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Actualization of Calvin's Eucharistic Theology in Geneva

Austin Jones

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“‘People know to disapprove of [Calvin], though not precisely why they should.’ They also know that Calvin was ‘an eighteenth-century Scotsman, a prude and obscurantist with a buckle on his hat, possibly a burner of witches, certainly the very spirit of Capitalism.’”

-Jason A. Goroncy, “John Calvin: Servant of the Word”
(2014)

John Calvin (1509-1564), one of the most influential Protestant Reformers alongside Martin Luther (1483-1546) and Huldrych Zwingli (1484-1531), has proven over the last 500 years to remain an enigma to theologians, historians, and even Calvinists themselves. Calvin has been ascribed with responsibility for centuries of democratic development, held complicit in one thousand years of religious oppression, and as the sole foundational figure for either a plurality of denominations or none at all.¹ Research into Calvin and his theological and political descendents has become a gnostic study in and of itself, dominated by regional interpretations which share little consensus in definitions or conclusions.

The lead up to what historians now call the Reformation has roots in a deep history of both successful, attempted, and ongoing reforms of the Catholic church. The heretical reform movements, such as the Lollards of England² and the Bohemian Hussites³ were suppressed by various Catholic authorities by the turn of the sixteenth century.⁴ Elsewhere in Europe, Christian humanists began to begin to support and institute certain reforms in their local churches. Figures

¹ James D. Tracy, *Europe's Reformations 1450-1650* (New York: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 1999), 85; William J. Bouwsma, *John Calvin: A Sixteenth-Century Portrait*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 1; Will Durant, *The Reformation*, (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1957), 473; Willem J. van Asselt, “Calvinism as a problematic concept in historiography,” *International Journal of Philosophy and Theology* 74, no. 2 (2013): 147-148.

² The disciples of John Wycliffe (c.1325-1384), an English theologian, who preached against clerical celibacy, transubstantiation, and other aspects of Catholic dogma. See Durant, *The Reformation*, 115-116.

³ Followers of Jan Hus (1369-1415), a Bohemian theologian and reformer, who questioned certain aspects of Catholic doctrine regarding transubstantiation and the selling of indulgences. See Durant, *The Reformation*, 164-165.

⁴Eugene F. Rice Jr. and Anthony Grafton, *The Foundations of Early Modern Europe, 1460-1559*, 2nd ed. (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1994), 148.

such as the scholar Erasmus of Rotterdam (1466-1536), who corrected various errors in translation of the Vulgate Bible and aimed to reduce clerical illiteracy and absenteeism,⁵ and Lefèvre d'Étaples (c.1455-1536), who translated the Bible into vernacular French and criticized the Churches insistence on good works being a means to attain salvation, performed a crucial role in what the historian of the French Reformation Mack P. Holt describes as the 'pre-reform' movement.⁶

John Calvin, the son of a French lawyer and himself a lawyer by training, was deeply versed in the aspirations and practices of the pre-reform movement, having met and discussed d'Étaples in 1534.⁷ Calvin arrived in the city of Geneva in 1536, after fleeing from the religious tumult at the University of Paris.⁸ Geneva had already embraced many of the basic facets of the broader Reformation, including the abolition of the Mass and the liquidation of ecclesiastical properties.⁹ Although initially granted a post as a preacher, the Genevan town council ousted Calvin from the city in 1538, along with his fellow Reformer William Farel (1489-1565), following a dispute with the city council over whether the lay authorities could make decisions regarding doctrinal questions.¹⁰ Both the reformers protested, demanding that only the theological faculty could rule on doctrine.¹¹ According to his many letters, Calvin thought often of the city of Geneva during his exile in Strasbourg.¹² He indicated his concern for the cities

⁵ Absenteeism is a phrase describing the practice of a clergy member not being present in his assigned diocese, leaving the parishioners without a trained clergy to hold service or perform the sacraments.

⁶ Rice and Grafton, *The Foundations of Early Modern Europe*, 150-151; Mack P. Holt, *The French Wars of Religion, 1562-1629*, 2nd ed. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 14-15.

⁷ Holt, *The French Wars of Religion*, 21.

⁸ Durant, *The Reformation*, 460, 467.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 468-469

¹⁰ Tracey, *Europe's Reformations*, 87.

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² John Calvin to Henry Bullinger, 20 May 1538, in John Calvin: Tracts and Letters, vol. 4, ed. Jules Bonnet, trans. David Constable (Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 2009), 68-69; John Calvin to William Farel, 4 August 1538, in John Calvin: Tracts and Letters, vol. 4, 74-75; John Calvin to Farel, undated, in John Calvin:

wellbeing and hoped that the city would come to “[Lay] aside all evil affections, be guided solely by... zeal for the service of God...”¹³ In 1541, the Genevan city council requested Calvin return to the city and promised not to intervene in certain aspects of church discipline, such as excommunication. From his return onward, Calvin headed the process of confession building in the town. While he was never again forced into exile, he repeatedly quarrelled with the town council over matters of discipline, organization, and theology within the church.

Following a brief history of the Reformation, this paper examines the role that John Calvin played in the shaping of the eucharistic theology and practice in the city of Geneva. To assess Calvin’s individual role two major models of confession building are presented: confessionalization and actualization. Using these models as the foci of a historiographic analysis, it is made clear that no major historiographic trend has tackled the interaction between Calvin’s theology and the Genevan confessional society. Following the historiographical framing of Calvin’s role, Calvin’s exegetical, political, and administrative works will be used to demonstrate that the process of confession building in Geneva was directed principally by Calvin and that the actualization model best fits Geneva during the time of Calvin’s tenure.

Background and Theory

The Reformation, typically dated as beginning with the publication of the German monk Martin Luther’s “95 Theses” on October 31st 1517, began the process of new sects, or confessions, of Christianity emerging such as Lutheranism, the Reformed tradition¹⁴, and

Tracts and Letters, vol. 4, 80-81; John Calvin to Farel, 24 October 1538, in John Calvin: Tracts and Letters, vol. 4, 101; John Calvin to Farel, 15 March 1539, in John Calvin: Tracts and Letters, vol. 4, 120; John Calvin to Farel, April 1539, in John Calvin Tracts and Letters, vol. 4, 134.

¹³ John Calvin to the Church of Geneva, 1 October 1538, in *John Calvin: Tracts and Letters*, vol. 4, 85.

