insisting that, in comparison with New Testament signs (signa), the signs of the Old Testament were lesser signs (signacula).[53]

Unlike his earlier claim that meeting on the Lord's Day was a Christian and political necessity, but without religious warrant, Calvin began to hold that even though the eternal Sabbath was basic, 'there is ample evidence that we must assemble on stated days, even if only in the usage of the Jews,' and that was now sufficient for Calvin. 'Repose from labour to servants and workers' is commanded in Deuteronomy 5:14-15; also Exodus 23:12 is cited to show that beasts of burden should have rest. Calvin asked: 'Who can deny that these two things apply as much to us as to the Jews?' Ideally, Calvin argued, one should meet for worship every day, 'but the weakness of many made this impossible.' Therefore, 'Why then should we not obey the order we see laid upon us by God's will?'[54]

In 1536, Calvin had attacked Christian Sunday observance, that is 'the appointing of the day,' as advocated by the Schoolmen, as a form of Judaizing that also was designed to spite the Jews. Now Calvin defended the Lord's Day without referring to the 'appointed day' of the Schoolmen, but the passage in which he had argued against the 'appointed day' was struck from the Institutes, for Calvin was being charged with becoming a Judaizer:

> Some restless individuals complain that the Christian people are nourished in Judaism, because they keep some observance of days. But I reply that we transcend Judaism, because we are far different from the Jews in this respect. The Jews abstained from manual tasks, not because they are a diversion from sacred duties and meditations, but because with a certain scrupulousness, they imagined that by celebrating the day, they were honouring mysteries once recommended.[55]

The Jews whom Calvin attacked in this passage, curiously resembled Calvin, even though he argued that he 'transcends' Judaism, and is 'far different' from the Jews, 'at least in this respect.' When Calvin accused the Jews of 'honouring mysteries once recommended,' he was feigning an attack on himself, rather than the Jews, for he himself had declared the Sabbath to be a mystery. And when he charged the Jews with 'a certain scrupulousness,' he implicated himself, at least from the viewpoint of those who regarded him a Judaizer. And as for the Jews, 'abstaining from manual tasks, not because they are a diversion from sacred duties,' mere diversion was no longer Calvin's concern either, to the extent that the Sabbath was appointed for divine, rather than political reasons. So what at first seems like anti-Jewish rhetoric, was no more than an ironic and disguised attack on Calvin's own position, because he had to deflect criticism that he was a Judaizer. In not really attacking a Jewish position here, Calvin showed an unusual scrupulousness towards the Jews.

Calvin accepted the 'Lord's Day,' but other days remained a possibility. Logically, Calvin may have had in mind any day, but historically only the day of the Jewish Sabbath makes sense. As he had written in 1536, 'Why change the day to spite the Jews?'

Referring to the passage above, where Calvin had 'transcended the Sabbath,' J.T. McNeill asserted:

> It is clear from this passage that for Calvin the Christian Sunday is not as in the Westminster Confession XXI.8, a simple continuation of the Jewish Sabbath 'changed into the first day of the week,' but a distinctly Christian institution adopted on the abrogation of the Sabbath, as a means of church order and spiritual health.'[56]

Here McNeill read Luther into Calvin, and as to his comment on Calvin and the Sabbath, virtually everything I have already noted can be cited in refutation of McNeill's position. Moreover, Calvin never referred to a 'Christian Sunday' as McNeill did. Calvin preferred the word 'Sabbath,' or when he referred to the specific day observed by Christians, he called it the 'Lord's Day.' Let Calvin answer McNeill's notion of the abrogation of the Jewish Sabbath:

> God indeed would have the Sabbath as a notable symbol of distinction between the Jews and gentile nations. Therefore, the devil, to pour infamy on pure and holy religion has often slandered the Jewish Sabbath through perverse tongues.[57]

> God promises that as he blessed the seventh day and set it apart, so he will bless believers

to sanctify them.[58]

> God in his kindness provides an antidote for our weaknesses. He sets apart one day from the rest, and commands that it be free from earthly business and cares, so that nothing may stand in the way of that holy occupation... In this respect we have an equal need for the Sabbath with the ancient Jews, so that on one day we may be free, and thus be the better prepared to learn and attest to our faith.[59]

Creeds simplify complex doctrinal systems. If the framers of the Westminster Confession intended to follow Calvin slavishly, one must concede to McNeill that they somewhat overstated the Reformed position on the Sabbath. But the Westminster divines came closer to Calvin's position than did McNeill in his criticism of them.

Luther's rejection of the Jewish Sabbath was based on his understanding of Mark 2:27: 'The Sabbath was made for men, not men for the Sabbath.' Calvin realized that Christ had 'not come to abrogate the law, but to fulfil it.' Calvin understood this to mean that when the disciples plucked grain on the Sabbath, Jesus defended his disciples from Pharisaic criticism, not by abrogating the Law, but by fencing legitimate exceptions to the Torah, already allowed in the Mosaic Law, for example, as when an ox had fallen into a pit, or when a dangerous animal was running loose.[60]

Luther had reduced the Sabbath to natural law, a notion that proved vapid, as his rather prosaic comments in the Larger Catechism show. This, as was

noted, did influence the younger Calvin when he asserted that the Sabbath was 'in a sense' natural law, although he needed a divine command to clarify it. Towards the end of his life Calvin virtually discarded this position, for he held that, after the fall, the notion of the Sabbath was 'extinct' among the gentiles. Therefore, the Sabbath, as well as salvation is from the Jews:

> But what in the depravity of human nature was wholly extinct among the gentile nations, and almost obsolete with the nation of Abraham, God renewed in his Law: that the Sabbath should be honoured by holy and incorruptible observance, and that the gentiles 'like dogs that return to their own vomit,' accounted to be among the disgraces of the Jewish nation.[61]

Calvin's reference here to the 'nation of Abraham' in connection with the giving of the Law, religiously links the Law to faithful Christians. For the 'nation of Abraham' includes all faithful Christians as well as the faithful Jews in the Old Testament, for Abraham is 'the Father of all Believers.' The single covenant, struck by God with Abraham, was renewed and clarified on Mount Sinai, and the intent of the Law remains binding.

Of course, from a traditional Jewish perspective, even Calvin had removed too many fences from around the Torah. But Calvin felt that Jews often followed so many fantastic Scriptural interpretations that they wandered from the Torah itself: 'Jews get hopelessly lost in reading the Scripture, for with their excessive curiosity over words, they lose the main target.'[62]

Despite this, even ceremonial and dietary laws were not simply abrogated, for they had been intended to shed light on the Law. To recover those intentions, Calvin composed his Harmony of the Four Last Books of Moses. Thus Calvin's aim of restoring the Mosaic Law to its rightful place becomes clear when it is illustrated especially with reference to images and the Sabbath. Here Calvin discarded over a thousand years of Christian tradition.

Evaluation

As we saw, Calvin's polemical references to 'Jewish' ceremonial should largely be dismissed as the adoption of unfortunate terminology. In fact, for Calvin genuinely Jewish was better than much Christian ceremonial, for although both were outdated, Jewish ceremonial had once been sanctioned by God.

Calvin loved the faithful Jews of Old Testament times, and could identify Moses with Christ. After Calvin dismissed as skeptical the idea that Moses was saved from the Nile, because of a fortuitous happening, he claimed: 'Surely God drew out Moses, the future redeemer (redemptor) of the nation, as from the grave, to prove that the initial security of his Church was like a creation out of nothing.'[63]

Thus as Christ redeemed the Church, so Moses had redeemed Israel, and as Christians regarded the Church as beginning with the resurrection of Jesus, and believers dying and rising in baptism, so the Church of

Moses had its beginning when he was as it were resurrected from a watery grave. That of course is a strained interpretation, and therefore remarkable. Then, to enhance the event of Moses' being saved from the Nile, Calvin speaks of the coming of Moses', that is God's, Church among the Jews, as a miracle of new creation, no doubt to draw a parallel between New Testament passages that proclaim the New Testament Church as a 'New Creation' in Christ Jesus.

Love for the ancient Jews, Calvin could only partially transfer to continuing Jewry, however. Calvin was grateful to the Jews for having preserved without falsifying the precious scriptural legacy. He also realized that much of so-called Christian polemic was nothing but ungrateful and 'shameless insult':

> But even though all the wicked, as if conspiring together, have so shamelessly insulted the Jews, no one has ever dared charge them with substituting false books, for whatever, in their opinion, the Jewish religion may be, they confess Moses to be its author.

The miracle appeared not only in that God delivered the Tables of the covenant from the bloody edicts of Antiochus, but also in that the Jewish people, ground down and wasted by such misfortunes, were soon almost exterminated.

And through whom did God preserve for us the doctrine of salvation embraced in the Law and the Prophets, that Christ in his own time might be made

manifest [Matt 22:37-40]? Through the Jews, Christ's most violent enemies, whom Augustine justly called the 'bookmen' of the Christian church, because they have furnished us with reading matter of which they themselves do not make use.[64]

Thus the praise that Calvin lavished on the Jews after Christ was mixed, and ended on a note of frustration. Calvin, on the basis of Romans 9-11, believed that Jews who denied Christ had been cut off from their own legacy, but he pinned his hope for Jewry on an eschatological remnant:

> When the gentiles have come in, the Jews will at the same time return from their defection to the obedience of faith. The salvation of the whole Israel of God, which must be drawn from both, will thus be completed, and yet in such a way that the Jews, as the first born in the family of God, may obtain first place.[65]

Meanwhile, Calvin preferred what he regarded as the side of God, not Jewry. However, in preserving the Law for Christians, Calvin could be equitable in his denunciations. Since Luther rejected the Law, even in one of Melanchthon's senses as a pedagogue unto Christ, he preached grace to Christians and applied the Law to Jews in his later tracts against them. No such inequity can be found in Calvin. In his sermons to the Genevans, he could lash out with awful denunciations, preaching Law.

Another advantage that accrued to the Jews because of the Reformation was that the Reformers often sniped

at Rome rather than the Jews. Since Rome responded in kind, or worse, Christian wrath now found inward rather than outward direction. Within a century, for example, the Reformed ministers of Amsterdam objected strenuously to the clandestine services held at the Church of Our Lady in the Attic, while Jews and Marranos who had been driven out of Spain could live and worship there in peace. This outcome is not surprising, for the first generation of the Dutch Reformed had rallied to the slogan: 'We'd rather be Turks than Papists.'

Calvin could also be more equitable in his claims for Christianity (and here he was indebted to Luther) because of his relative lack of churchly triumphalism. Calvin made universal claims for the church's message, though he regarded faithful Christians, like the Jews, as only a remnant, dispersed through a largely pagan earth. Here, however, Calvin's limitations also become apparent, for he did not renounce the universal claim for Christianity.

Calvin did not know that the Scriptures, over the millennia that they took to be written, proclaimed more than one opinion, for Calvin would have argued that Scripture is the Word of God, and God's mind is undivided. That the scriptural light in the context of human particularity can be refracted into a whole spectrum of possibilities, did not occur to Calvin nor to most of his contemporaries. Thus, like all theologians, Calvin could confuse God's and his own

mind, also when he referred to Jews whom he did not know.

In one crucial area Calvin and the entire Christian tradition must be challenged. Calvin simply explained away Christ's final words about the Jews 'Father forgive them for they know not what they do.' Basically he clung to Paul's position in Romans, without Paul's contradictions and inner conflicts, to say that the Jews, after Christ, had been cut off from their own legacy. Now the Reformers taught rightly that the Church without spot or wrinkle is an eschatological rather than an observable phenomenon. Therefore, although the church must make universal claims in so far as it is loyal to the truth, that does not make the church the universal arbiter of truth.

On the basis of the historical data one must maintain that the church has been grafted onto Israel, and this is a partial graft. The Law and the promises have attracted the gentiles, but a God who simply transfers his promises or changes the rules is not to be trusted. Therefore, neither Calvin nor the other Reformers, except for Zwingli, could proclaim God's boundless mercy as long as they built fences around the Christian Church.

However, Calvin and the Jews have this in common: They know that mercy is not devoid of content, hence the continuing need for God's Law, also for those who live out of mercy. In attempting to establish equity between both the Old and the New Testament, Calvin's

theology was the least inequitable or anti- Judaic of the major classical theological systems.

NOTES

Purely numerical designations refer to the 1559 edition of Calvin's Institutes. They follow traditional usage as found e.g. in Petrus Barth and Guilhelmus Niesel, eds. Calvini Opera Selecta vols 3-5 (1928-36) and in John T. McNeill, ed. Calvin. Institutes of the Christian Religion vols 1-2, 'Library of Christian Classics' vols 20-21 (1960).

The following abbreviations are used:

CC Calvin's Commentaries (Edinburgh: 1844-56)

CR Corpus Reformatorum (Braunschweig, Leipzig: 1834f)

INST Institution of the Christian Religion (1536), trans and ed Ford Lewis Battles (Richmond: 1975)

LW Luther's Works (Philadelphia, Saint Louis: 1955f)

NTC Calvin's New Testament Commentaries, ed David W. & Thomas F. Torrance (1959-72)

OS Johannes Calvini Opera Selecta, ed Petrus Barth & Guilelmus Niesel (Munich: 1926-36)

WA D. Martin Luthers Werke (Weimar: 1933f)

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[1]Gottfried W. Locher, 'Calvin spricht zu den Juden,' Theologische Zeitschrift (Basel) 23 (1967): 181-82 interprets Calvin's Ad Quaestiones (CR 37: 657-74) as 'den Niederschlag eines Schriftwechsels der wirklich stattgefunden hat.' For the expulsions see e.g. Salo W. Baron, Encyclopaedia Judaica vol 5 (1971): 66

[2]Carl Cohen, 'Martin Luther and his Jewish Contemporaries,' Jewish Social Studies 25 (1963): 203

[3]Calvin A. Pater, Karlstadt as the Father of the Baptist Movements (1984): 122

[4]See Johannes Reuchlin, Warumb die Juden solang im elend sind (1505). Copy: Universitätsbibliothek, Tübingen

[5]For Luther see: WA 53:450 (LW 47:178); for Bucer see W. Nijenhuis, Ecclesia Reformata, 'Kerkhistorische Bijdragen' vol 3 (1972): 48

[6]WA 53:448 (LW 47:175). Nijenhuis (n 5): 47

[7]WA 14:500 (LW 9:7)

[8]CR 73:30 (NTC 1:27)

[9]Heiko A. Oberman, The Roots of Anti-Semitism (1981): 135 n108; 10

[10]WA 50:326, 330, 33, etc (LW 47:84, 89, 92-93, etc)

[11]WA TR 2:271.23-31

[12]Pater (n 3): 17-18

[13]Erich Hertsch, ed. Karlstadts Schriften vol 1:24.22-25: 'Denn in allen gebotten muss die ursach und der geist gemeindt werden, und nichts anders, das ist das nur der Got sol behertzet werden, der do gebeut, und sein will im gebot gesucht und erkand werden.'

[14]Hans Lietzmann, ed. Kleine Texte vol 74 (Bonn: 1911): 6.9-25

[15]Ibid, 20.33-35: 'Welte got das unsser hern weren wie die weltliche frumen Konig und hern gewest sein in der Judenschafft die der h. geist lobet.'

[16]Ibid, 5.28-30: 'Ich wolt gern sehen was wir den warhafftigen Christen konten antwurten, oder den Jüden

die verstand der Biblienn haben...'

