

The Cities of Calvin



Calvin Enters Geneva

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**Farel & Calvin banished from Geneva (1538) – Van Muyden (Farel et Calvin
bannis de Genève (1538))**

Introduction

ACCORDING to A.G. Dickens, the Reformation of the 16th Century was an “urban event.” That is, the Reformation captured many of the cities of Europe, including the cities of the Swiss Reformation, even as Geneva became the base for one of the more important reformers, John Calvin. Steven E. Ozment, author of *The Reformation in the Cities*, notes that Calvin and the other key reformers pledged themselves to cities, even when full citizenship was denied. He writes:

“. . . they did pledge allegiance to their cities, pay certain taxes, and became completely subject to the civil law code. This was true even when, as in the case of Luther in Wittenberg, Zwingli in Zurich, and Calvin in Geneva (until late in life), citizenship was not formally acquired” (Ozment, 1980: 85).

By organizing Protestantism in Geneva along strict church-state separation lines, Calvin was able to impact the religious and moral character of the city in a way that was unprecedented. Ozment notes that the Swiss reformers, “Zwingli, Bucer [and] Calvin... closely integrated religion and society and were determined to transform the latter by the former, subjecting rulers to Scripture’s guidance and the standards of divine righteousness” as interpreted by a somewhat literal interpretation of the Bible (Ozment 198: 135). But, how successful was Calvin? Did the cities of his 16th century world impact his thought? To what extent did Calvin impact the cities that he visited and lived in?

Calvin’s life, writings and ministry cannot be divorced from the cities that he travelled to or resided in. Born in Noyon, he would later study in Paris, Orleans and Bourges. He would seek sanctuary in Angouleme and Nerac. He would flee to Basle and Strasbourg to escape persecution in France. He would travel to Ferrara in Italy, and to several German cities from 1539-1541 to participate in colloquies sponsored by Charles V, Holy Roman Emperor. Eventually, he would settle in Geneva, and make his home there as a refugee and an exile from his own city and country.

Europe in the sixteenth Century

The situation in Europe in the sixteenth century was ripe for reform. Johannes Gutenberg’s (1398-1468) invention of the printing press allowed for books, pamphlets and papers to be mass produced quickly, and distributed widely. Trade between cities, and the rise of a new educated artisan class created a demand and interest in reform. The rivalries between England, France and the remnants of the “Holy Roman Empire” created tensions that forced monarchs to come to terms with reformers who became unwittingly third party forces among rival powers. The sixteenth century was also noted by the rise of the New Learning, what many call “Renaissance Humanism.” With the ascendancy of the Renaissance, and the emergence of scholarship, the establishment of universities and with it the pursuit of education grew in status and in importance. Education and the study of the classics became accessible and educational opportunities, in the cities where the universities were, would fuel the emergence of a newly educated class who were not royalty or clergy, but were those who would become the new artisan class. They would master the languages and translate and publish the classics into the vernacular, including the Old and New Testament scriptures. They would also engage in commerce and participate in local political processes. Such was definitely the case in 16th century Geneva.

A major breakthrough in the late middle ages was the revolution in printing and publishing. There would be no Luther without Gutenberg, and no Calvin without Erasmus. If Erasmus “laid the egg that Luther hatched” (Roland Bainton), Calvin would harvest the golden egg of humanism and spread the new learning worldwide. Humanism, a return to the classics, fed the

Renaissance which became the seedbed for Reform from within and without. The modern world was created in the 16th century.

Politically, the 16th century was characterized by rivalry and conflict between political and religious powers. But, fortunately, there was enough relative “stability” between the Black Death (peaking from 1348-1350) and the 100 Years War (1337-1453) on the one hand; and the horrible 30 Years War (1618-1648) in the 17th Century, on the other, to allow for a firm grounding of the ideas that emanated from the Renaissance and Reformation movements. Renaissance humanism, world exploration, and the rise of incipient nationalism would follow. The modern world was begun in the 16th century.

England was helped politically by its relative isolation, and the weakening of the papal-states gave occasion for an incipient nationalism in Germany as well. France was hemmed in on all sides by the Holy Roman Empire, and was fighting for sovereignty. King Charles I of Spain (1500-1558), who in 1519, Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire, tried to bring together the disparate pieces of the empire, strewn from the four corners of Europe from the Low Countries in the North; Spain and Southern Italy to the South and Germany and the Eastern Europe to the East. In the end he was not successful. For the Popes of the Renaissance, from Alexander VI Borgia to Clement VII and the sack of Rome, a struggle was waged to hold on to the material possessions, political and religious authority, and ultimately to the funding streams that brought splendour, opulence and corruption to Rome and Florence. It was the campaign of Leo X to fund St. Peter’s Basilica through indulgences that led to Luther’s protest. (Tuchman 1984:105). For the King of England, the princes of Germany, and the artisan classes of the Swiss cities, these struggles provided an occasion for greater independence and autonomy. For local powers outside of Italy, it was in their self-interest to retain taxes and to question the utility of indulgences, rather than send them to Rome to fund artists, building projects -- or to fight the Turks. Luther’s protest was politically expedient, and he had the full support of the German princes who would not go back to the Church, despite efforts of the emperor. The bungling of the Renaissance popes provided an opportunity for reform and independence (Daniel-Rops 1961: 177-275; Tuchman 1984: 51 ff.).

Sixteenth Century Europe Population and Urbanization

The stage was set for the Reformation, and the Reformation was fuelled in part also by events that were happening in society and in the local economies, that is in 16th century urbanization. By 1500, there were some 73 million people in Europe, most of them in rural hamlets, but many beginning to move to the cities. Of the total population of Europe, 20 million were in the “Holy Roman Empire,” mostly Germany and bordering territories; 15 million people

were in France, Europe’s most populous country; 13 million people were in Italy; 8 million were in Spain, and a mere 4.5 million were in England and Wales (Manchester 1992: 46-47).

Manchester records that the three largest cities in Europe were Paris, Naples and Venice with about 150,000 persons each. France and Italy were on the throes of increased urbanization. The cities with at least 100,000 each were located by the sea, a river or some other waterway, and they included Seville, Genoa, and Milan in Italy. Montpellier was the largest town in Southern France, with about 40,000. Other large towns in 1500 included Florence (70,000); Barcelona (50,000) and Valencia (30,000) in Italy; Augsburg (20,000) and Nuremberg (15,000) in Germany; Antwerp and Brussels (20,000 each) in Belgium. The two largest cities in England were London (with about 50,000) and Bristol (with but 10,000) (Manchester (1992): 47).

These were pre industrial cities, characterized by relative smallness, density, the connection between shop and residence, the supremacy of the church, and rigid social stratification. Pre

industrial cities at this time were surrounded by thick walls and turrets for defence purposes, and were noted for their gabled roofs, spires of local parish churches and dwarfing them all, the local cathedral. In the sixteenth century, clergy and royalty governed the city, but merchants and artisans were making their mark. When Calvin was in Strasbourg, he became a citizen, and joined the tailors' guild for legitimacy. Cities were dense, dark, dirty, and dangerous. Artisan quarters were distinctive. "Here were found the butcher's lane, the paper-maker's street, tanner's row, cobbler's shops, saddle makers, and even a small bookshop" (Manchester (1992), 48). Calvin would attract 22 printers to Geneva alone by 1560.

After the plague years, urbanization the 15th had begun to pick up again at the end of Century, and these trends continued under King Francis I. Paris was again the largest city in Europe, and it had recovered its population of from 150,000-200,000 prior to the Black Death and the Hundred Years War. Some scholars estimate that Paris may have been a city of 400,000 in 1528, about the time that Calvin was present in the city as a young student (Knecht 1984: 312). Other urban populations by 1550 in France were as follows: Lyon 80,000; Rouen, 60,000; Bordeaux, 50,000; and Toulouse, 40,000.

In France, urbanization and population movements were on the rise. Their towns ranked as some of the largest in Europe at the time. And, by mid-century, there were a number of smaller towns that were emerging as well with populations of about 20,000 each. These included Amiens, Nantes, La Rochelle, Marseilles, Tours, Rheims and Orleans. There were also some thirty towns in France by 1550 that boasted at least 10,000 in population. Similarly, Calvin's Geneva swelled from 10,300 in 1540 to 21,000 in 1560 due to immigration from France and Italy by Protestants fleeing persecution. Berne, Strasbourg, Basle and Zurich, other cities of Calvin, were cities of from 10-20,000 persons each in population as well.

Many towns in France had their own Parlements (including Paris, Toulouse, Montpellier, Orleans, Cahors, Angers, Aix, Poitiers, Valence, Caen, Nantes, Bourges, Bordeaux, Angouleme and Isidore), so that government was not unified. The Parliament of Paris would fight with the King, local magistrates, and by mid-century even with the Sorbonne for power. Fifteen towns had universities (Paris, Toulouse, Montpellier, Orleans, Cahors, Angers, Aix, Poitiers, Valence, Cane, Nantes, Bourges, Bordeaux, Angouleme and Issoire), though none were as powerful as the colleges of the University of Paris. 150 cities and towns in France, including Calvin's own Noyon, had an Episcopal see, but only two cities were known as industrial cities: Amiens (cloth); and Tours (silk) (Knecht 1984: 312-313). Of these cities, Paris, Orleans, Bourges, and Angouleme were cities important to Calvin's life, and they appear prominently in these lists. They had perhaps the three most important universities in France, and Paris was the most important university in Europe next to the University of Boogna. Noyon, the birthplace of Calvin, was not really a manufacturing town, but was a centre for trade, and as noted, an Episcopal see. But Noyon was much less important as far as cities and towns go in 16th Century France. Calvin would have to see Paris, and when he did his life would change forever.

Sixteenth Century Society

French urban society in the sixteenth century consisted of the *aises* (the well to do); the "menu people" (the proletariat or working class); and the poor. The nobility and the clergy were exempted from urban taxes and military service. But functionally, the most important persons to the towns were merchants and municipal office holders. As Knecht describes:

In towns which were primarily administrative centres, office-holders were the dominant social group. They were often as rich as the merchants, from whose ranks many of them had risen. The core of urban society consisted of artisans and small to middling merchants. They worked for themselves, served in the urban militia, paid

taxes, participated in general assemblies of the commune and owned enough property to guarantee their future security (Knecht 1984: 313.)

But, most of the people in France were the poor. Most significant was what was happening to France in the 16th Century economically. The “menu people” were manual workers, and were excluded from any share of the local government. Their plight was to live from day to day in fear of hunger, homelessness and utter destitution. In Paris, there were so many feast and festival days, that there were only 260 days a year that a manual labourer could work and earn money. Any illness, accident, civil disorder, unemployment—or sudden rise in the cost of consumer goods, could drive a person and his family to poverty, homelessness and beggary. From 1520 on, increase in wages lagged behind the rising cost of bread. Rents and the costs of fuel were rising; as well as the costs for “essentials” such as candles, cloth, shoes and so forth. “By the end of the century the purchasing power of the working man was 40% less than it was at the beginning” (Knecht 1984: 314). This was not just a situation that would help the Reformation, but would also give birth to revolutions, peasant wars, and civil unrest.

The disruptions of the period were fuelled by more than just conflicts over religious dogma. Humanism was in the air, challenging Papal authority. Francis I and Charles V were embroiled in an implacable struggle over empire. And the rise of the cities and with it social, economic and political tensions created an environment that fed dissent on the one hand; and severe repression of dissent on the other. But, who were the groups of people who would be most attracted to the Reformation? Would it be the poor, the nobility or the emerging urban artisans? For the poor, the fear was that their poverty would get worse. For manual workers, any disruption in their work lives could mean hunger and poverty. For the poor, any change in society was a threat to the immediacy of economic needs. But, for artisans, there may be the other factor of rising expectations and economic opportunity. Economic self-interest enters the picture even as religion continued to dominate society. What seemed to happen in Germany, England and Switzerland was that economic opportunity and religious conviction were conjoined. Revolution does not usually come from “below” but from the ranks of a threatened and more opportunistic middle. So, who were those most impacted by the Reformation and the possibilities of a new social order?

Journeymen (migrant workers) travelled extensively and were exposed to new ideas; they resented the rigid controls society placed on them; and did not have social and religious bonds that membership in the guild confraternities placed on their masters. The relatively new printing industry seems to have had the largest number of proto- protestants, perhaps because its members were less bound by tradition. The artisans and journeymen had a strong streak of anti-clericalism, probably because they saw the large number of well-fed clerics about their towns while they struggled for survival despite their skills.... The combination of artisan attraction to Reform and bourgeoisie education in the colleges ensured that the early evangelical movement was primarily an urban phenomenon.... Paris, with its large number of liberal humanists and artisans and the site of the principle heresy-hunting institutions, the Sorbonne and the Parliament, was the focus of attention until 1535 (Baumgartner 1995: 138-139).

Political and Religious Conflicts

The 16th Century politically was epitomized by the reigns and shenanigans of three kings, including Emperor Charles V of Spain and the Holy Roman Empire; Francis First, the King of France (with his successors); and Henry VIII, King of England, and his successors King Edward VI, Mary I and Elizabeth I. Switzerland, more independent, but less unified, was a relatively small player as contestants, as their cities and towns either vied with each other, or established a league to protect their interests. Switzerland, to compete in the 16th century world, found its cities developing pacts with each other in order to survive. In Geneva’s case, a pact

with Savoy was replaced with a pact with Berne. Calvin and his fellow Genevans by mid-century were in perpetual fear of invasion by one of the powers noted above.

Francis I (1496-1547) came to the throne in 1515 following the death of Charles XII (1462-1515). He inherited a fragmented France, parts of which were claimed by England, the Holy Roman Empire, the Swiss and even the Pope. With a victory over the Swiss in 1515 at the Battle of Marignano, the French now had claim to Milan and Northern Italy. Unfortunately, with the election of Charles V as Emperor by the seven electors in 1519, political conflicts in Europe would escalate throughout most of the Sixteenth Century. Francis was a candidate for Holy Roman Emperor, but the votes didn't go his way. As a result, Charles V set out to unite his empire, which included Spain, the Low Countries, Germany, Southern Italy and Eastern Europe. Even some lands in France, Picardy and Burgundy, were claimed at some point by Charles. Such geographical fragmentation would prove Charles's undoing, but not for decades.

At the same time, England found itself more removed and isolated from the mainland, and the lack of a male heir with Catherine of Aragon produced a crisis of succession. Henry's attempt to divorce Catherine and marry Anne Boleyn is one of the great tragic stories of the era, and the Pope would not approve. Faced with this dilemma, Henry passed the Act of Succession in 1534, noting the pattern of succession after his marriage to Anne Boleyn. Later in 1534, he passed the Act of Supremacy in 1534, claiming the headship of the Church of England for himself. Conflicts swirled, and when Mary Tudor (1516-1558) assumed the throne after Henry's death in 1547 as Queen Mary I, she attempted to turn back the state to Catholicism.

Religious affiliation thus became the most important, and the most dangerous of allegiances. Matters only settled down somewhat with the ascendancy of Elizabeth as Queen in 1558, but bloody religious wars reigned in France from 1562-1598. Conflicts in Germany and in Italy also continued hot throughout the 16th Century. William Manchester's portrayal of the age is fitting, "A World Lit Only By Fire: The Medieval Mind and the Renaissance." It was a volatile age of intrigue, wars and numerous civil disturbances.

