The Works of John Calvin

on microfiche

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John Calvin, 1509-1564

In the past few years, IDC Publishers has released several important collections on the Reformation, such as *The Lutheran Reformation*, *The People Called Methodists*, *Guy de Brès* and *Huldrych Zwingli*. If there is one name that cannot be left out, it is that of John Calvin. IDC Publishers is therefore pleased to offer you this catalogue, in which we present the original editions in their original languages.

Of all the major Reformers, John Calvin had the most far-reaching influence on the modern world. Unlike Luther and Zwingli, he worked from a city, Geneva, which was not his 'home town' but a place of exile, and his target was always wider than the local community: France, Europe (both Western and Eastern), and even the New World, for Calvin had a global view of his vocation. Calvin's name has been associated with the development of two major phenomena of the modern world: democracy and capitalism. While the claims made for his direct contribution to these two movements have been exaggerated, the breadth of their implications is significant. Calvin's Reformation was not simply a religious movement, in the sense of an ecclesiastical reorganization or a doctrinal revision; it was something that touched all areas of life, and which involved a profound reorientation of the life of the individual and of society in line with the teachings of the Gospel.

His works

So who exactly was Calvin? Though we can easily outline the major events of his life, getting to know his personality is a rather more difficult matter. He was, surprising to relate, a retiring and timid person, unwilling to talk about himself, concerned only with the task of communicating the message which he believed had been entrusted to him. What he has left us is his works - his theological treatises, his biblical commentaries and sermons, and his monumental *Institution of the Christian Religion*. The present collection seeks to make the writings of the Reformer available in the most direct form possible, by presenting, in almost every case, the original editions of his printed works. This is Calvin as he impacted on the reading public of the sixteenth century.

His life

Many biographies of Calvin have been written, and this is not the place to provide yet another. A few words of introduction, however, will help to place the present collection in context. He was born in Noyon, northern France, in July 1509, the son of a lawyer employed by the Noyon Cathedral Chapter. He studied in Paris from about 1521 to 1526 (studying Latin, rhetoric and dialectic, but not theology), at Orleans and Bourges from about 1526 to 1531 (studying law), and in Paris once again from 1531 to 1533, when he concentrated on classical literature. Some time between about 1528 and 1533, probably after a long period of hesitation, he was converted to the Reformed doctrines then sweeping Europe, and had to leave Paris. During 1534 he moved frequently, sometimes living under a pseudonym, studying the

Bible and the Church Fathers (and thereby laying the foundations of his self-taught theology), and writing his first works. His first published theological study, the *Christianae Religionis Institutio*, was probably completed by August 1535, though publication (in Basle) was delayed until early 1536.

Geneva

After further travels to Italy and to Paris, he finally arrived at the recently reformed city of Geneva in July 1536. Here he found himself accosted by the forceful Guillaume Farel, who dragooned him into joining in the work of the Reformation in the city. Unlike Luther, Zwingli or Bucer, Calvin was never ordained in the Roman Catholic Church; he saw his ordination as a prophetic call from God (communicated by Farel) within the exceptional context of the early Reformation.

Exile

His first sojourn in Geneva lasted only 20 months, ending in apparent disaster when he was exiled from the city, along with Farel, for opposing the city government in a conflict between the authority of State and Church, and for making himself thoroughly unpopular with the citizens by attempting to impose on each individual a confession of Reformed faith. He then went to Strasbourg, where his three years as pastor of the French refugee congregation and as lecturer in the Academy enabled him to mature his thinking (this was to be the only period of his life during which he was able to enjoy the company of his intellectual and theological equals). He extensively revised and augmented the *Institutio* and translated it into French (thereby creating, incidentally, a turning-point in the evolution of the French language). He also composed the first of his long series of commentaries on Scripture (Romans) and the short *Treatise on the Lord's Supper*, the first work that he wrote directly in French. He composed a liturgy for his congregation, and introduced the singing of metrical psalms in congregational worship. At the interdenominational colloquies at Worms and Ratisbon in 1540 and 1541, he made contact with the religious leaders of the Lutheran Reformation.