¹⁴ The term ‘Reformed’ in the context of calvinistic or Zwinglian theology is used in the place of ‘Calvinist’ in order to denote the regional and theological differences that emerged in post-Reformation Europe. Reformed or calvinistic will generally be used when referring to affairs not limited solely to Calvin’s tenure in Geneva but instead

Anabaptism. One of the principal peculiarities of the Reformation is the internal conflict within these new confessions between the theologians who developed the doctrine and the governments which chose to embrace such reformers in shaping these new religious-social communities. Largely two modes of resolution within these conflicts can be found, that of confessionalization and actualization. In regions where the government, whether it be a town council of princely estate, asserted more dominance over the building of the confession, a process of confessionalization emerges, where the new religious community is used as an arm of state social control. In contrast, where the theologians and reformers dominated the process of confession building, an actualization of their theology occurs, whereby the theological tenants they espouse shape both the institutional organization of the church and of the confessional society.

Heinz Schilling, one of the foundational historians in developing the “Confessionalization thesis,” argued that confessionalization brought “theological, cultural, political, and institutional differentiation within the Christian world—from the ecclesiastical monocultural of the Middle Ages to the multiconfessionalism of the early modern period and to the religious and societal pluralism of the modern age.”¹⁵ Schilling describes confessionalization as the casting of a “formerly religious emphasis into the secular sphere.”¹⁶ In the historical narrative that Schilling postulates, confession building led to further internal diversification which ultimately led to secularism in a dialectic progression. As the four primary western

the tradition to which Calvin, Beza, Perkins, Baxter, Turretin, etc. contributed. The term Calvinist or Calvinism will likewise be used when referring directly to Calvin or Calvin’s policies and theology. For more on the benefits of using the term Reformed instead of Calvinist, see Asselt, “Calvinism as a problematic concept,” 147.

¹⁵ Heinz Schilling, *Early Modern European Civilization and Its Political and Cultural Dynamism* (Lebanon, NH: University Press of New England, 2008), 18.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 31.

confessions, Lutheranism, Anglicanism, Catholicism, and Reformed, fragmented new branches emerged –Pietism within Lutheranism, Puritanism within Anglicanism, and Jansenism within Catholicism– ultimately leading to the weakening of the church as a solitary institution.¹⁷ What is strikingly missing, however, is any example of such a process occurring within the Reformed church.¹⁸

While the confessionalization process cast the “religious emphasis into the secular sphere,” the actualization process has the inverse effect: expanding the religious emphasis into more secular institutions. A key example that demonstrates the actualization process is that of the Genevan hospital during Calvin’s tenure. Prior to Calvin’s arrival in Geneva, the city had already had a long history of social care, including eight hospitals,¹⁹ the first of which was founded by 1289.²⁰ The Laity established the bulk of the hospitals, but an appointed clergyman (Known as a recteur) managed daily affairs.²¹ The city council also worked to provide aid to the poor, typically using fines from minor offences to fund the hospitals or civil institutions.²² Coinciding with Geneva’s ousting of its Catholic bishop, in the early 1530s the town council began a process of consolidation of the hospitals that would ultimately be completed by Calvin; the eight hospitals were merged into a single institution and the council exercised more control over who could come and go from the new hospital.²³ Calvin, after returning to Geneva from his time in exile, began to work on further reforms to the hospitals. The most fundamental change Calvin

¹⁷ Ibid., 29.

¹⁸ Ibid., 19.

¹⁹ Hospitals, in early modern and medieval terms were quite different institutions than what we know of today. They offered much more than just medical treatment, but also acted as places for travelers to stay, offered care to plague victims, and distributed alms.

²⁰ William C. Innes, *Social Concern in Calvin’s Geneva*, ed. Susan Cembalisty/Innes (Allison Park: Pickwick Publications, 1983), 14.

²¹ Ibid., 15.

²² Ibid., 30.

²³ Ibid., 92-93

made was the establishment of the diaconate, which would directly oversee the affairs and proceedings of the hospital.²⁴ Various officers of the hospitals would later be assigned specific tasks and specialize in those, such as overseeing the collection of meals, preparation for meals, collecting rent, or other tasks.²⁵

Calvin, from his earliest works, indicated deep concern for how to maintain the social fabric and help those who were struggling or perhaps lashing out. In Calvin's *Commentaries on Seneca's De Clementia*, Calvin writes that a ruler must "imitate good physicians, who prudently afflict the sick, who first try gentle cures and deceptive remedies, and do not despair so long as they are able to attempt something. They do not get angry at diseases –they try to cure them."²⁶ Calvin saw offering hospitality as a means to attempt to cure the diseases which afflict societies. Calvin saw part of the process of healing as reconciliation with those who are injured; using Luke 4:38-43²⁷, Calvin explains that the process of laying hands is "under the Law... a sign of reconciliation; and, therefore, it was not improperly, or unseasonably, that Christ *laid hands* [sic] on those whom he freed from the curse of God."²⁸ Calvin's social laws were manifestations of this desire to heal social wounds through first inflicting punishment, either biblical illness or arrest, and then with reconciliation. One of the major reforms Calvin brought about was the expansion of the prison system, although it remained small compared to other contemporary communities.²⁹ Terms of banishment, such as a year, was a common punishment, and

²⁴ Innes, *Social Concern*, 121

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 123.

²⁶ John Calvin, *Commentaries on Seneca's De Clementia*, ed. and trans. Ford Lewis Battles, and Andre Malan Hugo (Leiden: Brill, 1969), 266-267.

²⁷ See Appendix

²⁸ John Calvin, *Commentary on the Harmony of the Evangelists: Matthew, Mark, and Luke*, vol. 1, ed. and trans. William Pringle (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1981), 251.

²⁹ Innes, *Social Concern*, 164-165.

reconciliation would follow such exile.³⁰ Calvin would likewise exclude individuals from attending the Lord's Supper until they had demonstrated regret and repentance for their, non-criminal, sins, which encouraged individuals to reconcile with their community so that they could partake.³¹ In this example both the confessionalization process and the actualization process are observed. Prior to Calvin's arrival in Geneva the town council had taken a previously religious institution, the hospitals, and exerted further control and lay regulation of the institution, hence casting it into the secular realm. Calvin, then, took the now secular hospital and cast it back into the religious realm, and further expanded it into broader social care and punishment.

Historiography and Review of the Literature

Broadly there are four schools when it comes to Calvin, two of which approach Calvin through an ideological lense and two through a structural lense. The ideological frameworks can be broadly placed into an Enlightenment-esque history, which tends to view Calvin through the lense of the anti-clericism of the prominent philosophers of the Enlightenment, and the Whiggish history which puts Calvin in the context of the rise of secularism and democracy. The structural frameworks, which have been the most prominent since the 1980s, are the postmodernist approach, which attempts to analyze Calvinism through the lense of structural changes and practiced religion, and the theological approach, which deals primarily with the theological continuity or disruptions between Calvin and those who both came before and after him.

Nineteenth –and twentieth –century historians, enamoured with the apparent triumph of the Enlightenment, placed great emphasis on the seemingly totalitarian and intolerant structure of

³⁰ Ibid., 165.

