

REFORMATIONAL THOUGHT AND THE SOCIAL COVENANT*

Paul Wells

One of the most marked features of modernity in the West has been the rise of individualism and its correlate – the relationship between the individual and the community. In terms of political structures, the radical separation between the individual and the state has been either seen as the way of guaranteeing the liberty of the individual, in the best possible worlds or, on the contrary, a way of remodelling humanity by programmes of social engineering, in which the state acts as omniscient and omnipresent benefactor of the people.

In both instances, the sovereignty of the reified state, either in a democratic sense or a totalitarian one, is thought to act for the good of the people. In the first case because power has been invested in the political institution by the people and acts for them, or in the second, because those who are in power know what is best anyway. Both versions are tributary of the thought of Jean Bodin (1529-1596), a contemporary of Calvin, who in his *Six livres de la république* advocated the principle of indivisible sovereignty, which became the foundation of the modern state system.

At the end of the modern era, we can recognise that this principle has had both a positive and a negative influence. On the one hand, it has been a motor for the rise of centralised government and the development of coherent policy, organisation and the structuring of modern societies, while contributing to the development of individual freedom within the bounds of law, implying political choice and representation. On the other hand, the indivisible sovereignty of the state has fostered increasingly monolithic units with tentacular bureaucracies, impersonal policies and “might is right” attitudes, with colonialism, warmongering and control as their inevitable consequences.

At the end of the modern period it is generally recognised today that if a return to premodernity is as unthinkable as it is undesirable, the problems of state sovereignty raised by reified indivisible state power cannot be avoided, not only because of its historical outcomes, but also because of cultural developments. Theoretically, the big loser in the modern developments was the theory of federalism. Practically, the losers were the intermediate institutions between the state and the individual, all forms of non-governmental associate life, including the family and the church. These mediating expressions of cultural life, standing between the state and the naked individual gradually diminished in influence. Today, in the context of the emerging Europe, the

question of federalism can hardly be avoided. Even where the principle of state sovereignty is not questioned, it is increasingly obvious that the exercise of absolute sovereignty is problematic. Information techniques, the corporate power of multinational industries, ethnic identity, population movements and militant groups, all pose serious and diverse challenges to centralisation and control. The time may be ripe for another look at federalism as a form of non-pyramidal exercise of authority in society and the importance of associations and consensus for cultural activities.

For this reason, we have chosen to look at the contribution of reformational thought to the development of a consensual and covenantal view of politico-social relationships.¹ As well as providing some insights to the past, this might also stimulate reflection as to the development of a balanced exercise of authority in society in terms of consensualism and the development of mediating institutions between the state and the individual. Our remarks will focus in on the theory of John Calvin and Johannes Althusius as being representative of the origins and development of reformational polity.

John Calvin and good Government

“Calvin was the patron of modern human rights. In his thought he anticipated the modern republican form of government... Calvin stood against the abuses of power in his time and wrestled with the problem of the right to revolt.”² Such an opinion will come as a shock to anyone who has simply associated the name of Calvin with ‘Genevan theocracy’ or the case of Servetus. However, Geneva was not a theocracy in any sense of the term, as A. Biéler has demonstrated.³ He was not even a citizen of the town until a few years before his death and he fought all his life for the division of the power of church and state.⁴ On the contrary, everywhere Calvinism went, freedom was the eventual result for “in Calvinism lies the origin and guarantee of our constitutional liberties.”⁵

What are the features of Calvin’s thought that justify these surprising opinions? The questions are complex, but perhaps two focal points can be indicated. Firstly, where does authority lie and how is it expressed? Secondly, what is good government for Calvin and how is authority exercised?

In reply to the first question, the traditional discussions had centred around the relation of the church and the state. Already in the later middle ages conciliarism had called into question the power of the church and in particular that of the Pope. Marsilius of Padua had produced the most radical answers, contesting the authority of the Pope and the traditional Augustinianism that set

the church over the state. Every Pope should be resisted and deposed, as divine right resides in the people not the papacy.⁶

Martin Luther was one of the inheritors of this radical questioning. Fundamental to his view of God's governance of the world was the distinction between the two kingdoms, to which he returned repeatedly. Luther thought that it was an error to mix the two, a situation inherited from Constantine, in which the church sought to dominate the world and the world tried to govern the church. "The devil, he said, never stops cooking and brewing these two kingdoms into each other."⁷ The spiritual kingdom of the church is totally different in its politics from the world and a wedge must be driven between the two. Even though the two kingdoms are under the authority of Christ, the rules governing them are different. Luther could even call on the authority of the German princes to limit the power of the Pope. He had a high view of the responsibilities of civil rulers; since in their domain they are representatives of God, to resist the prince is to resist God.