[17]Nijenhuis (n 5): 24-25

[18]WA 18:77 (LW 40:93)

[19]WA 14:601-619 (LW 9:63-76)

[20]Die Bekenntnisschriften der evangelisch lutherischen Kirche (t. Aufl) (1963): 567, where the First Commandment is referred to as the 'Hauptgebot (huic praecepto, quod aliorum comnium caput est), to be related to all the commandments.' Also, 572: 'Quando summa est caput totius pietatis in eo vertatur, prophterea quod, ubi cordi cum Deo bene convenit et hoc praeceptum servatum fuerit, cetera omnia apte consequuntur.'

[21]OS 1:49 (INST:33)

[22]For Calvin see OS 1:43 (INST:26). For Zwingli and Karlstadt see Charles Garside, Zwingli and the Arts (1966): 40-41

[23]Lietzmann (n 14): 6.30-7.4

[24]OS 1:43 (INST:27)

[25]OS 1:44 (INST:28)

[26]Charles Garside, 'Ludwig Haetzer's Pamphlet,' Mennonite Quarterly Review 34(1960): 20-36. Pater (n 3):130-34

[27]OS 1:44 (INST:28): 'Non hanc esse docendi populi Dei rationem, quem longe alia doctrina quam istis naeniis institui voluit Dominus. Verbi sui praedicationem communem omnibus doctrinam proposuit.'

[28]OS 1:44 (INST:28)

[29]OS 1:39 (INST:23): 'Proprieque haec ipsa scripta lex, testimonium est duntaxat legis naturalis, quod memoriam

nostram saepius excitet, et inculcet ea quae, docente intus lege naturali, non satis didiceramus.'

[30]See n 18

[31]2.8.1

[32]1.11.1

[33]1.11.4

[34]1.11.2

[35]Lietzmann (n 14): 7.24-36. In this popular sermon, Karlstadt does not refer to dulia and latria, but he uses the corresponding verbal forms in the vernacular, namely eheren and anbeten.

[36]Ibid, 13.19-22

[37]WA 14:593-95 (LW 9:58)

[38]CR 52:386 (CC Ex-Num vol 2:434): 'Adde quod diabolicus fuit furor, abrogare unum ex decem praeceptis...'

[39]See Isaiah Shachar, The Judensau (1974)

[40]WA 18:77 (LW 40:93)

[41]OS 1:46-47 (INST:31)

[42]CR 33:267-68 Calvin's Selected Works (Edinburgh: 1851) vol 3:398-99)

[43]WA 50:333 (LW 47:93)

[44]OS 1:48 (INST:32)

[45]OS 1:48 (INST:32): 'Non religione aliqua discernimus inter diem et diem, sed communis politiae causa.'

[46]OS 1:47 (INST:31)

[47]Ibid

[48]2.8.28

[49]2.8.29

[50]2.8.29

[51]4.14.1

[52]4.4.3; 14.2

[53]See Calvin's argument in 4.14.20-16. For Thomas see Summa Theologiae 3, q. 62 a.6

[54]2.8.32

[55]2.8.33

[56]John T. McNeill, ed. Calvin: Institutes of the Christian Religion vol 1 (1960): 399

[57]CR 52:577 (CC Ex-Num vol 2:434)

[58]CR 52:579 (CC Ex-Num vol 2:437)

[59]Ibid.

[60]CR 52:580 (CC Ex-Num vol 2:438)

[61]CR 52:581 (CC Ex-Num vol 2:440)

[62]CR 73:47 (NTC vol 1:46)

[63]CR 52:24 (CC Ex-Num vol 1:44)

[64]1.8.10

[65]CR 49:226 (NTC 8:255)

CALVIN'S PSYCHOPANNYCHIA: ANOTHER LOOK

Timothy George

It is a curious fact that Calvin's first theological writing as a Protestant has received relatively little attention from his many interpreters. Originally directed against the somewhat obscure heresy of soul sleep, the Psychopannychia has suffered from its proximity to the Institutes of 1536, which all of the biographers have recognized as Calvin's real first work of genius. Moreover, the specific origin and provenance of the treatise have been matters of dispute since the first modern critical edition appeared in the Corpus Reformatorum in 1866. Indeed, the term "psychopannychia" itself is fraught with ambiguity, and there is no scholarly consensus concerning the identity of Calvin's original opponents.

Despite these difficulties, the Psychopannychia is an important document both for our understanding of Calvin's development and for our assessment of early Reformed polemics. In this treatise we see Calvin wrestling for the first time with what might be called the "eschatological tension" in his thought--the effort to hold in balance a fervent eschatological hope with a realistic commitment to history. Here he also broaches certain christological and soteriological concerns which he will treat in extenso in his later theological writings. The purpose of this essay is first to review the bibliographical problem related to the

Psychopannychia, then to suggest several sets of opponents who may have attracted Calvin's attention, and, finally, to measure the significance of the treatise for Calvin's developing theology.

I.

The first printed edition of Psychopannychia of which we have an extant copy appeared in Strasbourg in 1542 published by Wendelin Rihel, who three years earlier had also published the first edition of Calvin's Commentary on Romans as well as the famous epistola to Cardinal Sadolet.[1] This edition carried the title, Vivere apud Christum non dormire animis sanctos, qui in fide Christi decedunt. The same printer brought out a second edition three years later in March, 1545, but with a revised title: Psychopannychia, qua refellitur quorundam imperitorum error, qui animas post mortem usque ad ultimum iudicium dormire putant. The edition also bore as a subtitle the following ascription: "Libellus ante septem annos compositus, nunc tamen primum in lucem aeditus." This statement is puzzling for two reasons. The proposed date of composition--"seven years earlier"--would have fit more accurately the 1542 edition, judging from the two prefaces which were attached to each edition; further, the claim that this was the editio princeps was clearly false since, with only minor variants, the identical treatise had been published by the same printer in the same city only three years before. Perhaps this is merely an example

of sixteenth-century "book talk"--the ruse of a publisher trying to dress up an old product with a new, flashier title for a showing at the Frankfort book fair!

Several subsequent editions of the Psychopannychia are worthy of note. A French translation was made in 1542, but published only in 1558 by Conrad Badius in Geneva. The editors of the Corpus Reformatorum were aware of only one extant exemplar of this edition, although it was reprinted in the Bezae corpus gallicum in 1566.[2] A possible explanation for the long delay in publication of the French translation was the appearance in 1544 of Calvin's Brièvе Instruction contre les Anabaptistes, which dealt at length with the issue of soul sleep and incorporated much material from the Psychopannychia.[3] The first English translation of the document appeared in 1581 translated by T. Stocker under the title: An Excellent Treatise of the Immortalyte of the Soul. A second English translation, made by Henry Beveridge, appeared in 1844, published by the Calvin Translation Society in Edinburgh. A Hungarian translation was published in 1906. Two critical editions of the Latin text have been published: the first in the Corpus Reformatorum, Vol.5 of Calvini Opera; the second, and far superior, by Walther Zimmerli, a German Old Testament scholar. Zimmerli's edition was published at Leipzig in 1932 as volume 30 in the series "Quellenschriften zur Geschichte des Protestantismus."[4]

Having survey the printed editions of Psychopannychia, we must now turn to the controverted question of its original Sitz im Leben. All of the editions we have mentioned contain two prefatory letters by Calvin, the first addressed "to a certain friend" and dated "Orléans, 1534," the second "to the readers" dated "Basel, 1536." On the basis of these prefaces the editors of the Corpus Reformatorum assumed that two early editions of Psychopannychia had in fact been printed. They guessed that the 1534 edition had been published by some unknown printer in Paris, while (they assumed) that of 1536 must have come from the press of Thomas Platter at Basel. They admitted that they had not been able to find any exemplars of these editions, though they expressed hope that they might yet be discovered in "some dark corner of a French library" (in obscura quadam interioris Galliae bibliotheca).[5] In support of their theory was Beza's statement, supported by Colladon, that Calvin had first published the Psychopannychia before he was forced to withdraw from France.

However, on the basis of his careful study of Calvin's correspondence, A. L. Herminjard was able to show that, in all likelihood, the first drafts of Psychopannychia circulated only in autograph form. Of great importance here is a letter of Wolfgang Capito addressed Martianus Lucanius, one of Calvin's pseudonyms. Herminjard argues that the letter was sent to Calvin during his sojourn in Basel "toward the end of

1534."[6] In this letter Capito says that he has been pleased by Calvin's book, although he complains that he has not been able to read it thoroughly "because of the small characters"--perhaps a reference to Calvin's handwriting? He counsels against publication because that would only give greater notoriety to the teaching Calvin is seeking to refute. Moreover, there are certain autores splendidi, whom the Lord has allowed to fall into the same error, who would only be further exacerbated by Calvin's attack. Nonetheless, the fruit of Calvin's labors are not lost, for they can be revised and used at a more favorable time.

We must return to the question of the identity of the splendidi autores whom Capito is so wary of offending. However, at this point it is well to note that Calvin seems to have taken Capito's advice to heart. The preface of 1536 opens with at least a half-hearted apology for his rather "severe and harsh expressions which have perhaps given offence to delicate ears." Apparently Capito was not alone in upbraiding Calvin for his blunt polemics, for in the same preface he defends himself against those who "charge me with stirring up fierce contests about nothing, and of making trifling differences the source of violent dissensions." He responds that the issue at hand is more significant than many suppose: "it is certainly no trivial matter to see God's light extinguished by the devil's darkness."[7]

In fact, by the time Calvin wrote the preface of

1536, he had apparently already completely re-worked the original draft. This can be deduced from a letter of 3 September 1535 addressed to his friend Christopher Fabri who had been among the critics of the first draft. Calvin informs his friend that he has thoroughly revised this "little book" changing the order of presentation, taking out some things, adding others, so that the copy he is now sending is really a "novum librum."[8] Apparently, Calvin intended to submit this revised edition to the press, and accordingly wrote the 1536 preface to introduce it afresh. For some reason, however, this intention was not fulfilled. On 1 October 1538, settled now in Strasbourg following his expulsion from Geneva, Calvin wrote to his former classmate from Orléans, Antoine Pignet: "At present you will receive nothing from me against the lethargic hypnosophistas. I hope the booklet I wrote against them three years ago will very soon be published. For Bucer, who had advised against its publication before, encourages me now."[9] One year later the work remains unpublished, for on 4 October 1539 Pignet writes to Calvin from Geneva urging him to send the work against soul sleepers. As we have seen, it would be nearly three more years before the first imprint of 1542.

II.

Against whom was the Psychopannychia directed? Who were Calvin's opponents? This is perhaps the most difficult question we face in seeking to reconstruct the

life setting of the document. Before suggesting several possible sets of opponents, we should look briefly at the preface of 1534. In his first sentence Calvin tells us that he is taking up the pen against the soul sleepers at the urging of certain "pious men." Emile Doumergue makes a great deal of the word "pridem" (long ago), or in the French version, "déjà de long temps." Doumergue thinks this word supports an early dating of Calvin's conversion since "depuis long temps" he had been regarded "comme un défenseur, comme un chef des idées evangeliques."[10] More to the point, Calvin indicates that this heresy, which he had hoped would simply vanish of its own accord, had in fact grown into a rather virulent movement. "These babblers have so strenuously exercised themselves, that they have already drawn thousands into their insanity." How well informed Calvin was about the size or even the nature of this sect is quite dubious. He claims never to have seen their writings. Indeed, he says that he has only received "some notes from a friend" who had transcribed what "he had heard from their lips, or collected by some other means." Nonetheless, he is convinced that there is a clear and present danger to the faith, for this sect is "gaining ground daily" and "eating in like a cancer."[11]

Once in the preface of 1534, and once again in that of 1536, Calvin refers to his opponents as Anabaptists: in the former he calls them "dregs of Anabaptists" (ex anabaptistarum faece), in the latter "the nefarious herd

of Anabaptists." Apart from these two references, the name "Anabaptists" appears only once in the body of the text, and that in the very last paragraph. More commonly, he refers to his opponents in pejorative terms such as "these soul slayers" (isti animicidae), "dreamy sleepers" (somniatores), hypnologists, vain dreamers, etc. Moreover, Calvin distinguishes clearly two levels of heresy among his opponents: first, those who allow a real existence to the human soul after death, but who teach that it sleeps in a state of insensibility until the Day of Judgment; secondly, those who claim that the soul cannot exist without the body, that in fact it perishes along with the body, until the day when the whole person is raised again. The former view, psychosomnolence, Calvin regarded as an error which had to be corrected; the latter, thnetopsychism or, more popularly, mortalism, he saw as a serious heresy which "ought to be repressed."[12]

Calvin believed that he was faced with the recrudescence of an ancient heresy which had recurred at intervals throughout the history of the church. In the preface of 1536 he locates the origin of the error with certain Arabs who, according to Eusebius, taught that "the human soul dies and perishes with the body" to be rejoined with it again at the resurrection.[13] Calvin then mentions the case of Pope John XXII (1249-1334) whom he classifies as a mortalist, although apparently John had only taught that the beatific vision was withheld from the faithful departed (including the

saints and the Virgin Mary) until after the Last Judgment. To be sure, this was a serious enough departure from orthodox eschatology. Under pressure from the theologians at Paris, John was forced to embrace the standard view.[14] This false doctrine, Calvin avers, then "lay smoldering" for some years until its recent revival by "some dregs of Anabaptists."

While blaming this teaching on the Anabaptists, Calvin admits that is "has been spread abroad far and wide" (longe et lateque pervagatae).[15] Indeed, there were multiple sources for psychopannychist sentiment in the sixteenth century. We must speak not only of the polygenesis of Anabaptism, but of the polygenesis of psychopannychism as well. Let us now look at several diverse streams of psychopannychist thought which may possibly have had some bearing on Calvin's situation.

III.

1. Italian Philosophical Speculation. The problem of the natural mortality of the soul had been a topic of lively debate among several Italian philosophical schools in the decades prior to the Reformation. The Averroistic interpretation of Aristotle, for example, found no place for individual souls, but only for an eternal rational soul, in which each individual transiently participates. Within this context immortality meant merely the absorption of the individual in the universal Intellect. Another challenge to orthodox catholic eschatology was put forth

by Pietro Pomponazzi in his daring analysis of Aristotle's anthropology, published in 1516 as On the Immortality of the Soul. Therein he sought to demonstrate by natural reason that human beings were possessed of dignity and individuality despite the mortality of the soul.

Pomponazzi believed that these speculations, deduced from mere human reason, posed no threat to ecclesiastical doctrine, based as it was on the higher norm of divine revelation. This, however, did not prevent Pope Leo X, in the first year of his pontificate (1513), from condemning at the Fifth Lateran Council all views which denied the philosophical probability of the natural immortality of the soul.[16].