The sixteenth century was a violent century. Peasants were crushed in Germany in 1524-5, with 100,000 peasants killed. Anabaptists took over Munster to create a "kingdom for 1000 years" in Germany in 1534; and this too was brutally crushed. John of Leiden, after being named king, organized Munster on the basis of an Old Testament theocracy, with twelve elders representing the "twelve tribes of Israel." "The twelve published a new code of moral law, which enjoined a strict communism of goods; and required certain hand workers, previously employed by money, to continue in trades without pay as servants of the community with a strict military organization" (Williams 1962: 371). This Utopia died hard. Munster was besieged in August, 1534 and was finally sacked on June 25, 1535 when an army of Catholics AND Protestants re-captured the city, slaughtering the inhabitants. The self-appointed king, John of Leiden (Jan Beukelson) (1509-1536), was executed, along with two of his leaders the following year. The Anabaptist experiment in Munster was fabled as a place where goods were held in common, and polygamous marriage was practiced.

Karl Kautsky (1854-1938), orthodox Marxist and a historian who was looking for traces of socialism in the distant past found those in early Christianity, in More's Utopia and in the early Anabaptist experiments in Germany. In his *Communism in Central Europe at the Time of the Reformation*, he argued that the negative portrayal of the Anabaptist movement in Munster was depicted by its enemies, and missed the point. Kautsky believed that the movement in Europe represented an early example of communism, and he therefore saluted John of Leiden's emphasis on social equality, political democracy, and communal living. However, the utopianism, hierarchical political-religious organization and strict morality were not limited to the Anabaptists. Calvin would develop his own brand of theocracy in Geneva, and virtually every city from Strasbourg to Basle attempted to control religious practices politically.

Religious identity was a sensitive political matter in the 16th Century, as it was in Puritan New England and indeed to the present time in the U.S. The new religious fervour was perceived to be a political threat as well. Francis I vacillated from tolerance to persecution with respect to the Protestants. For a while, all reformers were thought to be “Lutherans” or “Anabaptists.” On January 19, 1535, following the affair of the Placards (October 17, 1534), Francis issued a general edict, encouraging the extermination of all “Lutherans.” However, by July 16, 1536, Francis released the Edict of Cousy which allowed all “heretics” the chance to come back to France. They could stay, if by six months they would recant and returned to the Mother Church (Knecht 2001: 145). The Edict of Cousy was also accompanied by a resumption of talks between the King and the German Protestants, for he needed an alliance with German protestants to counter the moves of his rivals. Unfortunately, he believed that the Protestants in his own land were not so much guilty of wrong religious instruction, as of sedition. Calvin wrote a letter to Francis First, as a preface to the first edition of the Institutes to counter this perception.

Calvin took the opportunity provided by Cousy to return to Paris and Noyon to settle family affairs. Unfortunately, despite Calvin’s plea in early 1536, Francis did not heed Calvin’s plea, even if he had read the letter. By June 1, 1540, Francis released the Edict of Fontainebleau which gave the Parliament overall jurisdiction to weigh and adjudge heresy. So, the persecutions continued. In a May, 1540 letter to Farel, Calvin stated that he was “struck with horror when I hear with what cruelty the godly are persecuted in France. Yet somehow, the Lord does preserve some of the excellent ones, while others are hurried off to the stake” (Tracts V (2009): 182-3). For Calvin, it was better to escape, to come out of the bosom of Satan, rather than remain in it. Calvin’s letter to Roussel and Duchemein urged an exodus, and this campaign versus the so-called “Nicodemites” continued for decades.

By 1550, these French Protestants were being called Huguenots. Francis’ successor, Henry II (1519-1559), was even more vicious than Francis. On June 27, 1551, the Henry published the Edict of Châteaubriant which demanded that the civil and ecclesiastical courts in France detect and punish all heretics. Henry placed severe restrictions on Huguenots, and confiscated one-third of their property based on any information supplied by informers. In 1557, Henry specifically mentioned Geneva, stating that Geneva was “the source of much evil because many heretics are received there and thus disseminate their errors into France” (cited in Knecht 2002: 16). With the death of Henry II in 1559 in a jousting accident, there appeared to be a small opening whereby a peace could be achieved, and this was pursued vigorously by Henry’s wife and self-appointed regent, Catherine de Medici (1519-1589). Catherine, who became the mother of the frail fifteen-year-old King Francis II, who died in 1560, was thrust into the political arena to try to resolve the century’s most serious conflict. After the death of Francis II, the rule passed down to the ten-year-old son of Francis, King Charles IX, who died in 1574. When Henry III (1551-1589) became King in 1574, Catherine continued to play a key role in the affairs of France, though by this time she had turned her back on the Protestants.

In 1560, Catherine sought to broker a truce between Protestants and Catholics, and brought Theodore de Beza (1519 -1605) to France for negotiations. By 1561, there were 2000 Calvinist churches in France, and for loyal Catholics, the numbers appeared to be a threat to France politically. In 1561, Beza represented the evangelicals at Poissy, and defended the cause of French Protestants. This broke off without result, and the Queen brought Beza back to France January 28, 1562 at St. Germaine. Eleven days earlier the Queen declared an edict that granted privileges to French Protestants. Unfortunately, on March 1, 1562, hatred of Huguenots led to the Massacre at Vassy, whereby 1,200 Huguenots were massacred. This event triggered the Wars of Religion in France which lasted from 1562 to 1598. On August 24, 1572, several years after Calvin’s death, there occurred the St Bartholomew’s Day massacre, whereby 20,000 French Protestants were massacred in Paris, and all over France. Not only did these persecutions fuel the fleeing of refugees to Strasbourg, Geneva and the Low Countries, but eventually, but the end of the 17th century, there were very few Protestants left in France.

The Cities of Calvin = Noyon

“It was a bourgeois from Noyon in Picardy who provided leadership, coherence and structure to French Protestantism” (Baumgartner 1995: 139). John Calvin was born, July 10, 1509, in France, the province of Picardy. Noyon was a cathedral town 65 miles NW of Paris. Calvin’s journey from Noyon to becoming perhaps the most influential reformer of the Reformation took him through several of the most important cities of the 16th Century. The Picardy region was noted for its radicalism and penchant for reform. Walker describes members of the Picardy region as “eager, controversial to the point of fanaticism, enthusiastic, dogmatic and persistent.” Persons from the Picardy region have “seldom been lukewarm or indifferent,” and have included reformers such as Calvin’s contemporaries, Le Fevre, Olivetan, Roussel and Vatable; and later the philosophers Peter the Hermit, Roscelin, and Ramus, and also French revolutionaries Desmoulins and Babeuf. Calvin was a proud member of “the Picardy nation,” and in his own way a religious reformer and social revolutionary. Calvin’s social and political thought in “his thinking and approach really do represent a turning-point in the history of relations between the church and the social and economic world” (Bieler 2005: 453).

In the 16th Century, Noyon, devoid of commercial or economic significance, was an important ecclesiastical centre (Walker 1969: 19). Noyon was important historically to France. Charlemagne was crowned king of the western Frankish kingdom of Neustria at Noyon in 768. Hugh Capet (939-996), king of France and founder of the Capetian dynasty, was also crowned at Noyon, in 987. The Capetian dynasty ruled France until 1328. Its Cathedral of Notre Dame is a late 12th-century Romanesque-Gothic edifice. As an ecclesiastical center, Noyon attracted young scholars who planned on studying for the clergy who aspired to teaching or administrative duties in the Catholic Church.

At least one major political event happened in Noyon when John was a boy, and he must have been present at the time, though there is no mention of this in Calvin’s writings. On August 13, 1516, Charles, the King of Spain, (later Holy Roman Emperor in 1519) and Francis I met in Noyon. There they established a treaty, the Treaty of Noyon. Because of the Treaty, France abandoned its claims to the Kingdom of Naples and received the Duchy of Milan from Charles in recompense. The Treaty ended the “War of the League Cambrai,” the third of a series of Italian Wars. As an added sweetener, Charles offered in marriage his daughter Charlotte to Francis as a prospective bride (Knecht 1984: 70). Charlotte (1516-1524) at the time was not yet one year old.

The treaty did not last, as though not the only reason, Charlotte died as a young girl of eight years of age.

Calvin’s hometown was razed by Charles V in 1543, and again in 1552 (Calvin to Ambroise Blauer, 19 November 1552; Tracts and Letters, 5: 373-4). Calvin notes that Noyon, “the city where I had been born had lately been utterly destroyed by fire,” though an eyewitness told Calvin later that his own father’s house stood even as others had been destroyed (Tracts (2009), V: 37, n. 1). Even so, due to the wars and the persecution of French Protestants, and Calvin’s own stature, he could not return to his birthplace. Calvin’s home was severely damaged centuries later in both World War One and World War II. However, it was restored and dedicated anew after the war on July 17, 1955. Calvin’s home is now a museum, but is not quite the same home of Calvin’s youth. Yet, we know from Calvin’s letters that he had a great attachment to his hometown and its region.

In the 16th century, Noyon was not only an administrative and cathedral centre, but a commercial one as well. It was a centre of the grain market, and merchants were numerous in the town, and were organized into guilds. In addition to wheat, the town possessed merchants who made and

sold goods of wool and textiles. Also, leather tanners and a bank thrived in Noyon (Cottret 2000: 9).

“Jean” was baptized July the 10th, 1509 at St. Godeberte, and his Godfather was Jean des Vatines, a canon of the cathedral. The Cauvin family was of modest origins, as they were a Picardy family of watermen and artisans. They came from the nearby town of Pont-L’Eveque, one of the towns that gave the younger Calvin a benefice for study purposes. Calvin’s grandfather was a cooper in Pont-L’Eveque. Today, Pont L’Eveque is known for its wine and cheeses. Richard, one of his grandfather’s sons and the brother of Gerard, was a locksmith, and had a shop in Paris. Also Richard’s son, Jacques, and cousin of John, was also a locksmith in Paris. So, when John went to Paris to study, he had family connections to help him get by.

Gerard Cauvin, brother of Richard and father of John, rose quickly to respectability in Noyon. He was established in Noyon by 1481, and then achieved the status of Bourgeoisie in 1497. Gerard was friends with the bishop of Noyon, Charles d’Hangest, who was bishop from 1500-1525. In 1525, this office was ceded to his son, Jean d’Hangest, a personal friend of John Calvin, and Jean was Bishop until his death in 1577. Gerard Cauvin was described by his biographers in several ways. One person described him as a “sly man, of a sharp and crafty nature, skilled in chicanery, but a great rascal.” Another described him as a man “of ardent spirit, among the most skilled in the finest practice and algebra of the law” (cited in Cottret 2000: 10). Gerard achieved the equivalent of middle class status as he “acquired the positions of secretary to the bishop of Noyon, notary to the chapter of the cathedral, registrar to the city government, solicitor in the ecclesiastical court, and fiscal agent of the county” (Bratt 1959: 9). Whatever the case, it seems that John was dutiful towards his father, but did not seem to have a warm affection.

Gerard also married well, to Jeanne Le Franc, the pretty daughter of a wealthy innkeeper from Cambrai. Jeanne was also apparently quite religious, and took John as a young boy on a pilgrimage to the shrine in the nearby Ourscamp Abbey. There, allegedly, was the skull of Anna, the mother of Mary, and pilgrims were expected to kiss the skull of Anna for good luck. Anna was the patroness of sailors from Brittany. Calvin remembered this, and wrote against it in his 1543 tract against relics. Cottret put it this way: the pilgrimage to Ourscamp “undoubtedly habituated her son early to those pious exercises that later incurred the sarcasms of his *Treatise on Relics*” (Cottret 1900: 10). Unfortunately, Jeanne died in 1515, when John was but six years of age. Gerard apparently remarried, and he continued to advance as a “bourgeoisie” in the city. Beginning as a town clerk, he advanced to the Episcopal court as a fiscal agent, secretary, notary and procurator of the financial affairs of the Cathedral.

Unfortunately, the chapter apparently demanded of Gerard an accounting of his activities, which Gerard, for some reason, refused to do. Whether an action of chicanery, or a matter of pride and honour, is hard to tell. Regardless, the unfortunate matter is that Gerard was excommunicated. When he died in 1531, there was some controversy as to whether Gerard could receive an honourable burial. John’s brother Charles was left with the task of negotiating with the cathedral betters to have his father buried properly. Charles was also pursuing ordination, but five years later, at his death bed, Charles refused to take the sacraments of the church. It seems that Charles was guilty of striking a cathedral chapter person, and had a reputation as being hot tempered. One wonders what was going on in his brother John’s mind? Was the possible mistreatment of his father, and the difficulties surrounding his father’s and brother’s situation in Noyon factors in Calvin’s pilgrimage away from the mother church to the Reformation? I believe that these events provided the initial occasion for Calvin’s eventual “conversion.”

What we do know is that Jean was a precocious youth and a child prodigy. He advanced quickly in his studies, and he would eventually rank with Erasmus, Luther, and some of his own professors as a scholar of Renaissance humanism, and the *de facto* intellectual leader of the Reformation. Calvin was educated initially in a private boarding school near Noyon, called the

School of the Capettes, called such because of the caps they wore. Calvin's memories of his early life in Noyon and in the Picardy region were insignificant. Even so, Calvin was elected as head of the "nation of Picardy" while at Bourges as an advanced student in law school. His closest companions in Noyon were sons from noble and aristocratic backgrounds. The connections would have its benefits. In 1521, Calvin received his first ecclesiastical benefice from Chapel of La Gesine in the city cathedral (Spjker 2009: 10), a name of one of the cathedral altars. This would help fund his educational endeavours. Cottret speculates that the year of his first benefice in 1521 represented a ritual towards leaving home. He was then 12 years of age, and young men of standing would go to school somewhere at this age, and this was true of Calvin, and apparently received a tonsure (haircut that identified him as on his way to becoming an ordained priest).

So, in 1521 (some say 1523) John Calvin left Noyon for Paris and for the College De La Marche. In 1527, he received a second gift from Saint -Martin de Martheville (eight miles from Noyon) which Calvin exchanged in 1529 for a benefice from Pont-l'Eveque, his father's birthplace. In turn the Le Gesine benefice was given to John's younger brother, Antoine, though Calvin picked it up again in 1531 when Antoine no longer needed it. Calvin would renounce these benefices and sever his ties with the Church on May 4, 1534, though he never lost his love for his native Picardy and the city of Noyon.

Paris

The University of Paris at the time contained as many as 68-70 resident colleges. Founded in about 1200, the University of Paris was the oldest university in France, and the second largest in Europe next to the University of Bologna. In about 1280, the College d'Harcourt was founded. Afterwards, the College du Cardinal Lemoine the College de Navarre; Montaigu; the Sorbonne and the Lisieux were founded, each dating from the fourteenth century. When Calvin arrived, the University of Paris, Montaigu was the "liberal" rival to the Sorbonne, and the centre of Renaissance humanism. At Paris, Orleans and Bourges, Calvin studied with some of the greatest minds of the age. The College de la Marche was founded in 1363 by Maitre Jean de la Marche. Montaigu was founded as the College de Aicelins by Giles Aicelin in 1314, and it was renamed as the College Du Montaigu in 1588 (Battles1996: 48). By the early sixteenth century, Montaigu was declining in numbers due to the harsh and uninspired leadership of Noel Beda and Pierre de la Tempete.

The University of Paris was an intellectual tour de force in Europe. Some of the great minds of the West had studied there including Thomas Aquinas, Duns Scotus, Bonaventura, William of Occam, Pierre de Ailly, and Jean Gerson. In addition to Latin, Greek had been taught there since 1458. In 1508, Girolamo Aleandro, brought fame to the teaching of Greek at Paris. Aleandro was later an opponent of Luther at Worms. In 1507, the printing of books in Greek was produced in Paris, and in 1509, Jacques Lefèvre d'ftaples or Jacob Faber Stapulensis (c.1455 –1536), renown classicist, published a work on the Psalms. Among the students of Le Fevre was Guillaume Bude, who released his Commentary on the Greek Language in 1529. King Francis I, and his well-known sister, Marguerite, were in their own way were champions and guardians of the New Learning. Even though the scholars of the Sorbonne maintained a vigil for traditionalism, Paris in the 1520s was well suited to the training of humanist scholars like the young Calvin (Walker 1969: 5-7).