³¹ Raymond A. Mentzer, "Reformed Liturgical Practices," in *A Companion to the Eucharist in the Reformation*, ed. Lee Palmer Wandel (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 239.

the Genevan polity during John Calvin's ministry (1536-38, 1541-64). In the broader historiographical context, this interpretation of Calvin is far from unique; with the emergence of the Enlightenment, philosophers and historians began to portray prior eras as living under a fog of ignorance and religious oppression.³² The Genevan Consistory, the body tasked with enforcing the moral codes of Geneva and investigating potential preaches in morality, has drawn a great deal of ire from historians of the Enlightenment school of thought.³³ Particular emphasis has been placed on the trial of Michael Servetus (c.1511-1553) and his subsequent execution as a key example of the tyranny and religious oppression of Calvin's regiment.³⁴ Scholars³⁵ from the Enlightenment school tended to focus on the brutality and intrusiveness of the religious and civil authorities during Calvin's ministry. The portrayal of Calvin and the Reformed Church of Geneva as a theocratic, anti-humanist, and anti-Renaissance force has, however, been questioned and repudiated by many more recent scholars. For these thinkers, the apparent intolerance that occurred in Calvinist regions, namely Scotland and Geneva, represent "a last stand by the State and the Church against the slowly rising tide of toleration."³⁶ Calvin thus serves as an exemplifying figure of this "last stand," a pure example of how –despite or in spite of the broader tendency towards secularization and intellectual progresses–, the Christian religion served to oppress the intellectual diversity and freedom that the Renaissance embodied.

³² Joyce Appleby, Lynn Hunt, and Margaret Jacob, *Telling the Truth About History*, (New York: W.W. Norton, 1994), 18.

³³ Robert M. Kingdon, "The Control of Morals in Calvin's Geneva," in *Articles on Calvin and Calvinism: Calvin's Work in Geneva*, ed. Richard C. Gamble, (New York: Garland Publishing, 1992), 50.

³⁴ James K. Cameron, "Scottish Calvinism and the Principle of Intolerance," in *Articles on Calvin and Calvinism: Calvinism in France, Netherlands, Scotland, and England*, ed. Richard C. Gamble, (New York: Garland Publishing, 1992), 190.

³⁵ See Cameron, "Scottish Calvinism," 190; Will Durant, *The Reformation*, 395; E. William Monter, "Witchcraft in Geneva, 1537-1662," *The Journal of Modern History* 43, no. 2 (1971): 179; E. William Monter, "Crime and Punishment in Calvin's Geneva 1562," in *Articles on Calvin and Calvinism: Calvin's Work in Geneva*, ed. Richard C. Gamble (New York: Garland Publishing, 1992), 273.

³⁶ Cameron, "Scottish Calvinism," 123.

The sixth volume of Will Durant's *Story of Civilization* titled, *The Reformation*, serves as a key case study of the modern Enlightenment school approach to Calvin and Calvinism. Durant's primary emphasis regarding Calvin's theology rests on Calvin's emphasis on the depraved and mediocre nature of humanity, an emphasis which echoes the Enlightenment philosopher Baron d'Holbach's (1723-1789) argument that Christianity "denies the transfiguring power of human beings, representing them as impotent slaves of a bellicose and tyrannical God..."³⁷ Durant summarizes Calvin's political views as: "The ideal government will be a theocracy, and the Reformed Church should be recognized as the voice of God. All the claims of the popes for the supremacy of the Church over the state were renewed by Calvin for his Church," further framing Calvin as an extension of the medieval church.³⁸ Durant places Calvin as the sole, authoritarian leader of the process of confession building. Durant, however, does not approach the theological concepts that Calvin sought to integrate within the Geneva community, instead emphasizing the outcome rather than the process.

While the Whiggish³⁹ historians differed with Enlightenment school historians in their understanding of the impact of Calvinism, they fundamentally agreed with the assumption that he alone was the driving force of the confession building in Geneva. Whereas Durant saw Calvin as the last gasp of Papist authoritarianism, historians and politicians such as Abraham Kuyper,

³⁷ François-Emmanuel Boucher, "Philosophes, Anticlericalism, Reactionaries, and Progress in French Enlightenment Historiography," in *A Companion to Enlightenment Historiography*, ed. Sophie Bourgault and Robert Sparling, (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 374.

³⁸ Durant, *The Reformation*, 465.

³⁹ It should be noted that Whig may not be the most appropriate phrase to use in reference to continental history. Whig history is typically confined to an understanding of parliamentary supremacy in an English context, and how the age of "feudalism" suppressed that ancient freedom the Anglo-Saxons once held. The application of the term Whig here however is attributing the same model on the continent, a period of freedom suppressed by Papist tyranny rather than Norman tyranny, followed by an awakening of democracy and freedom. Thus the phrase Whiggish, to indicate that it is similar in structure rather than content to Whig history, will be employed. For more on the origins of Whig History, see Trevor Colbourn, *The Lamp of Experience: Whig History and the Intellectual Origins of the American Revolution* (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1965), 8-9.

instead, saw him as the first step towards freedom and democracy. As the Prime Minister of the Netherlands, Kuyper (r.1901-1905), specifically, sought to use Calvin as a justification for his political ambitions, as laid out in his manifesto, *Our Program: A Christian Political Manifesto*.⁴⁰ More recent historians are less overt than Kuyper in their Whiggish tendencies, nevertheless certain elements of the flawed Whiggish interpretation find their way into literature dealing with the political implications of Calvinism, both contemporary and modern.⁴¹

Kuyper is by no means unique in attempting to find the outlines of modern statehood in the Early Modern period; the periodization of Early Modern alone is suggestive of a political continuity with industrial and post-industrial society. What is more unusual about Kuyper's historical model was that he framed the concept of statehood purely in terms of confession, identifying the three forms of nations as Catholic, Puritan, or based off of the "French or German doctrinaires."⁴² Kuyper placed these three modes of governance in a strict hierarchy with the calvinistic Puritan model at the top: "The weakest type to develop was the Catholic one... Of greater influence was the liberal keynote... But the type to develop most richly, to blossom most abundantly, to ripen to nationality most fully, was the Puritan Christian type."⁴³ Kuyper's polemics ascribed to Calvin a wide berth of achievements, from bringing the "psalm of freedom... from the troubled conscience to the lips,"⁴⁴ to laying the groundwork for a

⁴⁰ Abraham Kuyper, *Our Program: A Christian Political Manifesto*, 1879, ed. and trans. Harry Van Dyke, (Bellingham: Lexham Press, 2015).