In a striking comparison George H. Williams has suggested that psychopannychism should be considered the Italian counterpart of German solafideism and Swiss predestinarianism in contributing to the dismantling of the medieval structures of sacramental grace, thus weakening the grip of the papacy on human souls at the very outset of the Reformation.[17] Among Calvin's possible opponents at Orléans, Williams, following Henri Busson, suggests certain "French Paduans" who presumably had been infected with the views of Italian Averroists, Pompanazzi, or both. Admittedly the identity of such heterodox dissenters remains shadowy at best. Nonetheless, the persistence of psychopannychist ideas (of both the mortalist and psychosomnolent variety) is a distinguishing trait of most, if not all, of that

heterogeneous group of radical reformers Williams refers to as "evangelical rationalists". Most of them were Italians or had strong contacts with Italian radicals; to mention only three of the most prominent in this grouping--Michael Servetus, Camillo Renato, and Lelius Socinus, all of whom had extensive personal contact with Calvin. We know, for example that Calvin had planned a rendezvous with Servetus in Paris in 1534, about the time he would have written the first draft of Psychopannychia. It has been suggested that Calvin's depiction of his opponents' view of the soul as "merely a vital power derived from arterial spirit on the action of the lungs" (ex spiritu arteriae aut pulmonum agitatione) echoes Servetus' theory of the pulmonary circulation of the blood.[18] In any event, the intensity of Calvin's hostility toward Servetus is better understood when we remember that the latter was not only an anti-Trinitarian but also an Anabaptist and a psychopannychist.

The psychopannychist ideas attacked by Calvin, however, were not the sole domain of university-trained academics such as Socinus or eclectic intellectuals such as Servetus. They had also gained wide acceptance among radicals of the rank and file. For example, the famous synod of Venice, which met for forty days in 1550 and summoned delegates from as far away as St. Gall, declared that there was no hell except the grave, and that the souls of the elect slept from death until the Day of Judgment. Carlo Ginzburg has shown how these

radical eschatological doctrines trickled down to a common miller of the Friuli, a certain Mennochio, who was condemned to death by the Inquisition for holding, among other things, that "when the body dies, the soul also dies and returns to God who gave it to us."[19]

2. Evangelical Anabaptism. Among the radical reformers the doctrine of soul sleep seems first to have been taught by Andreas Bodenstein von Karlstadt and his brother-in-law, Gerhard Westerburg, both of whom had studied at Italian universities--Karlstadt at Siena and Westerburg at Bologna. In 1523, while both were serving as peasant preachers in the village of Orlamünde, the two men published two attacks on purgatory, which also included a positive affirmation of the transient sleep of the soul pending resurrection. Westerburg's eight-page tract, Vom Fegfeuer und Stand der verschiedenen Seelen: Eine christliche Meinung, was so popular that it earned him the nickname of "Dr. Fegfeuer." In 1524 Westerburg was in Zürich conferring with Conrad Grebel and Felix Manz. In a letter to Vadian (14 October 1524) Grebel writes that Westerburg had stayed with them six days and claims to have read Westerburg's libellum on the slumber of souls.[20] By 1529 Westerburg had embraced Anabaptism and become the leader of the Anabaptist movement in his native city of Cologne.

The first Protestant reformer to defend immortality of the soul against sectarian psychopannychism was Heinrich Bullinger. In 1526, while serving as "Schulmeister" at Kappel, Bullinger wrote a little

pamphlet entitled, Quod Anima a Corporibus Separatae, Non Dormiant, sed cum Christo in Coelis Vivant. This was written at the request of a certain Paul Berkius who had complained that the common people in his area were being swept away by this false doctrine.[21] Some five years later Zwingli picked up the same theme in his Elenchus(1529), claiming that "the Catabaptists teach that the dead sleep, both body and soul, until the day of judgment, because they do not know that the Hebrews used the word 'sleeping' for 'dying.'"[22]

Over against this, Mennonite historians have denied vehemently that sixteenth-century Anabaptists advocated any form of the soul sleep doctrine.[23] Whatever may be said of Calvin's original opponents, it seems clear that later editions of Psychopannychia were indeed directed against certain French-speaking Anabaptists who held some form of psychopannychism. In the early 1540s there was an outburst of Anabaptist activity in the area of Neuchâtel. The first Anabaptist to be arrested at Neuchâtel was a woman from the parish of Cornaux who reportedly had said that "the soul of a person dies with the body, and that there was no difference between the soul of a beast and that of a person."[24] Writing to Calvin in early 1544 Farel, then the pastor at Neuchâtel, suggested that a French translation of Psychopannychia would greatly help in his efforts to counteract the principal doctrines of the Anabaptists. In lieu of such a translation (which did not appear until 1558) Calvin added to his Briève Instruction a

separate chapter comprising nearly one-third of the entire work dealing with psychopannychism.

3. Lutheran Soul-Sleepers. We have noted already Capito's advice against publication of the first draft of Psychopannychia lest certain "autores splendidi" be offended. And, in the preface of 1536, Calvin concedes that there are some "boni viri" who have fallen into this error either, as he imagines, "from excessive credulity or from ignorance of the Scriptures." He does not wish to offend these pious brethren since his main target is "the nefarious herd of Anabaptists."

Who were the "autores splendidi" and the "boni viri" whom both Calvin and Capito are so wary of offending? Herminjard suggests that Capito was alluding to Caspar Schwenckfeld and Martin Cellarius; the editors of the Corpus Reformatorum suggest Karlstadt as a likely possibility. Even more likely, however, is the reformer of Wittenberg himself, Martin Luther. Luther had strongly condemned the decree of the Fifth Lateran Council on the natural immortality of the soul. This was partly in keeping with his blast against "whore reason"; it was another example of philosophy intruding into the realm of faith. But it also reflected his suspicion of the inherited Catholic view of the afterlife. In a sermon of 1524 he declared that the soul sleeps until God awakens both it and the boy at the Last Judgment. In another sermon (1533) he proclaimed: "We shall sleep until he comes and knocks on the grave and says, 'Dr. Martinus, arise!'"[25] His clearest

statement on the issue is from his Commentary on Ecclesiastes, published in 1532, two years before Calvin penned the first draft of Psychopannychia. Commenting on the text, "there is no work, nor desire, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave whither thou goest,"(Eccl. 9:10), he writes:

> Solomon judges the dead are asleep, feel nothing at all. For they lie there accounting neither days nor years, but when they are awakened, they shall seem to have slept scarce one minute.[26]

Luther's psychopannychism was picked up by his English disciples. William Tyndale and George Joye, who proceeded to defend its basis in Scripture against the attacks of Sir Thomas More.[27]

Calvin, then, directed Psychopannychia against the Anabaptists, although he was aware that the heresy of soul sleep had also been advanced by more reputable reformers. We cannot identify with precision the "hypnologi" who elicited the first draft of 1534. While we cannot rule out the influence of Italian philosophical speculation on various streams of radical dissent, Calvin's opponents seem to have been thoroughgoing biblicists who were possessed of an acute apocalyptic eschatology. Despite the paucity of primary evidence for the teaching of soul sleep among evangelical Anabaptists, it seems certain that some of their number had in fact embraced this view and that Calvin was not entirely off base in ascribing it to

them. Whoever the original soul sleepers may have been, Cardinal Sadolet felt justified in attributing their teaching to Protestants in general. Was it not a logical step for those who had denied prayers for the dead, invocation of saints, and purgatory to also deny the sentient existence of the soul after death? Here then is a major apologetic motive which may well have prompted Calvin to write the Psychopannychia: his desire to dissociate himself and the true evangelicals from this pernicious error. We must now turn to a brief review of the central theological themes touched upon in Psychopannychia.

IV.

1. Immortality of the Soul. Psychopannychia contains Calvin's first extensive treatment of the nature and origin of the human soul. Over against his opponents, psychosomnolents and mortalists alike, Calvin maintains that the soul is a true substance (substantia) endued with both sense and understanding which are not abrogated by the death of the body. Calvin had been preoccupied with the issue of the soul as early as his Commentary on Seneca's De Clementia where he had reviewed the various philosophical opinions as to the location of the soul--Herephilus had located it in the brain, Plato in the entire head, Strato between the eyebrows, Diogenes in the heart, etc.[28] In the Psychopannychia, while referring approvingly to both Plato and Aristotle's discourses on the soul, Calvin

asserts that the true nature of the soul cannot be derived from philosophical inquiry. He proceeds to identify the human soul with the imago dei: "Whatever philosophers or these dreamers may pretend, we hold that nothing can bear the image of God but spirit, since God is a spirit."[29] In contrast to animal life which is derived from the general creative process, the human soul is a special creation of God. "The soul of man is not of the earth. It was made by the mouth of the Lord, i.e., by his secret power."[30] Calvin opts for the creationist rather than the traducianist theory of the origin of the soul.

Despite Calvin's claim to be following a strictly biblical view of the soul, many of his interpreters have criticized him for being too heavily influenced by the Greek, especially Neoplatonic, philosophical tradition. Heinrich Quistrop, for example, charges Calvin with not taking seriously enough the corporeal connotations of the Hebrew word nephesh and the Greek word psyche. More recently, Suzanne Selinger has argued that Calvin's disparagement of the body together with his overly spiritualized view of the soul resulted in "a continuous and significant conflict between dualism and orthodoxy" within his entire thought.[31]

There is no question but that Calvin's depiction of the soul in the Psychopannychia is laden with Neoplatonic imagery. He stresses the sharp distinction between soul and body, quoting Jesus' statement in John 2:19, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will

raise it up," to prove his point.[32] Significantly, this was also Nestorius' favorite proof text in his disputes with the Monophysites. The soul he describes as the "bona pars hominis" which is contained in a vessel of clay. Again, the soul is that "better part" held captive by bodily chains (anima corporis viniculis captiva). The body is the "prison of the soul," a "kind of fetters," which decays, "weighs down the soul, and greatly limits its perception."[33] At death the soul will shake off all kinds of pollutions and return, as it were, to its true spiritual condition.[34]

Calvin's doctrine, however, is much more than an echo of the Fifth Lateran Council's decree on the philosophical provability of the soul's natural immortality. Calvin, no less than Luther, would not have accepted philosophical proofs of natural immortality. He in fact plainly disavows the natural immortality of the soul.

> For when we say that the spirit of man is immortal, we do not affirm that it can stand against the hand of God, or subsist without his agency. Far from us be such blasphemy!

He then quotes Irenaeus who says, "Let us not be inflated and raise ourselves up against God, as if we had life in ourselves," [for] God alone is immortal.[35] Calvin also distances himself from the Neoplatonic world view by insisting on the corporeality of the resurrection. To be sure, he does not enlarge upon this theme in the Psychopannychia since it was a tenet which

he held in common with the soul sleepers. The reality and futurity of the bodily resurrection will emerge as a major theme in Calvin's polemic against the libertins spirituels whose overly realized eschatology he vehemently opposed.[36]

In the Psychopannychia, then, Calvin, while making liberal use of Neoplatonic imagery, shies away from the notion of the natural immortality of the soul. At one point he does go so far as to deny that the imago dei has any reference to the body, a position he will later qualify in the Institutes.[37] For the most part, however, his emphasis is on the biblical/parasitic idea of the soul's constant sustenance by the power of God.

2. The Intermediate State. Calvin's primary concern throughout the treatise is to show that the soul in its posthumous state is conscious, vivid, and filled with awareness. In order to make this point against the soul sleepers he uses a variety of theological arguments. We observe briefly his appeal to exegetical, Christological and soteriological concerns.

a. Exegetical. He appeals throughout to a number of Old Testament exempla to illustrate the active, vigilant state of the soul after death. For example, Jesus likened his own death to Jonah's stay in the belly of the fish, whence the wayward prophet cried unto the Lord and was heard. Further, in an imaginative allegory, Calvin compares Isaac, who was offered on the altar but did not die, to the soul while the ram, sacrificed in his place, represents the body. In his

Commentary on Genesis, published in 1563, Calvin seems to have abandoned this use of the Isaac story declaring that "subtle allegories" have no foundation in the text."[38] In another, somewhat strained analogy Calvin compares the soul prior to its release at death to the wanderings of the children of Israel in the wilderness before their entrance into the Promised Land.[39]

However, Calvin's primary exegetical support for his refutation of soul sleep comes from several well known loci in the New Testament. The first of these is the story of the rich man and Lazarus in Luke 16:19-31 which Calvin insists on interpreting as a "vera narratio" rather than a parable. He cites Ambrose, Tertullian, Gregory, Irenaeus, Origen, Cyprian, Jerome, and Augustine in support of this view. Even Chrysostom, who did view it as a parable, saw it as proof of the sentient state of the dead, which Calvin's opponents deny. Abraham's bosom is the place where the faithful "enjoy God fully without weariness." It is that special condition of rest,

> a heavenly Jerusalem, i.e., a vision of peace, in which the God of peace gives himself to be seen by his peace-makers, according to the promise of Christ.[40]

Abraham's bosom, then, is not a dormitory, a sleeping room, but rather a repository, a waiting room; the souls therein are neither slothful nor drowsy, but tranquil and vigilant, freed as they are from the warfare of this world.

Calvin also makes use of Jesus' words to the

penitent thief, "Today shalt thou be with me in paradise" (Luke 22:42) and the cries of the souls of the martyrs under the altar in Rev. 6. These latter souls are said not only to have cried out loudly, but also to have received white robes. With a touch of sarcasm, Calvin asks: "O sleeping spirits! what are white robes to you? Are they pillows on which you are to lie down and sleep? You see that white robes are not at all adapted for sleep, and therefore, when thus clothed, they must be awake."[41] Calvin also draws on apocryphal writings such as Ecclesiasticus, Wisdom, and Esdras to which his opponents have appealed. These books, while not canonical, "ought to have some weight" as ancient pious writings.[42]

b. Christological. The very fact that Calvin chose to focus so much attention on the somewhat obscure doctrine of soul sleep indicates that for him something of tremendous theological import was at stake. In the 1536 Institutes he declares that "the whole sum of our salvation and also all its parts are comprehended in Christ," and "by faith we possess Christ and all that is his."[43] It is therefore not surprising that in the Psychopannychia Calvin appeals to the Christological focus of redemption to buttress his argument against soul sleep. There is an inviolate nexus between Christ and the believer. When Paul proclaims that we have been made conformable to Christ's death, Calvin draws a precise parallel.

> Now, O dreamy sleepers, commune with your own hearts, and consider how Christ died. Did he sleep when he was working for your salvation? ... Let any one of you now put on a supercilious air, and pretend that the death of Christ was a sleep--or let him go over and join the camp of Apollinaris! Christ was indeed awake when he exerted himself for your salvation; but you sleep your sleep, and buried in the darkness of blindness, give no heed to his awakening calls![44]

However, it is not only the death of Christ but also his resurrection, ascension, and session at the right hand of the Father which is the focus of the believer's hope.