Upon arriving in Paris, Calvin probably stayed with his Uncle Richard, a locksmith, near Saint Germaine-l'Auxerrois. At the College de La Marche, Calvin audited classes from the famous Latin linguist, Mathurin Cordier (1479-1564). The courses in Latin were prerequisite before a student could advance to study philosophy, law or theology. He quickly mastered Latin, and then moved on to Montaigu to study philosophy. Allister McGrath believes that Calvin was never officially enrolled in the College de La Marche (McGrath, 1990: 22-23), but that he studied Latin with Cordier temporarily before he could be admitted to Montaigu. Cordier was a master

teacher, but was critical of the other colleges of Paris for their severity and rote teaching methods. He was ultimately attracted to the reform movement, became a friend to Calvin, and ultimately ended up in Calvin's Geneva shortly before his death. One of Calvin's Commentaries, First Thessalonians (1550), was dedicated to this teacher. At the time of the dedication, Cordier was the Principal of the College of Lausanne.

Cordier was an original. In 1530 he published a manual on how to teach his pupils. He was against education as a form of strict discipline or punishment. He wrote: "The sages never approved this unnatural custom of bringing children only with strokes of the rod and with punishments to observe correct language." Cordier did not believe that the teacher was a substitute for God. He advised: "it is your business only to plant or irrigate, God will make the plant grow" (cited in Cottret 2000: 15). There is some debate as to the extent Calvin heeded these words, and the extent that Calvin's writings resembled a more absolute surety. Even so, Calvin never forgot his debt to Cordier. He tried to get Cordier to come to Geneva in 1545. He could not relocate then, but later relocated there towards the end of his life.

Unlike what was envisioned by Cordier, the College du Montaigu was noted for its severity and harshness. Montaigu was located at the present site of the Library of Sainte Genevieve, close to the Pantheon. The college had been reorganized 40 years earlier by Jan Standonck (1450-1504). Standonck was influenced by the Brethren of the Common Life, a spiritualist sect that supported community, bible study and service. The Brethren of the Common Life, following Gerhard Groote, was critical of the staleness of medieval scholasticism, and favoured poverty, mysticism, and a communal living. However, Standonck was noted for the demands of a most severe discipline from students. Erasmus was a student at Montaigu in 1495, but only remembers the privation and "abundance of lice." Erasmus chided Standonck for giving his students "a bed so hard, a diet so strict and so little abundant, vigils and labours so overpowering that in less than a year from beginning the experiment he had brought numerous young people, gifted by nature and highly promising, either to death, or blindness, or madness or sometimes leprosy" (Cited in Cottret 2000: 17). Some have argued that Calvin's numerous bodily afflictions date from this period.

Standonck was replaced by famous scholar, Noel Bedier (or Beda) (1470-1537). Beda was known as a conservative theologian who opposed the protestant reformation. Another individual, Pierre Tempete, directed the College du Montaigu from 1514 –1528. Like Standonck, Tempete was known to thrash his students, and was called derisively "the tempest" by Rabalais. Rabalais weighed in against the corporal mistreatment of students. Tempete ruled the institution with a rod of iron (Cottret 2000: 19). Ironically, Calvin apparently suffered none of these abuses, or was not thwarted by them. Rather, he was known to be a model student and for an extraordinary high capacity for study and self-discipline. Calvin seemed to thrive in such an environment and was nicknamed by his peers as "the accusative case." It appears that Calvin learned much from Montaigu, despite or because of its Spartan discipline.

At Montaigu, Calvin thrived and he benefitted from what must have been on balance an excellent education. Beza mentions that Calvin was instructed by an excellent Italian (perhaps Antonio Coronel); and perhaps also by the scholar, Scot John Mair (known also as John Major) (1469-1550). Mair would later count Ignatius Loyola (1491-1556) as one of his students in 1528. Despite its reputation, Montaigu had succeeded in attracting some of the most important humanist and religious leaders of the era including Erasmus, Calvin, Knox and Loyola! Cottret (2000: 20) speculates that Mair must have been one of Calvin's teachers, as Calvin would later emphasize some of the same concepts that Mair emphasized: faith, predestination, the importance of the Word, and the use of logic and grammar. The thematic similarities between Mair and Calvin are striking. When Mair returned to Scotland, he attracted yet another famous pupil, John Knox (1510-1572).

Calvin may have bumped into other famous scholars at this time, including Le Fevre d'Étaples, a “pre reformer;” and Pierre Robert Olivetan (1508-1536), a Hebrew scholar. Olivetan, a cousin and friend of Calvin, was the first to translate the Bible into French based on the original Hebrew and Greek languages. Calvin would later build on his cousin's faithful work. After his death, Calvin inherited Olivetan's books, some of which he sold to avoid poverty in Strasbourg. At about this time, Calvin stayed in the home of Etienne de la Forge, a Lutheran merchant who distributed gifts to the poor and provided sanctuary for refugees from Holland. Unfortunately, de la Forge was burned at the stake in Paris, Feb. 15, 1535, which made a dramatic impact on Calvin. This incident was perhaps the major cause for his writing the Institutes, preceded in particular by his opening letter to King Francis I of France.

Orleans

When Calvin turned 20, a major change occurred. His father, for whatever reason, directed his son to leave Paris to study law. Calvin dutifully obeyed his father and moved to Orleans, and would later find himself at Bourges. Calvin would become a student in the three most prestigious universities in France at this time, and he would study with several of the most notable scholars and professors of the age. Speculation has it that the reason his father moved his son to Orleans was that he was experiencing problems with the Cathedral in Noyon. When Calvin's father began to become embroiled in a controversy with the Cathedral chapter in Noyon, he took John out of Paris and sent him to Orleans to study Law. To Calvin's father, a career in Law seemed more lucrative than a career in theology, especially given the volatilities of the time. Even so, Calvin describes the utility of the move.

When I was yet a very little boy, my father had destined me for the study of theology. But afterwards, when he considered that the legal profession commonly raised those who followed it to wealth, the prospect induced him suddenly to change his purpose. Thus it came to pass, that I was withdrawn from the study of philosophy, and was put to the study of law. To this purpose I endeavoured faithfully to apply myself, in obedience to the will of my father; but God, by the sacred guidance of his providence, at length gave a different direction to my course” (Calvin, Preface to Commentary on the Book of Psalms, in Dillenberger 1975: 26).

Orleans in the 16th Century was a vital town with a renowned university and a reputation for turning out legal scholars. At Orleans, Calvin resided with Nicholas Duchemin, a law student and disciple of Pierre L'Estoile (1480-1537). Calvin also befriended Francois Daniel and, through some unconfirmed reports, may have met Francois Rabalais (1483-1553). Another member of the group was Francois Conan. Orleans historically was a strategic point on the River Loire, for it was situated at the river's most northerly point, and was relatively close to Paris. There were few bridges that crossed the Loire, but Orleans had one of them, and so became, with Rouen and Paris, one of Medieval France's three richest cities. On the South bank was the “chatelet des Tourelles” which protected access to the bridge. This was the site of a battle of May 8, 1429 when Joan of Arc entered and liberated the city from the English during the Hundred Year's War. Joan of Arc (1412 -1431) is significantly remembered in Orleans, and the house where she stayed is reproduced and maintained as a replica of the original.

The University of Orleans also contributed to the city's prestige. Specializing in Law, it was respected throughout Europe. However, Marguerite of Navarre/Angouleme was a patron of Bourges, and she enticed several of the good scholars to leave Orleans for Bourges, following the coming of Andreas Alciati (1492-1550) there. Alciati is considered to be the founder of French legal humanism. As a result, Calvin and his friends left Orleans for Bourges, though he came back to Orleans unimpressed with Alciati. Orleans was also known to be a university that was open to Protestant thinking. Melchior Wolmar (1497-1561), a Greek scholar with Lutheran leanings taught there. Later, Henry the VIII of England, who consulted Calvin's works to promote his independence from Rome, offered to finance a scholarship at the University. Throughout the 16th Century many Protestants were sheltered in the town. At Orleans, Calvin

studied under Pierre L'Estoile, a philosopher and case lawyer; and under Melchior Wolmar, a Greek scholar of reputation with Reformation leanings. Wolmar had written a book on Homer, and was Calvin's instructor in Greek. In 1529, Wolmar accepted a teaching position at Bourges, and Calvin followed him there. By the end of 1529, Alciati, Wolmar, Nicholas Duchemin and Calvin were all at Bourges. Cottret argues that Calvin's time studying the law had great effect on the man, and ultimately on how he carried out and applied his theology. "But Calvin the theologian would be to the end Calvin the jurist. His thought remained permeated with the rigor, the geometry, the fascination and the memory of the law" (Cottret 2000: 21). Calvin had also discovered in the process the rhetoric and methodology of the Roman orator, Cicero. Elements of a truly Calvinist theology was emerging.

In Orleans, Calvin developed a fond friendship with several fellow law students. These included Francois de Connan, Francois Daniel, and Nicolas Duchemin. Ironically, Calvin followed the teachings of the most prominent man at Orleans, Pierre de L'Estoile. L'Estoile was perhaps the greatest French legal scholar of the time, but was also a conservative and a critic of the Reform. He was "a conscientious churchman," respectful of tradition, a man of piety and integrity" (Ganoczy 1987: 66). In 1528, he participated in the Council of Sens at the Church of the Grand Augustinians organized to fight the "Lutherans" and the Reformation. The presiding officer over the council was Cardinal Antoine du Prat, "chancellor of the King and a fervent enemy of reformers." Du Prat enacted severe laws against heretics, "including any translators, printers, editors and readers of the French Bible" (Ganoczy 1987: 66). Clearly, if Calvin had embraced the Reformation at this time, he would have looked differently at L'Estoile. Calvin's devotion to L'Estoile shows at this point he was far from the "sudden conversion" alluded to in his Preface to his Commentary on the Psalms. In fact, Calvin proved to be one of L'Estoile's outstanding students.

However, Calvin was exposed to another teacher of significance, Melchior Wolmar (1497-1561). Wolmar was a Greek scholar, born in Germany, and instructed both Calvin and later Beza. He apparently taught Calvin how to read Greek via reading Homer in the original language, and may have influenced his young student in reformed views. Wolmar was influenced by Lutheran views, and would eventually leave France to serve the University of Tubingen with distinction until his death. While some argue that it was at this time that Calvin embraced Lutheran ideas from Wolmar, this is not conclusive. He certainly learned Greek from his teacher, and he continued to study both the law and classical writers in Latin at this time, including Cicero and Seneca, but there is no solid evidence that Calvin embraced the Reformation under Wolmar. Cottret argues that what we can say is that Calvin learned from Wolmar an appreciation of Greek, even if he did not follow him at this time towards the Reform.

Yet he must have remembered something, for Calvin would later dedicate his Commentary on St. Paul's Second Epistle to the Corinthians to Wolmar, dated, August 1, 1540.

"Nothing. . . has had greater weight with me than the recollection of the first time I was sent by my father to learn civil law. Under your direction and tuition, I conjoined with the study of law Greek literature, of which you were at that time a most celebrated professor. And certainly it was not owing to you that I did not make greater proficiency; for, with your wonted kindness of disposition, you would have had no hesitation in lending me a helping hand for the completion of my course, had I not been called away by my father's death, when I had little more than started" (Calvin, "The Author's Dedicatory Epistle," Calvin's Commentaries XX 2003: 2:100).

Bourges

Located almost exactly in the centre of France, Bourges is the capital city of Cher department in the country's Centre region. It lies on the Canal du Berry, at the convergence of the Yevre and Auron rivers, in marshy country watered by the Cher, southeast of Orleans. During the

Hundred Years' War Charles VII resided there (1422-1437), and Joan of Arc wintered there (1429-1430). In 1438 the Pragmatic Sanction was signed at Bourges. Louis XI (1423-1483), who was born there, endowed the city in 1463 with a university (abolished during the French Revolution) at which Jacques de Cujas (1522-1590), French humanist legal scholar, was once a renowned teacher of Roman law. But Cujas was at Bourges after Calvin's time.

The Italian jurist, Andreas Alciati (1492-1550) was also at Bourges. Calvin was moving towards the study of law and he sought to understand the underlying broad philosophical principles of legal practice. Phillip Schaff, the great historian notes the significance of this movement in Calvin's pilgrimage:

“The study of jurisprudence sharpened his judgment, enlarged his knowledge of human nature, and was of great political benefit to him in the organization and administration of the church at Geneva” (Schaff, History, VII, 306).

Yet, in 1529, Calvin followed his friends Duchemin and Daniel to Bourges, as Andrea Alciati of Milan was just appointed there as a professor by Marguerite de Navarre. Alciati (1492-1550) was more liberal than the other teachers at Bourges, and probably seemed radical to Calvin when compared with L'Estoile. Perhaps it was Alciati's appearance. He was big, fat, and was known to have a large appetite. Alciati was a progressive, and argued that the law must be understood in its historical context, and that the literature of the age should be used to illuminate the law's meaning. Such a perspective flies in the face of the more traditional understanding of the law as espoused by L'Estoile. Whereas de l'Estoile was on the side of intolerant orthodoxy, Alciati belonged to a university where, thanks to the protection of Marguerite, the reformists enjoyed complete freedom. However, [Calvin] ... entered the fray against Alciati in order to defend de l'Estoile. The importance of this observation may be seen if one is willing to retrace the religious evolution of the future reformer without taking sides (Ganoczy 1987: 69).

At this time, Calvin was more supportive of the traditional understanding of law as represented by L'Estoile. Whether it was too soon for Calvin, or whether it was a matter of personality or teaching style, Calvin rejected the approach of Alciati, and also recoiled at Alciati's criticism of L'Estoile. In March of 1531, Calvin's friend, Duchemin, responded to a treatise of Alciati which attacked the laborious nature of French legal education (read the methodology of L'Estoile). Duchemin responded by writing a public defence of L'Estoile against Alciati, called the *Antapologia*. Calvin without hesitation supported Duchemin, and wrote a preface to this work. Basically, the *Antapologia* argued that L'Estoile was the superior legal scholar, and had better things to do than respond to the likes of Alciati. Clearly, in 1531, Calvin was not yet converted to the Reformation. Yet, Calvin's study of the law and legal systems in Orleans and Bourges was not lost in the shaping of Calvin's character, or of his perspective on life. Schaff wonders if Calvin actually retained a little too much of what he may have learned at Orleans.

The study of jurisprudence sharpened his judgment, enlarged his knowledge of human nature, and was of great practical benefit to him in the organization and administration of the church in Geneva, but may have also increased his legalism and overestimate of logical demonstration (Schaff VIII 1910: 306).

After three years at Orleans, Calvin received his license in Law. In a letter of September 6, 1529, Calvin wrote his friend Francois Daniel to ask a friend to return his (Calvin's) copy of Homer's *Odyssey*. “Will you say to Sucquet that I have occasion to use the Homer's *Odyssey* that I have lent him? And when you had got it, keep possession. . .” (Letter to Francis Daniel, Meaux, Sept. 6, 1529). Calvin was clearly advancing in his study of humanism and the classics.

