Drawn into Controversie

Reformed Theological Diversity and Debates Within Seventeenth-Century British Puritanism

Edited by
Michael A.G. Haykin and Mark Jones

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Elsie McKee, Richard Muller

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Contents

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Preface

This project began as an idea a few years ago when I (Mark Jones) sat down with my then Ph.D supervisor, Michael Haykin, and discussed with him the idea of a book that looks at the various theological debates that took place between Reformed theologians in the context of British Puritanism. Since that time we sought to find authors with expertise in Puritan theology that would be able to write on the debates covered in this book. We are grateful for their co-operation in making this project a reality.[1] We are also grateful to the staff, especially Jörg Persch and Christoph Spill, at Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht for their help in bringing this book to the press. We are also very thankful to Herman Selderhuis and the RHT series editors for accepting this book into this fine series.

This book does not look at every debate that took place among Puritan theologians, but it does give a fairly comprehensive overview of some of the most significant debates that took place in Britain during the seventeenth century among Reformed theologians who agreed on more points of theology than they disagreed. Richard Muller's chapter shows that this type of project provides a helpful companion to the literature in recent years that has questioned the old historiography put forth in terms of "Calvin against the Calvinists".

While it is customary to offer thanks to those who have helped make a book a reality, I (Michael Haykin) would also like to stress that in doing so, I am not doing this in any sort of perfunctory manner. I am deeply thankful for the help afforded me by my assistant at the Andrew Fuller Center for Baptist Studies at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Revd. Steve Weaver. Finally, I would like to thank my dear wife Alison for her patience and ongoing support in all of my academic pursuits, and especially in the editing of this book.

I (Mark Jones) want to thank the members at Faith Vancouver Presbyterian Church for encouraging (enduring?) me in my academic pursuits as their minister. It is also an honor to have edited this book with Michael Haykin, a person and scholar from whom I have learned much. Finally, and most importantly, I thank my wife Barbara for her continued support in all areas of my life.

[1] The title for this book, "*Drawn into Controversie*" comes from John Crandon's Epistle dedicatory to *Mr. Baxter's Aphorisms Exorized and Anthorized* (London, 1654).

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1. Diversity in the Reformed Tradition: A Historiographical Introduction

Richard A. Muller

1.1 Introduction: Tradition, Diversity, and the Interpretation of Reformed Thought

Traditions are, by their very nature, diverse. Nor do theological traditions provide an exception to this rule, even when, as in the cases of Augustinianism, Thomism, Lutheranism, or Calvinism they have been named for a single individual. The case of Augustinianism is particularly instructive. That there is an Augustinian tradition, few would deny. What "Augustinian" precisely means is, however, subject to considerable variety, if not disagreement. In a general sense, the theology of Western Christendom is Augustinian. If one traces out the medieval theology of grace, Thomas Aquinas stands as an Augustinian. If one examines the issue of philosophical models, Franciscans like Alexander of Hales, Bonaventure, and Duns Scotus are clearly Augustinian. If one examines the emphatically Augustinian theology and spirituality of the Augustinian order, one nonetheless finds both *via antiqua* and *via moderna* Augustinians.[2] A similar point can be made concerning Thomism, which experienced several branches in the later middle ages, a significant shift from an emphasis on the Sentence commentary to the Summa in the early sixteenth-century, and significant development in the debates over Molinism in the seventeenth century. Likewise the Lutheran tradition which, although it does tend to identify Luther as its foundational thinker, early on incorporated Melanchthonian elements, and experienced considerable differences over such issues as the understanding of Christ's real presence in the Lord's Supper, the relationship of faith and works, and the nature of original sin – as evidenced in the debates leading to the Formula of Concord (1580).

Equally so, the Reformed tradition, which did not begin with the generation of thinkers like Calvin, Musculus, and Vermigli, but with an earlier

[2] See David C. Steinmetz, "Luther and the Late Medieval Augustinians: Another Look," *Concordia Theological Monthly*, 44 (1973), 245–260.

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generation of Reformers of rather varied training and background – notably Bucer, Zwingli, Capito, and Oecolampadius – is a highly diverse tradition and, in addition, was rather diverse in its origins. Nonetheless, the diversity of the older Reformed tradition was not a prominent subject of discussion in the older literature on "Calvinism." The appearance of diversity in the Reformed tradition as the subject of the present volume identifies a significant line of argument in the on-going work of examining and reassessing the development of seventeenth-century Protestant thought.

Accordingly, readers will find little of the older "Calvin against the Calvinists" model in the following chapters. The theological positions of seventeenth-century authors are no longer evaluated in terms of their resemblance (or lack of resemblance) to Calvin's thought, but as exponents of a diverse and variegated tradition – indeed, a tradition that diversified increasingly in proportion to the increasing number of teachers, preachers, and theologians who came to be numbered in its ranks. The old claim that Calvin was the founder and norm of the Reformed tradition and that something disastrous happened to the Reformed tradition shortly after his death, yielding a predestinarian, scholastic, speculative, metaphysical monolith that could be set over against Calvin's humanistic Christocentrism, has given way to the portrait of a highly complex tradition in process of development. "Calvin against the Calvinists" has not, in other words, been replaced by an equally monotonous refrain of "Calvin for the Calvinists." Calvin's theology is referenced, not as a norm to be invoked for the examination of the later Reformed tradition, but as part of an antecedent complex of earlier Reformed formulations lying in the background of many aspects of the later Reformed positions. Beyond this, later developments in this diverse tradition are allowed to speak for themselves, out of their own historical contexts.