> If, therefore, the life of Christ is ours, let him who insists that our life is ended by death, pull Christ down from the right hand of the Father, and consign him to the second death. If he can die, our death is certain; if he has no end of life, neither can our souls ingrafted in him be ended by any death![45]

c. Soteriological. The believer's union with Christ is not abrogated but rather enhanced by the death of the body. Indeed, if at death believers were to lapse into a state of unconscious slumber, their constant communion with Christ would be severed. This would mean, in effect, that we would enjoy greater bliss now than after we have departed this earthly life. "If, as they maintain, our souls are at death overwhelmed with lethargy, and buried in oblivion, they must lose every kind of spiritual enjoyment which they previously possessed."[46]

While Calvin devotes most of his attention to the

state of elect souls after death, he does not shrink from speaking plainly about the fate of the reprobate as well. They too are reserved in a chamber of waiting; but, unlike the elect who rest in the felicitous care of Abraham's bosom, the reprobate anticipate the dreadful judgment and are tortured by that expectation. Calvin is reluctant to spell out precisely the nature of the torments experienced by the damned--that would be "to plunge into the abyss of the divine mysteries."[47] Later, in his commentary on the rich man and Lazarus, he seems to have demythologized certain features of the medieval conception of hell ("For souls have not been endowed with fingers and eyes, nor are they tormented with thirst .... The Lord is painting a picture which represents the condition of the future life in a way that we can understand.") while retaining a literal enough view to speak of the reprobate as terror-struck by the incomprehensible vengeance of God, enduring the "terrifying torments" which have been prepared for them.[48] Calvin has no developed doctrine of predestination in the Psychopannychia, but even here he speaks of those "whom God has condemned and doomed to destruction," those reprobate spirits who in their lamentable posthumous state despair because they know themselves excluded from the redemption in Christ.[49]

3. The Consummation. Calvin has defined the rest or peace of the elect in terms of three distinct stages. First, there is the rest into which believers enter upon receiving the gospel. The effects of this initial

evangelical experience are described in almost Lutheran categories: God the dreaded Judge becomes now a gracious Father; instead of children of wrath, believers now see themselves as children of grace. At the same time, this rest remains partial, incomplete in this life. Human life on earth is a warfare, and those who are beset by the "stings of sin and the remains of the flesh" (simul iustus et peccator) must feel depression in the world even while they find consolation in God.[50] The second stage of rest is the peace which awaits the believer after death, the experience of Abraham's bosom. The release of the soul at death does bring about a qualitative change in the "rest" of the elect: they will then "see" their future reward from a distance, and rest in the sure hope of a blessed resurrection."[51] Yet even this rest is by its very nature also provisional. Indeed, Calvin says, our blessedness is always in progress (in cursu) up to that day which shall conclude and terminate all progress, the final consummation, the apocatastasis when, as St. Paul has it, "God shall be all in all" (I Cor. 15:28). This third, consummate stage of rest Calvin identifies with the Parousia of Christ and the resurrection of the dead.

One major objection which Calvin's opponents had levelled against traditional eschatology was that it reduced the resurrection to an anticlimactic event at the end of the age.

> How will the elect be then called to the possession of the heavenly kingdom, if they

> already possess it? How can they be told to come, if they are already there? How will the people be then saved, if they are safe now?[52]

To forestall this kind of objection, Calvin emphasizes the incompleteness of the beatific experience prior to the resurrection. At one point he suggests that elect souls continue to progress during the interval between death and the resurrection. He supports this idea with a quotation from Augustine which he only half endorses, realizing perhaps the fine line between this notion and the Catholic conception of purgatory.[53]

For Calvin the Kingdom of God is present here and now; it may "in some measure be beheld," he says. And yet we continue to pray "Thy kingdom come," because it will only properly come when it is completed.[54] In the meantime, the church is (as Calvin points out several times in the Psychopannychia) "still a pilgrim on the earth," called to live out its mission in the tension between the "no longer" and the "not yet."[55] At this point individual and corporate eschatologies converge. For Calvin the way one viewed life after death had important implications for the way one lived life before death. The regnum Christi consists both in the progress of believers (profectus fidelium) and the building up of the church (aedificatio ecclesiae). The church as a community of pilgrims, and itself a pilgrim community, is often enough the church "under the cross," ecclesia militans, the church at war with the principalities and powers of this present age. This is the church which is

sustained amidst all its struggles by the assurance of its union with Christ, which not even death can sever, and by its expectation of the ultimate victory of that kingdom not made with hands. Such are the people, Calvin says, who sing and celebrate the goodness of the Lord, for he delivers and restores the hopes of those who are "afflicted, bruised and in despair."[56] Perhaps these were among Calvin's thoughts as he fled the persecution in his native France, and trudged along the road toward Basel.

And now, a brief postscript. This year, 1986, is the 450th anniversary of the first edition of Calvin's Institutes and of the official acceptance of the Reformation in Geneva. It is also the 100th anniversary of the birth of the Reformed theologian, Karl Barth. In the winter term of 1934-1935, Barth's theological students at Bonn gathered for their seminar in the home of their professor. Their text: Calvin's Psychopannychia, in the Zimmerli edition which had just been published. However, the seminar was never able to complete its study of the treatise due to the expulsion of Barth from Germany. Like Calvin 400 years earlier, Barth too found refuge in Basel. Perhaps in our own apocalyptic times Calvin's eschatology can be studied with profit by a church which, in the midst of turbulence, dares still to hope.

NOTES

[1]On Rihel see Miriam U. Chrisman, Lay Culture, Learned Culture: Books and Social Change in Strasbourg, 1840-1599 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982), pp. 13-25.

[2]The French translation bears the following title: Psychopannychie. Traitte par lequel est prouvé que les ames veillent + vivent apres qu'elles sont sorties des corps, contre l'erreur de quelques ignorans qui pensent qu'elles dorment iusques au dernier iugement. This translation is reprinted in Oeuvres Françoises de J. Calvin, ed. P.L. Jacob (Paris: Librairie de Charles Gosselin, 1842), pp.25-105. Jacob refers to a French edition of 1556 and suggests that Calvin himself was the translator: "Ce traité, qui avait paru en latin dès 1534, nous semble avoir été traduit par Calvin lui-même, comme un de ses ouvrages de prédilection," ibid., ix. An extant copy of the 1558 imprint is located in the rare book collection of the University of Aberdeen.

[3]It has been suggested that the section on "the state of the souls after death" in the Brieve Instruction may have been the original draft of Psychopannychia. Cf. the introduction and English translation of the Brieve Instruction in John Calvin: Treatises Against the Anabaptists and Against the Libertines, ed. Benjamin W. Farley (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1982). Cf. also the helpful discussion by Willem Balke, Calvin and the Anabaptist Radicals (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1981), pp. 25-38, 169-208.

[4]Joh. Calvin, Psychopannychia, ed. Walther Zimmerli (Leipzig: A. Deichertsche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1932).

[5]Joannis Calvini Opera quae supersunt omnia, ed. Guilielmus Baum, Eduardus Cunitz, and Eduardus Reuss (Brunsvigae: C.A. Schwetschkte, 1863-1900), vol. 5, xxxv. Thomas F. Torrance, Kingdom and Church (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1956), p.90, posits two early published editions before the "third" one at Strasbourg in 1542.

[6]Correspondance des Réformateurs dans les Pays de Langue Française, ed. A.L. Herminjard (Geneva: H. Georg, 1870), III, pp. 242-45 No. 490. In his Bibliotheca Universalis, published in 1545, Conrad Gesner mentions only the 1542 Strasbourg edition of the Psychopannychia.

[7]John Calvin, Tracts and Treatises, ed. Henry Beveridge (Edinburgh: Calvin Translation Society, 1851), III, p. 418. Hereafter cited Tracts.

[8]Herminjard, III, pp. 349-50, No. 527.

[9]Ibid., V, p. 132, No. 749: "Adversus veternosos hypnosophistas nihil habebis a me in praesentia, tum quia longior est disputatio quam ut epistola comprehendi queat, tum quod libellum quem ante triennium adversus eos scripseram propediem editum iri spero. Bucerus enim qui editionem ante dissuaserat nunc est mihi hortator."

[10]Emile Doumergue, Jean Calvin: Les hommes et les choses de son temps (Lausanne: Georges Bridel, 1899), I, p. 467.

[11]Tracts, p. 414-15: "Atque utinam inventa esset alia ratio, quae malum hoc plus nimio pullulascens mature recideret, ne velut cancer magis ac magis indies serpat."

[12]Etymoligically, the word "psychopannychia" means "wakeful watch of the soul" (cf. Greek, pannychios, all night long). Calvin, however, uses it as a general designation for all views, psychosomnolence and mortalism alike, not consonant with his own idea of the soul after death as capable of motion, feeling, perception, etc. Interestingly, the Oxford English Dictionary defines psychopannychia as "the all-night sleep of the soul," and cites Calvin as the first source for this meaning.

[13]Tracts, p. 415; Zimmerli, pp. 16-17: "Siquidem legimus arabicos fuisse quosdam huius dogmatis auctores, qui iactarent animam cum corpore una emori, in die

indicii utrumque resurgere." According to Eusebius, Origen held a public disputation on this subject and won back many of those who had embraced mortalist views. Eusebius: The Ecclesiastical History, tr. J.E.L. Oulton (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1932), II, p. 90-91 [bk. 6, ch. 37].

[14]John's views were set forth in a series of sermons preached in 1331-32. Cf. the discussion in Leroy E. Froom, The Conditionalist Faith of Our Fathers (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald, 1955), pp. 35-37.

[15]Tracts, p. 415; Zimmerli, p. 17.

[16]Pomponazzi's treatise is translated in The Renaissance Philosophy of Man, ed. Ernst Cassirer et al. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1948), pp. 257-381. The famous Apostolici regiminis is translated in part in George H. Williams, The Radical Reformation (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1962), p. 23. The original text is printed in Mansi, Concilia xxxiii, coll. 842f.

[17]Ibid., p. 24.

[18]Ibid., pp. 584-86. Tracts, p. 419; Zimmerli, p. 23.

[19]Carlo Ginzburg, The Cheese and the Worms: The Cosmos of a Sixteenth Century Miller (New York: Penguin Books, 1982), p. 75. The influence of psychopannychism on subsequent radical theologies has been traced by George H. Williams, "Socinianism and Deism: From Eschatological Elitism to Universal Immortality?" Historical Reflections/Reflexions Historiques 2 (1975), pp. 265-90. In a letter written from Louvain on 1 November 1519, Erasmus refers to certain Christian groups with mortalist views: "Quis antem crederent adhuc superesse qui stulticiam Epicuri profiterentur, negantes animas nostras superesse post obitum?" Opus epistdolarum Des. Erasmi Roterdarmi, eds. P.S. Allen and H.M. Allen (Oxford, 1906-1957), IV, No. 1039, p. 114.

[20]The Sources of Swiss Anabaptism, ed. Leland Harder (Scottdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 1985), p. 295.

[21]Bullinger's tract was never published. The original text, in Bullinger's own hand, is housed in the Zentralbibliothek Zürich Ms A 82 f. 116[r]-119[r]. Cf. Heinhold Fast, Heinrich Bullinger und die Täufer (Weierhof: Mennonitischer Geschichtsverein, 1959), p. 83.

[22]Selected Works of Huldrych Zwingli, ed. Samuel M. Jackson (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 1901), p. 252. Cf. Richard Stauffer, "Zwingli et Calvin: Critiques de la confession de Schleitheim," in The Origins and Characteristics of Anabaptism, ed. Marc Lienhard (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1977), pp. 126-47.

[23]Cf. Christian Neff's article on "Sleep of the Soul" in Mennonite Encyclopedia, IV, p. 543: "There is no convincing evidence that such a belief was held by Anabaptists or Mennonites anywhere."

[24]Quoted by Jules Pétremand in Guillaume Farel, 1489-1565. Biographie nouvelle écrite d'apries les documents originaux par un groupe d'historiens (Neuchâtel and Paris, 1930), p. 536: "... avait nulle différence entre l'âme d'une bête et celle d'une personne." The nature of the soul was one of three topics discussed by Farel and Calvin at a disputation with Anabaptists in Geneva in 1537. Cf. Balke, Anabaptist Radicals, p. 81.

[25]WA, 37, p. 151.

[26]WA, 20, pp. 162-63.

[27]Cf. Norman T. Burns, Christian Mortalism from Tyndale to Milton (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1975), pp. 18-41. On Luther's psychopannychism see Paul Althaus, The Theology of Martin Luther, tr. Robert C. Schultz (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1966), pp. 410-17. Cf. Luther's hymns, "In Peace and Joy I Now Depart," LW, 53, p. 248, and his letter to his dying father, Hans Luther in Luther: Letters of Spiritual Counsel, ed. T. G. Tappert (London: SCM Press, 1955),

pp. 29-32.

[28]Calvin's Commentary on Seneca's De Clementia, eds. Ford Lewis Battles and A. M. Hugo (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1969), p. 93.

[29]Zimmerli, p. 29.

[30]Ibid., p. 28.

[31]Heinrich Quistorp, Calvin's Doctrine of Last Things, tr. Harold Knight (London: Lutterworth Press, 1955), p. 64; Suzanne Selinger, Calvin Against Himself: An Inquiry in Intellectual History (Hamden, Conn.: Archon Books, 1984), p. 3.

[32]Zimmerli, p. 35.

[33]Ibid., p. 50, 60; Tracts, p. 425, 440, 454.

[34]Zimmerli, p. 60: "Quamdiu in corpore est virtutes suas exserere, cum ex illo ergastulo egreditur ad deum migrare. Cuius sensu interim fruitur, dum in spe beatae resurredtionis requiescit."

[35]Ibid., p. 95; Tracts, p. 478.

[36]Farley, Treatises, pp. 292-98.

[37]Tracts, pp. 422-24. Cf. Quistrop, Last Things, p. 64.

[38]Zimmerli, p. 48; John Calvin, Commentaries on the First Book of Moses called Genesis (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1984), p. 571.

[39]Zimmerli, p. 82.

[40]Ibid., pp. 43-44. Luther, Zwingli, and Calvin's exegesis of Luke 16:19-31 is compared in Auslegungen der Reformation, ed. Gerhard Friedrich (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1984), pp. 125-35.

[41]Tracts, p. 445.

[42]Ibid., p. 424.

[43]John Calvin, Institution of the Christian Religion, ed. F. L. Battles (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1975), p. 77, p. 81.

[44]Tracts, p. 436, p. 439. Torrance, Kingdom and Church, p. 94, points out the Christological character of Calvin's argument in the Psychopannychia.

[45]Tracts, p. 439.

[46]Ibid., p. 443.

[47]Ibid., p. 450.

[48]Calvin's New Testament Commentaries, eds. David W. Torrance and Thomas F. Torrance (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1972), II p. 119.

[49]Tracts, p. 480, p. 429.

[50]Zimmerli, p. 42.

[51]Ibid., p. 81: "Quia et deum agnoscunt sibi propitium et futuram mercedem eminus vident et in certa exspectatione beatae resurrectione acquiescunt."

[52]Ibid., p. 77.

[53]Tracts, p. 470.

[54]Zimmerli, p. 77. Cf. Calvin's exposition of the Lord's Prayer in the 1536 Institutes: "While we pray in this way, that 'God's kingdom come,' at the same time we desire that it may be at last perfected and fulfilled, that is, in the revelation of his judgment. On that day he alone will be exalted, and will be all in all, when his own folk are gathered and received into glory, but Satan's kingdom is utterly disrupted and laid low." Battles, Institution, p. 108.

[55]Tracts, p. 449. Cf. also p. 432.

[56]Cf. Torrance, Kingdom and Church, p. 96.

JOHANN FISCHART'S CALVINISTIC PROSELYTISM

Joseph Schmidt

Luthrisch, Päpstisch und Calvinisch, diese Glauben alle drei sind vorhanden; doch ist Zweifel, wo das Christentum dann sei.