⁴¹ See W. Stanford Reid, "John Calvin, John Knox, and the Scottish Reformation," in *Articles on Calvin and Calvinism: Calvinism in France, Netherlands, Scotland, and England*, ed. Richard C. Gamble (New York: Garland Publishing, 1992), 179; Richard L. Greaves, "Calvinism, Democracy, and the Political Thought of John Knox," in *Articles on Calvin and Calvinism: Calvinism in France, Netherlands, Scotland, and England*, ed. Richard C. Gamble, (New York: Garland Publishing, 1992), 206.

⁴² Kuyper, *Our Program*, 11.

⁴³ Kuyper, *Our Program*, 11.

⁴⁴ Asselt, "Calvinism as a Problematic Concept," 145.

hypothetical utopia of purely calvinists.⁴⁵ Kuyper, unlike the Enlightenment historians, offered a simple and clear –albeit immensely flawed– definition of Calvinism, by defining its central dogma as “doctrine of divine sovereignty and predestination.”⁴⁶ Kuyper’s analysis of Calvin has been widely dismantled, both by historians in the postmodernist school and by contextualist historian Quentin Skinner who dismissed the attribution of democratic statehood to Calvin as an anachronism.⁴⁷

The current scholarly discussion of “resistance theory” in Calvinist societies preserves Kuyper’s hard-line Whiggism. The idea of the natural right –and even in some cases a mandate– of the people to cast down a tyrant is rooted in both English, American, and many other histories.⁴⁸ One of the key problems in assessing calvinistic resistance theory is that Calvin himself was ambiguous on his support of political resistance. Reformed churches tended to be prevalent in areas of social or religious oppression and dissent and were far more often than not grassroots movements.⁴⁹ In the Netherlands, from the late 1500s to the end of the 30 Years War, Calvinism was defined by opposition to both their Spanish masters and the Remonstrants;⁵⁰ in this area rife in inter-communal and national conflict, resistance became a far more acceptable stance to take than subservience to a fixed temporal head.⁵¹ Similarly, the English and Scottish protestants fleeing persecution under Queen Mary (r.1533-1538) advocated a far more robust

⁴⁵ Kuyper, *Our Program*, 287.

⁴⁶ Asselt, “Calvinism as a Problematic Concept,” 145.

⁴⁷ Asselt, “Calvinism as a Problematic Concept,” 145-146.

⁴⁸ Greaves, “Calvinism, Democracy, and the Political Thought of John Knox,” 206.

⁴⁹ Asselt, “Calvinism as a Problematic Concept,” 148.

⁵⁰ The Remonstrants were Dutch Protestants who followed Jacob Arminius’ theology, who disputed the Calvinist doctrine of election.

⁵¹ Tracy, *Europe’s Reformations*, 174, 176.

theory of justified revolution than Calvin was comfortable.⁵² Because of the more middling and outcast nature of Reformed followers, the application of confessionalization theory to such groups.⁵³

While the Whiggish and anti-ecclesiastical interpretations of Calvin tended to focus on the intellectual image of Calvin –either as a representation of clerical intolerance or democratic idealism– recent scholarship, largely drawing on postmodernist techniques, has turned to looking at the temporal elements of Calvin’s church as a means of evaluating the nature of practiced Calvinism. Dealing primarily in what the parishioner would have seen, this new historical tradition examines the liturgical practices, social organization under Calvinistic systems, and Calvinist sermons. The postmodernist narrative has been instrumental in the dismantling of Enlightenment and Whiggish understandings of Calvinism, challenging both the claims of social equality attributed to Calvin by the Whiggish historians and the accusation of theocratic tyranny asserted by the enlightenment historians.⁵⁴ The shifting of the narrative away from Calvin’s individual role, which was the focus of both the Whiggish and Enlightenment historians, has subsequently lead to a shift on to how society shaped Calvin.⁵⁵

The liturgical practices of Calvin’s Geneva have attracted the most inter-tradition interest of any structural element of Calvinism, attracting scholarship that analyzes the rites and rituals from both theological and postmodernist perspectives. The postmodernist tradition attributes the liturgical and ministerial practices of Reformed cities to the context of the “strong traditions of

⁵² W. Stanford Reid, “John Calvin, John Knox, and the Scottish Reformation,” in *Articles on Calvin and Calvinism: Calvinism in France, Netherlands, Scotland, and England*, ed. Richard C. Gamble (New York: Garland Publishing, 1992), 181.

⁵³ Asselt, “Calvinism as a Problematic Concept,” 148.

⁵⁴ For the Whiggish assertion of equal liberties see Kuyper, *Our Program*, 12-17; For the Enlightenment assertion see Durant, *The Reformation*, 465, 473.

⁵⁵ See Bouwsma, *John Calvin*.

communalism which flourished in southern German and Swiss lands...,” rather than to any single individual.⁵⁶ Calvin’s emphasis on social unity and wellbeing is the primary focus of discussions pertaining to Calvin’s reform of the hospitals and social welfare programs in Geneva. Robert M. Kingdon, one of the foremost historians writing about the poor relief efforts in Reformed areas; he summarizes the two key elements of this social reform program as “laicization and rationalization.”⁵⁷ These elements are reflected in the consolidation of various separate institutions and the increasing control the laity held over these institutions. Kingdon identifies the General Hospital of Geneva as the epitomization of this process, whereby the eight social welfare organizations that existed prior to 1535 became unified under a single body controlled by the laity.⁵⁸ Kingdon makes sure to note, however, that the General Hospital existed prior to Calvin’s arrival, but was endorsed by him after he arrived in Geneva, a distinction which is lost by other historians.⁵⁹ The Hospital does not represent a purely Calvinist development but rather a development that Calvin integrated into his social model. However, the planned relief of the poor that Calvin developed is evidence of a far more direct actualization of Calvin’s social philosophy.⁶⁰ In the twentieth and twenty first centuries the extent of this planned relief is a subject of frequent historical debates: on one end of the spectrum Kingdon emphasized Calvin’s insistence that the deacons’ primary use should be in extending alms to the poor. On the other end, historian Abel Alves recognized “Foucault's great confinement of the poor, insane, and

⁵⁶ Bruce Gordon, “The New Parish,” in *A Companion to the Reformation World*, ed. R. Po-chia Hsia (Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2004), 412.

⁵⁷ Robert M. Kingdon, “Social Welfare in Calvin’s Geneva,” in *Articles on Calvin and Calvinism: Calvin’s Work in Geneva*, ed. Richard C. Gamble (New York: Garland Publishing, 1992), 23.

⁵⁸ Kingdon, “Social Welfare,” 25.

⁵⁹ Kingdon, “Social Welfare,” 24, 32; Abel Athouguia Alves, “The Christian Social Organism and Social Welfare: The Case of Vives, Calvin, and Loyola,” *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 20, no. 1 (1989): 9.