From the perspective of one who has participated in over three decades of the examination and reassessment of the older Reformed theology, the importance of this shift in method and approach ought not to be underestimated – nor, indeed, should the confusion concerning both the nature of the Reformed tradition and the significance of Calvin's theology generated by the "Calvin against the Calvinists" approach. Noting some of the inherent problems in this approach in order, if only to highlight the historiographical advance represented in the essays found here.

At its core, the "Calvin against the Calvinists" historiography was a highly theologized product of the era of neo-orthodoxy. It not only identified Calvin, often specifically the 1559 edition of Calvin's *Institutes*, as providing the sole theological index for the assessment of later Reformed thought, but it identified Calvin as a thoroughly Christocentric thinker whose theology focused on Christology and which for purely dogmatic

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concerns placed the doctrine of predestination in an *a posteriori* position.[2] With these dogmatic shibboleths in hand, it rather easily labeled theologies that placed the doctrine of predestination toward the beginning of the system, often following the doctrine of God, as drastic departures from Calvin's christocentrically "balanced" theology. Theodore Beza was identified as the culprit, and his little *Tabula praedestinationis*, labeled as the source of the predestinarian system – even thought it was written a decade before Calvin's death, in consultation with Calvin, and is neither a theological system nor a prospectus for a theological system.[3] According to the "Calvin against the Calvinists" model, where Calvin was Christocentric, *a posteriori*, inductive, and humanistic, later Calvinists focused on predestination, and argued scholastically in an *a priori*, deductive manner. The understanding of scholasticism on the part of this scholarship was, among other things, unique to the "Calvin against the Calvinists" model and quite out of touch with the main lines of scholarship concerning the nature of scholasticism. Specifically, scholasticism was defined as a highly deterministic form of predestinarianism, immersed in Aristotle, and devoted to a logic of deducing entire theological systems from the divine decree rather than, as the large body of extant scholarship on scholasticism had long indicated, primarily an academic method that was suited to multiple disciplines and that did not determine such results as predestinarian systems.[4]

In what was, arguably, a more dogmatically deductive argument than any launched by a seventeenth-century Calvinist, this older line of scholarship held that a Christocentric Calvin must have held to a notion of universal atonement while the later Calvinist predestinarians must have deduced a doctrine of limited atonement from their view of the divine decrees. Stray seventeenth-century proponents of universal atonement, like John Cameron and Moises Amyraut, could be identified rather uncritically as the true Calvinians, opposed by the predestinarian Calvinists.[5] Advocacy of a scho-

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[2] In the following paragraphs, I cite only a few salient examples of each claim concerning "Calvin against the Calvinists." For a lengthier bibliography and critique of these lines of argument, see Richard A. Muller, *After Calvin: Studies in the Development of a Theological Tradition* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 63–102.

[3] Cf. Basil Hall, "Calvin Against the Calvinists," in *John Calvin: A Collection of Distinguished Essays*, ed. Gervase Duffield (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1966), 19–37; Brian G. Armstrong, *Calvinism and the Amyraut Heresy: Protestant Scholasticism and Humanism in Seventeenth Century France* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1969), 32, 40–42, 136–137; and Peter Toon, *The Emergence of Hyper-Calvinism in English Nonconformity, 1689–1765* (London: The Olive Tree, 1967), 13; with the analysis of the *Tabula* in Richard A. Muller, "The Use and Abuse of a Document: Beza's *Tabula praedestinationis*, the Bolsec Controversy, and the Origins of Reformed Orthodoxy," in *Protestant Scholasticism: Essays in Reassessment*, ed. Carl Trueman and Scott Clark (Carlisle: Paternoster Press, 1999), 33–61.

[4] Armstrong, *Calvinism and the Amyraut Heresy*, 32, 131–139.

[5] Armstrong, *Calvinism and the Amyraut Heresy*, 54–55, 161–167, 172–172, 186–191; Alan Clifford, *Calvinus: Authentic Calvinism, a Clarification* (Norwich: Charenton Reformed Publish-

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lastic method in academies and universities was argued to be the cause of declension from the more flexible and purportedly inclusive theology of the Reformers into a rigid, unyielding orthodoxy.[6]

In its fully developed form, the "Calvin against the Calvinists" approach linked humanism, some form of fideism, and Christocentrism in Calvin and in a few later true Calvinians, and in the case of Armstrong's and Moltmann's theories, connected these characteristics with Ramism, *a posteriori* argumentation, and covenant theology.[7] It then opposed this artificially constructed pastiche of balanced, purportedly true, Calvinian theology to the purportedly unbalanced, Aristotelian, scholastic, predestinarian, metaphysical, *a prioristic*, and rationalistic theology of later Calvinism. Not only did the approach view the thought-world of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in terms of neat dogmatic packages, but the packaging typically reflected twentieth-century dogmatic interests and not the patterns of formulation found among early modern Reformed theologians.