Back to Geneva

In 1540, the Geneva City authorities, unable to find suitable leadership for the newly reformed Church, asked Calvin to return to the city. Much against his will, and after procrastinating for a year, he finally returned in September 1541. It is then that his real work began. He first proposed ordinances for the
regulation of the Church (and its relationship with the State); this was followed by a catechism and a liturgy, including the metrical psalms of Clément Marot. He then undertook the mammoth task of education: educating the local population through his massive series of sermons (about 250 each year, each an hour long); educating theological students and the wider scholarly community by his equally impressive series of commentaries on the Bible; and explaining the need for a Reformation, attacking the Roman Church, as well as the ‘radical Reformation’, the Anabaptists and ‘spiritual libertines’, in over 40 very varied treatises. These ranged from the popular and entertaining (Traité des reliques, 1543) to the satirical (Articuli facultatis parisienst cum antidoto, 1544) or the persuasively eloquent (Excuse aux Nicodemites, 1544), from the irenical (Petit traité de la sainte Cène, 1541) to the bitterly controversial (e.g. the exchanges with Joachim Westphal and Sebastian Castellio). On the whole, the earlier treatises were more general and more popular, while, after 1550, the emphasis lay more on doctrinal conflicts over predestination, the Trinity, and the Eucharist.

The programme that Calvin set himself was of superhuman proportions, and it killed him: he died before his 55th birthday, in 1564. Geneva, and the world, had been changed by his intervention in history.

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The present microfiche collection

The aim in this series is to present the complete works of Calvin in the original editions and in their original languages. We have deviated from this principle only in omitting three of the eight Latin editions of the Institutio produced under Calvin’s authority, and three of the seven French editions; we have retained only the five Latin and four French editions which represent radically different states of the text. We have likewise omitted the déclarations composed by Calvin on behalf of Count William of Fürstenberg, and some minor items of which the original editions are lost. In three cases (Petit traité montrant que doit faire..., 1543, Excuse aux Nicodemites, 1544, and Contre les libertins, 1545), we have chosen to reproduce, both the original edition, and a later one, because in each case this includes not only a text that is essentially identical to that of the first editions, and also additional material on the subject. In a few cases where the translation of a Latin work into French appears to have been the work of Calvin himself, and shows significant variants from the Latin text, we have reproduced both the Latin and the French text.

The collection is presented in three sectors:

Sector 1
The Institution of the Christian religion in the Latin editions of 1536, 1539, 1543, 1550 and 1559, and the French editions of 1541, 1545, 1551, and 1560. This selection displays the essential evolution of the work, but omits the relatively minor changes introduced into other editions.

Sector 2
The polemical and didactic treatises.

Sector 3
Calvin as commentator: the Biblical commentaries and leçons of Calvin, supplemented (where no commentary survives) by sermons on that book (e.g. Job).
References

The following references to bibliographies or library locations are used in this catalogue:

BC  Rodolphe Peter and Jean-François Gilmont. *Bibliotheca Calviniana, Les oeuvres de Jean Calvin publiées au XVIIe siècle.*

BNP  Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris

BVU  Universiteitsbibliotheek, VU, Amsterdam

Geneva BPU  Bibliothèque publique et universitaire, Genève

Geneva MHR  Société du Musée historique de la réformation, Genève

Lausanne BCU  Lausanne, Bibliothèque Cantonale et Universitaire

ÖNB  Oesterreichische Nationalbibliothek, Wien

Peter, Premiers ouvrages français  R. Peter, *Les premiers ouvrages français imprimés à Strasbourg.*


Berne StUB  Stadt- und Universitätsbibliothek, Berne (Bern)