⁶⁰ Kingdon, “Social Welfare,” 32-33.

other undesirables” and Calvin’s admittance that the undeserving poor should be confined to the hospitals and forced to work.⁶¹ While both Kingdon and Alves mark Calvin’s efficacy in implementing his social policies, both still view him as a product of the social situation within Geneva; Calvin, within this framework, is ultimately more shaped by Geneva than Geneva is shaped by him.

Whereas the Postmodernist, Whiggish, and Enlightenment schools all deal with the individual role of Calvin in the creation of the Genevan confessional community, none of them directly link to his theological premises. Instead a highly insular group of religious and intellectual historian –largely writing during the twentieth and twenty-first centuries– which fit broadly into a theological school of thought directly analyze his theology. The theological school emphasizes solely the theological continuities and discontinuities between Calvin and those considered to be Calvinists. Theologian R.T. Kendall’s assessment of the legacy of Calvin, known as the Calvin versus the Calvinists thesis, is by far the most dominant narrative within the theological discussion.⁶² Kendall argued that “Genevan theology was rapidly hijacked by Calvin’s successor, Theodore Beza, who abandoned Calvin’s thought in certain fundamental areas,” and that Calvin’s tradition was largely lost until far more recent attempts to revive it, effectively making the traditionally calvinistic denominations not Calvinist.⁶³ Kendall’s thesis has, despite remaining predominant, received much criticism, especially by English historian Jonathan Moore. Moore levels two major criticisms against the Calvin versus the Calvinists narrative. First he argues that significant elements of theological continuity left out by Kendall,

⁶¹ Kingdon, “Social Welfare,” 32; Alves, “The Christian Social Organism,” 12-13.

⁶² For Kendall’s thesis see R.T. Kendall, *Calvinism and English Calvinism to 1649* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979); Jonathan Moore, “Calvin Versus the Calvinists? The Case of John Preston (1587-1628),” *Reformation & Renaissance Review* 6, no. 3 (2004): 328.

⁶³ Moore, “Calvin Versus the Calvinists?,” 229.

namely the theology of John Preston (1527-1648).⁶⁴ Secondly, he argues that placing Calvin as the sole benchmark to compare all Reformed theologians against is an arbitrary decision. The flaw in the purely theological approach to Calvinism is that it leaves out both the context in which Reformed communities formed in, and it tends to overly emphasize phrase or term differences between theologians. Likewise, there is an important lack of definitive texts that standardized the doctrinal Calvin. Whereas Lutheranism had the Book of Concord and Catholicism had the Tridentine Decrees,⁶⁵ a plurality of regional confessions emerged in the Reformed tradition and little attempt appears to be made to standardize them outside of a purely regional context.

The discussion of Calvin's role in the building of the Reformed community in Geneva is of vital importance in the assessment of his legacy. However, ahistoric ideologies such as those of the Whiggish and Enlightenment historians and partial analyses by the theological and postmodernist authors have dominated the historical dialogue. A handful of scholars have assessed that there may not be a Calvinism as such, but rather Calvin's theology and institutions should be considered Reformed rather than Calvinist.⁶⁶ This view, while containing an element of truth, ignores the broader political, religious, and historiographical implications of an outright rejection of Calvinism as a concept. The framework of Calvin's theology as an '-ism' cannot be easily dispelled from non-specialists such as Durant or from political rhetoric like that of Kuyper, and hence an outright changing of terms is neither useful or necessary for Calvinist studies. Rather, a synthesis of modes should be the approach a historian takes to an attempted understanding of Calvinism. Instead of relying purely on the intellectual abstracts of comparative

⁶⁴ Ibid., 227.

⁶⁵ As pertaining to the Council of Trent.

⁶⁶ Moore, "Calvin Versus the Calvinists?," 347; Asselt, "Calvinism as a Problematic Concept," 148-149.

theology or the purely institutional and organizational approach of the postmodernists, the historian should seek to integrate these modes of understanding.

Source Analysis

Calvin's theological tracts are the principal foundation for the assessment of his theological and political views. The tract of foremost importance is Calvin's address to the Emperor Charles V (r.1519-1556) and the princes assembled at the Diet of Spires (1543), entitled "The Necessity of Reforming the Church."⁶⁷ In this tract, Calvin sought to persuade the Emperor of Luther's innocence against the charge of being a schismatic, the nature of the follies of Roman Catholicism, and purpose ecclesiastic and dogmatic reforms.⁶⁸ This appeal, being written shortly after Calvin began his second tenure as pastor of Geneva, thus provides an outline for the reforms that Calvin sought to implement in Geneva. The second tract that serves as a representation of the later reforms that Calvin sought to institute is Calvin's "Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent, with the Antidote" (1547).⁶⁹ Calvin addresses the rulings of the Ecumenical Council of Trent (1545-1563), the Catholic convention that sought to address the Protestant reformers, reaffirm the Catholic principals which were under attack, and institute reforms where necessary. Calvin defends both his prior reforms and asserts further reforms that were necessary in his 'antidote,' responding to each session of the Council of Trent. Calvin's tract on the Tridentine decrees served as one of the earliest publication to review the Council's rulings fully and provided a framework for other Protestant reformers to criticize the reforms

⁶⁷John Calvin, "The necessity of reforming the church," in *John Calvin: Tracts and Letters*, vol. 1, ed. and trans. Henry Beveridge (Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 2009), 123-234.

⁶⁸ John Calvin, "The necessity of reforming the church," 125-126.

⁶⁹ John Calvin, "Acts of the council of Trent with the antidote," in *John Calvin: Tracts and Letters*, vol. 3, ed. and trans. Henry Beveridge (Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 2009), 17-188.

both rejected and proposed by the Catholic Church.⁷⁰ Calvin's "The True Method of Reforming the Church and Healing Her Divisions" demonstrates his refutation to the confessionalization process in the Holy Roman Empire.⁷¹ This tract, which was Calvin's response to the Interim regulations published by Emperor Charles V, denounced the interim regulations as aiming to "secretly lead us away from the Author of peace..." while "vainly promising peace..."⁷² Calvin saw the interim regulations as an example of secular rulers dismissing the necessity of reforming the church, an issue which came up in Geneva in the frequent battles Calvin had with the city council. These three tracts reveal the development of Calvin's views regarding the affairs of the laity.

Calvin's first major publication, a set of commentaries and translation of the classical author Seneca's *De Clementia*, demonstrates Calvin's outlook prior to the Reformation. Here, Calvin's indebtedness to Erasmus of Rotterdam (1466-1536) and the Renaissance scholarship of the past century is showcased. Calvin, as argued by Ford Lewis Battles of the Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, likely saw a mirror of himself in Seneca and expanded on Seneca's writings in evangelical direction.⁷³ Calvin translates sections of the *De Clementia* and then provided individual commentaries on Seneca's mindset and on Seneca's views. Calvin's *Commentaries* provide an important reference point to both his intentions and how he changed over his tenure in Geneva.