Several variant lines of argument, related to this basic "Calvin against the Calvinists" approach, took up the issue of covenant theology. Each of these approaches the rise of covenant theology and argue, on the basis of Calvin's minimal contribution to the development of a doctrine of covenant, that later federalism was a departure from Calvin. According to one pattern of argument, inasmuch as Calvin had identified the covenant of grace as unifying the two testaments and had offered no discussion of a pre-lapsarian covenant, the problematic innovation separating Calvin from later Calvinists was the covenant of works. In this view the Christocentric grace theology of Calvin stood opposed to the legalisms of later Calvinism.[8] According to another pattern of argument, Calvin's own doctrine of predestination prevented him from understanding the covenant of grace as bilateral and therefore marked out a fundamental difference between the Calvinian side

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ing, 1996). It must, incidentally be questioned as to whether such terms as "limited" and "universal atonement" can ever do justice to an early modern discussion and debate that did not use this language but instead had recourse to questions of the sufficiency and efficiency of Christ's satisfaction.

[6] Thus, Brian G. Armstrong, "*Semper Reformanda*: The Case of the French Reformed Church, 1559–1620," in *Later Calvinism: International Perspectives*, ed. W. Fred Graham (Kirksville: Sixteenth Century Journal Publishers*, 1994)*, 119–140.

[7] Note, in particular, Jürgen Moltmann, "Zur Bedeutung des Petrus Ramus für Philosophie und Theologie im Calvinismus," *Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte*, 68 (1957), 295–318.

[8] James B. Torrance, "Calvin and Puritanism in England and Scotland – Some Basic Concepts in the Development of 'Federal Theology,'" in *Calvinus Reformator* (Potchefstroom: Potchefstroom University for Christian Higher Education, 1982), 264–277; idem, "The Concept of Federal Theology – Was Calvin a Federal Theologian?" in *Calvinus Sacrae Scripturae Professor*, edited by Wilhelm H. Neuser (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994), 15–40; and Holmes Rolston III, *John Calvin versus the Westminster Confession* (Richmond: John Knox, 1972). On the other side of the argument, see Peter Alan Lillback, *The Binding of God: Calvin's Role in the Development of Covenant Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 2001).

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of the Reformed tradition and "the other Reformed tradition" grounded in the work of Bullinger, specifically in his bilateral understanding of covenant and, indeed, in what amounted to his virtually Arminian doctrine of predestination.[9] A third pattern of argument, already noted as found in the work of Moltmann and Armstrong, enlisted Ramism on the side of anti-Aristotelian humanism and posed Aristotelian, scholastic, *a prioristic*, deductivistic Bezan predestinarians against anti-Aristotelian, humanistic, Ramistic covenantal thinkers invested in salvation-historical *a posteriorism*.[10]

What united all of these approaches was a highly dogmatic reading of Calvin's theology in relation to a largely uninvestigated but nonetheless dogmatically-characterized and presumedly monolithic or monochromatic later "Calvinist" or Reformed tradition. Calvin was Christocentric – later Calvinists were predestinarian; or, in a recent equally problematic variant, Calvin was a theologian of union with Christ – later Calvinists failed to focus on union with Christ.[11] Calvin was a theologian of grace – later Calvinists were immersed in legalism.[12] Calvin, for all his purported Christocentrism, was still a predestinarian and therefore opposed to bilateral covenant theology – later Calvinism evidenced a deep-seated tension between predestinarianism and covenantalism, with the federal theology of Cocceius reasserting the anti-predestinarian bilateral covenantalism of Bullinger.[13] Calvin was a humanistic, anti-Aristotelian and, despite his predestinarianism, graciously covenantal – later Calvinism, with the exception of the Ramist covenantal thinkers, was scholastic, non-humanistic, rationalistic, and Aristotelian.[14] Calvin taught unlimited atonement – later predestinarian Calvinism taught limited atonement, to the bitter exclusion of proponents of

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[9] J. Wayne Baker, *Heinrich Bullinger and the Covenant: The Other Reformed Tradition* (Athens, Ohio, 1980); and idem, "Heinrich Bullinger, the Covenant, and the Reformed Tradition in Retrospect," *Sixteenth Century Journal*, 29, no.2 (1998), 359–376; note the contrary argument in Lyle D. Bierma, "Federal Theology in the Sixteenth Century: Two Traditions?" *Westminster Theological Journal*, 45 (1983), 304–321.

[10] As has been admirably shown, this third pattern of argument has little or no basis in early modern documents: see Lyle D. Bierma, *German Calvinism in the Confessional Age: The Covenant Theology of Caspar Olevian* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1996), 24–25, 162–168; idem, "The Role of Covenant Theology in Early Reformed Orthodoxy," *Sixteenth Century Journal*, 21, no.3 (1990), 457–459; cf. Willem J. van Asselt, *The Federal Theology of Johannes Cocceius (1603–1669)*, trans. Raymond A. Blacketer (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2001), 75.

[11] So Hall, "Calvin against the Calvinists," 24–28; and Armstrong, *Calvinism and the Amyraut Heresy*, 36-42; and recently, with reference to union with Christ, Charles Partee, *The Theology of John Calvin* (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 2008), 3, 4, 25, 27.

[12] E.g., Torrance, "The Concept of Federal Theology," 15–40.

[13] Thus, Baker, *Heinrich Bullinger and the Covenant*, 199–215.

