After Calvin
Richard A. Muller

This is a sequel to Richard Muller's The Unaccommodated Calvin (OUP 2000). The previous book attempted to situate Calvin's theological work in its historical context and to strip away various 20th-century theological grids that have clouded our perceptions of the work of the Reformer. This book carries this approach forward, with the goal of overcoming a series of 19th- and 20th-century theological frameworks characteristic of much of the scholarship on Reformed orthodoxy, or what might be called “Calvinism after Calvin”.

Theology Instruction in Basel
Amy Nelson Burnett

Theology instruction at Basel’s university reflected generational change among its faculty from 1550 to 1629, resulting in a significant evolution of pastoral education. The second generation of theologians tried to maintain Basel’s non-confessional evangelical identity into the 1570s. In the last quarter of the 16th century, the third generation, led by Johann Jacob Grynaeus, introduced Reformed Orthodoxy, developed with the tools of dialectic taught in the arts faculty. While Grynaeus relied primarily on Aristotle, his colleague, Amandus Polanus von Polansdorf, was committed to Ramism and introduced its use to theology. His successors, who taught the fourth generation of pastors, saw themselves as preservers of the Reformed tradition rather than as creative theological thinkers. An analysis of theological disputations illustrates the shift from general Protestant to more specifically Reformed
theology, combined with the growth of anti-Catholic polemic at the turn of the century.

Calvin and the “Calvinists”: Assessing Continuities and Discontinuities between the Reformation and Orthodoxy, Part 1
Richard A. Muller

in After Calvin: Studies in the Development of a Theological Tradition

This chapter provides an introduction to the historiography of Reformed orthodoxy, an analysis of its several trajectories and problems, and a series of eleven premises reflecting the basic thrust of the current reappraisal of “orthodox” or “scholastic” Protestantism. The first premise is concerned with the basic issue of continuity and discontinuity between the Middle Ages and the Reformation, and between the Reformation and the era of orthodoxy. The last three premises elaborate the theme in terms of scholasticism, Aristotelianism, and rationalism.

The Evolution of Preaching in Basel
Amy Nelson Burnett

An analysis of sermons by three generations of preachers illustrates the evolution of preaching in Basel. While sermons from the 1560s were primarily exegetical homilies explicating the scriptural text, sermons from the 1570s and 1580s show the gradual acceptance of topical preaching in the city. The topical sermons of Johann Jacob Grynaeus combine Christocentric piety with attention to key Reformed doctrines, especially concerning the Lord’s Supper. The sermons of his contemporary, Johann Jacob Gugger, are more expository and popular. The extant sermon schemata of the next generation are strongly influenced by Ramism. They proceed by dichotomies and emphasize Reformed Orthodoxy rather than experiential piety.
Calvinistic theology after Calvin came to be heavily influenced by
the philosophy of Aristotle. It developed an essentially scholastic
method. This chapter raises the question of why Descartes was not
more influential in Reformed circles. His actual influence on theologians
such as Francis Burman is discussed, as is the nature of the opposition
to Cartesianism as expressed by Gisbertus Voetius. A comparison is
made between the theological thought of Descartes and Calvin. It is
concluded that on balance, and given the eclectic nature of the attitude
of Reformed theologians to philosophy, there is no compelling reason
why Cartesianism could not have been more influential in the era of
Reformed Orthodoxy than it was.

This book describes the education and ministry of the Reformed
ministers who served the church of Basel in the century after the city’s
official adoption of the Reformation. It argues that growing homogeneity
in social and geographical background and in amount of education was
countered by a significant evolution in the content of that education,
resulting in four distinct generations of clergy. These generational
differences in turn influenced the preaching and pastoral care of the
city-republic’s parish pastors. The evolution of the curriculum of the
city’s university, especially the teaching of dialectic, contributed to
the development of Reformed Orthodoxy in the theology faculty. Each
generation of Basel’s pastors sought to inculcate a somewhat different
understanding of the evangelical faith in their parishioners through their
sermons, catechisms, and administration of the sacraments, moving from
a general evangelical piety and rejection of late medieval Catholicism
in the wake of the Reformation to a more self-conscious Reformed
identity and the development of a Reformed religious culture. Over
the last two decades of the 16th century, the church’s institutions for
supervision of the clergy were strengthened, while the city magistrate and lay officials worked more closely with the clergy to oversee and enforce official standards of belief and conduct. Beginning with the third and fourth generations, it is possible to see the visible impact of both confessionalization and the professionalization of the clergy on popular religion.

Laying the Foundation
Amy Nelson Burnett

in Teaching the Reformation: Ministers and Their Message in Basel, 1529-1629

The introduction of systematic religious instruction at Basel’s most important Latin school, the reformation of its stipendiary system, and the creation of colleges intended especially for future pastors were foundational aspects of the city’s new system of pastoral training. Over time, the religious curriculum became more rigorous and the city’s catechism was interpreted to accord more fully with Reformed Orthodoxy. Stricter supervision of stipendiaries and an increase in the number of stipends made it possible for more students to study for a longer time before entering the ministry. As students, they were expected to live in one of the university’s two colleges, where they received additional theological education and were subject to closer supervision.

Richard A. Muller

in After Calvin: Studies in the Development of a Theological Tradition

This chapter addresses the divine law, an issue that is both hermeneutical and doctrinal. It has been one of the most consistently identified issues in the discussion of continuity and discontinuity between the Reformation and the era of orthodoxy. The analysis of Witsius and Brakel on the covenant of works demonstrates that the doctrine was not
a matter of excessive legalism, or a matter of setting an absolute priority of law over grace. Rather, the doctrine was the result of the examination of a series of issues raised by biblical texts and resolved through a method of juxtaposition and collation for the sake of drawing conclusions. In the writings of Witsius and Brakel, the exposition of doctrine stood in the line of a century-long discussion of covenant, human nature, law and grace, and human responsibility.