⁷⁰ Henry Beveridge, introduction to *John Calvin: Tracts and Letters*, vol. 3 (Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 2009), vii.

⁷¹ John Calvin, "The True Method of Giving Peace to Christendom and Reforming the Church," in *John Calvin: Tracts and Letters* vol.3, ed. and trans. Henry Beveridge (Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 2009), 190-358.

⁷² Calvin, "The True Method of Giving Peace to Christendom and Reforming the Church," 241.

⁷³ Ford Lewis Battles, and Andre Malan Hugo, "The Spiritual and Intellectual Background," in *Calvin's Commentary on Seneca's De Clementia* (Leiden: Brill, 1969), 14.

While Calvin's tracts largely deal with the political and international side of his theology, his exegetical⁷⁴ writings give a deeper insight into his developing theology. Calvin's *Commentaries on the First Book of Moses Called Genesis* provides the most insight into both how Calvin saw the nature of the Divine and how he understood the matter of predestination of Calvin's exegetical texts.⁷⁵ Calvin dedicated the work to the heir to the Kingdom of Navarre, Henry of Vendome, and the future Henry IV of France. Calvin sought to provide Prince Henry, who was ten the year of dedication, with a educational text that would ensure Henry would not fall under the sway of other theological schools, such as the anti-Trinitarian thought emerging from Michael Servetus and his followers in 1531. Calvin's bulkiest exegetical writing is *A Harmonie Upon the Three Evangelists Matthew, Mark, and Luke*, which served as the foundation to his *Institutes of the Christian Religion*.⁷⁶ Calvin dedicated the epistle to the council of Frankfort, one of Calvin's homes during the period between his tenure at Geneva and the hosts of the Marian exiles, at the time of dedication. Here Calvin expounds upon the nature of the two sacraments recognized by the Protestants (baptism and the Lord's Supper), the nature of justification, and of the promise of Salvation.

A third genre of texts that provide a foundation for the implementation of the actualization process are the instructions on church administration that Calvin wrote during his two tenures in Geneva. Texts such as Calvin's "Catechism of the Church of Geneva" demonstrate how Calvin's theology, as written in his exegetical texts, were put into practice.⁷⁷

⁷⁴ Exegesis is a genre of writing focused upon close and detailed analysis of, typically religious, texts.

⁷⁵ John Calvin, *Commentaries on the First Book of Moses Called Genesis*, ed. and trans. John King (Grand Rapids: W.B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1948).

⁷⁶ Calvin, *Commentary on the Harmony*.

⁷⁷ John Calvin, "Catechism of the Church of Geneva, Being a Form of Instruction for Children in the Doctrine of Christ," in *John Calvin: Tracts and Letters*, vol. 2, ed. and trans. Henry Beveridge (Edinburgh: The Banner Of Truth Trust, 2009).

These administrative texts largely deal with the matter of church education, as is the case with the Catechism, along with the administration of the sacraments. Calvin's "Genevan Confession of Faith" demonstrates how Calvin sought to organize the Geneva Church.⁷⁸ These administrative texts demonstrate the actualized theology of Calvin within the Genevan Church. To further exemplify how these policies emerged from Calvin's theology, a plurality of Calvin's letters demonstrate the concerns and discussions he had regarding the actualization process.

Actualization of Calvin's Eucharistic Theology

One key case study in the actualization process is that of Calvin's theology regarding the Eucharist and the Lord's Supper. The devotion and theory that developed around the eucharist and Lord's Supper during the High Middle Ages was largely anathema to Calvin's, and more broadly the Reformation's, doctrine of *sola scriptura*. Lateran IV marked a substantial break between the early church and the medieval catholic church that Calvin addressed.⁷⁹ The theology that developed in the eleventh through thirteenth centuries was significantly more complex, more Aristotelian, and less understood by the laity than in times prior.⁸⁰ An extensive program of devotion developed alongside the theology, epitomized in the Festival of *Corpus Christi*.⁸¹ Calvin sought a simplification of the theology of the Eucharist, partially emerging out of the Erasmian tradition of emphasizing the importance of lay education regarding religious matters.⁸²

⁷⁸ John Calvin, "The Genevan Confession," in *Calvin: Theological Treatises*, ed. and trans. by J.K.S. Reid (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1954), 26-33.

⁷⁹ Norman Tanner, "The Eucharist in the Ecumenical Councils," in *The Church in Council: Conciliar Movements, Religious Practice and the Papacy from Nicaea to Vatican II*, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 137.

⁸⁰ Gary Macy, "The Medieval Inheritance," in *A Companion to the Eucharist in the Reformation*, ed. Lee Palmer Wandel, (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 16, 27-28.

⁸¹ Isabelle Brian, "Catholic Liturgies of the Eucharist in the Time of Reform," in *A Companion to the Eucharist in the Reformation* ed. Lee Palmer Wandel, (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 185.

⁸² Bouwsma, *John Calvin*, 14.

Calvin simultaneously sought to reform popular devotion as well to remove what he saw as the impure developments of the medieval Catholic church.⁸³

The theological developments regarding the sacrament of the Lord's Supper were two-fold: the application of Aristotelian philosophy to the concept of real presence and the expansion of the priest's role in the liturgy. Even in the days of the early medieval church there was significant disagreement regarding the presence of Christ in the eucharist; the theologian Paschasius Radbertus (785-865) being an early proponent of literal presence during the Carolingian period with theologian Ratramnus (d.868) taking the reverse position.⁸⁴ While these early debates went largely unresolved, a Catholic orthodoxy regarding real presence began to emerge after the Council of Rome condemned Berengar of Tours' (c.999-1088) proto-Zwinglian rejection of the significance of the eucharist in 1050.⁸⁵ The Fourth Lateran Council marked the turning point by establishing the orthodoxy of real presence, "Christ's body and blood are truly contained in the sacrament of the altar under the forms of bread and wine, in bread and wine having been changed in substance by the divine power into his body and blood."⁸⁶ From Lateran IV came the doctrine of transubstantiation which held, in accordance to Aristotle's teaching regarding form and matter,⁸⁷ that the form of the bread and wine was maintained, but the matter was changed into the literal body and blood of Christ.⁸⁸ A wave of theologians emerged from this doctrine, trying to explain using the framework of Aristotelian form changes, namely

⁸³ John Calvin, *The Necessity of Reforming the Church*, 128.

⁸⁴ Joseph H. Lynch, *The Medieval Church: a brief history*, (New York: Longman, 1992), 93.