WF  Herzog August Bibliothek, Wolfenbüttel

Zurich ZB  Zentralbibliothek, Zürich

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General information

Scope  75 titles

Number of fiche  358

Size of fiche  105 x 148 mm

Film type  Positive silver halide

Reduction ratio  Varies according to the size of the original

Internal finding aids  Eye-legible headers with title on each fiche

Prices

Information about prices, and how to order can be found on the IDC Publishers price list. If the price list is not enclosed, please contact IDC Publishers and a copy will be sent to you immediately.
I. The Institutio


Geneva BPU: Be 2485 Rés.
Translated from Ed.2 of Latin. 17 chapters. 10 microfiche
Order no. CL-15/1

Geneva BPU: Be 160.
Translated from Ed.2 of Latin. 17 chapters. 10 microfiche
Order no. CL-15/1

Geneva BPU: BC 08400.
Transalated from edition 3 of Latin. Missing: Title page. 12 microfiche
Order no. CL-43/1

II. Treatises

Geneva BPU: Ba 3028 Rés.
The Acts of the Ratisbon Colloquy were published in Latin by Bucer and in German by Melancthon. Calvin provided a French version, adding to the official report his own comments drawing attention to the eirenical stance of the Protestant representatives.
5 microfiche
Order no. CL-19/1

Geneva BPU: Be 849.
Translated from the Latin of 1547. The freedom of the translation suggests that it is by Calvin himself.
4 microfiche
Order no. CL-51/1

*Note: The text is related to astrology and other curiosities that were popular at the time. It mentions Jean Girard and the year 1549. The document is a printed text and includes references to other works and editions.*

**Calvin, J.** Brieve admissio Joannis Calvin ad frates Polonos, ne triplicum in Deo essentiam pro tribus personis imaginando, tres sibi Deos facient. Ed.1. Geneve: Ex officina Francisci Perrini, 1563. 16 pp. [BC-63/4]

*Note: This work addresses a philosophical or theological debate involving John Calvin and his views on the nature of God. It discusses the concept of trinity and its implications.*


*Note: This is Calvin’s response to criticism of his views on predestination. It includes an Epitre de la sacrée et orthodoxe doctrine, probably by Calvin himself.*


*Note: This work is a response to accusations made against Calvin. It includes a defense of his views and a rebuttal to the criticism.*

**Calvin, J.** Reply to the first published Index of censured books from the Paris Faculty of Theology. Order no. CL-12/1

*Note: This is Calvin’s response to an index of censured books published by the Paris Faculty of Theology.*


*Note: This is Calvin’s congratulation to a respected person, likely in relation to a new appointment or achievement.*

**Calvin, J.** Refutation of Balthazar Castellio, then refutes it. Castellio denied the approval of the Accord fait par ci devant entre les ministres et pasteurs des Eglises de Zurich et Geneve, touchant la nature, vertu, fin, usage et fruict des sacrements. For to monstrer que ceux qui en medisent sont gens escervelez, qui ne cherchent qu’a obscurcir ou pervertir la bonne et saine doctrine. Ed.1. [Geneva: De l’imprimerie de Conrad Badius], 1555. 86, [2] pp. [BC-55/2]

*Note: This work refutes Castellio’s views and defends Calvin’s position on church doctrine and sacraments.*


*Note: This is a brief resolution on disputes regarding church sacraments, emphasizing the importance of correct doctrine.*
Geneva BPU: Ba 4689 Rés.
Brief account of the murder of Jean Diaz by his brother in March 1546. The work is anonymous, but there are good grounds for attributing it to Calvin.
1 microfiche
Order no. CL-26/1

Geneva BPU: Be 2496 Rés.
Valentino Gentile fled from Geneva in 1558 after being convicted of holding anti-trinitarian sentiments. Calvin here replies to a confession of faith by Gentile.
2 microfiches
Order no. CL-38/1