A Different Kind of Calvinism? Edwardsianism Compared with Older Forms of Reformed Thought

Paul Helm

in After Jonathan Edwards: The Courses of the New England Theology

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Edwards’s theological significance is partly due to how he combined the theological conservatism of his inherited Reformed Orthodoxy (largely but not entirely, in its English Puritan expression) and a “modern” outlook, that of the world of Locke and Newton. Scholastic methods were largely abandoned in favour of Lockean psychology and Newtonian physics. This is particularly apparent in issues of freedom and determinism, Edwards’s occasionalism, and his approach to the Trinity. Comparisons are drawn between Edwards and both continental (e.g., Calvin, Turretin) and Anglophone Reformed orthodoxy (Charnock, Owen). This chapter explores how this plays out in the conceptuality and methodology of his philosophical theology, and its effect (if any) on matters of theological substance. A “control” is offered by briefly comparing Edwards and his English contemporary John Gill, whose work (some of which Edwards was acquainted with) remains indebted to many of the features of the older conceptuality.

Introduction

Adriaan C. Neele

in Before Jonathan Edwards: Sources of New England Theology

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Edwards’s debt to Protestant scholasticism, Reformed orthodoxy, and early modern Reformed theology has been largely overlooked
in interpretations of his thought. The chapter argues that the model of continuity and discontinuity between the Reformation and post-Reformation era, expressed by the phrase “Calvin vs. the Calvinists,” should be considered and challenged in examining the relationship between Edwards and post-Reformation thought. Therefore, first, a broad sketch of interpretative models will be provided concerning the various appraisals of Reformed orthodoxy. Secondly, a proposal will be offered that the era of Protestant scholasticism and Reformed orthodoxy, as commonly and currently understood, should include early eighteenth-century New England history—thus treating the post-Reformation era as a transatlantic enterprise.

The Aberdeen Doctors and Henry Scougal
Aaron Clay Denlinger

The Aberdeen Doctors and Henry Scougal remain the most recognized theologians of the first and second Episcopalian periods respectively in Aberdeen. This chapter examines the theologies of both the Doctors and Scougal. The Doctors’ theology is considered under the headings of their irenicism, their soteriology and sacramentology, and their approach to Scripture and tradition. Various aspects of Scougal’s theology emerging from his published works, The Life of God in the Soul of Man and an assortment of sermons, are highlighted. The doctrine of the Aberdeen Doctors is shown to lie within the boundaries of Reformed orthodoxy of their day, while Scougal’s theology is judged to be broadly Reformed but to comprise an incipient religious mysticism that would blossom in Aberdeen at the turn of the century.

The Reformed Scholasticism of James Dundas
Alexander Broadie

The Reformed Scholasticism of James Dundas
This chapter discusses the characteristics of scholastic thought and argues that Reformed orthodox thinkers of the seventeenth century wrote within the framework of scholastic philosophy and theology. In illustration of this genre in its Scottish manifestation, the concept of Reformed orthodox scholasticism is expounded here by means of a discussion of concepts such as those of moral action, the Fall, free will, and suicide, present in a recently discovered Scottish monograph, a manuscript entitled Idea philosophiae moralis (1679) by James Dundas, the first Lord Arniston. While Dundas attends closely to philosophers, such as Hobbes and Descartes, not generally regarded as scholastic thinkers, the scholasticism of Dundas’ philosophy is on display throughout the manuscript.

Before Jonathan Edwards
Adriaan C. Neele

This volume will present the first comprehensive study of Jonathan Edwards’s use of Reformed orthodox and Protestant scholastic primary sources in the context of the challenges of orthodoxy in his day. It will look at the way he appreciated and appropriated Reformed orthodoxy, among other topics. The book studies three time periods in Edwards’s life and work, the formative years of 1703–1725, the Northampton period of 1726–1750, and the final years of 1751–1758. A background of post-Reformation thought, but with particular attention to Mastricht, is offered for each period enabling readers to assess issues of continuity and discontinuity, development and change in Edwards. Since there has been limited research on Edwards’s use of his primary sources this study analyses the theological ideas of the past that found their way into Edwards’s own theological reflections. The book argues that the formation, reflection, and communication of theological thought must be historically informed. The teaching, preaching, and practice of theology must be rooted in the classical curricula, methods of preaching, and systema of theology. Inherited theology must be evaluated on its own terms, historically and theologically, so that meaningful answers for the present can be constructed. Tracing Edwards’s discerning engagement with past ideas exemplifies how theology unfolds in an era of intellectual, religious, social, and political transition.
Archiving the Archive: Scribal and Material Culture in 17th-Century Zurich
Sundar Henny

in Archives and Information in the Early Modern World

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This contribution is an exercise in amalgamation: it seeks to blur the distinctions between archival and scribal culture, between form and content, and between the history of the book and history of material culture. Three leading figures of 17th-century Zurich—a clergyman and two magistrates—are spotlighted as they take respective measures to secure their memory. Although these measures and the corresponding archival situations differ quite significantly, it becomes obvious that in all of these cases materiality played a crucial role in the process of conservation. Written remains were referred to as relics, treasures, and monuments. To reduce those non-governmental collections to a cult of autographs, however, would miss the point. Copying also flourished and was thought of as a necessity as well as an act of asceticism. The argument is that ‘information’, narrowly understood, does not convey what early modern archives were all about.