⁸⁵ Macy, "The Medieval Inheritance," 24.

⁸⁶ Tanner, "The Eucharist," 137-138.

⁸⁷ Aristotle held that all substances were composed of inseparable but featureless accidents called "matter" and "form" which dictated the nature of the substance. For example a chair is composed of matter, but it is the form of a chair that makes it a chair.

⁸⁸ Lynch, *The Medieval Church*, 281.

coexistence, substitution, and transmutation.⁸⁹ The metaphysics of aristotelian form change and transubstantiation was entirely lost of the ordinary worshippers, and an attempt of explanation was never made.⁹⁰ Rather the Catholic church saw lay understanding of the intricacies of transubstantiation as unimportant to the communal participation in the Lord's Supper.⁹¹ The esoteric nature of real presence led to increasingly strange and, for the Catholic church, worrying tales of the miraculous power of the host to rip people's throats out or act as love potions.⁹²

The second principal theological development that emerged in the aftermath of the Gregorian reforms and Lateran IV was the emphasis of the priest's power in effecting the miracle of transubstantiation. The trend towards emphasizing the power of the priesthood dates back to the Carolingian church reforms put forth in the *General Admonition* (789), where legal privileges and monastic standards of behavior were laid out for the Clergy.⁹³ This evolution in the role of the clergy came to a head with the reforms of Gregory VII (r.1073-1085), who stressed the importance of the clergy over the laity.⁹⁴ The Fourth Lateran Council solidified the importance of the priest as the signifying actor in effecting the substance change of the eucharist, decreeing that "Nobody can effect this sacrament except a priest who has been properly ordained according to the church's keys..."⁹⁵ The liturgical practices that existed in Sixteenth Century were largely a reflection of the significance of the priest over the congregation; a choir screen hung between the priest and the congregation, who largely could neither understand the words

⁸⁹ Macy, "The Medieval Inheritance," 26.

⁹⁰ Macy, "The Medieval Inheritance," 28; Virginia Reinburg, "Liturgy and the Laity in Late Medieval and Reformation France," in *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 23, no. 3 (1992): 531.

⁹¹ Reinburg, "Liturgy and Laity," 530.

⁹² Macy, "The Medieval Inheritance," 32-33.

⁹³ Lynch, *The Medieval Church*, 74-75.

⁹⁴ Lynch, *The Medieval Church*, 145, 149.

⁹⁵ Tanner, "The Eucharist," 138.

nor see the actions until the elevation of the host.⁹⁶ A seemingly peculiar development during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries was the practice of kneeling before the priest during the consecration, a practice which was condemned and prohibited by Canon 20 of the Council of Nicaea (325).⁹⁷

Calvin and many other reformers, Protestant and Catholic alike, placed a great deal of emphasis on education of the laity, an emphasis that was connected with an increasing lack of understanding of the esoteric doctrine of transubstantiation that existed.⁹⁸ Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274), for instance, was worried that the proliferation of tales of miracle hosts would mislead the laity as to the true nature of the body and blood of Christ. Aquinas' objections to tales of miracle hosts were entirely ineffective in stemming the tales, no matter "Whether the host bled, was stabbed, survived fire..." Christ's presence in the eucharist was taken, "quite literally by those unversed in the subtleties of Eucharistic theology."⁹⁹ Calvin, versed in the Erasmian tradition, put a priority education of the laity regarding the eucharist, which was substantially easier due to the lack of intense metaphysical complexity in Calvin's doctrine. Calvin's take on the metaphysics of the Medieval Catholic church owes much to the nominalism of Ockham. Calvin held that the principle cause of misunderstanding of doctrine was that mankind thought themselves able to interpret the nature of God, "The principal cause of obscurity, however, is, that we are with the greatest difficulty induced to leave the glory of righteousness entire to God alone... And in all ages there have been sophists exercising their pen

⁹⁶ Brian, "Catholic Liturgies," 187.

⁹⁷ Brian, "Catholic Liturgies," 187; Tanner, "The Eucharist," 135-136.

⁹⁸ T.M. Moore, "Some Observations Concerning the Educational Philosophy of John Calvin," in *Articles on Calvin and Calvinism: Calvin's Work in Geneva* ed. Richard Gamble, (New York: Garland Publishing, 1992), 222; Macy, "The Medieval Inheritance," 30.

⁹⁹ Macy, "The Medieval Inheritance," 33.

in extolling human righteousness.”¹⁰⁰ Calvin put a great deal of emphasis on the inability of man to reason itself way to salvation, arguing that man is entrapped in sin and hence man is “unfit to think a good thought.”¹⁰¹ The application of Aristotle, being wholly uninspired by Christ or the Bible, is then by nature folly under Calvin’s doctrine of *sola scriptura*; this rejection of pagan philosophy is by no means unique, previously being expressed by the Franciscan theologian Peter Olivi (1248-1298) and even before by early church scholars.¹⁰² The natural course of the thought of man, according to Calvin, was to detract from the righteousness of God and attribute a prideful primacy to man’s reason, which is why he placed no objection to the emphasis on the importance of explaining scripture and rites “piously and salubriously for the advantage of Christians...” expressed in the German *Interim* of Charles V.¹⁰³

Parallel to these theological developments was a vast expansion in the popular devotion shown to the eucharist. One of the principal consequences of the Gregorian reforms was a widespread increase in “Lay activism... some acceptable to the clergy and other unacceptable.”¹⁰⁴ The festival of *Corpus Christi* was one such demonstration that received immense popularity in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, and even received sanction from St. Thomas Aquinas and Pope Urban IV.¹⁰⁵ Prior to the first festival, there was a widespread increase in lay interest in the eucharist, partially stemming from tales of of the beguines, women who would fast for long periods before receiving the eucharist.¹⁰⁶ The festival centered around an

¹⁰⁰ Calvin, “Acts of the Council,” 108.

¹⁰¹ Calvin, “Acts of the Council,” 109.

¹⁰² Macy, “The Medieval Inheritance,” 28.

¹⁰³ Calvi “True Method of Giving Peace,” 207.

¹⁰⁴ Lynch, *The Medieval Church*, 149.

¹⁰⁵ Lynch, *The Medieval Church*, 284.