Geneva BPU: Be 3428 Rés.
Text of the 1548 Augsburg Interim of Charles V, followed by Calvin's essay on the reformation of the Church.
3 microfiches
Order no. CL-29/1

Calvin, J. L'interim, c'est à dire, provision faicte sur les differens de la religion, en quelques villes et pais d'Allemagne. Ed.2. [Geneva: Jean Girard], 1549. 248 pp. [BC-49/9]
Geneva MHR: A 50,1(49)
Translated from the Latin of the same year.
3 microfiches
Order no. CL-53/1

Geneva BPU: Be 2502
Calvin's reply to Baudouin's response to the Response a un cauteleux et rast moyenner, followed by several texts by various authors.
2 microfiches
Order no. CL-39/1

Geneva BPU: Bd 1462 Rés.
Two letters to ex-friends who had accepted office in the Roman Catholic Church.
1 microfiche
Order no. CL-17/1

Calvin, J. La Manyeere de faire priers aux eglises Franquesys, tant devant la predicacion comme apres, ensemble pseaulmes et canticques francoys qu'on chante aux dictes eglises, apres s'ensuyt l'ordre et fasce dont d'administrer les Sacrements de Baptisme, et de la sainte Cene de nostre seigneur Jesu Christ, de espouser et confirmer le mariage devant l'assemble des fideles, avecques le sermon tant du baptisme que de la cene. Le tout selon la parolle de nostre seigneur. Ed.2. Argentorati: J. Knoebelch Jr., 1542. 159, [1] pp. [Piloud Psautier hugenot 42/1]. Peter, Premiers ouvrages français No. 9
Geneva MHR: A 27,1(42)
Calvin's liturgy, with metrical psalms and melodies, based on Bucer's German liturgy of 1539.
2 microfiches
Order no. CL-4/1

Calvin, J. Petit traicte de la sainte Cene de nostre Seigneur Jesus Christ. Auquel est demonstre la vraie institution, profit et utilité d'icelle; ensemble la cause pourquoi plusieurs des modernes semblent en avoir scrit diversement. Geneve: Par Michel Du Bois, 1541. [BC-41/4]
ONB: 79>V91
6 further editions during Calvin's lifetime. Latin translation 1548.
2 microfiches
Order no. CL-79/1

Lausanne BCU: IU 451(3)
Four former editions during Calvin's lifetime. One of Calvin's most influential treatises, rejecting all compromise with Rome. Several editions add the Excuse aux Nicodémites (1544), and opinions from various Reformation leaders, all translated into Latin in De vitandis superstitionibus (1549).
2 microfiches
Order no. CL-56/1

Calvin, J. Petit traicte monstrant que doit faire un homme fidele connoissant la verité de l'evangile quand il est entre les papistes, avec une epistre du mesme argument, ensemble l'excuse faicte sur cela aux Nicodémites. Ed.3 of Petit traicte, ed.2 of the Excuse. [Geneva: Jean Girard], 1545 [1546]. 216 pp. [BC-45/9]
Geneva BPU: Bd 1432 Rés.
Petit traicte first published in 1543, Excuse in 1544. The 1545 edition brings together the two treatises, and (in a complement, p. 161-216) also adds "consents" from Melanchthon, Bucer, and Martyr. Of two final letters by Calvin to friends on the subject, one is dated 14 July 1546; the complement was thus later bound onto some copies of the 1545 edition.
3 microfiches
Order no. CL-22/1

Calvin, J. Response a un cauteleux et rast moyenner, qui souz couleur d'appauvrir les troubles touchant le fait de la Religion, a tenté tous les moyens d'empeschier et rompre le cours de l'Evangile... Ed.1. [Paris: Nicolas Edouard], 1561. 56 f. [BC-61/21]
Geneva MHR: D 14(624)
Translated from Latin original of the same year. Unique specimen of a Calvin text published in Paris, albeit anonymously.
2 microfiches
Order no. CL-54/1

Reply to the eirenique Catholic theologian Georg Cassander, De officio pii viri (1561) - though Calvin thought it was by Francois Baudouin.