[14] Cf. Jürgen Moltmann, "Prädestination und Heilsgeschichte bei Moyse Amyraut," *Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte*, 65 (1953/54), 281; with Armstrong, *Calvinism and the Amyraut Heresy*, 32–33, 37–42, 55–56.

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unlimited atonement as advocates of a "heresy".[15] Calvin's theology was wonderfully "balanced" – later Calvinists destroyed the balance.[16] All of these claims represent modern macro-dogmatic explanations that fail to engage the content, context, and intentionality of the early modern sources.

There are, also, a series of contradictions among these approaches: simply put, the older approaches, loosely identified under the rubric "Calvin against the Calvinists" did not agree with one another – and their disagreements fell, typically, along dogmatic rather than historical lines of argument. One, found in the work of J. Wayne Baker, for all its kinship to the argumentation of Hall and Armstrong,[17] probably ought to be separated out as "Calvin and the Calvinists against the Bullingerians." What they all have in common, however, is the a-historical assumption that Calvin was the founder and dogmatic arbiter of the later Reformed tradition and that the tradition was a fairly monolithic departure from its Calvinian norm, the exceptions appearing either as pure Calvinians when the body of Calvinists had departed from Calvin or as Bullingerians (or something else) when the body of Calvinists was presumed to stand lock-step in accord with Calvin. The various "Calvin against the Calvinists" approaches also all have in common a highly dogmatic, value-laden vocabulary: thus, christocentrism is good, legalism bad; humanism presumably flexible and therefore good, scholasticism and Aristotelianism purportedly rigid and rationalistic and therefore bad. Diversity in the tradition, whether doctrinal or methodological, was consistently assessed as problematic insofar as it represented something other than the declared norm, whether that norm was pure Calvinian grace theology *cum* christocentrism, Bullingerian anti-predestinarian bilateral covenantalism, Calvino-Amyraldian-humanistic universal atonement, Ramistic covenantal *a posteriorism*, or some other mythological construct, depending on the particular line of argument.

Those scholars involved in setting aside the Calvin against the Calvinists model and reassessing the post-Reformation development of Reformed orthodoxy have typically avoided dogmatically-loaded usages, recognized that historical method does not decide on matters of theological rectitude, and acknowledged the variegated nature of intellectual traditions. The last point, acknowledgment of the variegated nature of the Reformed tradition, goes to the heart of the present volume, which focuses on the test case of

[15] Armstrong, *Calvinism and the Amyraut Heresy*, 41–42, 137; cf. R. T. Kendall, *Calvin and English Calvinism to 1649* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979), 13–18, 31–32, 57–58; summarized in idem, "The Puritan Modification of Calvin's Theology" in *John Calvin: His Influence in the Western World*, ed. W. Stanford Reid (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1982), 197–214.

[16] Thus, Hall, "Calvin against the Calvinists," 25, 28; Toon, *Emergence of Hyper-Calvinism*, 11–13.

[17] See Baker, *Heinrich Bullinger and the Covenant*, 214.

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English puritan debates, but it could be easily extended to other theological cultures.

1.2 Debate Within the Reformed Tradition

The eras of the Reformation and of Reformed orthodoxy were times of intense polemic and debate, initially over issues of reform and, as the Reformation progressed and the church divided, over issues of confessional identity and confessional boundaries. There were also a large number of debates, varying in intensity, which took place over theological and philosophical issues not immediately related to confessional definition. A tentative distinction of these different types of debate – recognizing that the categories are not rigidly defined and include some overlapping aspects – can serve both to clarify the nature of Reformed orthodoxy and to characterize the direction of investigation undertaken by the present volume. The main point of the categories is to highlight not only the diversity of Reformed theology in the era of orthodoxy but also the diversity of the debates as they played out across a spectrum from major encounters requiring confessional statement and, indeed, condemnation or disapproval, to often bitter arguments of considerably lesser weight that addressed issues of preference in theological formulation without directly broaching questions of confessionality or leading to new confessional formulae.

Three kinds of kinds of debate have been most frequently referenced in the older scholarship – namely 1) the polemical debates with other confessionalities, whether Lutheran, Roman, Socinian, or Anabaptist; 2) debates concerning particular lines of doctrinal argument that transgressed acknowledged confessional boundaries – notably the controversies over Samuel Huber's universalism and Jacob Arminius' views on grace and predestination; and 3) debates internal to the Reformed confessional tradition that, in one way or another, pressed questions of the precise meaning of the confessional documents, such as the debates over eschatology or over various elements of Salmurian theology as proposed by Moises Amyraut, Paul Testard, Josue La Place, Samuel Morus, but that did not result in synodical decisions of heresy – although sometimes yielding, as in the case of the Articles of Morus and the *Formula Consensus Helvetica*, confessional documents of a more limited scope.

There are also several other types of debate characteristic of the era, debates that took place far more frequently, but that have generally been given less attention. Thus there were 4) debates over philosophical issues, often concerned with the impact of the new rationalisms on fundamental understandings in logic, physics, and metaphysics and, by extension, on theological formulation. There were also, 5) debates concerning non- or sub-

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confessional issues that were nevertheless of a fairly significant theological weight that threatened to rise to the confessional level. Here we count the supralapsarian-infralapsarian debates, debates over what for lack of a better term can be called non-Amyraldian hypothetical universalism, over the imputation mediate or immediate of Adam's sin to his posterity, over the imputation of Christ's active obedience to believers, and the debates related to elements of Cocceian theology. Finally, 6) there were a large number of theological topics subject to rather different formulations on the part of the Reformed orthodox that sometimes issued in fairly heated interchanges among theologians but that, arguably, did not rise to the level of the debates just noted in the fifth category. By way of example, there were differences in understanding of divine simplicity in relation to the predication of divine attributes and the problem of divine knowledge of future propositions.