¹⁰⁶ Miri Rubin, *Corpus Christi: The Eucharist in Late Medieval Culture* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 169.

immense procession in which the host was carried through the town in a canopy, and processioners would prostrate themselves before the host as it passed.¹⁰⁷ Alongside the festival of *Corpus Christi*, the Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament and the Forty Hours' Devotion developed, in which the sacrament was further exalted by the laity and clergy.¹⁰⁸ The exaltation of the eucharist led not only to an increase in devotion, but a massive wave of tales of miracle hosts in the twelfth century, which eventually garnered the condemnation and concern of many prominent theologians.¹⁰⁹

Calvin's emphasis on educating the laity manifested itself in his rejection of the devotional practices that revolved around the eucharist. Calvin was deeply worried about the presence of icons, whether statues or the eucharist itself, and how the laity would prostrate themselves before these icons in the place of solemn worship of God.¹¹⁰ Calvin specifically worried that the theological subtleties of *dulia* vs *latria* and *hyperdulia* in devotion, that were meant to ensure that higher worship was always directed towards God, were lost on the practitioners, "But some subtle disputant will object, that there are divers[e] species of adoration... As if these subtle distinctions were either known or present to the minds of those who prostrate themselves before images."¹¹¹ Calvin saw the celebration of the eucharist as an even greater demonstration of this confusion writing that, "While ceremonies ought to be living exercises of piety, men are vainly occupied with numbers of them that are both frivolous and useless."¹¹² Calvin's critique, while bearing much merit within an Erasmian framework, passes

¹⁰⁷ Brian, "Catholic Liturgy," 191.

¹⁰⁸ Brian, "Catholic Liturgy," 195.

¹⁰⁹ Macy, "The Medieval Inheritance," 32.

¹¹⁰ John Calvin, *The Necessity of Reforming the Church*, 131.

¹¹¹ Calvin, *The Necessity of Reforming the Church*, 131.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, 132.

over the communal experience and devotional experiences that benefited much of the laity. Calvin, however, brought in new communal elements to the Lord's Supper as part of his theological actualization in order to offset a potential disengagement of the laity.

Calvin's theology pertaining to the Lord's Supper mainly derives from his *Commentaries on the Harmony of the Evangelists*, where he places side by side Matthew 26:26-30, Mark 14:22-26, and Luke 22:17-20.¹¹³ Here Calvin argued that the words, "This is my body," were meant to signify a transfiguration of purpose rather than a transfiguration of substance, "So then, the *bread* [sic], which had been appointed for the nourishment of the body, is chosen and sanctified by Christ to a different use, so as to begin to be spiritual food."¹¹⁴ Calvin indicated that the bread was not what was special and nor should it be revered—as the doctrine of transubstantiation might lead one to believe—but rather the intent of the bread was spiritual nourishment. Calvin also uses Christ's words from Matthew, "I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine," to indicate that no transubstantiation of the wine into blood has occurred, for the wine is still of the vine rather than of the body.¹¹⁵

Calvin, thus, sought a twofold solution to what he perceived to be the ill-education of the laity: first, alteration of sacramental practices and second, the increased education of the laity through the eucharistic screening process. One such alteration was the use of common bread, whereas in the Catholic mass the Eucharist was of unleavened bread, in the Lord's Supper.¹¹⁶ Calvin further ended the practice of kneeling during the sacraments, in accordance with the traditions of the ancient church.¹¹⁷ A third change was that the communicants would directly

¹¹³ See Appendix; Calvin, *Commentary on the Harmony*, 202-203.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 206.

¹¹⁵ Calvin, *Harmony of the Evangelists*, 208.

¹¹⁶ Mentzer, "Reformed Liturgical Practices," 244.

¹¹⁷ Mentzer, "Reformed Liturgical Practices," 244; Tanner, "The Eucharist," 135-136.

receive the bread, and be allowed to hold and chew it, a practice which was not permitted in Catholic or Lutheran ceremonies.¹¹⁸ Part of the education process for those who wished to partake in the Lord's Supper was to receive and demonstrate clear understanding of the catechism which explicitly denounced the Catholic understanding of the eucharist,¹¹⁹

M. You do not imagine then, either that the body is inclosed in the bread or the blood in the wine?

S. Neither is inclosed. My understanding rather is, that in order to obtain the reality of the signs, our minds must be raised to heaven, where Christ is, and from whence we expect him as Judge and Redeemer, and that it is improper and vain to seek him in these earthly elements.

M. To collect the substance of what you have said- You maintain that there are two things in the Supper, viz., bread and wine, which are seen by the eyes, handled by the hands, and perceived by the taste, and Christ by whom our souls are inwardly fed with their proper aliment?

S. True...¹²⁰

Calvin thus ensured that individuals would neither mistake the sacrament tactilely nor intellectually. Both the perceived form and the understood form changed to fit into Calvin's understanding of the sacraments as being symbolic of Christ rather than substantively Christ.

Calvin's structuring of the Lord's Supper around the education of the laity is reflective of his previous works, humanistic and exegetical. Calvin aimed to ensure proper devotion was maintained by mandating proper education for participation in the Lord's Supper and by removing objects which might remind parishioners of the Catholic mass. As Calvin's humanistic influence, insistence on reform of the Lord's Supper, and criticism of popular devotion can be traced throughout his career, this undoubtedly is an actualized element of Calvin's theology.

¹¹⁸ Mentzer, "Reformed Liturgical Practices," 244.

¹¹⁹ Mentzer, "Reformed Liturgical Practices," 238.

¹²⁰ John Calvin, "Catechism of the Church of Geneva, Being a Form of Instruction for Children in the Doctrine of Christ," in *John Calvin: Tracts and Letters*, vol. 2, ed. and trans. Henry Beveridge (Edinburgh: The Banner Of Truth Trust, 2009), 91.

Appendix

Luke 4:38-43 - And he [sic] arose and left the synagogue and entered Simon's house. Now Simon's mother-in-law was ill with a high fever, and they appealed to him on her behalf. And he stood over her and rebuked the fever, and it left her, and immediately she rose and began to serve them. Now when the sun was setting, all those who had any who were sick with various diseases brought them to him, and he laid his hands on every one of them and healed them. And demons also came out of many, crying, "You are the Son of God!" But he rebuked them and would not allow them to speak, because they knew that we was the Christ.¹²¹

Matthew 26:26-30 - Now as they were eating, Jesus took bread and after blessing it broke it and gave it to the disciples, and said, "Take, eat; this is my body." And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, saying, "Drink of it, all of you, for this is my blood of the covenant which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. I will tell you I will not drink again of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom."¹²²

Mark 14:22-26 - And as they were eating, he took bread, and after blessing it broke it and gave it to them and said, "Take; this is my body." And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, and they drank of it. And he said to them, "This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many. Truly, I say to you, I will not drink again of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God."¹²³

¹²¹ Luke. 4:38-43 (English Standard Version)

¹²² Matthew 26:26-30 (English Standard Version)

¹²³ Mark 14:22-26 (English Standard Version)

Luke 22:17-20 - And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he said, “Take this, and divide it among yourselves. For I tell you that from now on I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes.” And he took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, “This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.”¹²⁴

¹²⁴ Luke 22:17-20 (English Standard Version)

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