Lutheran, popish, Calvinistic - we all know the three; but I doubt where all these creeds place true Christianity.[1]

When one of the witty epigrammarians of the 17th century, Friedrich von Logau (1604-1655), published these lines, Calvinism had gained a firm foothold in several German regions, notably in Brandenburg, Hesse, and the Palatinate.[2] There was strong support, too, in another province, long famous for being the meeting place of French and German culture, where sympathy for the Huguenots was direct and widespread: Alsace. It was also the home of the most eloquent German writer during the Counter-Reformation period: Johann Fischart (1546-ca.1590). And yet even the name of this very influential and ingenious author whose Calvinistic sympathies were expressed in a series of popular polemical writings is missing in recent studies on Calvin and his influence.[3]

Fischart's reputation today rests on his literary masterpiece, a translation/adaptation of part of Rabelais' Gargantua and Pantagruel (1575). A grotesque and innovative piece of German prose and poetry, it acquired the title by which it is known today, Geschichtsklitterung (Messy History of...), in later

editions. Fischart was a very prolific writer; his specialty was the enlarged and rather free translation from other literatures, notably from the French. Even though his preferred genre was the prose tale--he translated e.g. book six of Amadis, the most popular romantic novel of his day--he also wrote church songs, satires, polemical treatises, mock-exegeses, etc. He can be called a cultural translator in the modern sense of the word, a role that evolved, in part, out of his efforts. A burgher's son, he grew up in Strasbourg and Worms, where he acquired a solid education and was actively involved in the self-assured socio-cultural life of his native city. He saw his role as writer in addressing the specific urban audience of his time, enlightening and informing them about issues he considered central, essential, and vital to their interests.[4] Starting in the early seventies, he collaborated, until his death around 1590, with his brother-in-law, the printer Bernhard Jobin. Jobin was running a kind of news agency, and he commissioned Fischart to regularly comment on important political events. This was done mostly in the form of pamphlets- but very often Fischart would take his inspiration from an already existing publication and adapt it to the (German) context of his audience. He was extremely prolific, writing on a wide range of topics and genres: from a manual praising matrimonial virtues to a voluminous historical Prognosticon. Conscious of his role as an influential publicist in the modern sense of

the word, this meant that he became deeply involved in the struggle between more orthodox Lutherans and Calvinists (on the side of the latter!) in Strasbourg in the late seventies.[5] The Lutheran party maintained its dominant position, and Fischart left the city in 1581, possibly because of his high profile in this political skirmish, and took a post at the imperial court in Speyer. He later became the legal guardian of Count Johann VI. von Hohenfels-Reipoltskirchen and died as district magistrate in Forbach.

All biographical commentators agree that Fischart's strict adherence to Calvinism cannot be verified or documented.[6] But his Calvinistic proselytizing is apparent from a series of free translations of pamphlets that he issued before and after his departure from Strasbourg. Probably the most popular one was an adaptation of the Holy Beehive (1579) by the Dutch Calvinist Philipp von Marnix. De Bienkorf der H. Roomsche Kercke (1569) was a biting satire which chastized the Catholic Church in the form of an allegorical mock-justification in seven chapters.[7] The anti-Jesuit poem of an anonymous Huguenot, La legende et description du Bonnet Carré, avec les propietez, composition et vertus d'icelluy (2nd ed., Lyon 1578), grew from 212 verses into a vitriolic minor epic tale of 1142 lines with the short title Jesuiterhütlein (1580) under Fischart's pen. However, the most interesting work of this genre was the translation/adaptation of one of Calvin's own pamphlets, "le célèbre Traité des

Reliques" as François Wendel calls it.[8] Issued in 1543, the year of the publication of the enlarged version of the Institutiones, this work was twice translated into German, before Fischart's publisher, Jobin, urged him in the early eighties to edit it for contemporary tastes. Fischart complied with the request, and the first edition appeared in 1583; its numerous further versions underwent the flattering fate of successful popular satire: it was pirated, anonymously enlarged, added to, etc.

Before I treat you to morsels of this polemical pamphlet in its German version, a word about Calvin's motivation for issuing such a catalogue of condemnable forms and objects of the Catholic cult of the veneration of relics. Having returned from Strasbourg to Geneva in 1541, Calvin issued a number of learned pamphlets defending the institutionalization of his reformed church as it evolved in Geneva. The most prominent writings of this kind were directed against the attacks from his former alma mater, the Sorbonne. In 1543, he felt the need to appeal to the less intellectual among the faithful when reiterating in On the Advantage of an Inventory of Relics what aberrations had taken place in the Roman Church. The 19th century translator Henry Beveridge, in 1844, stated the case of Calvin's treatise thus:

> (It was a treatise) being designed to expose the very gross delusions practiced by the Church of Rome on the most ignorant of her votaries, and being consequently intended, in a more especial

> manner, for those who, as they yielded to such delusion, must have held a low place in intellectual culture... The details of absurdities and impostures given in this Tract....strike at the foundation of the whole system of Romish imposture, and completely establish the identity of its image and relic worship with the gross idolatry of the heathen.[9]

I think Beveridge is answering the question why Fischart, the German adaptor and translator, would pick such a pamphlet to proselytize Calvin's views for an urban reader at the time of the Counter-Reformation; "popular and homely" could be easily rendered into its German equivalent literary code. For by 1583, attacks and counter-attacks about holy legends and the veneration of relics had developed into a heated and widely observed "battle of legends" in which the most articulate writers published defenses and attacks on popular catholic worship. There were basically two kinds of counter-texts against Catholic legendaria and collections of mirabilia and profigia: Protestant martyrologies, and mock collections of miraculous absurdities. One of Calvin's friends, the printer Jean Crespin (+ 1572), began with Le Livre des Martyrs... in 1544 which became a model martyrologium of protestant witnesses for the faith, and a reinterpretation of their history.[10] In Germany, however, the polemical parodies and counter-parodies flooded the book market throughout the 16th century. Luther himself had ridiculed some of the legends, miracles and objects of veneration of the Catholic Church long before he prefaced the first

comprehensive sarcastic anti-legendarium, The new Koran according to the Mendicant Orders by Erasmus Alberus which was published one year before Calvin's treatise on relics in 1542.[11] Fischart, a generation later, achieved a very high profile by attacking the most articulate Catholic defenders of the popular devotional practice of the "Old Church", notably mendicant preachers like Johann Jakob Rabe and Johannes Nas. And they responded in kind! Fischart, as mentioned before, had to resort to adapting, reediting or just plundering existing material in order to maintain the pace of the blow-by-blow fight that ensued with prominent Catholic authors. And Calvin's "Traité des Reliques" was an ideal source in that it had already been translated into German before and needed very little editing both in terms of content and style. Its comprehensive treatment of the subject matter, its sarcastic tone, and its purpose of discrediting "the old way" provided new ammunition in an unbelievably stereotyped and stale exchange of polemics.

Calvin's treatise starts out with a solid theological argument, based on St. Augustine's skepticism towards some of the practices in the veneration of relics which could detract from true piety.[12] And he reiterates, in salty French, Luther's sarcastic denunciation:

> But the first abuse, and, as it were, beginning of the evil, was, that when Christ ought to have been sought in his Word, sacraments, and spiritual influences, the world, after its wont,

> clung to his garments, vests, and swaddling-clothes; and thus overlooking the principal matter, followed only its accessory. The same course was pursued in regard to apostles, martyrs, and other saints. For when the duty was to meditate on their lives, and engage in imitating them, men made it their whole study to contemplate and lay up, as it were in a treasury, their bones, shirts, girdles, caps and similar trifles. (pp. 289/90)

Following this up with examples, Calvin catalogues pseudo-relics like the foreskin of Jesus, parts of St. Peter's brain, etc. His heavy sarcasm is understandable as the thought of such practice taking place in his own city just a few years back must have angered him greatly. His example is typical in its mixture of condemnation, contempt and precision.

> En ceste ville (Geneva, J.S.) on auoit, ce disoit-on, le temps passé, un bras de S. Antoine. Quant il estoit enchassé, on le baisoit & adoroit: quand on le mist en auant on trouua que c'estoit le membre d'un cerf. (p.9; German text, p.7,r)

Fischart, while adding a few attributes in German, translates this and other passages fairly faithfully, maintaining the laconic irony of the original. I quote one of the milder passages:

> Les souliers de Jesus Christ
> Je ne scay de quelle grandeur sont des souliers qu'on dit estre à Rome au lieu nommé Sancta Sanctorum & s'il les a portez en son enfance, ou estant desia homme. Et quand tout est dit, autant vaut l'un que l'autre. Car ce qu i'ay desia dit, monstre suffisament quelle impudence c'est de produire maintenant des souliers de

> Jesus Christ que les apostres mesmes n'ont point eu de leur temps. (pp. 17/18)
>
> (I am not aware of the size of his shoes which are said to exist at Rome in the place which they call the Holy of Holies, and whether he used them when he was a boy, or after manhood; but it is all alike. For the observations I have already made are sufficient to show how impudent it is at this time to pass off, as belonging to Christ, shoes of which the Apostles had never heard. (p. 299)
>
> Von des Herrn Christi Schuhen
> Ich darf nit sagen/was für groesse die Schuh haben/die sie zu Rom an dem ort/welcher Sancta Sanctorum daz aller Heyligst genennet wird/weisen/ob ein Mansperson oder jung Kind dieselbigen getragen habe/ist ungewiss. Sogar stimmet eines mit dem andern gar nicht. Dann ich habe genugsam biss anher angezeigt/wie sie so unverschembt sein zu liegen/dass sie des Herrn Christi Schuh erst herfuer bringen/die auch die Apostel zu jhrer zeit nicht gehabt haben. (p. 13, r)

The "revelations" of numerous examples always follow this pattern. They are seasoned with the occasional piece of ratiocination where authentic proof of the fraud was not directly accessible but could be shown by circumstantial evidence. In the above example we have evidence (different sizes of a pair of shoes) and historical deduction (ahistorical style of the shoes). Various women saints are introduced as follows:

> As there were various saints of the name of Susanna, I cannot say whether they have thought proper to give two bodies to any of them. There is one body of a Susanna at Rome, in the church which bears here name, and there is another at

> Toulouse. Helen has not been so highly favoured. The Venetians have the body, but in addition to it, she has not gained any superfluous part, with the exception of another head which exists in Cologne in the church of Grisgon. (p.335)

The technique of this kind of ridicule is clearly apparent. And this is how Fischart, more than a generation after the publication of this tract, echoes another slogan of the Reformation when his postscript justifies the undertaking of a German translation by addressing the Christian reader with:

> Here, dear reader, you have this booklet, wherein the religious practice of the papists is described; for the common man to whom Latin is both unknown and foreign, and for many other reasons I have done this translation. (p.63 v)

Already the translation of the title is characteristic of Fischart's emphasis on the satirical element of Calvin's treatise. "Traitté des reliques: ou avertissement très utile..." becomes a direct satire with the very first words: "Der Heilig Brotkorb Der H. Roemischen Reliquien/oder Wuerdigen Heiligthumbs Procken: Das ist Joannis Calvini Notwendige vermanung..." (The holy breadbasket of holy Roman relics, or lumps of the worthy holy site; that is to say John Calvin's urgent admonition). The "other reasons" are headed by one theme: that the superstitious beliefs which were so popular only a few decades ago, were really blasphemies. Out of fear of God and concerned with cleaning up schools and pulpits in the churches

where such lies were propagated, the practice of the veneration of relics should be abolished.

> That we may cry out and call on God with passionate and pious prayers so that he may preserve for us the propagation of the Holy Gospel in churches, schools and homes. This Gospel which has shown us the darkness, that is to say the ignorance of God (sic), idolatry, human law and all false worship, it may fight, uncover, reveal, and punish but also bring forth for us the sun of justice. (p.64,r)

A prayer ends this postscript to the treatise. It is passages like these that have led Hugo Sommerhalder to the conclusion--in another context--, that

> (Fischart's) Christian (Lutheran) concept of freedom, together with the faith in being chosen, drives a Calvinist believer to a joyous worldliness and to a supreme effort. For Calvinist christianity, the world was a matter to be transformed in order to serve the establishment of the dominion of God.----The uprising in the Netherlands and their economic ascent were the example that Fischart admired as the manifestation of a historical development in Calvin's spirit.[13]

What makes Fischart's proselytizing special? Why should there be research carried out into the history of reception of his polemics that included, through historical circumstance, a strong influence of the Calvinistic impetus of the Reformation into German culture? Fischart reflects in a very idiosyncratic way the dynamic influence of the French reformer as opposed to the limited expansion of Luther's reformation. There is little doubt that Fischart played a decisive role in

establishing in the way of permanent prejudice the notion of an inferior Southern-Catholic German culture, that is the notion of old-fashioned and dying culture fettered by the "old church" as opposed to a dominant protestant cultural contest that was, for the following centuries, to become mainstream German culture.[14]

NOTES

[1] Deutsche Sinngedichte (1654), II, 3.

[2] Richard Newald. Die deutsche Literatur vom Späthumanismus zur Empfindsamkeit, 1570-1750, Geschichte der deutschen Literatur, hrsg, v. H. de Boor und R. Newald, Bd. 5, München: Beck, 1967; pp. 71f.

[3] E.g. Heidi Neuenschwander-Schindler. Das Gespräch über Calvin, Frankreich 1685-1870..., Basel und Stuttgart: Helbling&Lichthahn, 1975; or Menna Prestwich, ed. International Calvinism 1541-1715, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985.

[4] An extensive if somewhat jargonesque portrait is given in Erich Kleinschmidt, Stadt und Literature in der frühen Neuzeit. Voraussetzung und Entfaltung im südwestdeutschen, elsässischen und schweizerischen Städteraum, Köln/Wien: Böhlau, 1982. Chapter IV, Erzählerische Urbanität, "Emanzipation und Artifizialität: Johann Fischart", pp.300-327.

[5] Cf. Adolf Hauffen. Johann Fischart. Ein Literaturbild aus der Zeit der Gegenreformation, Berlin/Leipzig: Walter de Gruyter&Co., 1922, vol.I, pp. 63ff. The most prominent opponent to strict Lutheranism being the renowned educator Johannes Sturm.

[6] The most recent comprehensive monograph, Hugo Sommerhalder's Johann Fischart, Eine Einführung, Berlin:

Walter de Gruyter&Co., 1960, pp.108ff. quite correctly emphasizes the impossibility of attributing Fischart's religious conviction to only Lutheranism or Calvinism. This position is reiterated in Stefan Janson's Jean Bodin - Johann Fischart, "De la Démonomanie des Sorciers" (1580) - "Vom Aussgelassnen wütigen Teuffelsheer" (1581) und ihre Fallberichte, Frankfurt A.M., Bern, Cirencester/UK: Peter D. Lang, 1980, p.38.

[7] For factual information about this and the other satires, cf. A. Hauffen (note 5), vol. II, pp.108ff.

[8] Calvin, Sources et évolution de sa pensée religieuse, Histoire et Société 9, Genève: Labor et Fides, 1985, 2nd.ed., p.55.

[9] In Tracts and Treatises on the Reformation of the Church by John Calvin..., transl. from the original Latin..., vol.I, Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 1958, p.li.

[10] For numerous examples cf. "Zeugnis des Glaubens..." by Annemarie und Wolfgang Brückner, Berlin: Erich Schmidt, 1974, pp.520-579, especially pp. 570ff.

[11] For a short characterization of this situation, cf. "Golden Legends during the Reformation Controversy: Polemical Trivialization in the German Vernacular" by Josef Schmidt; in Legenda Aurea: Sept siècles de diffusion, ed. par Brenda Dunn-Lardeau, Montréal/Paris: Bellarmin/J. Vrin, 1986, pp.267-275.