Also at this time, the persecution of “Lutherans” (the then name for all the so-called protestants and religious or political dissidents) and any others who entertained reform ideas began to escalate. This too must have had an impact on Calvin as his Letter to Francis I would indicate

in 1536. On July 3, 1528, Denis de Rieux of Meaux was accused of Lutheran propagandizing and of criticizing the mass, and was burned to death in Paris.

In April of 1529, a translator, lawyer, civil servant and reformer, Louis de Berquin (1490- 1529) and one Simon DuBois, a printer who printed books representing the reform cause, were burned at the stake in Paris (Ganoczy 1987: 67). These events certainly did not escape the notice of the young Calvin. To borrow a crude metaphor, things were heating up in France.

Paris Again

When in Paris, Calvin stayed with the Coiffart family, and renewed his acquaintances with Nicolas Cop and Etienne de la Forge, a merchant who embraced the reform and was later a victim of the Paris inquisition. There we know that he read Augustine's City of God, and in his writings of the period he has read and quotes from Seneca, Ovid, Homer, Cicero, Pliny, Gregory, Plutarch, Virgil, Horace, Lucian, Terence, and of course, Erasmus (Ganoczy 1987: 75). Calvin was becoming an emergent humanist scholar. He studied with some of the notable humanist scholars of the time, including Greek with Pierre Danes (1497-1577); and Hebrew with Francois Vatable (d 1547). Vatable is credited with restoring the study of Hebrew in Paris, and his lectures attracted not only Calvin, but many Jews.

In March of 1531, Calvin was in Paris once again with the purpose of having Duchemin's work published. There he heard the news of his father's illness, and then rushed to Noyon. Gerard Calvin died May 26, 1531. Calvin was in Noyon for the funeral, but his father was in trouble with the magistrates there.

Gerard Cauvin was É in strained relations with the canons of the Noyon Cathedral, by whom he was employed. Apparently he was offended by their demand to see his accounts of certain properties left to the chapter. He stubbornly refused to present his books. The quarrel was prolonged. Possibly Gerard relied upon the support of the new bishop, Jean de Hangest, a brother of Calvin's friend Claude. But the bishop did not deliver Gerard from his troubles, and the wilful notary's resistance ultimately brought upon him excommunication (McNeil, 1954: 101).

Some biographies noticed that Calvin appeared emotionally distant from his father, and was likely very conflicted over the death of his father and the events that led to his being excommunicated by the Cathedral chapter. When Calvin arrived, his brother Charles was negotiating with the canons so that their father could achieve absolution, and could be buried honourably. It is not known what John thought of this, but it must have been upsetting. It may have been the first event that would eventually push Calvin to exile, and to the Reformation. He would later return to Noyon to surrender the benefices that were granted to him for the purpose of paying for his education as a future priest of the church. This would represent Calvin's rejection and separation from the mother church.

Calvin, to date a classicist, completed his first published manuscript, *De Clementia*, a defense of the ethical teachings of the Greek philosopher, Seneca. By 1532, Calvin had demonstrated that he was now well prepared to enter the world as an emerging scholar and as a proponent of Renaissance humanism. He sent a copy of *De Clementia* to Erasmus for comment. Some scholars argue that *De Clementia* had some hidden reform ideas, and that they would become more explicit in Calvin's subsequent writings. If so, these ideas are sufficiently veiled. The work was dedicated to Claude de Hangest, Abbot of St. Eloi in Noyon. The de Hangest family were connected formally to Calvin's roots in his hometown. One can find in *De Clementia* elements of what he would later say to Francis I in 1536. That is, that the ruler or king exists of divine origin ; and as a minister of God he must rule justly and seek the welfare of the people. The human community must of necessity have such a ruler to survive. The king or prince is to the Republic what the soul is to the body, so that the ruler has an obligation to seek justice and peace

in the earthly realm. In *De Clementia* . . . Calvin ascribes to kings a high authority by divine right, yet he freely assails their vices, pride, and inhumanity. He condemns arbitrariness, denounces tyranny, and stresses the importance of the voluntary submission of the king to law. A tyrant is for Calvin one who rules against the will of his subjects. There are evident here elements that became permanent in his political doctrine (McNeil (1967): 105).

Though not containing explicit reform notions, the tract was also critical of the superstitious and schismatic streams of religion . Calvin appealed to writers such as Cicero to discuss issues of piety and social obligation, but there is little in *De Clementia* that hint at reformist leanings. In fact, what one finds in *De Clementia* is a treasure trove of classical references which reveal the quality of Calvin's humanist education. Battles notes that Calvin cited or quoted from 102 classical sources. He quoted or cited Cicero 250 times; Suetonius 120 times; Virgil 105 times; Seneca the Younger 97 times; Quintillian 93 times; Budaeus 91 times; Livy 61 times and Justinian 63 times. Comparatiely, in *De Clementia*, Calvin quoted from Augustine 23 times and the Bible but 7 times (Battles 1966:86-88). Calvin also quoted from his contemporary, Desiderius Erasmus 44 times. He was on his way to becoming a humanist scholar of some note and ability. Unfortunately, he was not initially a commercial success.

Calvin published and sought to sell *De Clementia* at his own expense. Calvin was forced to borrow money from his friends, Daniel, Cop or Duchemin to pay for the volume. Calvin reveals his plight in the letter as follows:

Well, at length the die is cast. My Commentaries on the Books of Seneca, "De Clementia," have been printed, but at my own expense, and have drawn from me more money that you can well suppose. At present, I am using every endeavour to collect some of it back. I have stirred up some of the professors of this city to make use of them in lecturing. In the University of Bourges I have induced a friend to do this from the pulpit by a public lecture.... Should you determine oblige me . . . I will send you a hundred copies, or as many as you please. Meanwhile, accept this copy for yourself, while you are not to suppose that by your acceptance, of it, I hold you engaged to do what I ask (Letter to Francis Daniel, Paris, May 23, 1532).

In late 1532, Calvin returned to Orleans to receive his licensure in Law. Even as Calvin was "pushed" into legal studies, he advanced in this field in a manner that is rarely equalled. He was offered the degree of doctor of laws by the faculty, without having to take exams, as he often filled in as an instructor there. Calvin was barely 23 years of age at this point. Ganoczy believes that Calvin was in Orleans for about a year, but the research of a J. Doinel notes that in May and in June 1533, Calvin was operating as Deputy Bursar for the Picardy Nation in Orleans. Apparently such a duty was accepted over the term of a year. Minimally, it shows that Calvin still had considerable loyalty to his native land, even as he became more and more an exile from it.

Sometime between 1532 and 1533, Calvin experienced what he called "sudden conversion," though it is difficult to tell if there was a single event that precipitated it. There are but two references to Calvin's conversion in his writings, one in his Reply to Sadoletto (1539) and another in his Commentary on the Psalms (1557). Some argue that his conversion was connected to his study in Bourges under Wolmar. Others believe that he was pushed towards the Reformation following a lecture given by the new rector and friend, Nicholas Cop, of the College du Montagu. But somewhere between the death of his father in 1531 and his returning of the benefices in 1534, Calvin had rejected a career with the mother church and had embraced the Reformation. Perhaps the event that most pushed him in this direction was an incident that happened with his friend, Nicholas Cop. Cop was named Professor of Philosophy and Rector at the University of Montaigu . In November of 1533 he gave an inaugural lecture, called "Christian Philosophy." The lecture contained some identifiable Lutheran an d'Erasmian themes, and resulted in an uproar. Charged with heresy, Cop and Calvin were forced to flee Paris.

There is some speculation that Calvin was actually the author of the address, or he at least gave approval to its content. Regardless, Calvin was not a fugitive and was forced to seek asylum outside Paris.

Angouleme

In late 1533 to early 1534, Calvin fled to Angouleme, a town about 250 miles SW of Paris. There he stayed with Louis du Tillet, the canon of the local St. Peter's Cathedral. Calvin mined the library of du Tillet, which reportedly had some 3000 volumes. It is here that he apparently began writing what would become the first edition of the Institutes of the Christian

Religion. He also may have had a conversation with the aging Le Fevre d'Etaples at Nerac, a pre reformer with Lutheran leanings, who may have also pushed him in the direction of the Reform. Later in May 4, 1534, Calvin went to Noyon, resigned his benefices and broke ties with the church of his father. Calvin was now on the road to becoming one of the most important leaders of the Reformation.

In mid-1534, Calvin travelled throughout France, to Poitiers, Orleans, and Angouleme, using various aliases. By the Fall of 1534, he was back in Paris. On October, Antoine Marcourt published placards denouncing the Pope and the sacred character of the Mass, posting them throughout Paris, one of which showed up on the bedpost of the King of France. This unfortunately forced a nationwide hunt and persecution of Protestants, forcing Calvin to flee once again, this time to Basle, then to Italy and then back to Basle, Switzerland. In Basle, Calvin published the first edition of his Institutes of the Christian Religion, in part as a polemic to the French King. Calvin defended the cause of the Reformation, and implored Francis to not merely tolerate Protestants, but to denounce Catholicism for the Reformed cause. In March of 1536, the Institutes were published from the Thomas Platter press, and quickly established Calvin as an eloquent leader of for Reformed Protestantism. The Institutes propelled Calvin toward fame, and further controversy. The first edition soon ran out of supply, then Calvin revised it in 1539, and again in 1543, 1550 and 1559 (Latin); and French editions appeared in 1545 and 1560.

Basle

In late 1534, Calvin was forced to flee Paris and a bloody persecution of Protestants to Basle. Basle was the home of John Oecalampadius (1482-1531) and the famous Desiderius Erasmus (1466-1536). The first reformatory Council of Basle met there a century before from 1431-1548, with representatives present from both the Western and Eastern churches, though it is debated as to the extent Basle was an ecumenical council. The purpose was to promote unity in the church, to correct clerical abuses, and to pursue reconciliation with dissenting groups such as the Hussites.

In 1516, Erasmus published his first edition of the Greek New Testament. Basle had become the centre for printing and publications, and was a sanctuary for reformers. Du Tillet travelled with him to that city, and the result was a remarkable beginning to significant publications. While in Basle, he met Wolfgang Capito (1478-1541) and Simon Grynaeus (1493- 1541) (he would eventually dedicate his Epistle to the Romans to Grynaeus). Here he would also become acquainted with Heinrich Bullinger (1504-75). From January of 1535 to March of 1536, Calvin was in seclusion in Basle, putting the finishing touches on the Institutes. He had finished it the fall of 1535, and was frustrated with the printer that it was not out until March of 1536.

The literary achievements of his stay in Basle in part reflect the intellectual currents to which Calvin was exposed. In the dedication of his Romans commentary to Simon Grynaeus he recounted the fraternal manner in which the two men had discussed the Bible and its interpretation. There were many opportunities for such conversations with a range of remarkable figures. But circumstances and contacts alone do not explain the result. The Basle period saw the appearance of works of astonishing depth, elegance and intellectual penetration. A young man

who had never formally studied theology presented to the world writings that dazzled his contemporaries. A brilliant writer had emerged (Gordon 2009: 55).

Basle had embarked on the Reformation much earlier, so that when Calvin came to Basle, he came to a city that had not only embraced the Reformation, but was a center of publishing activity. One of the first contacts that Calvin had when he came to Basle was to connect with his cousin, Pierre-Robert Olivetan. Olivetan was embarking on a French translation of the Bible, and Calvin was asked to write two prefaces to the New Testament, one in Latin and one in French. Calvin would eventually revise the French New Testament in 1546 after Olivetan's death. Calvin was in the process of making his mark on the development of the French language, even as Luther had done so for German.

The preface to the Olivetan's French Bible also appealed to the reception and utilization by kings and nobles. Calvin would now turn to perhaps his most remarkable literary achievement, the publishing of the 1536 *Institutes of the Christian Religion*. Unabashed, the self-confident Calvin would address the King of France, with the purpose of gaining legitimacy for the Evangelical cause. The *Institutes* was written partly out of frustration and indignation at how evangelicals were treated in France, and partly as a way to provide a handbook on the faith for that same evangelical community. Beza writes in his 1564 biography of Calvin that the *Institutes* "was in the form of an apologia addressed to King Francis I on behalf of the poor believers who were suffering persecution. In fact, the King of France was wrongly labeling these people as Anabaptists so that his persecution of the gospel would not be condemned by the Protestant princes of Europe" (Beza 1997: 26). Gordon argues that, as original as the *Institutes* may have been, there was much that he borrowed from others. He was dependent upon Martin Luther's *Small Catechism* (1522) and his *Large Catechism* of 1529 which was very influential on the formation of the *Institutes*. Calvin existed, lived and benefitted by a world of ideas not entirely of his own making (Gordon 2009: 57)

The 1536 version of the *Institutes* was divided into six chapters; the Law, containing an explanation of the Decalogue; Faith, containing an explanation of the Apostolic Creed; Prayer, with an exposition of the Lord's Prayer; The Sacraments; Five False Sacraments, and a treatise on "Christian Freedom, Ecclesiastical Power and Administration." (Calvin 1536: Table of Contents). Calvin revised it again and again, to the point that in the 1559 edition it had swelled to five times the length of the original. Calvin's *Institutes* were destined to become his magnum opus, and would solidify his place among the great leaders and thinkers of Christendom throughout history. Philip Schaff and Bruce Gordon, writing a century apart, would summarize the importance of the *Institutes* as follows:

"The book (1536 edition of the *Institutes*) is the masterpiece of a precocious genius of commanding intellectual and spiritual depth and power. It is one of the few truly classical productions in the history of theology, and has given its author the double title of Aristotle and Thomas Aquinas of the Reformed Church" (Schaff VIII 1910: 329).

"The *Institutes* succeeded just as the Seneca commentary had failed: it was an immediate publishing success that drew praise from across the Protestant world. The *Institutes* marked a sea change in Calvin's sense of self: in the *Psychopannychia* he had come to speak in the language of scripture, above all Paul. Now he presented himself as a doctor of the Church. He was instructing the faithful as a learned interpreter of the word" (Gordon 2009: 62).

The *Institutes* used the Church Fathers favourably, refuting the charge that the reform was a diversion and departure from church tradition. Its use of reason reflected the skill of a humanist knowledgeable regarding classical authors, and one who is able to use language with supreme skills of persuasion. Its style was a luminous and forceful use of Latin. Calvin agreed with the Ecumenical creeds, the biblical teachings of the Old Testament and St. Paul, and was conversant with classical authors, and with the Augustinian thought of which Calvin depended. The

Institutes was a masterful defence of Protestantism versus charges of heresy, sedition and atheism. It was an appeal for legitimacy and respect by a man of letters.

In 1536, Calvin and Du Tillet inexplicably travelled across the Alps into Italy to meet with the Duchess of Ferrara, Renee (1510-1575), the second daughter of King Louis XII of France, and the cousin to Francis First and to Marguerite of Navarre. Calvin was apparently in Ferrara from April to May, 1536. In Renee's youth, she had come under the influence of Marguerite and of Le Fevre, so that her sympathies with the reform and with Protestantism were well known.

There, Calvin pled with the Duchess to receive the gospel, and to help influence those in power to look upon it with favour.

As it turned out, Renee and Calvin became lifelong correspondents, as one of the last letters that Calvin would ever write in the 1560's was to Renee. Renee's court featured many persons of French extraction, including Clement Marot (1496-1544), who would later assist Calvin in the development of church psalmody. Unfortunately, Renee's husband came back from Rome supporting the new policies of the Pope that sought an alliance not with France, but with Charles V, the Holy Roman Emperor. Ercole d'Este forced Renee to dismiss her court, and Calvin and Marot were forced to flee as well. Marot would later appear in Strasbourg in 1539, and again in Geneva in 1543. His translations of the Psalms into French verse and song became the basis of the Geneva Psalter.