However, Luther was under no illusions. He could say: "a wise prince is a mighty rare bird, and an upright prince even rarer. They are generally the biggest fools or the worst scoundrels on earth; therefore one must constantly expect the worst from them and look for little good, especially in divine matters."⁸ One may go to war for the Prince, but not against him: "rebellion is not just simple murder; it is like a great fire, which attacks and devastates a land."⁹ His only remedy for tyranny seems to be prayer for justice. Luther had an almost pathological fear of rebellion. Perhaps the fact that he lived all his life in small states which were absolutist regimes with little legal tradition played a role in his thinking, beyond theological considerations.

Not so with Calvin. "Shakespeare loves a king, but Calvin rarely mentions one with admiration."¹⁰ Calvin counted with the political use of religion, but deplored what Machiavelli recommended. He adopted Luther's distinction of the two kingdoms, without their law and gospel hermeneutic and took it to more consequent lengths, on a different basis.¹¹

Two factors were capital in Calvin's approach. Firstly, his understanding of man's situation was one that emphasised the discontinuity and heterogeneity of the divine and the human.¹² This means that there can never be an identity between human words, acts or institutions and divine authority. The word of God, the living, dynamic and ever relevant divine revelation, stands over against all instances of human authority, whether social, ecclesiastical or cultural, which are in constant mutation. On every issue man is brought back to the Lord and his justice in new situations. Calvin's thought on the relation of the word of God to

human situations was Chalcedonian. The divine word is ever distinct from all that is human and can never be confused with it, but it is never to be separated from it, but ever speaking to it in all its areas. Calvin's thought is non-dualistic, since the dynamic and prophetic word rules over the whole realm of nature and history.¹³

The divine sovereignty of God's word rules over church and state alike. These are to be distinguished but not separated, since they are placed under the one divine authority. If Calvin's practice tended to be conservative his theory was potentially revolutionary. It meant that ultimate authority could be vested in no human institution or human person. For Calvin, there are two different worlds in man, one that is internal and the other external, regulating external behaviour. Different, though not contradictory spiritual principles, reign in both areas. The state is to leave the church alone, and inversely, the church is to exercise no civil authority.¹⁴

The second non-dualistic element of Calvin's model of divine sovereignty concerns his notion of the covenant. All of creation and its relations are tied to God and exist in covenant with him. Both the ruler and the citizen exist under God, in covenant with him and with each other. Calvin considered that the Christian nations of his time had recognised that covenant through baptism.¹⁵ This is debatable, particularly in respect to how Calvin used this to criticise the Roman church for not respecting the fulfilment of the levitical covenant. However, the main issue is that under God all human relations are covenantal. Man is called to serve the Lord as creature and as all men are placed in a common relation to God, they are also called to serve each other in mutual relations. Human bonds and relationships are but a horizontal expression of the vertical relation existing between all men and God. In this way, Calvin saw social conventions as being a way of fulfilling the great commandment. "Every nation is left free to make such laws as it foresees to be profitable for itself", subject only to "the perpetual rule of love."¹⁶

For this reason Calvin had a more positive way of approaching civil government than Luther, but also because of his ideas about covenant, a more critical approach to abuses. The ruler is seen as "a minister of God in governing his kingdom". As such he exercises "a calling, not only holy and lawful before God, but also the most sacred and by far the most honourable of all callings in the whole life of mortal men."¹⁷ The ruler is "God's tribunal on earth". In maintaining law and order, a ruler indirectly defends God's kingdom, partly by establishing social uprightness and partly by creating a bulwark against anarchy and heresy. In his discussion of social relationships Calvin divides the subject

into three parts “the *magistrate* (ruler), who is the protector and guardian of the laws; the *laws*, according to which he governs; the *people*, who are governed by the laws and obey the magistrate.”¹⁸ The covenantal nature of this structure can be seen in the fact that the laws are the mediating bond between the ruler and the ruled, and consent to be ruled is placed in a legal framework.

