

# Geneva and the Calvinist Tradition

First introduced by the preaching of Guillaume Farel (1489-1565), the Reformation was adopted at Geneva in 1535-1536. But the Church and the City only took on real importance in the religious sphere with the arrival of Calvin in 1536 and especially after his return from Strasbourg in 1541. With his preaching and teaching, his international activities, and the creation of the Academy in 1559, Calvin turned Geneva into one of the principal centers for the diffusion of the Reformation in Europe.

His thinking drew followers and his ecclesiastical organization served as a model. While the works of Calvin are in general easily available it is by no means the same for those of his chief disciples and colleagues.

For that reason this catalogue includes texts by Guillaume Farel, Pierre Viret (1511-1571), who worked at Geneva

before becoming the reformer of Lausanne, and Théodore de Bèze (1519-1605), Calvin's right hand and later successor as head of the Reformed Church, as well as the founder of a reformed scholasticism that marked the whole 17th century.

Among the students of Calvin who contributed to the establishment of reformed doctrine we have included some talented minor figures, solid theologians from the early period of Calvinist orthodoxy, such as Lambert Daneau (1530-1595), professor at Geneva, later at Leiden and finally in the south of France; Antoine de Chandieu (1534-1591), a French refugee and later professor at the Academy at Lausanne; and Simon Goulart (1548-1628), the historian of the Wars of Religion.

Genevan Protestant theology took on a new importance in the 17th century

thanks to several illustrious theologians whose most important works we present here: Théodore Tronchin (1582-1657), one of the Genevan representatives at the Synod of Dordrecht (1618-1619); Bénédicte Turretini (1588-1631), and especially his son, François Turretini (1629-1687), who expounded an accomplished version of Protestant scholasticism synthesizing the thought of Calvin and Aristotelian logic; and finally, Frédéric Spanheim (1600-1649), also a master of Genevan orthodoxy.

The end of this orthodox period is represented by Bénédicte Pictet (1655-1724), and Jean-Alphonse Turretini (1671-1737), who turned his back on the scholasticism of his father François to effectuate a new synthesis between reformed theology and the rationalist current of the Enlightenment.

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# Switzerland

## Heinrich Bullinger's original publications

This chapter contains a selection of Heinrich Bullinger's works in Latin and German. In some cases, translations of Bullinger's works into Latin, French, German, English, and Dutch have been included because of their importance. This selection is of particular value for Reformation research in that Bullinger has always been overshadowed by Calvin and Zwingli. This situation is biased, if not wrong. In the first place, it was Bullinger who saved the Reformation in Zurich after Zwingli was killed at Kappel in 1531. And in the second place, not only before, but also during and after Calvin (1509-1564), Bullinger can be seen as at least the equal of the Geneva Reformer for Reformed Protestantism as far as his influence and importance are concerned. The term Calvinism, used as key word, is already found in the mid-sixteenth century in the discussions between the Reformed Churches and Rome, Lutheranism, and the Radicals. But this word is misleading, because in this period the Reformed Churches had two main centres and two spiritual leaders, Zurich with Bullinger and Geneva with Calvin. Bullinger and Calvin were friends and companions who had much in common with respect to theology, church organizations, and other ecclesiastical matters, as well as the influence they exerted. All the same, it is by no means justified to describe them both as Calvinists, either from a general point of view or in terms of specific details. But there is above all another reason: Calvin's work has long been and still is a subject of research, whereas Bullinger's theological and ecclesiastical activities and his general importance for church and secular history have received little or no attention. There have always been some scholars who have argued that Bullinger does not deserve this shadow existence; and more recent studies have confirmed his far-reaching influence and sometimes unique effect before, during, and after the time of Calvin. This applies to Bullinger's role in the consolidation and spreading of the Reformed Churches, as well as to their constitution, theology, and confessions, and also to their influence on the political, economic, and social development of large parts of Europe (e.g., the Swiss Confederation, Germany, The Netherlands, Great Britain, France and Hungary) and the New World. His influence and impact are seen in his roughly 100 publications in Latin and German, the most important of which were reprinted many times and translated

into other languages before his death. But this is even more evident from the innumerable still unpublished manuscripts and his unusually large correspondence comprising about 12,000 letters. For several decades, Bullinger's house functioned as a kind of agency where the latest news from all over Europe was collected, analysed, and passed on. And here Bullinger played an advisory role in both ecclesiastical and political matters that could not be treated through the official channels. For the many who needed advice and counsel all over Europe (including Calvin), he was a wise 'oracle' and an energetic helper.