1.3 Debates Concerning Confessional Boundaries – Crossing Over or Pressing the Boundary

Leaving aside the first category, the debates with other confessionalities, as not belonging to the scope of the present study and concentrating specifically on debates within the Reformed tradition, some comment is necessary concerning the difference between the second and third kinds of debate – namely those identifying transgressions of confessional boundaries and those remaining withing the confessional limits – given the way in which such differences were typically glossed over in the older scholarship, particularly when the debates were analyzed in terms of the "Calvin against the Calvinists" paradigm. The late sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century debates over universalistic and synergistic soteriologies, notably those over Huber's and Arminius' understandings of grace and predestination arose over the thought of theologians who were Reformed in terms of their ecclesial or confessional location but whose thought contradicted basic statements of the Reformed confessions, rendering these debates rather different from the debates over Amyraut's theology, given that not only was Amyraut Reformed in ecclesial and confessional location but his theology also arguably fell within the boundaries established by the Gallican Confession and the Canons of Dort. Huber's and Arminius' theologies did not fall within the boundaries established by such confessional documents as the Second Helvetic Confession, the Belgic Confession, and the Heidelberg Catechism.[18]

[18] Note the rather tendentious efforts to identify Arminius' theology as Reformed prior to the definitions of Dort in G.J. Hoenderdaal, "De Kekordelijke Kant van de Dordtse Synode," *Nederlands Theologisch Tijdschrift*, 25, no.5 (1969), 349–363; and Carl Bangs, "Arminius as a Re-

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The historiographical issue is virtually the opposite in the case of Amyraut. The rather unnuanced association of Amyraut's hypothetical universalism with Calvin's theology and with a trajectory of French humanism, taken together with identification of Amyraut's views as "heresy" in the eyes of scholastic Calvinists, abetted the false picture of the nature of Reformed orthodoxy as a predestinarian, scholastic departure from Calvin's more or less humanistic theology, indeed, as a monolithic theology capable of being contrasted quite negatively with the Reformation-era foundations of the Reformed tradition. The French Synods, while objecting to some of the formulations of Amyraut and Testard, refrained from condemning their views and it was left to the *Formula Consensus Helvetica*, a document of limited geographical reach and short-lived use, to disapprove the doctrine – yet without identifying it as a heresy.[19] Once the nature of the controversy as a debate internal to the confessions has been duly recognized, as well as the genuine differences between Amyraut's formulations and Calvin's thought and the rather scholastic patterns of distinction and argument assumed by Amyraut are noted,[20] Amyraldian hypothetical universalism can be recognized as belonging to the internal diversity of the Reformed tradition itself – and a very different picture of orthodoxy emerges.

Alan Strange's analysis of the debate over of Christ's active obedience highlights the continued intensity of reaction to the heritage of Piscator among the English Reformed. The essay examines some of the backgrounds to the Westminster debates in the French synodical decisions of Privas and Tonneins against Piscator and in James I's letter to the French Synods requesting moderation of the issue. Earlier, the Synods of Gap (1603) and La Rochelle (1607) censured Piscator's views, specifically indicating the imputation of Christ's active obedience.[21] In 1612 at Privas, the Synod required clergy to sign a confessional clarification to the effect that "toute l'Obeissance" of Christ was imputed in justification, specifically that justification is not merely a matter of forgiveness but also consists in the impu-

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formed Theologian," in *The Heritage of John Calvin*, edited by John H. Bratt (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1973), 209–222; see Richard A. Muller, "Arminius and the Reformed Tradition," *Westminster Theological Journal*, 70 (2008), 19–48.

[19] *Formula Consensus Helvetica*, *praefatio* and canon xvi, in H. A. Niemeyer, *Collectio confessionium in ecclesiis reformatis publicatarum* (Leipzig: Julius Kinkhardt, 1840), 729–730, 735; and see the similar approach to Amyraut's doctrine in Francis Turretin, *Institutio theologiae elencticae, in qua status controversiae perspicue exponitur, praecipua orthodoxorum argumenta proponuntur, & vindicantur, & fontes solutionum aperiuntur*, 3 vol. (Geneva: Samuel de Tournes, 1679–1685), IV.xvii.4; and XIV.xiv.6.

[20] See Richard A. Muller, "A Tale of Two Wills? Calvin and Amyraut on Ezekiel 18:23," *Calvin Theological Journal*, 44, no.2 (2009), 211–225.

[21] Jean Aymon, *Tous les synodes nationaux des églises de France*, 2 vol. (Den Haag, 1710), I, 257–258, 301–302; also see Heber Carlos de Campos, "Johannes Piscator (1546–1625) and the Consequent Development of the Doctrine of the Imputation of Christ's Active Obedience" (Ph. D. dissertation: Calvin Theological Seminary, 2009), 10–18, 216–239.

