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John Calvin

Calvin Courier

The newsletter of the H. Henry Meeter Center for Calvin Studies

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From the Director

As a busy but productive summer moves into autumn, we are delighted to report on our various programs and upcoming events. Our four-week National Endowment for the Humanities summer seminar was very successful. The sixteen participants, two co-directors, and three visiting faculty all benefitted from the experience. See the report on p. 2 for more on this seminar and participants' feedback. Our four Meeter Center fellowship recipients also made excellent use of the Center and its resources, and the three whose stay overlapped with our NEH seminar enjoyed the opportunity to interact with a larger group of colleagues. See p. 3 for Andrew Spicer's report on his faculty fellowship experience. We look forward to several public lectures and presentations in the fall and spring, and we are already planning for our summer 2014

Genevan paleography workshop, which will be led once again by Dr. Thomas Lambert. This two-week session provides outstanding opportunities for graduate students and colleagues who are planning archival work – there is no greater boost to confidence and efficiency in the archives than an intensive preparation on how to read sixteenth-century handwriting. See p. 3-4 for more details on how to apply. Finally, we offer our hearty congratulations to long-time Meeter Center board chair and supporter, Dr. Richard Muller of Calvin Theological Seminary, who was recently honored with a festschrift edited by three of his former graduate students. See p. 3 for more information on this new work.

Karin Y. Maag

The Heidelberg Catechism 450 Years On

In this year of the 450th anniversary of the Heidelberg Catechism, the Meeter Center hosted a Reformation Day lecture by Lyle D. Bierma entitled "The Origins of the Heidelberg Catechism in Ecumenical Perspective." Dr. Bierma is professor of Systematic Theology at Calvin Theological Seminary and has authored several scholarly works on the Catechism, most recently *The Theology of the Heidelberg Catechism: A Reformation Synthesis* (2013). In the lecture it was asked if the Heidelberg Catechism (HC) in its day was ecumenical in origin and character? The answer, it was suggested, is both "yes" and "no".

The first part of the lecture showed how the HC was in its design and origin ecumenical in a qualified sense. Hoping to mediate between Gnesio-Lutherans, Melancthonian Lutherans, late Zwinglians / Bullingerians, and Calvinists as the territory of the Palatinate shifted towards Reformed doctrine, the Elector Frederick III appointed the scholarly team tasked with drafting the Catechism wisely and representatively. Ursinus and his co-laborers blended various Protestant flavors together: Luther's Small Catechism (1529), Melancthon's Augsburg Confession (1530) and *Examen Ordinandum* (1552), Calvin's Genevan Catechism (1542), and Beza's two confessions (1560). The result was what Dr. Bierma called "a kind of Lutheran vine onto which various Reformed branches were grafted."

The second part of the lecture focused on ways in which the HC's ecumenicalism was limited. Its ecumenicalism was restricted, for example, by the political motives underlying the Elector Frederick's promotion of the HC. Internal political unity, rulers felt, suffered from theological divisions. The HC was also less than ambitiously ecumenical in participating in the fray of sixteenth-century church and theological polemics. A number of HC questions and answers opposed Roman Catholic practices and teachings, combated specific Anabaptist views and countered some understandings of the Gnesio-Lutherans. The historical context helps to explain this trend: religious practice, it was believed, was a social glue that had to hold communities and territories together.

In his conclusion Dr. Bierma noted the remarkable confessional unity which the HC achieved. Conciliatory and irenic minds clarified true doctrinal common ground and expressed it in the HC with pastoral sensitivity.

Antoine Theron
Calvin Theological Seminary Ph.D Student



Dr. Lyle Bierma



Another Successful Seminar

From July 15 to August 9, 2013, the Meeter Center welcomed sixteen participants (out of a pool of fifty applicants) to our fourth NEH seminar, “Persecution, Toleration, Co-existence: Early Modern Responses to Religious Pluralism.” The group gathered three mornings a week for intensive discussion of primary and secondary sources, and used the remainder of the time for individual scholarship. Visiting faculty Benjamin Kaplan (University College London), Barbara Diefendorf (Boston University), and Dean Bell (Spertus Institute for Jewish Studies) shared their expertise with participants in seminar sessions and one-on-one meetings discussing research projects. Co-directors Karin Maag and Amy Burnett (University of Nebraska Lincoln) met regularly with participants to discuss both individual and collaborative projects. Participants also got to know each other over meals and outings to the farmers’ market, Lake Michigan, and local restaurants. As one participant put it in the evaluation, “This was an absolutely amazing seminar. The directors did an outstanding job of organizing the readings, leading the group, and hosting the participants. Indeed it was probably one of the

Top Row: *James Blakeley, Jason Strandquist, Ekaterina Lomperis, Tim Fehler, Danny Wasserman.* Middle Row: *Susan Cogan, Gerrit Voogt, Victoria Christman, Jane Wicksham, Geoff Dipple, Karin Maag (co-director).* Bottom Row: *Brad Smith Shira Weidenbaum, Amy Burnett (co-director), David Mayes, Beth Plummer, Emily Gray, Greg Bereiter*

best experiences of my academic career.” We are truly grateful to everyone on campus and further afield that helped us make this seminar so successful.