## Selected works by other Swiss Reformers

This chapter comprises a selection of the most important works of the other Swiss Reformers in German Switzerland, included the two sixteenth century Latin editions of Zwingli's works. Their importance mostly has been overlooked because of the emphasis placed upon the work of Calvin and Zwingli by modern scholars. This neglect occurred despite the fact that these Reformers were, like Bullinger, theologians of international importance in the sixteenth century. Today they are totally forgotten, even though they played a decisive role in the development and dissemination of Reformed thought.

This holds particularly for the entire group of pastors and professors who were responsible for the development of the Reformation in Zurich. They included the two Alsatian Humanists, Conrad Pellican (1478-1556), the Hebraist, and Leo Jud (1482-1542), the translator of the Old and New Testaments as well as of many works of Erasmus and Zwingli, and the Italian Peter Martyr Vermigli (1499-1562), who came to Zurich in 1556 after his sojourns in Oxford and Strasbourg. The Zurichers Rudolf Gwalther (1519-1586), Ludwig Lavater (1527-1586), author of *De ritibus et institutis Ecclesiae Tigurinae*, and Josias Simler (1530-1576), the bibliographer and historian, also belonged to this group.

In addition to Zurich and its Reformers, the cities of Basel, Bern, and St. Gall had their own theologians as well. In Basel, Johannes Oecolampadius (1482-1531) helped to introduce the Reformation in 1529 and was active as a pastor and professor in the city. Oecolampadius first emerged as a champion of evangelical preaching in the Swiss Confederacy at the Baden Disputation of 1526, and was later

influential in guiding church reform at Ulm, Memmingen, and Biberach. In the introduction to his *Oecolampadius Bibliography*, which appeared in 1917, Ernst Stachelin said: "It is beyond any doubt that at a time when Zwingli Research is in full bloom and Bucer Research is producing its finest fruits that the third man of this group deserves to be studied and his real value understood". Even today, as Basel celebrated the 450th anniversary of her Reformation, Stachelin's wish has not yet been fulfilled. The IDC microfiche edition makes almost all of Oecolampadius' theological works available to the public and thereby performs a service to scholarship as great as is the publication of Bullinger's works.

The second part also includes selected works of the Bernese theologian Wolfgang Musculus (1497-1563) and of Joachim Vadian (von Watt) (1484-1551) of St. Gall. As a glance at the titles of their works reveals, all of the above-mentioned theologians were primarily concerned with the exposition of the Holy Scriptures. Their philological, exegetical, and homiletical works concerning the Old and New Testaments met the needs of their day in two ways: 1. by fulfilling the aim of the Reformation, which was to gain a correct understanding of the Bible; and 2. by aiding pastors and students of theology who were caught in a severe educational crisis. Naturally, their numerous dogmatic, polemical, and historical works also served the same purpose. Even though they spoke and wrote about the same themes over and over again, what Musculus maintained in the introduction to his *Common Places* can also be said of all of them: "... in the same way that Augustine approves various translations of the Holy Scriptures because they might be useful to industrious readers, should not one also be allowed to work on a treatment of Places which many in the church of God ... might find useful for understanding sacred things?"

## Secondary sources dealing with Heinrich Bullinger and the Swiss Urban Reformation

A selection of printed and secondary sources dealing with Bullinger and the Swiss Urban Reformation, comprising older, virtually unobtainable books published on the subject since the sixteenth century. They include chronicles, documentary selections, letters and biographies.