Calvin was under no illusions either about the docility of those to be ruled, nor about the innate temptations of rulers and ridiculed lack of realism with regard to human nature. Because of the difficulty of the task and the temptations of power, authority in the political sense is best in the hands of many rather than of one. If “equity” is the aim of the law, the end can best be achieved by power sharing.¹⁹ In the 1559 edition of the *Institutes* Calvin qualifies the flat assertion that “aristocracy tempered by democracy excels other forms” (of government) by the following consideration:

“The vice or inadequacy of men renders it wiser and more tolerable that many hold the sway, so that they may mutually be helpers of each other, teach and admonish one another, and if one asserts himself unfairly, the many may be censors and masters, repressing his wilfulness.”²⁰

The preference for a multiplicity of rulers, combined with his suggestion that they be elected worthies, reveal the extent of Calvin’s republicanism.

‘The best condition of the people is when they can choose, by common consent, their own shepherds: for when any by force usurps the supreme power, it is tyranny; and when men become kings by hereditary right, it seems not consistent with liberty.’²¹

This might well seem banal to modern ears, but for its day, when absolutism, hereditary rights and fixed social stations were the norm, it is rather progressive stuff. Reformational thought from the time of Calvin onwards was fixed in the direction of republicanism, power sharing, the separation of spheres of authority and covenantal consensualism. Calvin himself, to be sure was timid and placed in a precarious situation in Geneva, and for this reason his political practice was conservative and not always as daring as his theoretical ideas.

There was always an ambiguity in Calvin’s thought, related probably in part to the tension between his ideas of sovereignty and authority and the fact that rulers are instituted by God and his ideas concerning liberty. Although rulers are the indispensable “ministers of divine justice”, Calvin was outraged by their excesses of injustice.

“When tyranny has lost its concern for justice, there are no limits to its wickedness; and lamentations do not soften it but aggravate its cruelty... Tyrants therefore do not rest from their injuries and errors until the

wretched people have altogether given up.”²²

From the subjects’ point of view, tyranny is a violation of human dignity and since humanity implies dignity, this essential character is lost under the lash of tyranny.

For Calvin, the Pope was a prime example of tyranny, but he also detested world empires and feared the accumulation of political power. He drew from Augustine the idea that large kingdoms are “great robberies”.²³ So what can be done in the way of resistance? Calvin affirmed that “we must obey princes and others who are in authority, but only insofar as they do not deny to God, the supreme king, father and lord, what is due to him.”²⁴ Passive disobedience is legitimate in the case of tyranny; Calvin quoted as example the refusal of the Hebrew midwives to obey Pharaoh’s command to kill male infants. However, Calvin went a little further. When a sovereign exceeds the limits of his office then he can be brought to order. This cannot be done in an anarchic way by citizens in open revolt. It is the responsibility of the secondary magistrates to make opposition. He introduces a note that is absent in Luther’s thought. Sometimes God raises up avengers from his servants “and arms them with His command to punish the wicked government and deliver his people, oppressed in unjust ways, from the miserable calamity.”²⁵ Let princes hear and be afraid! Toward the end of his *Institutes*, Calvin penned a phrase that was to bear fruit in a way he probably did not anticipate. With regard to the function of the “magistrates of the people” he says:

“I am so far from bidding them to withstand, in accordance with their duty, the fierce licentiousness of kings, that if they wink at kings who violently fall upon and assault the lowly common folk, I declare that their dissimulation involves nefarious perfidy, because they dishonestly betray the freedom of the people, of which they know that that they have been appointed protectors by God’s ordinance.”²⁶

Calvin suggests that perverse rulers are not above the law and that they can be brought to justice by appointed representatives of the people when the need arises. This became the basis upon which the edifice of constitutional democracy was later to be raised. Commenting on Matthew 22.21 Calvin affirms that if “leaders usurp the rights of God they are to be denied obedience as far as possible short of offence to God.”²⁷

If Calvin’s thought was not original, because of precedents in his predecessors, it contrasts with that of Luther in that he proposes the ideal of a well-ordered commonwealth with checks and balances to power. Within this order, resistance and reform can be envisaged. An orderly commonwealth