Geneva

After wandering in France, Calvin intended to go to Strasbourg, but due to war between Francis First and Charles the Fifth, Calvin instead found himself in Geneva, arriving in the latter part of July, 1536. There, Gillaume Farel hearing of his reputation and that he was temporarily in Geneva, used the threats of impending doom if he left, implored that Calvin stay in Geneva to assist with the reform. Calvin remarked that Farel threatened him with the wrath of God, should he leave town. Calvin reflected on this later saying:

“Farel kept me at Geneva not so much by advice and entreaty as by a dreadful adjuration as if God had stretched forth His hand upon me from on high to arrest me”
(Cited in Walker, 1969, 158).

Geneva was, according to Monter's estimate, a city of 10,300 persons in 1537, and it was a city divided against itself (Monter 1967: 2). Monter goes on to describe Geneva as a relatively modest town of “1000 buildings, 100 barns, and 12 mills inside the new city walls.” It was a city without suburbs, which were dismantled for security reasons. New buildings were squeezed into empty spaces or where barns once stood, and more stories were added to existing dwellings to accommodate an increase in population. Geneva in the 1530s was a dense, dark and dank place. While a dozen or so “rich” merchants lived in the upper city in three-story stone houses, most lived in the lower city below. These were mostly of a burgeoning artisan class.

Genevan artisans generally inhabited rectangular homes, narrow in facing the street but fairly long. These were usually two-story buildings made of non-flammable material such as tile; wood had been forbidden since the 14th century. On the ground floor were the artisan's shop and the storeroom. At the back was a stairwell that led to the owner's bedroom, living room, and kitchen on the second floor.... Home furnishings were sturdy but simple - tables of oak or walnut; benches, stools, a storage cabinet, and usually a curtained bed for master and mistress. (Monter 1967: 3-4).

So, the upper city was inhabited by the bishops and the governing officials, whereas the relatively poorer merchants lived in the lower city. The lower city where Calvin lived was “a poor and austere city which could not afford to construct vast new buildings in her crowded

space. Indeed the change from the 15th only important century was that the ordinary Genevan inhabitant now had less fresh air and less living space” (Monter 1967: 4). So this was the pre industrial city of Calvin’s time. It was a “walking city” as individuals could easily walk from one side of the city to the other in 15-20 minutes. It was a city that where the work place and the residence were in the same building and location. It was a city that traded locally or regionally, but not internationally. Goods were sometimes bartered or exchanged, rather than using money as the medium of exchange. Any manufacturing or purchasing was done only on the basis of what one needed in the short term. Geneva, like other pre industrial cities was small, and dense, and rigidly stratified with limited social mobility.

Unlike other cathedrals in Europe, the cathedral of St. Pierre was not a great building architecturally, and actually reflected a hodgepodge of architectural styles, including the now dominant front age from the neo classical 18th century. Nor was the city noted for its manufactures or industry. By 1564, its leading, and only export, was the printed book, thanks to the coming of printers to the city via Calvin’s influence. But, for the most part, goods were traded and consumed locally, and these included bread, wine, cheese and other staples. There were no guilds to speak of in Geneva until 1557 (Monter 1967:21).

But what changed with the 16th century was the ascendancy of the university, and with it educational opportunity. William Monter notes that, with the coming of French refugees in the 1550’s, the professional character of the artisan class shifted dramatically. In earlier times, one could find tailors, cooks, carpenters, merchants, barbers, stone makers, and furriers. But, after 1550, the artisan class was clearly on the ascendancy.

At that time, one could find 181 cobblers, 67 goldsmiths, numerous individuals connected with fashion and textiles, 180 merchants, and 113 printers and booksellers. “[In] 1536, [there were] 50 merchants, only 3 printers and probably no noblemen,” but by 1557 “there were some 70 noblemen in the city” (Monter 1967: 5). The artisan class thanks to printing, and the influx of refugees and the availability of some form of education, was on the rise in 16th century Geneva. As a result, highly educated individuals like John Calvin, though not a noble by any means, could rise to high importance, even if not an actual citizen of the city where he resided (until 1559). There may have been less “city air” available, but even so, there was relatively more “freedom” in the city than in the countryside. One could think, read, and one could trade and barter; but one had better watch his or her morals and one’s outward behaviour, or face severe consequences.

In Geneva, the reformation was already underway, but the organization of it was in disarray. Yet, the Magistrates, desperate, but not knowing much about “that Frenchman,” heeded the pleas of Farel and having already accepted the Reformation from 1532, appointed Calvin as Professor of Sacred Letters. Thus with official backing, Calvin began teaching and preaching, beginning with lectures from the letters of St. Paul in September of 1536.

Church and society at the time were very closely interconnected. And in Geneva, as in many towns of the Reformation era, the control of religion was a political issue. As Basil Hall notes:

But in the sixteenth century religion was essential to the ways in which men expressed political ideas, social judgments, and economic practices: to separate the political, social and the economic from the religious in that age is difficult, and when attempted can be misleading. The religious and the secular were not divisible (Hall, 1971, 103).

Calvin and his followers, especially the “tripod“ of Farel, Viret and Calvin, then sought to reorganize the church, and thus impact the city in a most thoroughgoing manner. On January,

16, 1537, Calvin submitted to the Council of sixty a document called “Articles Concerning the Organization of the Church and of Worship at Geneva

The program recommended by Calvin argued for the following: congregational psalm singing; frequent celebrations of the Lord’s Supper; a strict system of discipline including excommunication of offenders; support of these matters by both the church and the civil government; and adherence to a catechism, including a Confession of Faith with 21 articles. All the inhabitants of Geneva were required to pledge their allegiance to each of these measures. Although Calvin envisioned a separate Consistory (a company of pastors and teachers) from the town councils, the relationship of the church and state in Geneva were virtually identical, and the council magistrates were reluctant to allow much autonomy to the Consistory. As McNeil puts it: “There was no thought of a separation in membership of church and citizenry. The Christian community envisioned by all parties was composed of the same people as the civil community” (McNeil 1967: 166).

The introduction of Calvin’s reform elements nonetheless led to a firestorm. In March 16-17, 1537, Calvin was called upon to dispute with some Dutch Anabaptist leaders before the Council of 200. The Anabaptists were defeated and banished from the city. Once this issue was buried, another showed itself. In May of 1537, one of Calvin’s opponents, Peter Caroli, accused Calvin of Arianism, which would deny the trinity and render Christ as a human, but not divine. Calvin had to spend time defending himself against his accuser, and eventually prevailed in Lausanne and then in Berne by June 1537.

Calvin argued that his views were not determined by the Church councils, but he appealed to the New Testament. Caroli would not go away, but at least the controversy was averted. Unfortunately, even though he won this battle for maintaining his honour and prestige, the same could not be said for winning the hearts and souls of Genevans with respect to his reform program. So, if on the one hand, Calvin was preoccupied with defending himself against other protestant options and the false charge of anti-trinitarianism in the Caroli affair; he also faced stern resistance from the residents of Geneva over his new reform policies.

On November 12, 1537 many of the residents who were required to swear an oath to the confession, would not. And, inside the city, some of the civil magistrates had reservations, and balked at requiring all Genevan citizens to be compelled to adhere to the Confessions. Then, on November 25, 2007, a large group of citizens protested against exchanging their “freedom” for “another pope” and becoming “enslaved” to the dictates of Calvin and Farel. Then, on January 4, 1538, the magistrates ruled that no one could be kept away from the Lord’s Supper, which of principle was a great problem for Calvin. On February 3rd, new syndics were elected to the Little Council who were hostile to Farel and Calvin. This group introduced the settlement from Berne, of whom Geneva was in alliance. This situation was understood by Calvin and Farel to be a challenge to their authority. So, in March of 1538, Calvin and Farel attended a synod held in Lausanne to explain their views, but were compelled to accept the Reformation resolutions of Berne. The Berne strictures allowed for festival days, an open communion, and the use in the Supper of unleavened bread (for Calvin, a symbol of the Catholic Church) must be used. Calvin and Farel responded by preaching, but they refused to administer communion.

This was interpreted as an affront to the Magistrates and to the people of Geneva and, as a result, Calvin and Farel were banished from the city (van t’Spijker 2009: 46-9). Farel went to Neuchatel to resume a pastorate; and Calvin after pleading with religious authorities in Zurich and Basle to gain their support of their interpretation, gained a letter from Berne to be readmitted to Geneva, but he was denied entry. Defeated, Calvin eventually found himself in Basle wondering what his future might be.

Strasbourg

Calvin was prepared to stay in Basel and to occupy himself as a scholar and writer, when another person intervened, beckoning him to come to another city. This time the plea came not from Farel, but from Martin Bucer (1531-1561). Bucer, like Farel, threatened Calvin that if he would not locate to Strasbourg, like Jonah, God would pursue him to the ends of the earth, and Calvin would never find rest for soul or body. Threatened once more, and believing Bucer's voice to be the voice of God, Calvin moved to Strasbourg. Beyond this story, Calvin initially believed Bucer to be too much of a Lutheran, as he seemed to be giving too many concessions to Luther and to the Pope. But, over time, Calvin's view of Bucer changed considerably.

It is easy to summarize the events in Calvin's ministry and life in Strasbourg, but the significance is even greater. The significant events for Calvin in Strasbourg are as follows according to Augustijn:

They cover his personal life and marriage; his day to day occupations in Strasbourg as Professor of Theology at the University and as pastor to the congregation of French refugees; his activities at the meetings of the Schmalkaldic League and in the religious colloquies at Hagenau, Worms, and Regensburg; and his writings, of which the second edition of the *Institutio*, his Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans, and his Response to Sadoleto may be counted as the most important. [But] the number of topics is limited (Augustijn in Neusner 1994: 166).

Strasbourg, since 1254, was a free city in Germany, and was famous for its Gothic church, its economic vitality and its reputation for literary excellence. Johannes Gutenberg had run the first printing press there in 1440. The city walls were widened in 1441 and at that time enclosed a city of but 620 acres, and over 20,000 persons (Brady 1997: 43). The city boasted ten gates and a network of canals. Church spires dominated the skyline, including a magnificent cathedral, then the tallest in Europe. In 1315, a hospital was established, and the city was noted for its philanthropy, as hospices for syphilitics, a poorhouse, an orphanage and a dozen or so public baths could be found (Brady 1997: 44).

Calvin would embrace such public institutions and re-establish them later in Geneva. Strasbourg was a crossroads between France, Germany and Switzerland, and was hospitable and receptive to French Protestant refugees. Some of the early refugees who arrived in Strasbourg included notables such as Frances Lambert, Guillaume Farel, Jacques Le Fevre d'Étaples (1450-1536), Gerard Roussel and Michel d'Arande (d. 1539).

Well before Calvin got there, Strasbourg had accepted the way of the Reformation in 1523. The Reformation had come to Strasbourg through the efforts of the pioneering reformer, Deibold Schwarz (1485-1561). Schwarz was a Lutheran, and translated the Latin Mass to German with Lutheran elements in 1524, so that he paved the way for the Reformation in this city. By 1529, Strasbourg had rid itself of the Mass and had accepted the Lutheranism. Unlike other cities of the region, the magistrates in Strasbourg were more pragmatic and more tolerant of religious practice. The magistrates were actually more interested in order and in stability than in reform, however. Van 't Spijker notes that: "As in all imperial cities, leadership consisted primarily in the prevention of revolutions, and in Strasbourg too, the government did not function as an engine of the Reformation. It guided the movement when it appeared that the preaching of the gospel could no longer be stopped" (Van 't Spijker (2009): 52).

On the other hand, the Reformation leaders in Strasbourg were without equal in the Protestant world. In 1521, Matthew Zell (1477-1548) began preaching a series of sermons from Paul's letter to the Romans. In 1523, Zell was joined by Bucer, Casper Hedio (1495-1552) and Wolfgang Capito (1478-1541). These leaders organized the Reform in Strasbourg through their academic efforts. Bucer was a Dominican priest, but after meeting Luther in 1518, embraced the Reformation. A moderate, he believed that Roman Catholics in the Holy Roman Empire

(Germany) could be persuaded to join the Reformation. Hedio was a historian, and taught in the gymnasium set up by Jacob Sturm. Capito studied law, medicine and theology, and eventually earned a doctorate from Freiburg. He later settled in Mainz, Zurich, and eventually in Strasbourg by 1523.

The Protestant movement in Strasbourg also had the support of both Johann and Jacob Sturm, who was mayor of the city for many years. Sturm supported the local gymnasium as a school to train young men who would become both pious in religion and learned in the classics. This school would later become a model for the Genevan Academy which Calvin would promote a few years later. Calvin also served as professor of theology in the gymnasium. Calvin was able to write and solidify his thinking in Strasbourg. He wrote many essays including his Commentary on Romans, Reply to Sadoleto, and a revision of the Institutes in 1539.

Strasbourg was on friendly terms with both Zurich and Geneva, so that Reformation ideas flourished and intermingled. Martin Bucer (1491-1551) was noted for his generosity and ecumenical spirit, and he was present at the diet of Augsburg in 1530, so that he knew both Luther and Melancthon. In 1536, Bucer sought to harmonize Reformed and Lutheran views of the Eucharist, and he was a willing party in colloquys that sought to harmonize Catholic and Reformed views sponsored by the Emperor. This effort was rejected by Bullinger and the Swiss churches (Schaff VIII, 1910: 364), and Calvin found himself in the middle, actually more congenial with Bucer and Melancthon than with Bullinger.

Calvin arrived in Strasbourg in early September, 1538. He was greeted with open arms, appointed professor of theology, given citizenship (withheld from him at Geneva till 1559) and status by joining the tailors' guild. Calvin was initially given but free board, but was not paid until May 1539, so that his situation was dire, and the community he served was not rich. His books were not that profitable either at this time. Still he enjoyed his independence, and his influence was rising. In Strasbourg he organized the first church for French-speaking refugees, and attendance towards the end of his tenure reached 400. He preached four times a week, trained deacons to assist in caring for the poor, and taught bible classes. He was able to introduce some of the reforms that failed in Geneva, such as psalm singing, church discipline, and the frequent observance of the Lord's Supper. Also of significance was the school or the academy that was supported by two leading lay persons in Strasbourg, Jacob and Johann Sturm.

The Sturms established a protestant college, called the Gymnasium, on March 22, 1538. Some of the first professors included Capito who taught Old Testament; Bucer who taught New Testament; Kasper Hedio (1494-1551) who was a German historian and theologian; Herlin for mathematics and Jacob Bedrot, who taught Greek (Schaff, VIII, 1910: 375). Calvin was appointed assistant professor of theology in January, 1539. This was a very impressive group of scholars, and the first college or university devoted to propagating a theology based on reformed ideas. Initially, Calvin lectured on the Gospel of John, the Epistle to the Romans, and other books of the Bible. Thus, he began work on what would become the famous Commentaries on the books of the Bible. He also revised his Institutes that were published with his commentary on Romans by Strasbourg printer, Wendelin Rihel in 1539. Calvin also wrote in French a treatise on the Lord's Supper, and landed somewhere between Zwingli's spiritualism and Luther's realism (arguing for the "real presence").

Calvin nonetheless found himself involved in several disputations, and he had to defend himself and his theology. In 1539, he disputed with Robertus Moshamus of Passau on the subject of the merits of good works. In October, 1539, he was embroiled in a disputation with Peter Caroli, who reappeared again arguing against Calvin's understanding of the Trinity. Calvin weathered these conflicts well, though the stress must have been hard on him. In 1539,

Calvin's friends were searching for a wife for him. Calvin had little romantic interest, but felt he needed someone to help him care for his various ailments.