2 microfiche
Order no. CL-74/1


Calvin’s answer to Westphal’s response to the Defensio sancete et orthodoxe doctrine de sacramentis.

2 microfiche
Order no. CL-34/1


A French translation, not by Calvin, published in 1543. Includes replies to various communications from Pierre Caroli.

1 microfiche
Order no. CL-50/1


Geneva BPU: Bc 3079 Rés.

Published under the name of Nicolas Des Gallars, but mainly written by Calvin, refuting the writings of Jesuit theologian Jean Girard.

2 microfiche
Order no. CL-18/1


Geneva BPU: Bc 860 Rés.

Translation of the Supplex exhortatio of 1543.

3 microfiche
Order no. CL-46/1


Geneva BPU: Bb 217(3) Rés.

Third and final contribution from Calvin to the argument with Westphal.

4 microfiche
Order no. CL-35/1


Geneva BPU: Bc 2762.

The title Psychopannychia appears in the 1545 re-edition.

2 microfiche
Order no. CL-20/1


Geneva BPU: Bc 3431 Rés.

Published under the name of Nicolas Des Gallars, but mainly written by Calvin, refuting the communications from Pierre Caroli.

1 microfiche
Order no. CL-50/1


Geneva MHR: A 115(52).

4 microfiche
Order no. CL-71/1


Geneva MHR: A 115(52).

3 microfiche
Order no. CL-72/1


Geneva BPU: Bb 1375.

13 microfiche
Order no. CL-63/1


Geneva BPU: Bb 1156.

The preface contains an important autobiographical element.

12 microfiche
Order no. CL-62/1

III. Commentaries, lessons and sermons


Geneva MHR: A 102(164).

Translated and revised by Calvin himself from the Latin of 1563.

20 microfiche
Order no. CL-70/1


Geneva MHR: A 115(52).

3 microfiche
Order no. CL-72/1


Geneva BPU: Bb 1375.

13 microfiche
Order no. CL-63/1


Geneva BPU: Bb 1156.

The preface contains an important autobiographical element.

12 microfiche
Order no. CL-62/1

Geneva BPU: Bb 1476.

Assembles Calvin's commentaries, which had been published separately from 1547 on.

17 microfiche
Order no. CL-64/1


Geneva BPU: Bb 2241.

Revision of the 1551 edition. The earlier edition was done from notes taken by Nicolas Des Gallars. This edition was written by Calvin himself, and dedicated to queen Elizabeth of England.

11 microfiche
Order no. CL-61/1


Geneva BPU: Bb 2131.

Calvin's last work. Includes the Latin translation of Beza's Life of Calvin.

4 microfiche
Order no. CL-60/1


Geneva BPU: Bb 1099(1).

Calvin's lecture notes, taken down by Jean Budé and Charles de Jonviller and rechecked by Calvin. The lectures on Hosea had previously appeared in 1557.

15 microfiche
Order no. CL-67/1


Geneva BPU: Bb 1245 Res.

Calvin's lectures, taken down by Jean Budé and Charles de Jonviller and rechecked by Calvin.

16 microfiche
Order no. CL-65/1


Geneva BPU: Bb 1260.

Calvin's lecture notes, taken down by Jean Budé and Charles de Jonviller and rechecked by Calvin.

7 microfiche
Order no. CL-66/1


Geneva BPU: Bb 1079.

Includes the Genesis commentary of 1554, and adds the new commentary on the four other books of the Pentateuch.

18 microfiche
Order no. CL-59/1


Geneva BPU: Bd 1814 Res.

The only sermons edited by Calvin himself, probably preached in 1549.

2 microfiche
Order no. CL-69/1


Geneva BPU: Bd 426.

Sermons taken down by Denis Raguennier in 1554-1555.

16 microfiche
Order no. CL-68/1