(*statum reipublicae bene constitutum*) is one in which those in positions of authority cooperate and use their skill to promote the general welfare of the people. “This model suggests that in practice a ruler presides over a complex network of associations and is responsible for far more than punishing the wicked. The administration of ‘justice’ means, in addition to punishment, protecting the weak and helpless and ensuring that all receive their due”.²⁸ In this respect the model of the covenant of people under God, where each has a proper place and where God alone is Lord, is the foundation of liberty in social association. It also allows for orderly resistance in the case of abuse of office. Reformational thought developed in lands that adopted it as a form of opposition to tyranny and the establishment of order in government, in a situation where each individual has a freedom of conscience to serve God. For Calvin, good government is briefly: “no kind of government is more happy than this, where liberty is regulated with becoming moderation and properly established on a durable basis.”²⁹ “Calvinism was a creed tailor made for the transformation of the reigning social order.”³⁰

The Limits of Resistance

The magisterial reformation was placed in the awkward position of avoiding the charges of sedition and anarchy while at the same time often being in a opposition to the powers that be. It was only natural that the question of the limits of resistance to injustice particularly in the realm of the freedom of conscience should become an issue.

Calvin’s ideal of elected representatives and authority exercised collectively and not from the apex of a pyramid down led to conflict particularly with the theory of the divine rights of monarchy propounded by Richard Hooker, the great Elizabethan apologist of Anglicanism, succinctly expressed by James I who believed he was ordained to serve “the weal of the people” but not “the will of the people.”

Theodore de Bèze, Calvin’s successor in Geneva took Calvin’s thought further in his *Du droit des Magistrats* (1574). A jurist like Calvin, he argued the right of the inferior magistrates to revolt against the government but was more explicit, proposing in his final chapter that arms may be taken in good conscience in order to defend freedom of conscience.³¹ This line was taken even further by his Scottish contemporaries John Knox, George Buchanan and later by Samuel Rutherford in his *Lex, Rex*. (1644), written to refute a treatise on the

divine right of kings by John Maxwell. The magistrate owes submission to the law of God and this is confirmed by means of the ordination or inauguration oath. If the covenant is broken with the people, it is no longer binding on them in their relation to the sovereign. Knox had argued that the right of rebellion against tyrannical and idolatrous rulers was not only that of the magistrates or the nobility but also of the elect. Rutherford followed suit by affirming that “the fountain of power remains most eminently in the people... therefore it is unlimited in the people and bounded and limited in the king, and so less in the king than in the people.” The king is not above the people, because his power is received from the people and is communicated to him “in the manner and the measure that they think good”.³² The power of a monarch is only relative to an end, that of “the safety and good of his people.” They do not “break covenant when they put in action that natural power to conserve themselves.”³³ In fact the power of the ruler is not his, but it is only delegated and remains the power of the people.

Rutherford proposed that the divine power of leadership is vested in the people of God, and under his rule, for the good of his people. This power is never divested from the people, but only vested in a leader by their nomination and consent. The ruler is therefore vested with governing authority from God as he is sworn in by the people and he rules, under God, by their consent. Should he prove unfaithful, the mutual contract is broken and appropriate steps for destitution can be taken. This is but a short step from the social contract theory proposed by John Locke and followed in the American Declaration of Independence and Constitution in which the “just power of government (is) in the consent of the governed.” In England, the Revolution settlement of 1690 embodied the principles of *Lex, Rex*.

The notions of the choice of the people, that power lies with the people in that choice, of consent to be governed and the right to change the government in the interest of freedom as proposed by Rutherford are significant contributions to the rise of Western democracy, although they are a world away from the secularised social contract of Rousseau in which obedience to God is removed both from the rulers and the ruled.

Johannes Althusius, Federalism and consent

Althusius, a German who spent much of his life in Emden, is largely unknown today, but it is not without reason that he has been called the “father of modern federalism”.³⁴ He took the seeds cultivated by Calvin and Beza and

planted them in the field of politics. His major work *Politica Methodice Digesta*, written in 1603 and enlarged in 1610 and 1614. Following the methods of Ramist rhetoric, it was influential in his time as a systematic republican politics, but was only translated into English and published in 1995.³⁵

Althusius was more systematic than his predecessors and also far more radical. A tyrant is one who violates “word and oath”. Half a century before the execution of Charles I of England he affirmed that “absolute power is tyrannical” and a dictator can be justly killed when his tyranny is incurable.³⁶ However, what is more interesting than this case in point is his systematic overview, which is the most complete expression of reformational politics ever to have been formulated. Standing at the dawn of the modern era his system is thought provoking for those who are in another period of similar change today, even if his thought as a whole was eclipsed by the rise of national state sovereignty with its structures of pyramidal centralised power.