[12] For the English version of the text, cf. footnote 9. For the German quotations I have used Der Heilig Brotkorb... with the mock-publisher information Ursinus Entwinus: Christlingen, 1594. Since I was unable to consult A. Autin's commented edition (Paris, 1921), I used the most readily available French text = Traitté des reliques: ou avertissement très utile... which contains additions and was printed by Pierre de la Rouiere in Geneva (1599); a modern reprint was issued by G. Revilliod & E. Fick in Geneva (1863). The Latin text can be found in the Corpus Reformatorum, VI, pp. 405-

452.

[13] Cf. (6), p. 110.

[14] Cf. Günter Hess, "Deutsche Nationalliteratur und oberdeutsche Provinz, Zu Geschichte und Grenzen eines Vorurteils"; in Jahrbuch für Volkskunde, Würzburg, Innsbruck, Fribourg: Echter (1985), pp. 7-30, particularly pp. 17ff.

IV. COLLOQUIUM: THE IMAGE OF JOHN CALVIN IN RECENT RESEARCH

INTRODUCTION

William Klempa

"Calvin studies are now beginning to come alive again." So wrote John H. Leith in 1977 in the journal, Interpretation.[1] If, nine years ago, Professor Leith saw evidence of a resurgence of interest in Calvin, this interest it seems, has not only been sustained but has also gained momentum during the intervening years. Peter de Klerk's annual Calvin Bibliographies in the Calvin Theological Journal are a good barometer.[2] They have grown in length year by year and this year the bibliography will run into 47 pages.

To be sure, John Calvin has never had the personal appeal of Martin Luther. If anything, Calvin continues to suffer from a bad press in both popular and more scholarly literature. He is still pictured as the Genevan dictator ruling a submissive population with a rod of iron, a kind of theological wet blanket and the apotheosis of a pious kill-joy. Increasingly, however, contemporary scholarship is getting behind the myth to the man. As a result, a more balanced view of the

reformer, of both his strengths and weaknesses, is gradually emerging. The image of Calvin which is coming into clearer focus is that of one of the truly great scholars of the sixteenth century. In the considered judgment of E. Harris Harbison, "...Calvin preserved closer touch with all the major thought-forms of the past than either Erasmus or Luther, each of whom was more genuinely revolutionary in his own way. He did so because he was more objective in his approach to scholastic, juristic, and humanistic learning, because he could absorb their methods without subscribing to their spirit and swallowing their content, and because he was more catholic in his intellectual tastes."[3] This is indeed high praise but if there is even a small measure of truth in that judgment, then Calvin has still much to teach us about being sensitive to the spirit of our times without becoming captive to it.

What sort of image of Calvin is emerging from recent Calvin research? Before our three panelists seek to answer that question from the perspectives of studies on Calvin's life, his theology and his social, economic and political thought, I want to make a few introductory remarks.

1. We will not understand Calvin aright if at the outset we do not grasp something of his deep personal awareness of the directing and sustaining presence of the living God. "God by a sudden conversion subdues my heart to teachableness"[4] is the brief but suggestive way in which Calvin described his conversion. In the

appropriate phrase of Jean Cadier, Calvin was "the man God mastered."[5] It was because he was mastered by God that he was not afraid of nor did he often give in to the mastery of others including the "Magnifiques Seigneurs" of the Petit Council in Geneva. Those who followed in his footsteps shared his attitude and thus they were always a major force to contend with as an anonymous seventeenth century writer acknowledged when he said: "I had rather see coming toward me a whole regiment with drawn swords than one lone Calvinist convinced that he is doing the will of God". Calvin was, to use the phrase that was applied to Spinoza, a "God-intoxicated man". He sought to know God and to make God known. For him, knowledge of God is intensely personal, arising out of and consisting in the bipolar relationship between God and humanity. This does not mean that theology is anthropology or that anthropology is theology, but simply that theological statements have their anthropological correlates and anthropological statements their theological correlates. How very contemporary Calvin sounds then when he begins his Institutes of the Christian Religion by saying: "Nearly all the wisdom we possess, that is to say, true and sound wisdom, consists of two parts: the knowledge of God and of ourselves"![6]

2. It is generally recognized in Calvin studies today that his theology of the duplex cognitio dei is not a closed system. Calvin did not construct his theology around one pivotal idea, such as,

predestination, justification, the Holy Spirit, the Church and so on, but he preferred instead to draw together a number of biblical and theological concepts. Thus his major work, The Institutes of the Christian Religion, gathers and arranges what is scattered, unrelated and sometimes even occasional in Scripture. In other words, Calvin adopted the loci method, the method of theological topics. It is significant that the outstanding theologian of our century, Karl Barth also adopted this approach in his Church Dogmatics in the belief that Melanchthon's and Calvin's method of loci "is the only truly scholarly method in dogmatics".[7] Recent research has also made us aware that Calvin stood in the rhetorical tradition. One important implication of this for theological method is that in using the loci approach, Calvin is not rigidly consistent. He is content to leave some issues and questions unresolved. Quentin Skinner has gone so far as to describe Calvin as a "master of equivocation". This is undoubtedly an overstatement, but we can no longer think of Calvin as the rigidly consistent theological thinker and writer which generations of Calvin scholars have made him out to be.

3. Calvin's inestimable contribution to Protestantism was that he not only gave evangelical theology a dogmatic form but that he also connected it with the mainstream of the Church's theological tradition. This accounts in large part for the respectful attention of an increasing number of Roman

Catholic scholars, including Alexandre Ganoczy, Kilian McDonnell, J.C. Olin and others, to his thought. It is true that the article on Calvinism in the New Catholic Encyclopedia states that Calvin's dogmatic formulation cannot be compared in power of reasoning to Aristotle's Metaphysics, Aquinas's Summa Theologiae or Spinoza's Ethics. This is not, according to the writer, because of a lack of logical concentration but because of Calvin's dogmatic conviction that "the Scriptures are the sufficient and necessary source of our knowledge of God for salvation."[8] Yet it is precisely the biblical character of his theology that gives it its persuasive power, its connection with the dominant theological tradition and its ecumenical significance. In 1919 Paul Wernle predicted that the Institutes would be read less and less. In fact, in subsequent decades it has probably been read more and more and many theological students are discovering that it is a good book on which they may cut their theological eye teeth.

Professors A. Wolters, David Demson and W. Fred Graham will now make their respective presentations from their particular perspective on recent Calvin studies:

NOTES

[1]John H. Leith, "Calvin Study for Today" in Interpretation Vol. 33 (1977), p. 7.

[2]Peter de Klerk's Calvin bibliographies began with Volume 7 (1972) and have been published annually.

[3]E. Harris Harbison, The Christian Scholar in the Age of the Reformation. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1956, p. 146.

[4]John Calvin, Preface to the Commentary on the Psalms, CO 31, 22.

[5]The title of Jean Cadier's book, translated from Calvin: L'homme que Dieu a dompté, by O.R. Johnston. London: Inter-Varsity Fellowship, 1960.

[6]The Institutes of the Christian Religion, edited by John T. McNeill and trans. by Ford Lewis Battles. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1960, I, 1, 1, (p. 35).

[7]Karl Barth, Church Dogmatics Vol. 1/2. trans. by G.T. Thomson and H. Knight. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1956, p. 870.

[8]R. Matzerath, "Calvinism" in New Catholic Encyclopedia, Vol. 2, p. 1090.

RECENT BIOGRAPHICAL STUDIES OF CALVIN

A. Wolters

The widespread and sustained modern interest in the life and times of John Calvin is a truly remarkable phenomenon. There is probably no other theologian in the history of the Christian church, with the possible exception of Luther, who has been the subject of so many twentieth-century biographies. Beginning with the monumental seven-volume opus by Emile Doumergue at the beginning of the century,[1] more than a score of booklength biographical studies of Calvin have been published, written in a wide variety of original languages. Many of these have been reissues--reprinted or translated once or a number of times. Consequently, there are probably more than a dozen Lives of Calvin currently in print.

To be sure, a good number of these works have no scholarly pretensions and are content to give a popular account of the life of an admired hero of the faith. A good example of this genre is Thea Van Halsema's This was John Calvin, originally published in 1959, reprinted several times, and translated into Spanish and Portuguese.[2] But there are also a goodly number of biographies written by recognized Calvin scholars which have been surprisingly successful. I think for example of W. F. Dankbaar's Calvijn, zijn weg en werk, originally published in Dutch in 1957, and translated

into German and Indonesian,[3] and of Jean Cadier's Calvin: l'homme que Dieu a dompté, originally published in French in 1958, and translated into German, English, Italian, Chinese, and Hungarian.[4] Some of the older biographies were also reprinted: 1969 saw a new edition of both Doumergue's magnum opus[5] and the influential biography by Williston Walker, John Calvin, the Organizer of Reformed Protestantism (originally published in 1906; French translation in 1909).[6] It would be easy to extend the list of works which demonstrate the great demand for both popular and scholarly accounts of Calvin's life.[7]

It is not my intention to pass in review this vast literature on the life of Calvin, or to speculate on the reasons for its popularity. I will restrict myself to some brief comments on more recent biographical studies, especially those based on original scholarly research. As "more recent" I shall define those works which have appeared since 1974, the year in which the first international Congress on Calvin Research was held. To my mind, that year and that Congress mark the beginning of a new era in Calvin studies, symbolized by the international congresses which have been held every four years since.

The twelve years since 1974 have seen four new booklength studies of the life of Calvin, as well as a substantial volume on his relations with Basel which includes a good deal of biographical material. Besides this, there has been considerable renewed discussion on

the date and significance of Calvin's conversion. I shall briefly deal with each item in turn.

Two of the new biographies are popular in character and bring no new material. The first is a very partisan account by the Dutch author L. Janse entitled Een strijder voor de ere Gods. Het leven van Johannes Calvijn (Kampen, 1980) ["A champion of the glory of God. The life of John Calvin"]. It is perhaps best characterized by quoting a sentence from the account of the trial of Servetus in Geneva. "But this hardened sinner [i.e. Servetus] does not realize that Calvin has the Lord and a clear conscience on his side" (p. 71). The other popular biography is that by Jansie van der Walt, Calvin and his Times (Potchefstroom, 1985). This short sketch is also very sympathetic to its subject, but appears to be based on solid research. Unlike Janse's book, it occasionally criticizes the reformer, as when it is stated that neglect of health "may well be seen as a defect in Calvin's personality" (p. 12).

There can be no question that the most significant scholarly biography of Calvin to be produced in our time period is John Calvin: A Biography by T.H.L. Parker (London and Philadelphia, 1975). Parker is a theologian, and his picture of Calvin is a theological one. Although this slant has been criticized as being one-sided, it strikes me that is the theological side which is most important if we want to understand and do justice to this great theologian. It is especially two themes which give Parker's theological biography its

distinctive character: Calvin as expositor of Scripture and Calvin as doctor of the universal church.

Parker stresses throughout that Calvin understood his primary mission to be the exposition of the Bible--chiefly in his sermons and in his commentaries. It is here that he finds the source and justification of the other aspects of his works--not only the systematic formulations in the Institutes but also the practical decisions of personal lifestyle, church polity and civil legislation. Calvin's tremendous investment of time and energy in the primary task of elucidating the text of Holy Writ stands out in bold relief in Parker's presentation. We here see Calvin dominated by the consuming passion to be an exegete of the Word; it is by highlighting this passion that Parker gives a credible slant on the unity and integrity of Calvin's work. Calvin, in this aspect of his work, is like the incarnation of the Reformation principle sola Scriptura.

The second theme which Parker stresses is that of Calvin as doctor ecclesiae, the honorific title given to those theologians whose teaching has paradigmatic significance for the church universal. In Parker's view, Calvin is not so much the founder of the Reformed tradition of Protestantism as one of the classic expositors of the catholic Christian faith shared by the church of all ages.

Whatever one may think of this view--and I personally am inclined to be sympathetic to it--it seems to me that it has more the character of a theological

assessment of Calvin than of a biographical description. Unlike the theme of Scripture-exposition, it does not illumine the internal unity of Calvin's life in the context of his time. It is an insight gained by a theologian after long reflection on the significance of Calvin in the history of theological inquiry; it is not a pattern which can be shown to emerge out of the givens of Calvin's lifetime.

A valuable feature of Parker's biography--and one whereby he breaks new ground--is his careful examination of the evidence pertaining to the years of Calvin's formal education, that is, the decade 1523 to 1533. There are two points of note here. The first is that Parker dates Calvin's conversion very early (1529 to 1530), and the second is that a significant part of Calvin's mature education was spent in law school. Whether or not we accept Parker's dating of Calvin's conversion (it seems to me that the religious tone of the commentary on Seneca's De Clementia counts against it) Parker's account highlights the juxtaposition of Calvin's years in law school, during which he was intensively engaged in the study of Roman law, and his earliest experience of the evangelical faith. Curiously, Parker does not seem to consider it significant that on his view Calvin came to conversion while at law school, and he fails to make the connection between the milieu and curriculum at Orleans and Bourges (which he sketches very effectively) and some of the distinctive features of the 1536 Institutio, not least

the structure and vocabulary of the Epistle Dedicatory, and the unusual addition of a chapter on politia, both ecclesiastical and civil, to the traditional exposition of the Decalogue, the Apostle's Creed and the Lord's Prayer. In my judgement, Parker has here opened the door to a fruitful avenue of research which he has himself failed to pursue.

It remains for us to mention briefly the fourth booklength study of Calvin's life which has appeared since 1974. The volume we are referring to is not a biography in the usual sense of the word, but an anthology of selected documents bearing on Calvin's life and thought. The volume in question is entitled simply John Calvin, and was edited by G.R. Potter and M. Greengrass. It appeared in New York, 1983, in the series "Documents of Modern History". The documents are judiciously selected, often freshly translated, and illustrate a wide spectrum of Calvin's connections and activities. The editorial notes with which the documents are introduced are generally brief, factual and evenhanded. The comments on the Servetus affair, for example, as well as the documentation chosen, are remarkably balanced and judicious. (pp. 102-109)

The volume was originally conceived and begun by G.R. Potter, who left it incomplete at his death in 1981. It was completed, but also reduced considerably in scope, by M. Greengrass. The result of his labours is a small, handy source-book which can serve as an excellent textbook in college history courses.

None of the works which we have surveyed so far--with the limited exception of Parker's biography--break new ground in the sense of bringing to light new evidence on the basis of original research. This is not the case for the substantial and detailed study by Uwe Plath entitled Calvin und Basel in den Jahren 1552-1556 (Zurich, 1974). Plath's book is based on years of careful archival research, and brings to light many new connections and bits of information which bear directly on Calvin's biography. In the nature of the case, the narrowness of the focus (over 300 pages on four years of Calvin's relationship to a single neighboring city) makes for both an exhaustive wealth of detail and a certain skewing of perspective. Nevertheless, Plath's investigation is of great interest also for some of the broader questions of Calvin interpretation because the period that is studied is dominated by the Servetus affair and the polemics on toleration which followed it. As it happens, Basel was the stronghold of those (notably Castellio) who challenged Calvin's handling of the affair and began to put the first steps on the road to developing a theory of religious toleration.

Besides this, it is useful to learn, for example, that although the church leaders of Basel, when asked, had given the Genevan authorities advice which could be construed as favouring Servetus' execution, the city as a whole was scandalized when the execution actually took place. As a matter of fact, the protest against the Genevan treatment of Servetus was already quite vehement

among the citizens of Basel before the actual execution took place.