Among those who perished in a plague of February of 1540 was Jean Stordeur of Leige, who was the husband of Idelle de Bure. Schaff conjectures that Idelle was probably the daughter of Lambert de Bure, who had his property taken and was banished from Liege with six fellow citizens for the Anabaptist “heresy” in 1533. John and Idelle were converted to the Reformed faith under Calvin’s ministry in Strasbourg. The tragedy of the pestilence provided a providential occasion for Calvin. Calvin gave a list to Farel of attributes that he thought he would need in a wife: “This only is the beauty which allures me, if she is chaste, if not too nice or fastidious, if economical, if patient, if there is hope that she will be interested in my health....” Of all the women who might be available, Idelle proved to be the person who seemed most congenial and adaptable to Calvin’s criteria (Letter to Farel, May 19, 1539). She and Calvin were married by Farel, August 1, 1540. Farel commented to his surprise that Idelle turned out to be pretty. Calvin grieved her death in April of 1549. In his letter to Farel, he conveys the news to him, and that he was doing “what I can to keep myself from being overwhelmed with Grief (Letter to Farel, April 11, 1549). In a letter to Viret, Calvin comments on the significance of this loss.

I have been bereaved of the best companion of my life, of one who, had it been so ordered, would not only have been the willing sharer of my indigence, but even of my death. During her life she was the faithful helper of my ministry. From her I never experienced the slightest hindrance. She was never troublesome to me throughout the entire course of her illness; she was more anxious about her children than about herself.... I took occasion, on the third day before her death, to mention that I would not fail in discharging my duty to her children” (Letter to Viret, April 7, 1549).

If Calvin’s marriage helped him settle down as an individual, at the same time colloquies in Germany with Lutherans provided the chance to make new friends and to expand his network of Reformers. Calvin attended colloquies in Frankfurt, Worms and Regensburg (Ratisbon) that were set up by Emperor Charles V with the blessing of the Pope. Emperor Charles V was anxious to bring the Protestant and Catholic factions together, “to secure their aid against the Turks” (Schaff VIII, 1910: 378). However, Luther and Calvin would not give into the Pope; even as the papal envoy, Johannes Eck, would not yield to the Protestants. Eck was a professor at Ingolstadt, and had previously disputed with Luther at Leipzig, promoting the papal bull of excommunication of Luther. Suspicious of the designs of the Emperor, Calvin favored an alliance with the Smalkaldic League with King Francis I of France, and was therefore not inclined to be weaned towards Catholicism or the goals of the Emperor. This was Charles last ditch effort to reclaim Germany for the pope, and for his empire. It would not last, and eventually he was forced to sign the Peace of Augsburg in 1555 which forever ceded Germany to the cause of the Lutheran Reformation. Charles, in defeat, would abdicate the next year.

Even so, Calvin’s meeting with German Lutherans enlarged his view and tolerance of Lutherans. He became lifelong friends with Philip Melancthon in the process. He also became more aware of the politics of the empire, and the depth of the conflict between the Lutherans and the Pope. From these contacts, Calvin assumed a wide correspondence, and began using the medium of dedications in his Commentaries and other writings to spread the word and to gain more acceptance and support from political leaders in Europe.

Unfortunately, Calvin became disillusioned with the process of the colloquies, and left Regensburg (Ratisbon), the last colloquy, earlier than that hoped for by Melancthon. At this time, Melancthon and Bucer held out the hope for some form of reconciliation. Also, at this time, Strasbourg was besieged by another plague year, and Calvin lost many close friends due to the disease. These included his revered deacon, Claude Feray; and his friends Bedrotus; professor Capito; a boarder, Louis De Richelbourg; and the sons of Oecolampadius, Zwingli and Hedios. “He was thrown into a state of extreme anxiety and depression, which he revealed to Farel in a melancholy letter of March, 1541” (Schaff VIII, 1910: 384). On March 28, 1541, Calvin wrote to Farel from Ratisbon regarding the plague.

In the meantime, while I wait for your letter, a distressing event is announced to me, that our dear friend Claude (Ferey), whom I singularly esteemed, had been carried off by the plague. Louis, the brother of Charles (sons of M. de Richesbourg) followed three days afterwards. My house was in a state of sad desolation; my brother had gone with Charlesto a neighbouring village, with my wife had betaken herself to my brother's, and the youngest of Claude's scholars was lying sick in bed. To the bitterness of grief, therefore, there was added a very anxious concern for those who survived (Tracts and Letters (2009): 4: 237-8).

The reader may agree that this shows a side of Calvin absent in many biographies, one as it were, who was very much acquainted with the grief and sorrow so much a part of the human condition.

Yet, despite what may be the darkest moment of Calvin's career, he was about to receive an opportunity to return to Geneva, and to start anew on the project of Genevan reform. Impressed with Calvin's superb defence of the Reformation in Geneva in his reply to Jacopo Sadoletto, the Genevan magistrates were at work attempting to lure Calvin back to Geneva. Calvin was initially very reluctant to return to Geneva, and he resisted this for some time. Yet, aided by Farel, and eventually by Bucer as well, he was compelled to return.

Calvin left Strasbourg for Geneva a much more mature man. His encounters with Bucer, Capito, and the German theologians, especially Melancthon, had a positive influence on his theology and helped him develop important pastoral and political skills. And though our evidence is sketchy, with but some eighty letters from Calvin (forty addressed to Farel), and 45 addressed by others to Calvin, we can get something of a picture of what happened to Calvin in Strasbourg, and what the significance was Calvin's development as a theologian and as a pastor was not disconnected from his social context. He was very much a product of the late Medieval city. After Calvin's stay in Strasbourg, and after his meeting with the Lutherans in Germany, he moved more towards the Lutheran Reformers, and more away from Zwingli and Bullinger. Significantly, when Calvin was invited, and when he accepted the call to return to Geneva, it was Bucer that he wanted most to bring with him. His tenure in Strasbourg helped broaden his vision, and deepen his skills, personally and professionally. As one scholar summarizes, at Strasbourg he "sharpened his awareness that the gospel is embedded in a social situation and does not remain unaffected by it" (Cornelius Augustijn, in Neuser 1994: 168).

Return to Geneva

Meanwhile, in Calvin's absence, things were not going well in Geneva. There was political anarchy, and moral laxity. The four ministers hired to handle the situation there proved incompetent. Schaff describes the situation in Geneva as follows:

Tumults and riots multiplied in the streets; the schools were ruined by the expulsion of the best teachers; the pulpit had lost its power; the new preachers became objects of contempt or pity; pastoral care was neglected vice and immorality increased; the old licentiousness and frivolities dancing, gambling, drunkenness, masquerades, indecent songs, adulteries reappeared, persons went naked through the streets to the sound of drums and fifes (Schaff VIII 1910: 426).

However, politically, things had changed significantly for the better. The Guillermins, followers of Farel, were back into political power, replacing the Artichauds. Further, in the time away, Calvin's reputation had grown, especially after his brilliant Reply to Sadoletto. Thus, the Little Council, in September, 1540, voted on Calvin's recall and this was approved by the General Council of 200 on October 19th and then verified by Assembly on October 20th

Calvin was very reluctant to return to the volatility of the city he had left three years earlier. In a letter to Viret, Calvin wrote: "There is no place on earth that I am more afraid of, not because I have hated it, but because I see so many difficulties presented in that quarter which I do feel

myself far from being equal to surmount.... I cannot but shudder throughout with heartfelt alarm at the thought, that I may be forced to expose myself a second time to these sort of contests” (Letter to Viret, March 1, 1541; Tracts and Letters 4: 231).

However, after some negotiations with Ami Perrin, a leader of the Guillermin party and commissioner of Geneva, Calvin was persuaded to return. So, predestined or not, Calvin returned to Geneva with enormous public acclaim on September 13, 1541. While one writer argues that Calvin returned from exile to his “home” in Geneva (Hall 2006: 59), it is probably more accurate to label his years in Geneva as one of exile, for he was never really at home in Geneva, and the citizens of Geneva never granted him citizen status. He became a Bourgeois in 1559, and could vote, but not being a native Genevan, could never hold public office. Calvin was ever a refugee from his native country.

In 1552, in a letter to Ambroise Blauer, Calvin laments the fiery destruction of his birthplace, Noyon. The letter also reveals the bitterness and disillusionment that he was feeling at the time.

“[Beza] will tell you the annoyance and disturbance we suffered from some worthless wretches, whose sole power of injuring us lies in the impunity and license which is allowed them, But God apparently wishes us to be destitute of human aid, that himself alone may protect us. In the meantime, though, I little expected it, I live a survivor of my native town. The city in which I was born has lately been utterly destroyed by fire. We are also compelled to hear daily of fearful disasters throughout all Picardy, but so far is the King’s fierceness from being subdued by them, that never was his price more insulting to God” (Letter to Ambrose Blauer, Nov 19, 1552).

However, he must have been surprised at the extent of the immorality and debauchery that dominated his adopted town. McNeil notes that in Medieval Geneva, the frivolity and licentiousness associated with fairs and amusements were well known. “Calvin was well aware that environment forms character and habits, and he pressed for the extermination of the community sources of moral delinquency” (McNeil 1967: 166). Even so, Calvin was not the innovator when it came to taboos or blue laws. Dancing, the playing of games unsupervised, and lascivious physical embraces were forbidden but went un-enforced. So, Calvin would come along with the intent to bring discipline and order to a city known for its pleasures. There was much in Geneva that invited reform:

Moral conditions, were indeed, such as to invite drastic reform. Medieval Geneva, by common consent of historians, abounded in centres of dissolute pleasure. Even contemporary opponents of the Reformation freely accuse the pre-Reformation clergy and friars of appalling misbehaviour; and while this was resented by the people, it was also imitated by them. Genevese gaiety was often associated with intemperance, obscenity and licentiousness. Calvin and the authorities resorted to repressive measures to eliminate the numerous taverns and houses of prostitution (McNeil (1967): 166).

The years in Geneva, from 1541 to 1559 were rife with conflict. In January, 1546, Pierre Ameaux, a member of the Little Council argued that Calvin was a wicked man. Calvin, aware that his authority was being questioned, brought this issue to the Council, and on April 8, Ameaux was brought before the magistrates, and “was sentenced to walk around the town, dressed only in his shirt, bareheaded and carrying a lighted torch in his hand, and after that to present himself before the tribunal and cry to God for mercy” (Wendel 1987: 86). It thus became a law that one could not criticize or make fun of Calvin or any of the other pastors. But this became more invitation than deterrence.

Ami Perrin, who had brought Calvin back to Geneva, and his friends the Favres, from respected Genevan families, contested the growing authority of the Consistory to question things like church attendance, morality or beliefs. Perrin was sent away on a diplomatic mission to France as a result. In January, 1547, Jacques Gruet, another member from an old Genevan family was

found with some papers that appeared seditious. Among them was a letter that questioned the reach of the Consistory; and a letter to Francis the First requesting intervention to re-establish order in Geneva. While there may not have been a plot, Gruet was tortured and eventually beheaded.

Calvin's theology was also challenged. In October 1551, Jerome Bolsec challenged the doctrine of double predestination and argued that the Song of Solomon was to be interpreted literally not figuratively. Bolsec argued that predestination made God the author of sin. The result was that Bolsec was arrested, and faced an inquisitorial hearing with Calvin, and was banished for life from Geneva. Bolsec was later to have his revenge, and wrote a scathing biography of Calvin in 1577, 13 years after Calvin's death (Wendel 1987; 92-93).

Of course, the most celebrated controversy was with Michael Servetus. Servetus was born in 1511 in Spain, and became a celebrated doctor and theologian. In 1531, he entered into a controversy, not only with the Reformers, but with Catholic orthodoxy by challenging the teaching of the Trinity. His treatises, on the Errors of the Trinity and Dialogue on the Trinity aroused a vigorous inquiry. Servetus's doctrine was condemned in France, and he was sentenced to be executed but escaped. In 1553, he managed to get his works published in Vienne, and copies managed to reach Calvin in Geneva. Seeking asylum in Naples, Servetus managed to enter the city of Geneva where he was recognized and arrested on August 13, 1555.

Not realizing the gravity of his own situation, Servetus seemed hell-bent at antagonizing the Councils of Geneva, and to challenge Calvin's authority and doctrine, demanding opportunity for a public disputation with him. Replies from other cities, Basle, Berne, Zurich and Schaffhausen were unanimous in denouncing Servetus. Despite Calvin's plea for the more humane execution of beheading, Servetus was condemned to be burned at the stake. On the morning of October 27, 1553, the sentence was carried out (McNeil 1967: 176).

The sixteenth century was certainly not noted for great tolerance and humanity with respect to those who disagree, or misbehave. However, if there were few more brazen attempts to challenge the authority of religious or political leaders by one individual than that of Servetus challenge to Calvin and to Geneva. Even the gentle Melancthon in a letter to Calvin approved the sentence. What might be said, however, is that the execution of Servetus was not unusual given the realities of the inquisition and the perceived threats to religious authority at the time. Witness Vassy or St. Bartholomew's massacre of the Huguenots in France. Witness also the terrible executions of Thomas More and Thomas Cranmer in England, or the massacre of the peasants in Germany.

These were violent times, and such executions did occur in Geneva, not just for blasphemy, but also for adultery and sedition. Adultery would in fact embrace Calvin's own household, twice, as his brother's wife, and the daughter of his deceased wife were found guilty, to Calvin's utter horror and shame. Numerous incidents were reprovved including urinating in public, slandering the ministers, challenging Calvin on points of theology, etc. In 1562, fourteen people were executed in Geneva for various crimes, "three for rape, three for homicide, three for serious or repeated theft, two for sodomy, two for witchcraft and one for counterfeiting" (Hirzel and Sallman 2009: 8).

"To comprehend episodes such as these, it helps to understand that the sixteenth century was a period in which individuals were intensely concerned about their honour, in which communities policed morals and considered blasphemy and heresy to be crimes that endangered the commonweal, and in which offences of all sorts were punished harshly when detected" (Benedict, in Hirzel and Sallmann 2009: 8).

Nonetheless, in Servetus' case, one could also say that the occasion for the execution and death of Servetus was in a sense put in place by the challenges posed by Caroli. Calvin was forced to

prove that he was a teacher of Trinitarian orthodoxy. Servetus forced his hand, and the hand of the Genevan magistrates. Decades later, in some recompense, representatives of the Reformed Church would issue a statement of profound regret and apology for this incident.

Triumphs and the Development of a Model City

From 1555-1559, the tide would turn for Calvin. Though his struggles with Geneva councils intensified, they were more than mollified by the coming of refugees, most of whom were friendly to Calvin. In the 1550's, the numbers of refugees coming from France to Geneva swelled, and many of these were artisans and well-to-do. The city was eager to capitalize and to attract persons of wealth, skill and standing, so that the city offered the status of "Bourgeoisie" to many. The Bourgeoisie had the power to vote, but to not hold office, as that privilege was left solely to native Genevans who were born in the town to hold public office (Johnson 2009: 9).

The influx of refugees also helped Calvin politically, as they supported his reform efforts. From 1536-1564, Benedict estimates that "perhaps 10,000" refugees from Italy and France poured into the city, so that by 1560, the town swelled to almost 21,000 people. These refugees did not include the "tired and poor" of Emma Lazarus, but those who were wealthy and influential. The refugees included Italian merchants and French skilled artisans. As a result, the city developed a reputation for fine linens and for clock making.