Daniel Elazar affirms that “the road to modern democracy began with the Protestant Reformation in the sixteenth century, particularly among those exponents of Reformed Protestantism who developed a theology and politics that set the Western world back on the road to popular self government, emphasizing liberty and equality.”³⁷ Althusius’ importance is that he synthesises the political experience of the Holy Roman Empire and the political ideas of covenant theology. In his treatise, he presents “a comprehensive theory of federal republicanism rooted in a covenantal view of human society... It presents a theory of polity building based on a compound political association established by the citizens through their primary associations on the basis of consent rather than a reified state imposed by a rule or an elite.”³⁸

For Althusius politics is above all symbiosis, or lives running together. Here is the definition from the opening lines of his work.

“Politics is the art of associating (*consociandi*) men for the purpose of establishing, cultivating, and conserving social life among them. Whence it is called ‘symbiotics’. The subject matter of politics is association (*consociatio*) in which those who live together pledge themselves each to the other, by explicit or tacit agreement, to mutual communication of whatever is useful and necessary for the harmonious exercise of social life. The end of political man is holy, just, comfortable, and happy symbiosis, a life lacking nothing either necessary or useful.”³⁹

At the end of the modern era with its abuses of power, oppression and victims without end, and at a time when politicians’ politics are a subject of scepticism or indifference, this declaration of intent comes as a breath of fresh air. It is to be

noted that political life is not primarily the exercise of power, but the art of living together. As a means to develop living together, it has at heart association or bonding. This is accomplished by a pledge, an oath of agreement, in which men function in such a way as to give themselves to each other, according to their differing functions. This is the basis for “communication”, not just verbal exchange, but of all that is useful to build a common social life in harmony. Communication is sharing of life. Living together by means of mutual agreement and consent for the common good experienced in a shared life has as its end justice, peace and happiness. Behind Althusius’ definition we can hear echoes of the second table of the Decalogue but also of Jesus’ summary of the law, which takes in its scope loving one’s neighbour as oneself. Apart from this we find the reformational notions of covenant, mutual agreement, freedom and the sharing of benefits which fuel the democratic ideal.

At the heart of Althusius’ republic, *res publica*, stands the notion of justice, to be achieved by equity in agreement and balanced social relationships. Liberty is safeguarded by a series of checks and balances in the private and public spheres. Althusius’ suggests that the body politic be organised around five sorts of associative life, two private and three public. These permanent structures allow individuals to have access to social life, to be represented and to preserve fundamental freedoms. In the realm of private associations Althusius indicates the centrality of the family and the *collegium*. Because man is created in the image of God, he stands in relation to others because of his genetic heritage and his basic human gifts. Because they are related to the creation, these forms of association are more permanent and supportive of human life than public associations which may come and go. So humans do not stand as naked apes in the jungle of life with no vis-à-vis other than the monolithic political state. Man shares first of all with his next of kin in a narrow or broader sense within a social tissue structured by common heritage, culture and story. By his vocation in the *collegium*, man forms associations to fulfil his calling in the use of his gifts. These may include guilds, academic institutions, churches, trades unions and all kind of private associations based on a common interest.⁴⁰ These “clubs” have rites of initiation and rules of membership based on mutual interest and consent to engage in activity together. “Communication among colleagues is the activity by which an individual helps a colleague, and so upholds the plan of social life set forth in covenant agreements.” For Althusius, unlike Bodin, these are not activities of citizenship, but of brotherhood. Althusius gives many biblical examples.

The public realm is comprised of three arenas, the city, the province

and the commonwealth, based not on ties of human relations or consent to a common interest, but on representation, delimited by geographic locality. Public associations are to be constituted and structured like building blocks by a process of direct representation. Thus families and *collegia* are represented in cities, cities in provinces and provinces in the commonwealth. Cities and provinces are particular federations, differing from the *res publica* which is a universal association. Sovereignty is vested in the people in such a way that popular sovereignty determines what is universal. A senate or similar governing body represents the people through delegates from the private associations which provide the basis for representation in the public associations. Thus there is a separation of the private and the public spheres with different kind of executive powers, but there is also a continuity established through representation in the common good.