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tation of Christ's "active righteousness" (*Justice Active*) – without, however, any reference at this point to Piscator.[22] In the appended documents, however, there is a substantial, unsigned, refutation of Piscator's doctrine.[23] Two years later, however, at Tonneins, the more explicit language of Privas concerning Christ's active obedience was replaced by the phrases "Obedience parfaite" and "toute cette Obedience."[24] These synodical censures and confessional elaborations are as close as the Reformed ever came to a full confessional declaration specifically against Piscator.

As Strange also makes clear, while noting the rather pointed worry on the part of several delegates that the doctrine could strengthen the antinomian cause, a significant majority of divines at Westminster assumed the imputation of Christ's active as well as passive obedience to believers in and for their justification. Still, the Westminster Assembly did not follow the route adumbrated in the initial debates over revision of the Thirty-Nine Articles: the phrase "whole obedience" was not used and the language adopted in WCF 8.5, "perfect obedience and sacrifice" WCF 11.1, "imputing the obedience and satisfaction of Christ", could be subscribed by all, including those who did not accept the imputation of Christ's active obedience to believers. Whereas all of the motivations and considerations behind the final language of the Confession refuse modern reconstruction, the intention of the language is clear – the debate over the imputation of Christ's active obedience for the justification of believers was not raised to confessional status by the Westminster Assembly. That development was left to two later confessions of limited provenance, namely the Savoy Declaration (1658) of the Congregationalists, written by Owen and Goodwin, and the Helvetic Consensus Formula (1675).[25] In the Helvetic Consensus Formula, Piscator's doctrine hangs in the background of the Salmurian issues addressed.

The Westminster Assembly's early debate (1643) over ecclesiology – specifically over the problem of church government and the power of the keys analyzed by Hunter Powell, when examined from the perspective of its immediate result, namely the formulae contained in the Westminster Confession of Faith, fits into the category of debates of significant theological weight that threatened to rise to the confessional level. In the longer view however, given the eventual severance between Presbyterians and Congregationalists or Independents, followed by the editing of confessional formu-

[22] Jean Aymon, *Tous les synodes nationaux des églises de France*, 2 vol. (Den Haag, 1710), I, 400.

[23] Aymon, *Tous les synodes nationaux*, I, 457–461. N.B. the document is not given in Quick's *Synodicon*.

[24] Aymon, *Tous les synodes nationaux*, II, 13.

[25] *A Declaration of the Faith and Order owned and practised in the Congregational Churches in England […] meeting at the Savoy, October 12. 1658* (London: John Field, 1659), xi.1 (p. 20); *Formula Consensus Helverica*, xv, in Niemeyer, *Collectio*, 734–735.

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lae to account for the differences in church polity, it bore the seeds of a deeper concern that would press the limits of the confessional formulae and result in confessional variants and schism. Powell surveys the minutes of the Westminster Assembly and collateral documents in detail, demonstrating that the debates over the nature and extent of the power of the keys and over the interpretation of Matthew 16:19 – viz., whether it was a generalized power of the universal church, a power reserved to the Apostles, a power given to all believers, or a power delegated or communicated by believers to the pastors of the church – stood in significant relation to immediate questions of church polity that plagued the English church throughout the seventeenth century. We can note, here, among other points of difference and debate, the rise of separatist groups in the early seventeenth century, the problems that the English delegation to Dort had with the polity of the Dutch Reformed church, the trans-Atlantic debate between Thomas Hooker and Samuel Rutherford over the nature of a church covenant, and the efforts of a writer like John Owen after the Restoration to refute the charge that Independents were schismatic.[26] By ending the debate with the briefest of formulae and not deciding on the broader implications of the power of the keys to the nature and forms of church government, the Assembly achieved a certain level of unity, leaving the issue unsettled and a source of later conflict.

That picture is further nuanced by Crawford Gribben's essay. The issue of millennial debate among the Reformed is both highly complicated and rather uniquely related to the confessional issue. The new eschatologies of a future millennium ran counter to the eschatologies of the sixteenth-century Reformed which, from Bullinger's commentary on the Apocalypse to Franciscus Junius' annotations, as ensconced in the margins of later editions the Geneva Bible, understood the millennium as past. Although, moreover, the major Reformed confessions had tended to tread lightly concerning the last things, two of them, the Forty-two Articles of Edward VI and the Second Helvetic Confession, had strongly argued against "the fable of the millennium" and notions of a "golden age" on earth prior to the final judgment.[27] What is rather remarkable, then, is the vast revision of Reformed eschatology that took place in the seventeenth century both in England and on the continent without yielding a major confessional confrontation – in fact, both witnessing an increased diversity in the tradition, a significant break with the views of the Reformers on the part of many orthodox Reformed writers

[26] Note Sung Ho Lee, "All Subjects of the Kingdom of Christ: John Owens' conceptions of Christian Unity and Schism" (Ph.D. dissertation: Calvin Theological Seminary, 2007); and Sang Hyuk Ahn, "Covenant and Conflict: the Controversy over the Church Covenant between Samuel Rutherford and Thomas Hooker' (Ph.D. dissertation: Calvin Theological Seminary 2011).

[27] *Articuli XLII. Eduardi VI*, art. 40, in Niemeyer, *Collectio*, 600; Second Helvetic Confession 11.14; cf. the Augsburg Confession, art. 17.