On these and many other points Plath corrects the historical picture which earlier writers had drawn. His book contains the kind of detailed primary research on which a future definitive biography will have to build. But since studies like that of Plath are relatively rare in contemporary Calvin scholarship, it will be a long time before a worthy successor to Doumergue's exhaustive biography will be written. For the time being, we will have to be satisfied with the likes of Parker.

Finally, we must pay attention to Calvin's conversion, since this is the one event in his biography which continues to be the subject of considerable scholarly discussion. Apart from the account in Parker's book in 1975, there have been separate articles on this question by Nijenhuis in 1972 (which we will include here despite its slightly earlier date),[8] by Ernst Koch in 1981,[9] by Danièle Fischer in 1983,[10] and by Neuser in 1985.[11]

The debate concerns not only the date of Calvin's conversion, but also its nature and significance. The current discussion is largely a reaction to the work of Alexandre Ganoczy, Le jeune Calvin. Genèse et évolution de sa vocation réformatrice (Wiesbaden, 1966), which had in turn built on an earlier book by P. Sprenger, Das Rätsel um die Bekehrung Calvins (Neukirchen, 1960). They pointed out that the term conversio in Calvin never has the modern sense of changing ecclesiastical

affiliation, and that therefore Calvin's famous reference to his subita conversio does not designate a break with the Catholic Church. It was Ganoczy's thesis that it refers instead to Calvin's realization of his vocation as reformer within the Catholic Church, and that this realization took place not all at once, but over a period of years.

Both Nijenhuis's article of 1972 and Parker's book of 1975 are generally sympathetic to Ganoczy's novel interpretation of Calvin's conversion. Both also make the point that subita can be translated as "unexpected" rather than "sudden". In Nijenhuis, moreover, there is a great emphasis on reading Calvin's statements on his conversion as theological, rather than as historical statements. He summarizes his view succinctly in the article on Calvin which he contributed to the Theologische Realenzyklopädie (Vol. 7, 1980):

> Subitus bedeutet hier nicht "plötzlich", sondern "unerwartet", nicht zuvor erwogen, ohne Anknüpfungspunkt in menschlichem Denken und Erfahren, vielmehr ausschliesslich ein Werk des Heiligen Geistes (p. 570).

Here we may well ask the question whether the legitimate distinctions between "sudden" and "unexpected", and between "historical" and "theological" are really as mutually exclusive as Nijenhuis takes them to be. It seems clear that at this point the philological and biographical analysis is significantly affected by one's theological assumptions, ultimately one's assumptions about the relation of nature and

grace. For my own part, I have no difficulty in understanding Calvin's conversion as both "sudden" and "unexpected", and his own account of it as both "historical" and "theological".

These reservations apply also to the otherwise very useful article by Koch, who analyzes the literary, theological and biographical context of the subita conversio passage, and similarly warns against reading it as a strictly historical account.

The French Protestants, unlike Nijenhuis and Parker, have not taken kindly to Ganoczy's account of Calvin's conversion. The recent article by Danièle Fischer, "Nouvelles réflexions sur la conversion de Calvin," is a case in point.[12] The article is largely a polemic against Ganoczy's views, but without specifically countering many of his arguments. Curiously enough, the author does not refer to Parker's book, nor to the relevant articles by Nijenhuis and Koch. She argues that the subita conversio took place in the early summer of 1531, and invokes the authority of earlier scholars for the view that it was indeed a violent break with the Church of Rome. Apart from an extensive survey of earlier views on the date of conversion, the article seems to offer little that is new.

Finally, we will mention the very recent article by Wilhelm Neuser, the doyen of contemporary Calvin scholarship. Building on the recent studies of the first word of Calvin's crucial phrase conversio ad

docilitatem, Neuser focuses on the last term: "teachableness." He comes to the surprising conclusion that the phrase refers to the period when Calvin first placed himself under the instruction of reform-minded religious teachers, specifically the German humanist Melchior Volmar, who taught Calvin Greek. The first education took place in 1527/1528, and it is in this time that Neuser dates Calvin's much-debated conversio.

NOTES

[1]Emile Doumergue, Jean Calvin. Les hommes et les choses de son temps. (Lausanne: G. Bridel, 1899-1927).

[2]Thea VanHalsema, This Was John Calvin (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1959). For the bibliographical details on the translations, of this and of other works, I refer to the excellent annual "Calvin Bibliography" published by Peter De Klerk in Calvin Theological Journal since 1972.

[3]W.F. Dankbaar, Calvin: zijn weg en werk (Nijkerk: Callenbach, 1957).

[4]Jean Cadier, Calvin: l'homme que Dieu a dompté (Geneva: Labor et fides, 1958).

[5]Seven Volumes in four (Geneva: Slatkine, 1969).

[6]With a bibliographical essay by John T. McNeill (New York: Schocken, 1969).

[7]Mention must also be made of the works of Wilhelm H. Neuser, Calvin (Gladbeck: Schriftenmissionsverlag, 1964), and Richard Stauffer, L'humanité de Calvin (Neuchâtel: Delachaud et Niestlé, 1964).

[8]W. Nijenhuis, "Calvijns 'subita conversio', notities bij een hypothese," Nederlands Theologisch Tijdschrift 26 (1972) 248-269.

[9]Ernst Koch, "Erwägungen zum Bekehrungsbericht Calvins", Nederlands Archief voor Kerkgeschiedenis 61 (1981) 185-197.

[10]Danièle Fischer, "Nouvelles Réflexions sur la Conversion de Calvin," Etudes théologigues et religieuses 58 (1983) 203-220.

[11]W.H. Neuser, "Calvin's Conversion to Teachableness," Nederduitse Gereformeerde Tydskrif 26 (1985) 14-27.

[12]See also the review of Ganoczy's book by Jean Cadier in Etudes théologigues et religieuses 42 (1967) 75-78.

RECENT STUDIES IN CALVIN'S POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL THOUGHT AND IMPACT

W. Fred Graham

Introduction

In the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries Calvin's theology was thought important in the areas of election/predestination, Holy Communion, and in matters where church and state or faith and social order came together. Some still regard true Calvinism as a strict predestinarian theory of salvation. Certainly, that is the popular image, and books such as John Calvin: His Influence in the Western World (1982), edited by W. Stanford Reid carry on that image. Only the editor and one contributor deviate from that popular interpretation. Almost no one, save sacramental theologians, has any accurate knowledge of Calvin's eucharistic theology, although in his own day it was widely regarded as a satisfying way of preserving Luther's assertion of the real presence of the Risen Christ, as well as maintaining the Zwinglian insistence on a true ascension and intercession for sinners.

But my task is to set before this company the best of recent works in the third area--the worldly Calvin. The general task is easily accomplished: if one wants to keep abreast of all Calvin research one must

subscribe to the Calvin Theological Journal where an annual listing of Calviniana by Peter de Klerk can be found. This is indispensible, even if it means introducing the rest of the works of convinced Calvinists into one's house or study by means of this organ. The other general bibliography is found in the annual Bulletin de la societé d'histoire et archaeologie de Genéve. This can be ordered through that society in care of the University of Geneva. In addition to these two helpful works, I try to consult the proceedings of the biennial meetings of the two Calvin Studies societies in the United States. The one meeting at Calvin College/Seminary can be gotten from Peter de Klerk, its secretary; the other is available from Charles Raynal, Davidson College Presbyterian Church, Davidson, North Carolina.

Next, let us turn to four major studies, then to a series of articles by the dean of American historians of things related to Calvin, and to one dissertation. I shall comment on these very briefly, my remarks being only suggestive.

Although more than a study of Calvin, Nicholas Wolsterstorff, Until Justice and Peace Embrace: The Kuyper Lectures for 1981 Delivered at the Free University of Amsterdam (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983) presents a clear picture of Calvin's world affirmation and world transformation. Both come from 1) gratitude to God for creation and salvation, 2) the third use of the law, in which the believer seeks to honour God 3)

per vocationem.

Harro Höpfl, The Christian Polity of John Calvin (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982) is an excellent study of Calvin's doctrine of ecclesiastical polity and political theory and the rather ad hoc relationship between them. Höpfl simply relegates all earlier studies in these areas to the shade, as he exposes the strengths and weaknesses of Calvin's theory of church and state, of the power of magistracy in the church, and of the right of rebellion, relating these to Calvin's conviction that both church and state exist for aedificatio of the believer. Although a political scientist, Höpfl is not afraid to test his analysis against Calvin's predestinarian theology. Must be read to be believed!

A work no one else seems to have found is William C. Innes, Social Concern in Calvin's Geneva (Pittsburgh Theological Monographs, New Series 7, Allison Park, PA.: Pickwick Publications, 1983). This doctoral dissertation written at St. Andrews in Scotland by an American computer software salesman is a gem at using all the extant archival studies of social and economic conditions in sixteenth century Geneva. Innes does a superb job of tracing social institutions from late medieval times and exposing their transformation under Calvin's guidance and the laicization of welfare under the City's Small Council. What the book lacks is a through knowledge of Calvin's social and economic thought as background to the study.

The diaconate is the focus of Elsie McKee, John Calvin on the Diaconate and Liturgical Almsgiving (Geneva: Droz, 1984). The relationship between worship and ethics and between theology and social concern receives expert attention by this young Colgate-Rochester Seminary professor. There is a long scriptural exegesis of the diaconate and its relation to worship. McKee is at present on leave in Geneva editing Calvin's Corinthian sermons for the Supplementa.

The dean of scholars is, of course, Robert M. Kingdon, of the University of Wisconsin. For other scholars who despair of ever finding Kingdon's scattered works, there is help at hand, even if it's found in England. His Church and Society in Reformation Europe (Variorum Reprints of London, 20 Tembridge Muse, London W11 3EQ, 1985) contains Kingdon's earlier studies on the control of morals, on city government, on printing and the like. Here I list some later studies.

"Calvin and Social Welfare," Calvin Theological Journal, 17, 1982.

"Calvin's Ideas about the Diaconate: Social or Theological in Origin?" in Piety, Politics and Ethics (Festschrift for George W. Forell) (Kirksville, MO.: 16th Century Journal, 1984).

"Calvin and the Family: the Work of the Consistory in Geneva," in Pacific Theological Review (San Francisco Theological Seminary), Winter, 1984.

"Calvin and Presbytery: The Geneva Company of Pastors," Pacific Theological Review, Winter, 1985.

"Calvin and Constitutionalism: His Work on the Laws of Geneva," Pacific Theological Review, Winter, 1986.

So if one orders Kingdon's book from England, the Forell Festschrift from R.V. Schnucker at the History Department of Northeast Missouri State University in Kirksville, the Calvin Theological Journal for de Klerk's annual bibliography and the Social Welfare article, and sends a check to the San Francisco Theological Seminary, then one can be reasonably sure of keeping up with both fact and interpretation in the on-going spelunking that Kingdon and his friends and students are doing in the Archives d'Etat in Geneva.

The dissertation is by Jeanine Evelyn Olson, "The Bourse francaise: Deacons and Social Welfare in Calvin's Geneva," Stanford University Ph.D. dissertation, 1980. McKee, Innes and Kingdon all draw from Olson's study, which has not yet been published but is available on microfilm.

Conclusion

There has now been a half-century of blaming and praising Calvin for the attention paid to him by Max Weber in his famous thesis, that the so-called Protestant Ethic came from the spirit of Calvinists who were trying to gain assurance of their eternal election via success in their callings. It is at least worth mentioning that in Peter de Klerk's most recent bibliography (Calvin Theological Journal, November, 1985) there were four articles or book chapters about that hoary thesis. One of these was by our own W.

Stanford Reid in The Reformed Theological Review, 1984. Perhaps the endurance of that bit of intellectual history indicates just how important the worldly Calvin is even today.

THE IMAGE OF CALVIN IN RECENT RESEARCH

David E. Demson

Students of Calvin will remember the days--not so long ago--when the proposition was trumpeted aloud that the primary intellectual context for the magisterial reformers was late medieval theology. And late medieval theology was represented as an entirely unwholesome decline from the high and holy days of the thirteenth century. Little wonder, these trumpeters believed, that the reformers reacted so strongly against this degenerate form of theology. Many questions could be raised about this thesis. Among others, and specifically with reference to Calvin: how well did he even know late medieval theology? In any event, the image of Calvin has altered in recent research. An older image depicted Calvin reacting strongly against nominalism (or, perhaps more precisely, voluntarism) and in reaction unconsciously absorbing some of its assumptions. The image of Calvin in recent research is of a Calvin positively influenced by the humanist tradition. The point had not gone unnoticed, of course, by such distinguished scholars as Doumergue, Wendel, Biéler, and Breen. The new element in recent research rests (a) on the insistence that the humanist tradition had far more influence upon Calvin than did voluntarist theology and (b) upon the particular attention paid to the influence of the humanist tradition of rhetoric upon

Calvin.

An eloquent example of a work which focuses its attention upon the influence the humanist tradition of rhetoric had upon Calvin is David Willis' article, "Rhetoric and Responsibility in Calvin's Theology" published in The Context of Contemporary Theology: Essays in Honour of Paul Lehmann, edited by A.J. McKelway and E. David Willis (Atlanta, 1974). I will review what Willis has to say and then indicate how the image of Calvin that emerges in this article is confirmed by other recent studies of Calvin which consider the reformer's understandings of biblical interpretation, exegesis, the place of experience in faith and theology, and the relation of theology and philosophy.

For many the very word "rhetoric" raises suspicion. For in one sense the word refers to the effectiveness of a speaker in winning his case, quite apart from a prior consideration of its truth. This sense of rhetoric, already assailed by Plato, refers to the putting of one's argument in the best possible form, in order to make it acceptable to one's hearers. Rhetoric and sophistry are virtual synonyms. But, Willis reminds us, there is another sense of rhetoric, which concentrates not upon rendering the speaker effective, but rather upon rendering the truth effective. The emphasis in the second sense is upon bringing the truth to bear upon one's audience. Indeed, this is the understanding of rhetoric presented by Aristotle. Cicero's understanding

of rhetoric moves beyond that of Aristotle in its emphasis that the truth that is to be brought to bear upon men and women is particularly a practical truth. The Ciceronian understanding of rhetoric is particularly important for a consideration of Calvin's use of rhetoric since the renaissance understanding of rhetoric represented itself as a recovery of Cicero's understanding.

Willis argues that Calvin's legal training, far from making him a legalist, as has sometimes been argued, was the means by which he received into his thinking the humanist tradition of rhetoric. His legal studies did not lead him to a concept of a God who demands legal obedience to imperial decrees. For legal studies in the sixteenth century prepared the lawyer to exercise the art of persuasion as the best means of applying justice to individual cases. Willis believes that such studies influenced Calvin's concept of God as a God who accommodates himself to us in Christ; that is, God acts to persuade us that in his action in Christ they have been brought into the freedom of adopted children.

Willis reminds us that Calvin's favorite early church theologian was Augustine. The influence of Augustine strengthened the understanding of rhetoric Calvin had gained from his legal studies. For Augustine speaks of God in Christ initiating an educational process through which the human creature is brought to wholeness. Christ uses this educational process, which

consists in the interpretation of the Old and New Testaments, to instruct, persuade and move his people from love of self to love of God. Jesus Christ is the truth which rhetoric brings powerfully to bear upon human beings. Since Willis says in consecutive sentences (in his interpretation of Augustine) that Christ uses the educational process to persuade and move his people and that Christ is the truth which rhetoric brings powerfully to bear upon humanity, he apparently understands Augustine to be saying that Christ is both the truth and the rhetor who applies truth to humankind.