By contrast with Spinoza who took the Old Testament to only apply to Israel in its land, Althusius sees the Biblical commonwealth constituted as a federation of tribes founded on a covenant, under a common constitution of law, as being the prime model for federalism.⁴¹ The constitution is best established by the common consent of the people expressed by a Senate, which has the right of legislating for public associations. A chief executive may preside over the communication of things, services and rights. Thus “administration and government of a commonwealth is nothing other than the execution of law. Therefore this law alone prescribes not only the order of administering for the magistrate but also the rule of living for all subjects.”⁴² Althusius considers the foundation of the law to be common to all human beings, a law of nature, which has specific expression in the Decalogue, and which is applied in proper law (*lex propria*), drawn up by the magistrate on this basis.⁴³

This is a comprehensive view of federal republicanism with its basis in a covenantal view of human society in which participation, consent and communication are capital. The emphasis on association is essentially a rejection of statism with a concentration of power in a particular instance. Sovereignty is vested in the people. As D. Elazar has commented: “Althusius has provided a proper application of the biblical model. For the Bible, only God is ultimately sovereign. Politically however, sovereignty is vested with the people who possess operational sovereignty within the framework of God’s constitution... The constitutional document and the network of associations, symbiotic relations and communications of things, services and right/law are in a sense the best protection against tyranny and for what we would today call human rights.”⁴⁴

Conclusion

What can be learned for today from the heritage of reformational thinking? In the complexity of the modern world, if it is impossible, undesirable even, to attempt to transfer the past into the present, some principles may serve to stimulate reflection on political themes. For the sake of debate let's try and imagine a few of Calvin or Althusius' reactions if they turned up today. I think they would go something like this:

1. Life is more than politics. It is a rich tissue of sharing relationships based on a multitude of agreements that allow individuals to aspire to freedom in the exercise of their activities whether familial, cultural, religious, economic or ludic. All of life is politics but governmental meddling in areas where it has no place can only lead to a stultifying lack of social diversity, which is ironically reinforced by modern individualism.
2. Politics is more than power. Proper politics involves sharing. Communication of information and transparency is the *bête noire* of modern democracies, with their secret services, decisions taken for "reasons of state" while the truth is too often hidden from the public by a media smoke-screen.
3. Our 'tyranny' became your dictatorial totalitarianisms or your statist myths. The reformational view of the exercise of sovereignty is the best answer to absolutism. Better than the popular sovereignty of the French revolution or the state sovereignty of the post-hegelians, is the view of sovereignty exercised in different spheres in which "different developments of social life have nothing above themselves but God... the State has nothing to command in their domain."⁴⁵ Concentrations of power in anonymous centralised state institutions are dangerous. "Responsibility and authority are not channelled through one institution." True leaders with authority in different areas of social life exist in the interests of servanthood.⁴⁶
4. Beware of the European Union. It is potentially dangerous, if it leads to concentrations of power in a presidium or in the hands of anonymous bureaucrats. However, it can be a great blessing as a *res publicae*, an association of associations (*consociatio consociationum*) in which the people as a whole find meaning. A new principal and structured federalism is necessary to legitimise the European project.
5. Concern must be expressed for mediating forms of association with

autonomous life between the State and the individual – families, cultural associations, labour unions and ecclesiastical institutions – in which liberty of association and conscience are the basis of consent.

6. The religious question. Economics is not everything, no more than politics. The present religious vacuum has serious implications, as nature abhors a vacuum. A new transcendence is the need of the hour, one that can provide a foundation for law and justice. “God’s word must rule, but in the sphere of the State only through the conscience of the persons invested with authority.”⁴⁷ The separation of Church and State is the New Testament model as both have, under God, a different calling. Where did the Christian church in the West lose the way?

*«Reformational Thought and the Social Covenant», in *Themelios*, 31 (2006:3), 32-47. Also in French «La théorie politique réformationnelle et le pacte social», *LRR*, 58 (2007:5), 41-66.

¹ The Reformer inherited a whole tradition from feudal Europe, in which the notions of covenants and oaths had played an important part, handed down in the traditions of Augustinian theology. On the covenant idea in later medieval society and theology see P. A. Lillback, *The Binding of God. Calvin’s Role in the Development of Covenant Theology*, Grand Rapids, Baker, 2001, ch. 2.