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evidenced by their acceptance of a doctrine of a future millennium. The spectrum of opinion among the continental Reformed, similar to what Gribben has identified among the English, is evidenced by the millennialism of Wilhelmus à Brakel on the one hand and the anti-millennial views of Francis Turretin on the other.[28] Turretin, significantly, distinguished between the "crass" chiliasm of various heretics and the highly objectionable but not heretical "subtle" chiliasm of Piscator, Alsted, Mede, and Launaeus – an approach parallel to his objection to Amyraldianism.[29]

1.4 Debates Over Philosophical Issues

This category of debate does not appear as a separate topic in the present volume, but it nonetheless deserves some notice given both the caricatures of Reformed scholasticism and its philosophical backgrounds found in the older scholarship and the rather diverse and variegated picture of Reformed approaches to philosophy that emerges when the documents are actually studied. Often dismissed as holding rigidly to a moribund and discredited Aristotelianism, the Reformed orthodox thinkers of the seventeenth century expressed a series of significant concerns over impact of the new rationalisms on fundamental understandings in logic, physics, and metaphysics and, by extension, on theological formulation, while at the same time developing and modifying their own approaches to the formulation and use of philosophy.

The Reformed encountered, debated, and adapted various of the patterns of metaphysical and physical argumentation that arose in the broader debates of the early modern era. Thus, for example, toward the beginning of the seventeenth century, perhaps generated by Suarez' influential work on metaphysics, with its stress on the univocity of being, Reformed theologians and philosophers debated the question of whether or not God could be discussed in metaphysics – with some arguing that God, considered as infinite being, could be a subject of metaphysics and others restricting the topics of metaphysics to being in general, excluding God from discussion.[30] As the seventeenth century progressed, various Reformed writers combated

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[28] Cf. Wilhelmus à Brakel, *LOGIKH LATREIA, dat is Redelijke Godsdienst in welken de goddelijke Waarheden van het Genade-Verbond worden verklaard [...] alsmede de Bedeeling des Verbonds in het O. en N.T. en de Ontmoeting der Kerk in het N. T. vertoond in eene Verklaring van de Openbaringen aan Johannes*, 3 parts (Den Haag: Cornelis van Duyck, 1701), III.xx.1–27; with Turretin, *Institutio theologiae elencticae*, XX.iii.1–22.

[29] Turretin, *Institutio theologicae elencticae*, XX.iii1–4.

[30] See the discussion in Richard A. Muller, *Post-Reformation Reformed Dogmatics: The Rise and Development of Reformed Orthodoxy, ca. 1520 to ca. 1725*, 4 vol. (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2003), III, 167–170.

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the problem of Pyrrhonic skepticism in their Roman Catholic opponents and at least one major Reformed thinker, Pierre Bayle (otherwise largely Cartesian), himself adopted a form of skepticism, the implications of which continue to be debated in the scholarly literature.[31]

There have been several studies of the debates that took place in the Netherlands over the reception of Cartesian thought among the Reformed,[32] studies of some of aspects of more traditional metaphysics among the Reformed,[33] and there is a highly significant recent study of the relationship of Reformed orthodoxy and philosophy from the early seventeenth through the middle of the eighteenth century, noting the shifting patterns of the more traditional, modified Aristotelianism of the era and the gradual appropriation of Cartesian arguments on the part of other Reformed thinkers.[34]

In yet another example of philosophical debate, Reformed concerns over the doctrine of providence and divine foreknowledge of future contingents associated with the rejection of Molinism, brought Reformed orthodox writers into dialogue with Dominican opponents of Molinism and led to the adoption or adaptation on the part of many of the Reformed of the concept of divine concurrence understood as "physical premotion" (*praemotio physica*). William Twisse advocated the concept, Francis Turretin adapted it selectively, and Richard Baxter polemicized against it as a form of determinism.

1.5 Debates Concerning Issues of Significant Import that Threatened to Rise to a Confessional Level

These are debates that fall within the bounds of the major Reformed confessions and that, in some cases were debated in the process of framing confessions – notably the lapsarian and hypothetical universalist questions at Dort and the hypothetical universalist issue at the Westminster Assembly –

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[31] See the essays in Paul Dibon, ed., *Pierre Bayle, le philosophe de Rotterdam* (Amsterdam: Elsevir, 1959); and Wiep van Bunge and Hans Bot, ed., *Pierre Bayle (1647–1706), le philosophe de Rotterdam; philosophy, religion, and reception* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2008).

[32] E.g., Theo Verbeek, *Descartes and the Dutch: Early Reactions to Cartesianism (1637–1650)* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1992); idem, "Descartes and the Problem of Atheism: the Utrecht Crisis," *Nederlands Archief voor Kerkgeschiedenis*, 71, no.2 (1991), 211–223; J.A. (Han) van Ruler, *The Crisis of Causality: Voetius and Descartes on God, Nature, and Change* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1995).

[33] J. A. (Han) van Ruler, "Franco Petri Burgersdijk and the Case of Calvinism Within the Neo-Scholastic Tradition," in Egbert P. Bos and H. A. Krop, ed., *Franco Burgersdijk (1590–1635): Neo-Aristotelianism in Leiden* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1993), 37–55; idem, "Burgersdijk and Heereboord on the Question of Divine Concurrence," in ibid., 56–65.