Willis concludes his article by indicating the influence the humanist tradition of rhetoric had on three areas of Calvin's thought: faith, the knowledge of God, and revelation.

Faith. For Calvin, faith is the personal application of God's mercy and benefits to one's own life; or faith is the gospel becoming inwardly and effectively persuasive in one's own life. "Unbelief", Calvin writes, "is so deeply rooted in our hearts, and we are so inclined to it, that not without hard struggle is each one able to persuade himself of what (is) confessed with the mouth: namely, that God is faithful." (Inst. III, 2, 15).

Knowledge of God. Truth is measured in the rhetorical tradition not primarily by logical coherence or clarity, but by its power to change those whom it grasps. Similarly, Calvin remarks, "Doctrina is not of the tongue, but of life ... it is received only when it possesses the whole soul ... it must enter into our

heart and pass into daily living, and so transform us into itself...." (Inst. III, 6, 4). Or, in another place, Calvin declares that the knowledge of God to which we are called is "not that knowledge which, content with speculation, merely flits in the brain, but that which will be sound and fruitful if ... it takes root in the heart. For the Lord manifests Himself by His powers, the force of which we feel within ourselves and the benefits of which we enjoy." (Inst. I, 5, 9).

Revelation as God's Persuasive Accommodation.

Calvin does not maintain a view of a lofty God untouched by human weakness. Rather, God "strategically adjusts His dealings with His people in order to inform, delight and move them to (do) His will", which is His glory and their maturity. God accommodates Himself to us and the story of the covenant attested in Scripture is the story of this accommodation. "God keeps hope alive in his people by freshly adapting the promises of His covenant to different epochs..." (p. 53) "God ought not to be considered changeable merely because He accommodates diverse forms to different ages, as He knew would be expedient for each .... God has accommodated Himself to men's capacity, which is varied and changeable." (Inst. II, 11, 13).

The persuasion of God's mercy and favour, Calvin's definition of faith, is not merely inward. Being so persuaded one serves God in the Spirit of freedom and not out of compulsion and so is mature. The persuasion of God, then, is the dissuasion of human beings from

acting out of fear and the persuasion to act out of the freedom of adopted sons and daughters. Conscience (self-knowledge) is either to be persuaded by God that he accepts us as a loving Father, or not to be so persuaded and to live in fear of God as an angry judge.

Willis concludes that if one reads Calvin from the perspective of nominalism, then for Calvin God is "wholly other" and the finite creature is not capable of the infinite. However, if one regards Calvin's emphasis on the story of the covenant and understands him to be interpreting the story of the covenant from the perspective of the rhetorical tradition's emphasis on persuasion, then God and man are depicted as being together in the continual effort of God to relate himself persuasively to humankind and in the struggle of human beings to grow in knowledge and maturity in that persuasiveness. God is not the "wholly other". "God is God for man in His self-accommodation to human capacity". That is, "God begins with our incapacity, makes Himself small to adjust to it, and by His gracious action of strategic self-limitation, transforms us so that we are increasingly united to God Himself in Christ." (p. 58).

Willis presents us with an image of Calvin as a theologian influenced in a primary fashion by the humanist tradition of rhetoric. Willis' image of Calvin has not remained in isolation. Indeed, this is the image emerging in recent research. I shall try to demonstrate this.

In the same year that Willis' article was published, Hans Frei's The Eclipse of Biblical Narrative (New Haven and London, 1974) appeared, which includes a section on the Protestant reformers as interpreters of Scripture. A brief review of this section will demonstrate the convergence between Willis and Frei on the image of Calvin.

Frei indicates that the true meaning of the Bible's words, according to Calvin, rests in their literal sense. 'Literal sense' means that what is depicted in the text is what the text is about; what is depicted cannot be known apart from the text. Calvin's emphasis on the 'literal sense' does not disallow, but rather demands, figural or typological interpretation. It demands it because the literal meaning of various passages must be woven into a unity. Indeed, for Calvin, history, doctrine, the pattern for the Christian life were all held together in the storied text which the Bible is. But for typological interpretation to discern and represent their unity the illumination and persuasion of the Holy Spirit are necessary. For all this history, doctrine and ethics in the Bible comes into a unity as the Spirit illuminates to the mind of the reader their common basis in Christ and persuades the heart of the reader of the truth of Christ and of his mercy poured out for everyone. Here Frei is following the lead of H.J. Kraus' well-known article on Calvin's exegetical principles.[1] Kraus argued that for Calvin the Bible is not inspired and does not inspire,

but rather communicates and informs. The reader, not the text, is illumined and persuaded by the internal testimony of the Holy Spirit, so that we may say that such interpretation is inspired. God the Holy Spirit, God the Rhetor, is the crucial element in the interpretation of Scripture.[2]

To try to understand Calvin in terms of a scheme that refers to an objective divine Word and of a subjective appropriation of it does violence to the coherence of Calvin's theology. The Holy Spirit educates the reader in the unity of Scripture and persuades the reader that the common subject of these texts of Scripture is God's Word. The Holy Spirit, in this sense, enables the reader to interpret Scripture truly; i.e. in terms of its own coherence. By the Spirit the text of Scripture is identical with its subject matter.

T.H.L. Parker, a translator into English of several of Calvin's New Testament commentaries, and the author of a work on Calvin's New Testament commentaries, has published, this year, a book entitled, Calvin's Old Testament Commentaries (Edinburgh, 1986), in which he examines the character of Calvin's exegesis of the Old Testament. As Frei indicated in his treatment of Calvin, so too Parker recognizes that for Calvin the unity of the many discrete passages of Scripture is discerned through typological interpretation. But there can be no question of a commentator inventing these types arbitrarily. Rather, he is to recognize the types

that have been set up by God and attested in Scripture. Thus, the law - the whole religious order attested in the Old Testament - is to be understood of Christ preparatively and effectually,. The Old Testament religion corresponds to Christ as the image on a coin corresponds to the pattern of the die that stamps it. Yet, Calvin in his exegesis of the O.T. does not rush to typology, but uses it reservedly. For as an exegete he carefully observes context. That means that any sentence must be understood according to the sense of the passage in which it occurs; and the passage according to the sense of the whole book. The whole book must be understood in terms of its context in its portion of the Old Testament. At this point, the context becomes the whole of Scripture. No biblical passage and no biblical book may be interpreted as if it stood outside the Bible. One can demonstrate linguistically that certain books belong together. (The synoptics, for instance, or the Books of Samuel and Kings.) But the fact that 1 Corinthians and Ruth form a unity rests upon typological interpretation, which, in turn, is founded on the faith that each attests in its own way the Word made flesh.

Now we arrive at what Parker regards the crucial point. The commentator, according to Calvin, must see to it that he or she is controlled by the intention of the book which is being exegeted. The O.T. lives in an obscurity that will be dispersed by the rising of the sun of righteousness. The exegete, who would faithfully

render the text, must accept the limitations of the Old Testament condition. The religion of the O.T. is incomplete. The exegete does not read into the text the person of the mediator.

How then does Calvin envisage the period before the incarnation? Parker indicates that the image of 'shadow and body' won't do. Rather, the controlling image is 'childhood and maturity'.

First Parker sees this image applied in Calvin's treatment of O.T. narrative. The O.T. recounts the childhood and growing up of the church. But this process of maturation is not simple organic or historical growth. God by His Word and Spirit effects this maturation. God by His Word and Spirit leads, teaches, inflames. In sum, God is the rhetor, illuminating his saints and persuading them to maturity through the interpretation of Scripture. The sound interpreter of Scripture, therefore, is one who does not jump forward to Jesus Christ, but follows along the texts by which God, the rhetor, leads the church into fullness of life in Jesus Christ.[3]

Calvin applies the childhood and maturity image to his treatment of the law. "It was necessary that the people should be not only frightened by God's majesty, but also sweetly charmed, so that the law might be more precious to them than gold or silver or sweeter than honey." (CO.24, 209-210). God therefore reminds them of what he has done for them. He reminds them of the wonderful privilege he has shown them in uniting them in

covenant with him. In sum, God places a demand upon his people, but persuades them to it by reminding them that he has chosen them to share his life, he having shared their life with them, blessing them in this life and the next, and protecting them from the evil one in all affliction. Again, the emphasis on God as "rhetor" is clear.

Calvin applies the image of childhood and maturity to his treatment of the prophets. The prophets, according to Calvin, were interpreters of the law. The law was a sufficient guide for the people. Why, then, did God appoint prophets? To accommodate to their own age the warnings and promises which Moses proclaimed. If Calvin represents the prophets as applying the threats and promises of the law to the particular situations of their own day, so too, Parker remarks, the commentator Calvin applies the words of the prophets to the reader or hearer of his day, i.e., to the people of Geneva or sometimes to the whole of evangelical christendom. "It is the application of a passage to the readers or hearers that is most prominent in Calvin's exposition of the prophets." (p.215).

In Parker's book the image of Calvin as a theologian influenced by the rhetorical tradition is evident. God is <u>the</u> rhetor who illumines and persuades; and the prophet is a rhetor, too, in the limited sense of applying the law to the situations of his time; and the biblical commentator is a rhetor, as well, in the limited sense of applying the biblical word to the

situations of one's time.

Charles Partee in Calvin and Classical Philosophy (Leiden, 1977) agrees explicitly with Willis that Calvin is profoundly influenced by the rhetorical tradition (p.8). This influence is made particularly clear in the chapter entitled "Reason and Experience in Epistomology". Partee quotes the Geneva Catechism:

> Child: Scripture teaches that <faith> is the special gift of God, and experience confirms this.
>
> Minister: Tell me what experience you mean?
>
> Child: Our mind is too crude to be able to grasp the spiritual wisdom of God which is revealed to us through faith; and our hearts are too prone to distrust or to perverse confidence in ourselves or other creatures to rest of their own accord in God. But the Holy Spirit by His illumination makes us capable of understanding those things which would otherwise far exceed our grasp and brings us a sure persuasion by sealing the promises in our hearts. (P.39)

"Experience" refers in the Geneva Catechism to the work of the Holy Spirit illuminating our understanding and persuading our hearts.[4] God, the Holy Spirit, is the

rhetor. The persuasion of the Spirit, which is the experience of faith, is not of the kind that declares that when Scripture says the walls of Jericho fell down, the Spirit enables us to believe it. That would make the work of the Spirit not persuasion, but rather force; not faith, but rather credulity. The Spirit persuades us by graciously moving us to an understanding of what the God of Scripture has done and by sweetly leading us to the understanding that this mercy and beneficence of God are given to us and to the whole church.

> "The goodness of God", says Calvin, "cannot be placed beyond doubt unless we really ... experience its sweetness within ourselves, because no one offers himself as Christ's disciple who does not experience ‹Christ› to be a faithful and true teacher." (C.O. 47, 146)

Indeed, Calvin often remarks that we human beings are so sluggish and obdurate that the Word of God makes no headway with us; thus, the Spirit is required to persuade us of its truth. The Word is the truth and the Spirit is the rhetor who bears the truth home to our hearts.

Especially important for the thesis of this paper is Partee's conclusion to his chapter entitled, "Calvin and the Philosophers". In earlier sections of his book the reader may learn how the rhetorical tradition influenced Calvin's concept of God. In this later section the reader may learn how the same tradition influenced Calvin's concept of the Christian teacher and preacher. "Calvin uses philosophy, not as a source for

the truth, but as a learned adjunct to the explanation of the Christian faith." (p.91) The Christian teacher seeks to set forth lucidly how the truth bears in upon the life of men. "It has been said", Partee remarks, "that reformed theology consists of the Bible, the whole Bible, and nothing but the Bible. Of course, Calvin affirms the centrality of Scripture, but by his example, he suggests that one who knows only the Bible does not even know the Bible." (p.146) Calvin is convinced that "no one will ever be a good minister of the Word of God except he be a first-rate scholar". (C.O. 26, 406) Only such a scholar can explain sufficiently well the Christian faith and be a rhetor of the Word of God. Exemplifying what such a scholar does, Calvin, by contrasting and occasionally by complementing what he has heard in Scripture with what he has heard in Plato, Aristotle, Cicero, the Stoics and the Epicureans brings home with clarity to his reader what is proclaimed in the Word.

In sum, not only do Calvin's conception of God and his conception of the Christian teacher manifest the influence of the rhetorical tradition, but also his own method and style of theological teaching.

Finally, W. Balke's address, "The Word of God and Experientia according to Calvin", delivered at the 1978 International Calvin Congress in Amsterdam and published in Calvinus Ecclesiae Doctor, edited by W.H. Neuser (Kampen, 1982) confirms Partee's treatment of Calvin's understanding of "experience" and, more generally, the

influence of the rhetorical tradition upon Calvin.

Balke reminds his reader that Calvin in his writings constantly appeals to Scripture and experience. The reference to experience, as Partee also indicates, is not to experience in general, but rather to the experience of Scripture. Calvin's appeal is to Scripture and to our experience of its truth. The experience of truth is the effect of Scripture upon our lives and upon the life of the whole church. Balke suggests, by way of etymology, that the word 'experience' means: testing. I am tested by another and I am aware of being tested by another. The expression, "the experience of Scripture" may thus be rendered: I consciously undergo testing by Scripture. Balke recalls that Calvin recommends himself as an exegete to us in his introduction to his Comm. on Psalms by declaring that he has "experienced" what the Bible attests.

Balke identifies, as does Partee, this sense of the word 'experience' with the work of the Holy Spirit upon us. He asks, what experience does the Holy Spirit engender in us? He quotes Calvin's reply: "By the power of the testimony of the Holy Spirit we are drawn and inflamed, knowingly and willingly, to obey ‹Christ› yet ... more vitally and more effectively than by mere human willing or knowing." (Inst I, 7, 5). The Holy Spirit is God the rhetor.

Calvin recognizes that while the Spirit engenders the experience of hope in our hearts, fear co-exists

with it there. So we experience hope and fear. In the struggle between them we are to cast ourselves upon the promises of God. Calvin does not try to resolve the conflict between hope and fear in the human heart - as if a theologian were competent to accomplish such resolution. Rather, he counsels his hearers to attend the promises and to count upon the persuasion of God to maintain hope in its struggle with fear.

In sum, Balke suggests that Calvin speaks of two kinds of knowledge of God. The one is scientia fidei- knowledge of the Word. The other is scientia experientia - the knowledge that God keeps his Word, which he has spoken to us (and which is always logically subsequent to scientia fidei). Scientia experientia is clearly a persuasion, which is the work of God the Holy Spirit, God the rhetor.

The image of Calvin that emerges in David Willis' article is of a Calvin influenced in a primary fashion by the rhetorical tradition of humanism. Once we have espied that image we discover it confirmed in many recent works on Calvin, even where that image is not explicitly presented.

NOTES

[1]H.J. Kraus "Calvins exegetische Prinzipien", Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte 79-80, 1968-69.

[2]Frei does not explicitly employ the term 'rhetor', but

the concept is clearly there.

[3]Parker does not explicitly employ the term 'rhetor', but the concept is clearly there.

[4]Partee is careful to indicate that Calvin distinguishes between the "experience of faith", which is the work of God the Holy Spirit upon us, and other kinds of experience. Calvin cannot easily be drawn into a mystical or even pietistic interpretation of experience.

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