² R. D. Knudsen, ‘Calvinism as a Cultural Force’ in W.S. Reid, ed., *John Calvin. His Influence in the Modern World*, Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 1982, 13. See generally H. Höpfl, *The Christian Polity of John Calvin*, Cambridge University Press, 1982.

³ A. Biéler, *La pensée économique et sociale de Calvin*, Genève, Georg, 1959, 128, 300.

⁴ See W. G. Naphy, *Calvin and the Consolidation of the Genevan Reformation*, Manchester University Press, 1994.

⁵ G. van Prinsterer, quoted in A. Kuyper, ‘Calvinism and Politics’, in *Lectures on Calvinism*, Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1961, 78.

⁶ Lillback, 34.

⁷ M. Luther on Psalm 101, *Luther’s Works*, 13, 194.

⁸ M. Luther, *Temporal Authority*, *Luther’s Works*, 45, 113.

⁹ M. Luther, *Against the Robbing and Murdering Hordes of Peasants*, *Luther’s Works*, 46, 50.

¹⁰ J.T. Mc Neill, 'Calvin and Civil Government', in D. McKim, ed., *Readings in Calvin's Theology*, Grand Rapids, Baker, 1984, 261.

¹¹ Cf. D. Vandrunen, 'The Context of Natural Law: John Calvin's Doctrine of the Two Kingdoms', *Journal of Church and State*, June 2004.

¹² Biéler, 516.

¹³ Knudsen, 16.

¹⁴ W.J. Bouwsma, *John Calvin. A Sixteenth Century Portrait*, Oxford University Press, 1988, ch. 13.

¹⁵ Cf. Lillback, 37.

¹⁶ J. Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, IV.20.14-15.

¹⁷ Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, IV.20.4.

¹⁸ Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, IV.20.3.

¹⁹ For Calvin's views on the law, see Mc Neill, 266ff.

²⁰ McNeill, 272.

²¹ J. Calvin, Commentary on Micah 5.5.

²² Calvin, Commentary on Exodus 5.9.

²³ Calvin, Commentary on Isaiah 47.10.

²⁴ Calvin, Commentary on Acts 4.19.

²⁵ Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, IV.20.30.

²⁶ Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, IV.20.31.

²⁷ Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, IV.20.32.

²⁸ Bouwsma, 210. Cf. Biéler, 326ff.

²⁹ *Institutes*, IV.20.8.

³⁰ Cf. D. H. Compier, *John Calvin's Rhetorical Doctrine of Sin*, Lewiston, NY, Edwin Mellen Press, 2001, 9.

³¹ T. de Bèze, *Du droit des Magistrats*, Genève, Droz, 1970, 67.

³² S. Rutherford, *Lex, Rex*, Harrisonburg, Sprinkle Publications, 1982, 82.

³³ Rutherford, 84.

³⁴ See H. Woldring, 'The Constitutional State in the Political Philosophy of Johannes Althusius', *European Journal of Law and Economics* 5 (1998:2) 123-132 and J. Coffey, 'Johannes Althusius' on the web site of the Jubilee Centre.

³⁵ J. Althusius, *Politica*, Indianapolis, Liberty Fund, 1995, edited and translated by F. S. Carney with an introduction by D. J. Elazar. The best available discussion about Althusius in general is by Daniel J. Elazar, 'The multi-faceted covenant. The Biblical approach to the problem of organizations, constitutions, and liberty as reflected in the thought of Johannes Althusius.' It is accessible as a paper of the Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs on internet. Martin Buber was also influenced by Althusius, particularly in his *Kingship of God*, New York, Harper and Row, 1967.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 191, 199.

³⁷ *Ibid*, xxxv.

³⁸ *Ibidem*.

³⁹ *Ibid*, 17

⁴⁰ *Ibid*, 28ff.

⁴¹ *Ibid*, xxxvi.

⁴² *Ibid*, 134

⁴³ *Ibid*, 139.

⁴⁴ Elazar, 'The multi-faceted covenant', art. cit.

⁴⁵ Abraham Kuyper's view of 'sphere sovereignty' in his *Lectures on Calvinism*, 91.

⁴⁶ P. Marshall, *Thine is the Kingdom. A Biblical Perspective on the Nature of Government and Politics Today*, London, Marshalls, 1984, 50, 57, 59.

⁴⁷ Kuyper, 104.