[34] Aza Goudriaan, *Reformed Orthodoxy and Philosophy, 1625–1750: Gisbertus Voetius, Petrus van Mastricht, and Anthonius Driessen* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2006).

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but which did not rise to the level of causing further confessional formulation. Typically, these debates reflect issues in seventeenth-century Reformed thought that were not debated or defined by the Reformers. They also manifest a kind of diversity and variety of formulation not suitably acknowledged in the older scholarship on Reformed orthodoxy. Included here is one debate (concerning Adam's reward) that did result in the disapprobation of the *Formula Consensus Helvetica*, but that was not confessionally defined or delimited in England, where the *Formula* had no authority.

John Fesko's analysis of lapsarian debates at the Synod of Dort works through the arguments of Franciscus Gomarus on the supralapsarian side with the various definitions and supportive arguments presented by infralapsarians at the Synod, including the British delegation and, in so doing, underlines the theme of the volume, namely the diversity of the Reformed tradition. With the infralapsarians in a clear majority, the Synod not surprisingly formulated its final set of canons to include an infralapsarian definition. Fesko turns to the question of the character of the orthodoxy framed by the synod: does the infralapsarian formula render a supralapsarian definition heterodox? Significantly, this was not the conclusion drawn by the Synod. In the case of charges brought to the Synod against the supralapsarian views of Johannes Maccovius, the synodical verdict indicated the orthodoxy of his views, albeit accompanied by admonitions against excessive speculation. In Fesko's view, the underlying issue was the problem of divine authorship of sin – denied alike by infra- and supralapsarian – and the interest of the Synod in arriving at a formula that would make clear the Reformed position. The Canons of Dort, therefore, reflect both an attempt to arrive at a majority formulation and a willingness to allow for breadth and diversity of theological opinion among the Reformed.

Jonathan Moore's essay carries forward the issue of hypothetical universalism, firmly establishing by way of an examination primarily of John Owen's and John Davenant's thought that there was a significant development of non-Amyraldian hypothetical universalism in English Reformed orthodoxy that continued through the era of the Westminster Confession. There is, moreover, good reason to place this branch of the debate over hypothetical universalism in this rather than in our third category, given that it did not rise to the confessional level of the Amyraldian debates – receiving neither synodical reprimand nor explicit confessional disapproval. Moore's careful examination of the text of the Westminster Confession confirms his analysis over against those who would either read the confession as containing an unequivocal exclusion of hypothetical universalism or who would attempt to view all hypothetical universalists as Amyraldian, including those present at Westminster.

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A question can be raised here concerning Moore's description of the non-Amyraldian trajectory of hypothetical universalism as a "softening" of a Reformed tradition that was "on the whole" particularistic and resistant to such softening. Given that there was a significant hypothetical universalist trajectory in the Reformed tradition from its beginnings, it is arguably less than useful to describe its continuance as a softening of the tradition. More importantly, the presence of various forms of hypothetical universalism as well as various approaches to a more particularistic definition renders it rather problematic to describe the tradition as "on the whole" particularistic and thereby to identify hypothetical universalism as a dissident, subordinate stream of the tradition, rather than as one significant stream (or, perhaps two!) among others, having equal claim to confessional orthodoxy.

Mark Herzer's study of "Adam's Reward: Heaven or Earth?" also takes up an issue related to covenant theology, specifically to the problem of the promises given under the covenant of works and the meaning of the "life" promised to Adam in return for obedience – perpetual, yes, but would it be heavenly or earthly? The fairly radical disagreement on the issue between such eminent thinkers as Thomas Goodwin, John Cameron, Moise Amyraut, John Ball, and Johannes Marckius on the side of an earthly reward, and Francis Turretin, J.H. Heidegger, the *Formula Consensus Helvetica*, Thomas Boston and Thomas Ridgley on the side of a heavenly reward. Against the kind of arguments presented by Holmes Rolston and Donald Bruggink, Herzer shows that this aspect of a Reformed debate and formulation of issues concerning the covenant of works did not lead to "legalism" as had been alleged – both on the ground that the Reformed assumed grace in Eden and on the ground that the doctrine did not offer works as salvific in any way after the fall. What is significant here is, as Herzer concludes, that the debate occurred within the Reformed understanding of the covenant of works and did not yield intense polemics in Britain. It did, however, in the view of continental disputants in the Amyraldian controversy, press on the confessional boundaries, as made clear in the *Formula Consensus Helvetica* – without, given the limited acceptance of the *Formula*, succeeding in ruling out either the doctrine of an earthly reward for Adam or the trichotomous federal definitions with which it was associated.

1.6 Debates over Theological Topics that did not Press on Confessional Boundaries

This category of debate is of particular importance to the understanding of the character of Reformed orthodoxy and, even more than the previous category, was either ignored or misunderstood by the "Calvin against the

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These essays document the ongoing concern among Reformed theologians to further the Reformation cause. In this pursuit, Reformed theologians, as they did during the time of the Reformation theologians, often found themselves disagreeing on a number of theological doctrines.
Contributors are Joel R. Beeke, John V. Fesko, Crawford Gribben, Michael A.G. Haykin, Mark A. Herzer, Mark Jones, Robert J. McKelvey, Jonathan D. Moore, Richard A. Muller, Hunter Powell, Jeffrey Robinson, Alan D. Strange, and Carl R. Trueman.

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