Further, master printers such as Robert Estienne (1503-1559) located to Geneva, and by 1560, there were 50 printers who opened shop there, especially between the years, 1550-1563 (Johnson (2009):11-12). Geneva, like Basle and Strasbourg, became a centre for printing, as an average of 61 titles per year, mostly publishing tracts and treatises of Reformed theology, were produced in Calvin's last years. At the level of morals, institutions, literacy, and commerce, Geneva became a thriving city. Part of this was due to Calvin's legal, scholarly, and personal characteristics as a forceful preacher, lawyer and moral force; but a lot was also due also to circumstance. Geneva was a newly developing free city. Its guilds were weak, and the absence of an institution of higher learning presented Calvin and his followers a ready vacuum to be filled. "The combination of the man and the moment added up to a dramatic illustration of how much influence a prophet can wield in propitious circumstances" (Benedict, in Hirzel and Sallman, 2009: 13).

Even so, ever the exile, Calvin reportedly never trusted or even liked the Genevans (Johnson 2009: 7), calling them a "perverse and unhappy nation," even on his deathbed. But since he was unable to return to France due to the persecution of the Reformers, Geneva became his adopted city, and due to his stature, he was able to pursue vigorous reform and publishing activities. In his own mind, Calvin remained a fugitive, even in Geneva.

Calvin, who did not become a bourgeois of Geneva until 1559, always remained in his own mind first and foremost a Frenchman. He evoked the beauty of his country nostalgically in his sermons and retained an exile's fixation on the affairs of his native land (Benedict, in Hirzel and Sallmann 2009: 4).

Yet, even so, Calvin would assist in the developing of a model city and his internationally famous Academy in subsequent years. Thus, by 1555, an election put into power those who were supportive of Calvin, and his status in Geneva was secure thereafter. Calvin was given Bourgeoisie status in 1559, which gave him the right to vote, but he could never become a citizen, as he was not born in Geneva. Following Calvin's enfranchisement as a Bourgeoisie of the city, Calvin entered the last phase of his life in triumph, even as his illnesses became more severe. For many years, Calvin was more appreciated internationally than locally, and his contacts, travels, letters, and visits from those sympathetic to Reform enhanced his reputation.

In 1556 Calvin went back to Strasbourg to meet with John Sturm to gather ideas about starting an Academy in Geneva (McKim,19). Though he was not allowed to speak there, as Strasbourg was now a single minded Lutheran city, he was received with great fanfare. As a result of his experiences in Strasbourg and elsewhere, Calvin was able to bring back some of his ideas for a university in Geneva. He started the Geneva Academy in 1559, which later became the University of Geneva. The Academy trained both children and adult students, and became a centre for the development of Reformed theology. Ever the classicist and ever the humanist, the Genevan academy taught French reading, Latin, and Latin grammar reading Vergil, Ovid, and Cicero. Students learned Greek grammar and graduated with a strong preparation in Latin and Greek literature. As McNeil notes:

With respect to the predominance of the classics in the curriculum, the college was a typical Renaissance school. It was said, from their readiness in Latin declamation, that the boys of Geneva talked like Sorbonne doctors. Calvin, like Sturm, wanted to develop competence in Latin speech and writing on the model of Cicero. But another feature is not less marked: the Psalms were sung, not in Latin but in French; the hour from eleven to twelve daily was devoted to exercise. The alumni of the Geneva school were nothing if not vocal in speech and song (McNeil 1967: 195).

Yet, his life was also ebbing, as his many illnesses worsened. “Throughout his life, his illnesses were many: chronic indigestion, migraine headaches, chronic gout. . . , fevers, kidney stones, possible tuberculosis, and to add insult to injury, haemorrhoids” (Johnson 2009: 10). In the end, he invited the ministers of Geneva to his home to say goodbye, and by his request was buried in an unmarked grave.

Conclusions

Calvin lived in an age of discovery and great change. Born in 1509, Columbus had discovered the new world just 17 years beforehand. Michelangelo was painting the Sistine Chapel in 1509, and Shakespeare was born the year of Calvin’s death in 1564. Nicolas Copernicus (1473-1543) was his contemporary, and the idea that the earth revolved around the sun, rather than vice versa, was revolutionary. Calvin was clearly a man of his times and a product of the Renaissance.

Calvin travelled through many of the significant cities and towns of Renaissance France. These included Paris, Orleans, Bourges, Angouleme, and Nerac. He travelled once to Ferrara in Italy, and throughout Switzerland and South-western Germany. He clearly learned much from his travels, and especially from key relationships. His family connections supported him for his study in Paris, and later in Orleans and Bourges. There he met many fine students, and some of the more excellent teachers of the day, including Cordier, Wolmar, d’Estoile, Alciati, and more. He came back to Paris to hear the lectures of Danes and Vatable, and would eventually befriend not only students like Daniel and Duchemin, but merchants such as De La Forge and up and coming academic leaders such as Nicolas Cop, and those who would become outstanding clergy including du Tillet. His journey to Strasbourg and to SW Germany led him into contact with reformers such as Martin Bucer and later Philip Melancthon and Heinrich Bullinger. Yet, it was Guillaume Farel and his friend Peter Viret who would have the most influence on him.

Neither could Calvin escape the political conflicts of his time. He surely ran into executions while in Paris; and he had to have witnessed also the volatility and disorder that political actions would make, be they plays, a controversial lecture or the affair of the placards. He witnessed first-hand the repressions of a government body, the prospects of a university collective, and he knew first-hand the consequences of war and repression done by kings and princes. At the same time, in his correspondence, he wrote to friends, to scholars, and to noble persons regarding the evangelical reform movement. His most famous plea was to Francis I, King of France; and his

most famous disputation is found in his reply to Jacopo Sadoletto. Calvin could not escape the cultural, religious and political upheavals of his own time.

But what did he learn. He seemed to adopt a strategy that sought the widest possible distribution of his writings. His 1536 Institutes, as has been stated, was prefaced with a letter and a plea to the King of France. Many of his other writings and commentaries were dedicated to dukes, scholars, kings and princes, as one way of educating them; and of spreading the torch of the evangelical faith. His writings, especially his letters, reflect the times, persons and events that he was a part of.

It is hard to depict the specific impact on the cities where he served. Certainly, he preached, pastored, lectured, and participated in various councils, synods, colloquies and disputations. He participated rather directly in the affairs of the city, but mostly around moral and religious issues, all of which were politically charged. It appears that, while he was clearly living in a city consciously, that the mundane affairs of city government were not attractive to him, for he preferred the role of a detached scholar, and moral leader. Yet, after 1557, the syndics ordered a visitation of the city residents to make sure the reforms were taking hold. Also, these visitations were more than just moral, and more than just spiritual or pastoral, but they also extended to practical matters of city living.

Based on his experience of living, studying and working in cities all his life, various practical matters were discussed and mandated for sake of the public welfare. And these were all matters that would fall under Calvin's oversight. J.T. McNeil notes some of those concerns:

No fires were to be permitted in rooms without chimneys, and chimneys were to be swept for safety. Latrines were to be provided for houses in which they were lacking, and the streets kept clean. Rooms were not to be let without police permission; and the night watch was to be duly performed by those appointed or by reliable substitutes. Such matters came within Calvin's care. He was also asked to sit in judgment on an invention for the cheaper heating of houses and on a painting to commemorate the peace with Bern.

It was at his suggestion that railings were ordered for the balconies of houses for the safety of children, and it was he who brought about the strict enforcement of the law against recruiting mercenaries in Geneva (McNeil 1967: 190).

But these were not matters that stirred Calvin's imagination. He seemed to believe that if one held right beliefs, and if the citizens conducted themselves in an honourable or moral fashion, the material matters of ordinary life would take care of themselves. The other problem is that the physical city of John Calvin seemed to be of little note and seemed to have buildings of little architectural value. This was true of the churches that he preached, and in the apartments where he lived. The old city of Geneva, since it was of so little architectural significance, has almost totally disappeared, save for the cathedral, the walls, the Auditoire, and the street where he once lived. But, no matter, "a City. . . is not an agglomeration of buildings, but a collection of men [and women]" (Monter (1967): 4).

He was more concerned with the city as people than the city as a place. Given the Spartan lifestyle, and the bent toward simplicity, and the preference for singing and the preached word, Calvin's insistence on sound doctrine and ritual simplicity reflects his beliefs and priorities. He was the "Mies Van Der Rohe" of sacred space. What mattered was the function of universal spaces as places where God could be worshipped, and the word preached. In summary, we are left with conflicting images of Calvin. Was he a tyrant. I think not. As McNeil notes, "Calvin used lawful means, went unarmed and unguarded, lived modestly, and without display, sought advice from many, claimed no authority save as a commissioned minister of the Word, assumed no title of distinction or political office. It was not until Christmas Day, 1559, after he had been

instrumental in the admission of hundreds of refugees to citizenship, that he himself, on invitation of the magistrates became a citizen (McNeil 1967: 185).

His legacy is also up for grabs, and he invites contradictory assessments from those who study and read him. According to Carter Lindberg:

He has been portrayed as both a narrow dogmatist and an ecumenical church person; a ruthless inquisitor and a sensitive, caring pastor; an ascetic, cold authoritarian and a compassionate humanist; a rigorous individualist and a social thinker; a plodding systematizer and the theologian's theologian who finally completed the doctrine of the trinity; a man dominated by logic and a man of contradictory traits and inconsistencies; a theoretician of capitalism and of socialism; the tyrant of Geneva and a defender of freedom; a dictator and a revolutionary...." (Lindberg 1996: 250).

The Cities of Calvin (Working Conclusions and Discussion Questions)

John Calvin's understanding of the city stressed more the activities of its citizens (the *civitas*) than developing the urban infrastructure (*as urbs*) of cities. Even so, though not a citizen until 1559, he was involved in many of the day to day activities. For, Calvin, cities functioned best if they were based upon strong religious and moral foundations, and this perspective was not limited to Calvin in the 16th Century. In the modern world, a challenge for Calvin, and for Calvinists, is how people of faith respond the growth in pluralism inherent in modern culture, and the extent that a particular set of doctrines or prescribed morality can be influence a society. This paper has sought to begin the process of assessing Calvin's relevance for today's city. The following "working" conclusions are suggested for discussion purposes.

1. Calvin travelled through and temporarily resided in some of the more important cities of Western Europe during the 16th century, including Paris, Orleans, Bourges, Basle, Strasbourg and Geneva- and travelled through many more. What did Calvin learn from these travels?
2. Calvin received a first class education in classics, philosophy, languages, law and, informally theology, from several eminent universities of France. How did his education influence Calvin's thought?
3. Calvin was trained as a Renaissance Humanist scholar in Latin, Greek, and Hebrew; and he utilized a methodology that analysed the original texts rather than commentaries on them. This approach was adopted by Calvin and Theodore Beza in the establishment of the Geneva Academy from 1559. Did Calvin use humanist scholarship to advance religious ends? Is this a problem? Should Calvin have used exclusively biblical or even theological sources to make his arguments?
4. Calvin's writings were in no small part, a response to the political, social, and religious issues of his time. This is especially true in his Letter to Francis I and Reply to Jacopo Sadoletto. To what extent should Christians be involved in current political questions of a given era?
5. Calvin met with and corresponded with many Reformation, political and cultural leaders of the 16th century-including professors at the universities, political leaders, and cultural icons like Marguerite of Navarre, Renee de France. How influential was this correspondence in the spread of Calvinism, or in the insistence of its recognition and tolerance?
6. Calvin's letters are replete with discussions and reactions to some of the key political and social events of his day, including treaties, cruel executions, persecu-

tions, controversies, etc. Is this a legitimate form of faith based advocacy? Would you broaden or narrow those concerns today?

7. Calvin dedicated most of his commentaries and many of his other writings to political and religious dignitaries (including King Edward VI and to Elizabeth I, though she declined as she identified Calvin with the negative attitude towards women rulers as found in a treatise of John Knox who visited Geneva). Is it legitimate to appeal to the wisdom of secular rulers for the sake of a sacred cause?

8. Calvin's influence on Geneva, and other cities, was primarily religious, educational, and moral, though some argue also economic and political. Calvin advocated for religious toleration for fellow reformers even as he was less tolerant for those who disagreed with his understanding of theology and high morals. To what extent should we in this day strive for a greater tolerance and understanding for those who act and believe differently than we do?

9. Calvin was in the company of those who were making decisions about practical matters regarding city life and urban governance, though he functioned more as "expert witness" in moral and religious affairs in Geneva, than with mundane practical matters. Do you agree that Calvin's theology explicitly gave legitimacy to secular vocations, such as urban planning, social work, or banking and business? Does Calvin's critique of usury and ostentatious wealth, and his concern for the poor and the general welfare of the city (via the "Bourse Francais", work of deacons, etc) help us think about our obligations to the public welfare today? Did not Calvin also found "public institutions" to carry on these efforts rather than rely exclusively on the generosity of individuals?

10. It appears from Calvin's letters and other writings that Calvin's interest in architecture and the physical form of the city was more functional than aesthetic. How do we justify items of beauty and aesthetics (city beautiful movement?) in cities, if our primary goal is to proclaim the gospel? Are these concerns mutually exclusive?

11. He seemed primarily interested in church governance (his role), which for him constituted the bedrock of society-including Sabbath observance, the adherence to a Reformed confession of faith, the practice of proper church ordinances, and an understanding of the Bible as the basic theological resource for right moral practice. To what extent can we evangelize, teach, and argue for doctrinal purity in a world that is today radically pluralistic, and possibly even post Christian? Is our truth now just "for us," or is it also for society at large, and how so?

12. Calvin's reform of church architecture consisting in ridding it of icons and any vestiges of Roman Catholic teaching and practice. Calvin helped to remodel three churches in Geneva to be more conducive to Reformation priorities of preaching, teaching and the spiritual life of a congregation by painting the walls white, adding benches, and an hour glass or interior clock for practical reasons. What reforms would you suggest for the church today, and which ones are rooted in Calvin/Calvinism? Which reforms would you suggest that would be a suitable response to our current cultural needs?

A Reformation Bibliography:

The Preindustrial City in the 16 th Century

By

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Appendix One: A Brief Time Line of Calvin's Life

1509- Born in Noyon, July 10th

1523- Goes to Paris to Study, at College du Marche, then Montaigu. 1528-31 - Goes to Orleans and Bourges to study Law.

1531- Father, dies, Returns to Paris.

1532- Publishes Commentary on Seneca's The Clementia.

1533- Lecture of Nicolas Cop, Calvin flees Paris. 1533-Sudden Conversion?

1534- Breaks with Rome, Surrenders Benefices at Noyon.

1534- Seeks Asylum in Angouleme. Begins work there on Institutes. In Nerac, under protection of Marguerite of Navarre, meets d'Etaples.

1535-6- In Basle, publishes first edition of Institutes, with letter to Francis I.

1536- Brief visit with Renee, Duchess of Ferrara, in Italy

1536- Arrives in Geneva. Implored by Farel to stay.

1538- Calvin and Farel are banished from Geneva. Calvin goes to Strasbourg, pastors a French Speaking Congregation

1539- Calvin asked to Reply to Cardinal Jacopo Sodoletto on behalf of Geneva

1540- Publishes Commentary on Romans, marries Idelette de Bure

1539-1541- Participates in Colloquies in Germany, meets Lutheran leaders.

1541- Calvin Returns to Geneva on Sept 13.

1542- Only child, Jacques, is born and dies.

1549- Death of Idelette. Beza relocates to Geneva.

1553- Michael Servetus is burned at the stake in Geneva (Calvin consenting)

1559- Calvin establishes the Geneva Academy after consultation with J. Sturm
Publishes Final Edition of the Institutes of the Christian Religion

1564- Calvin preaches his last sermon on February 6 Calvin dies, May 27th at age of 55.

Appendix Two: The Cities of Calvin

- **Noyon** (1509-1523, 1528, 1531, 1532, 1533, 1534, 1536)

- **Paris** (1523-1529; 1530-1534, 1536)- Studies Latin and Classics. Releases De Clementia (1532)
- **Orleans** (1528-1529)-Studies Law at U of Orleans under d'Estoile.
- **Meaux** (1529) [writes a letter from Meaux to Francis Daniel]
- **Bourges** (1529)-Studies law (Alciati) and Greek (Wolmar) at the University of Bourges
- **Angouleme** (1534)- Begins research on Institutes at home of du Tillett in Angouleme
- **Nerac** (1534) –meets Lefevre d Estaples, Human ist and Reformer
- **Poitiers** (1534?)-Establishes a Protestant congregation at Poitiers
- **Basle** (1534, 1536, 1538)-Writes first edition of the Institutes from Basle
- **Ferrara** (1536) - Visits with Duchess of Ferrara, Renee de France and her court
- **Aosta** (1536?)-Acc to some reports, initiates a religious revival in Aosta.
- **Geneva** (1536-1538) -First Stay in Geneva
- **Lausanne** (1536)-Participates in Lausanne Colloquy, wins victory for Reformers vs Catholic leaders
- **Berne** (1538, 1541)-Appeals to Berne versus banishment from Geneva
- **Zurich** (1538)-Meets leaders at Synod in Zurich, appealing banishment from Geneva
- **Neuchatel** (1541?) –
- **Strasbourg** (1535, 1538-1541, 1543, 1557)-establishes residency in Strasbourg as teacher and pastor
- **Frankfort** (1539) [Participates in a number of disputations and colloquies, sponsored by Ch V)
- **Worms** (1540), Haguenau (1540), Ulm (1541), Ratisbon (known as Regensberg) (1541)
- **Geneva** (1536-1538; 1541-1564). Calvin's maturity and bulk of his career, though he does travel on occasion to nearby towns.

Appendix Three: Historical Dedications

John Calvin's Dedications:

Institutes and Commentaries on Books of the Bible.

Books, Essays or Tracts

De Clementia (1532)-To Jean de Hangest, Bishop of Noyon.

Institutes of the Christian Religion (1536 edition). To Francis I, King of France .

Letter to James Sadolet, A Roman Cardinal. To The Senate and People of Geneva . (1539).

“The Necessity of Reforming the Church.” To: The Imperial Diet at Spires (A.D. 1544).

Mutual Consent in Regard to the Sacraments. To: The Pastors and Doctors of the Church at Zurich, 1554.

Second Defence of the Pious and Orthodox Faith of the Sacraments. To: The Churches of Saxony and Lower Germany (Reply to Westphal) (1556).

Confession of Faith, in the name of the Reformed Churches of France. To: The Emperor, Princes, and the States of Germany at the Diet of Frankfort , 1562.

Biblical Commentaries

[Note: Other Commentaries did not receive a Dedication].

Genesis: To three sons of Johann Frederick, Electorate of Saxony (1554)

Exodus –Deuteronomy. To Henry of Bourbon (later King Henry IV of France) (1563). **Isaiah.** To Edward VI, King of England (1551 edition).

Isaiah. To Elizabeth I, Queen of England (1559 edition).

Jeremiah and Lamentations. To Duke Frederick III, Lord Palatine of the Rhine, Elector of the Roman Empire (1563).

Daniel. “To Pious Worshippers of God . . . in France” (1561).

Minor Prophets. To Gustavus Vasa, King of the Goths and Vandals (Sweden) (1559).

Harmony of Matthew, Mark and Luke. To the Council of Frankfort (1555).

John. To The Syndics and Council of Geneva (1553).

Acts, Vol. I. To Christian III, King of Denmark (1553).

Acts, Vol II. To Crown Prince Frederick of Denmark (1554).

Acts. To Nicholas Radziwill, Duke of Olike, Lithuania (1560 edition).

Romans. To Simon Grynaeus, Professor of Latin and Greek at Heidleberg (1540)

First Corinthians, To James of Burgundy, Master of Falais and Breda (1546)

First Corinthians. 2nd edition. To Lord Galliazus Caracciolus di Vico (1556 edition). **Second Corinthians.** To Melchior Wolmar, Greek Teacher, U of Orleans (1547).

Galatians, Ephesians, Phillippians, Colossians. To Christopher, Duke of Wurtenberg (1548). **First Thessalonians.** To Malthurian Cordier, Latin Professor at U of Paris (1550).

Second Thessalonians. To Benedict Textor, his family physician (1550).

First and Second Timothy. To Edward Seymore, Duke of Somerset and Lord Protector of England, reign of Edward VI (1548).

Titus. To William Farel and Pierre Viret (1549).

Hebrews. To Sigismund, August II, King of Poland, and Duke of Lithuania, Russia, Prussia and Lord of Muscovy (1549)

Catholic Epistles. To Edward VI, King of England (1550).

Appendix IV: A Reformation Chronology Reformation Chronology Pre Reformers

1330- 1384 John Wycliffe

1415 Jan Hus (1415- burned at the stake)

1452 Birth of Girolomo Savaronola in Ferrara

1478 Wolfgang Capito is born, Strasbourg Reformer 1483- birth of Martin Luther at Eisleben, Germany (B.A. 1502; M.A. 1505 Erfurt, and Doctorate 1512).

1484 Birth of Huldrych Zwingli, Zurich Reformer

1489 Gillaume Farel born, Genevan reformer

1491 Martin Bucer born, Strasbourg reformer

1494 Girolamo Savonarola (21 September 1452– 23 May 1498) Dominican priest and leader in Florence from 1494 until his execution in 1498. He was known for his book burning destruction of what he considered immoral art, and hostility to the Renaissance. He vehemently preached against the moral corruption of much of the clergy at the time, and his main opponent was Rodrigo Borgia , when he served as Pope Alexander VI from 1492 to 1503. Savonarola is executed in May 23, 1498 for criticizing the church in Rome.

1497 Phillipp Melancthon is born

1503 Pope Alexander VI dies

Reformation Chronology

1492 Cardinal Ximinez begins Inquisition in Spain

1509 John Calvin Born in Noyon, NW France

1510 Leo X becomes Pope of Rome, institutes Indulgences as way to pay for St. Peter's. 1515 Luther teaches book of Romans, becomes convinced of Justification by Faith alone. 1516 Erasmus of Rotterdam publishes New Testament (Novum Testamentum) with Latin and Greek texts. Second edition in 1519.

1516 ca Calvin's mother takes young John to Ourscamp at a young age, to kiss the skull of Anna, allegedly the skull of the mother of Mary. In 1543, Calvin references this in his tract against idols.

1516-1525 The "Circle at Meaux"- reformers meet informally in Meaux, a city just NW of Paris. Included G. Briconnet, G. Roussel, L. d' Etaples, G. Farel, f. Vatable and P. Caroli. The Circle

sought to study the Bible in the original languages and to return to the teachings of the early church. The Circle sought to reform the church from within.

1517 Luther posts 95 Theses at Wittenberg.

1519 Charles V becomes Holy Roman Emperor.

1519 Leipzig disputation. Luther debates Karlstadt and Eck

1521 Diet of Worms, Luther Excommunicated at trial before Charles V. Luther refuses to recant, and is “kidnapped” by Frederick the Wise, placed in the Wartburg Castle.

1521 Henry VIII called “Defensor Pacis” because of his treatise against Luther

1521 Ignatius Loyola writes Spiritual Exercises, published in 1548.

1522-26 Zwingli defends printers, and secretly marries Anna Meyer, attacks clerical celibacy, then debates John Eck at Baden, Zurich cleansed of organs, relics, images, and religious houses, mass is abolished and City council takes over church discipline. Roman Catholics are tolerated but civic activities are restricted.

1523 First Zurich Disputation-Reformation begins in Zurich led by Zwingli, Oecolampadius, and Heinrich Bullinger.

1523 Calvin goes to Paris to study at 14 years of age. Studies Latin, Greek, classics, is on the way to becoming a humanist like Erasmus.

1524 William Tyndale translates the NT into English.

1525 Luther contends versus Andreas Karlstad and Thomas Muntzer; marries Katherine von Bora.

1528 Reformation spreading in Switzerland, with opposition by Catholic cantons. Christian Civic League established uniting Zurich, Berne, Basel, Schaffhouse, St. Gall and Constance.

1528-31 Calvin goes to Orleans and then to Bourges to study law. Calvin receives licentiate in law.

1529 Luther and Zwingli debate at Marburg Colloquy. Schmalkaldic League established among Lutheran princes to defend an emerging Germany.

1529 September 6. Calvin writes letter to friend Francis Daniel, from Meaux.

1530 Melancthon writes the Augsburg Confession

1531 Calvin’s father dies in Noyon, Calvin free to study subjects of his choosing.

1531 Zwingli is killed in the Battle of Kappel holding off troops from Swiss Catholic cantons. Oecolampadius dies, Bullinger replaces Zwingli as leader of the Reformation in Zurich.

1532-3 Calvin returns to Paris and Orleans. Calvin studying Church fathers, humanists, hears lectures at U of Paris, and publishes De Clementia, a commentary on The Clemency of Seneca, dedicating book to Erasmus. Calvin on way to becoming humanist scholar.

1533 Calvin and Nicholas Cop flee Paris, Cop to Basle and Calvin to Angouleme.

1534 Henry VIII passes Act of Supremacy, which declares Henry head of Church of England.

1534 Ignatius Loyola founds the Jesuit order

1533/4 Calvin visits Poitiers (?), then visits and remains for awhile with friend Du Tillet in Angouleme, take advantage of his large library and begins writing his Institutes. He meets reformer Lefevre d'Étaples in Nerac under the protectorate of Marguerite of Navarre.

1534 Calvin journeys to Noyon to renounce Benefices, formally breaks with the Church. 1534 October 17. Affair of the Placards in Paris. Francis, the Sorbonne and Paris Parliament clamp down on "Lutheran ideas" and are persecuting Protestants, many burned at the stake in Paris, including Calvin's friend, Etienne de la Forge

1534 Calvin travels to Orleans, and afterwards to Strasbourg then to Basle..

1534 While in Orleans, Calvin writes Psychopannychia, against soul sleep (between death and resurrection) a doctrine held by some Anabaptists, though this is not published until 1543 in Basle.

1535 Thomas More executed for refusing to take oath of King's Supremacy over the Pope. 1535 Anabaptists take over Muenster, and are crushed by troops of Charles V and Lutheran princes.

1535/6 Calvin in Basle. Calvin publishes Institutes of the Christian Religion with a preface to Francis I.

1536 Death of Erasmus in Basle, but there no evidence that Calvin and Erasmus ever met.

1536 Luther agrees to Wittenberg Concord on the Lord's Supper, but Zwinglians do not accept interpretation.

1536 Henry dissolves 376 monasteries and nunneries

1536 Menno Simons becomes an Anabaptist in Holland, moves group to pacifism.

1536 Denmark and Norway declare themselves Lutheran

1536 April–May, 1536. Under assumed name, Charles d'Espeville, Calvin visits Renee, Duchess of Ferrara in her court in Italy. Meets Clement Marot there, and they collaborate on developing a Psalmody for the Reformed Church later.

1536 Calvin returns to Basle, and then Paris, and is on way to Strasbourg, but is detained due to war troop movements of Francis I and Charles V. Is met by and implored by Farel to remain in Geneva which he does.

1536-8 Calvin in Geneva.

1536. October. Calvin in Lausanne for Disputation between Catholics and Reformers, Lausanne is under oversight of Berne, and the disputation turns out to be a victory for the Reformers. The Pays du Vaud becomes a significant victory for the Reformation.

1537 Calvin and Farel attempt to solidify the reformation in Geneva, by insisting on the reciting of a public Confession for all citizens, enforcement of church discipline, the right to banish persons who don't attend church; and the frequent practice of the Lord's Supper though it should be limited to those who are in good standing; and the singing of Psalms in worship should be the normal practice. Calvin and Farel meet resistance at all levels.

1538 Early. Calvin and Farel are banished from Geneva in early 1538. Calvin goes to Berne, then Zurich to argue their case, but Calvin refused re-entry to Geneva.

1538-1541 Implored by Martin Bucer, Calvin summoned to Strasbourg as pastor of a French speaking refugee congregation

1539 Cardinal Jocolo Sadoletto writes a letter to Geneva, asking that they return to the Mother Church. Calvin is asked to respond, representing the city, regains favor of Geneva.

1539-1541. Calvin participates in colloquys with Lutherans, sponsored by Charles the V. Ratisbon is most important, in that the two sides, Catholic and Reformed churches, could not be brought together. Calvin thought that Bucer and Melancthon, who became a lifelong correspondent with Calvin, tried to give too much away to the Catholic leaders. Frankfurt, February 1539, Hagenau, June 1540, Worms, Winter of 1540-41, Ratisbon, April-May 1541.

1540 Calvin marries widow, Idellete de Bure in Strasbourg (Idellette dies in 1549).

1541-1564 Calvin returns to Geneva, remains till his death in 1564.

1541 John Knox begins Reformed movement in Scotland.

1543 First Protestants are burned at the stake by Spanish Inquisition.

1546. Luther dies, Feb. 18.

1546-7 Schmalkaldic War between Charles V and league of Lutheran princes.

1549 Thomas Cranmer releases Book of Common Prayer in England

1553 Michael Servetus arrives in Geneva, is burned at the Stake at order of Little Council. Calvin functions as expert witness, recommends beheading rather than burning. 1553 Mary Tudor becomes Queen of England.

1553 John Knox and “Marian exiles” flee England for Europe, Knox spends next several years in Geneva before he can return to Scotland.

1554 Restores Catholic Church to supremacy in England

1555 Peace of Augsburg- Lutherans given rights equal to Catholics in Holy Roman Empire (Germany mostly).

1556 Thomas Cranmer is burned at the stake for unwillingness to recant from Protestantism. 1557 Calvin visits Strasbourg, with plans to start a Geneva Academy. But the city was now a Lutheran city, and Calvin was given a warm reception by Sturm, but was refused permission to speak.

1558 John Knox publishes “First Blast of the Trumpet Against the Monstrous Regiment of Women,” attacking Mary I, Queen of England. Elizabeth I later attaches Calvin to the document as well.

1558 Elizabeth becomes Queen of England

1559 Calvin is made citizen, Bourgeois, in Geneva. Last edition of the Institutes is published. The Academy is established.

1559 Elizabethan “Book of Common Prayer” is released, passes Act of Uniformity, penalizes those who do not use the Book of Common Prayer. This is not radical enough for the Puritans.

1560 The Church of Scotland is founded.

1562 Hawkins and Drake initiate slave trade with America.

1562-98 Wars of Religion in France

1564 Death of Calvin in Geneva.

1566 Bullinger writes the Second Helvetic Confession

1567-8 Vestments controversy in England, Puritans wish to purge all remnants of Roman Catholic liturgy.

1572 Death of John Knox

1572 Massacre of St Bartholomew’s Day, worst persecution of Huguenots (French Protestants) in France.

1575 Heinrich Bullinger dies

1588 Spanish Armada defeated by Sir Francis Drake

1598 Edict of Nantes, passed by Henry IV in France, grants Huguenots religious freedom

1605 Death of Theodore Beza, the follower and Successor of Calvin



Geneva - The Protestant Rome of Calvin

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