Friends of the Meeter Center

We welcome members to the Friends of the Meeter Center. Friends’ donations help provide funding for special programs, including the Friends of the Meeter Center Fellowships, the Rare Book fund, and the biennial paleography workshop. Checks may be made out to Friends of the Meeter Center and sent to the Center’s address. Thank you for your support! Annual membership fees are:

Student	\$20	Associate	\$100
Supporter	\$40	Partner	\$200
Donor	\$75	Benefactor	\$500

Richard Muller Honored With Festschrift

On October 9, 2013, Calvin Theological Seminary gathered to celebrate the twentieth anniversary of its PhD program. Unknown to Richard Muller, the occasion also served as a time to present to him the extensive festschrift in his honor, edited by three of his former graduate students. The work is published by Brill, and includes over fifty contributions including one by Meeter Center director Karin Maag, and a bibliography of Richard Muller's works prepared by Meeter Center curator Paul Fields and student assistant Andrew McGinnis. We are delighted to join in celebrating the appearance of this work and congratulate Richard for this testimony to his impact on Reformation and post-Reformation scholarly research!

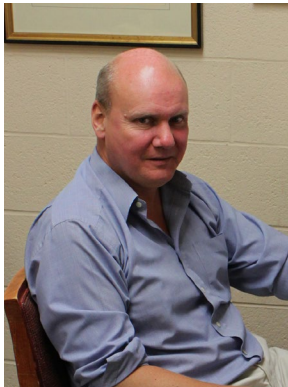


Dr. Richard Muller

Reflections from a Visiting Scholar

To some, 'Huguenot art' might be regarded to be an oxymoron, while for others it is a research topic 'that won't take too long' but this has been the focus of my research during my time as Faculty Fellow at the Meeter Center. While Calvin attacked inappropriate religious imagery and idolatry, he did not condemn the arts per se but recognized artistic talent as a gift from God. It should be

directed towards works that recorded historical events or represented the close observation of nature and the world. For some it has been an easy step from these precepts to the art of the Dutch Golden Age.



Dr. Andrew Spicer

Over the last couple of months, I have taken an alternative perspective by looking at the work of Reformed painters and printmakers in France. While some such as Sebastien Bourdon and

Abraham Bosse are relatively well

known and a lot of their work survives, there are many others for whom this is not the case. Nonetheless, it is clear that there were certain genres that held limited appeal for Huguenot artists such as landscape and still life paintings, while the continued patronage of the crown and the Catholic Church determined the

output of others. Alongside this 'high art', I have also been examining work that was produced specifically for a Huguenot context, such as the decorated tables of the Ten Commandments for the Reformed temples.

The Meeter Center with its rich resources, as well as Calvin College's library, has made this an ideal place to consider the relationship between the Huguenots and art over the summer. The excellent facilities, support, and welcome offered by the Center have helped to make this a stimulating environment in which to think things through and to write. I would therefore like to thank Paul Fields, Karin Maag, and Ryan Noppen for making this such an enjoyable and profitable stay.

Dr. Andrew Spicer

2013 Faculty Research Fellowship recipient and

Professor of Early Modern European History, Oxford Brookes University, UK

Summer French Paleography Workshop

Calling all archive users and manuscript decipherers! This summer from June 16 to 27, 2014, the Meeter Center will host its sixth biennial two-week workshop on 16th century French paleography. This course, co-sponsored by the Sixteenth Century Studies Conference, is intended primarily for graduate students and scholars who seek training in reading manuscript sources in French, whether those documents are stored in French or Swiss archives, or in the Meeter Center's own collection. The instructor is Dr. Thomas Lambert who has extensive experience in reading and transcribing early modern handwritten French texts. He served for many years as one of the key editors of the Geneva Consistory edition project.

Students will have the opportunity to read as broad a range of documents as possible within the time allowed, including criminal proceedings, sermons, deliberations of the Geneva City Council and the Consistory of Geneva, wills, contracts, personal letters, and other documents. Class will be held every morning, Monday through Friday, for three hours, much of which will be devoted to group reading of the texts the student has prepared the previous day. Ideal candidates will have an interest in culture of early-modern France and will have had some exposure to the language and literature of 16th century France, but all students with a strong reading knowledge of French are welcome, regardless of specialty or background. Students accepted into the course will receive a \$500 stipend to help defray travel and accommodation costs, etc. Accommodations can be arranged in

continued on page 4

Lecture Recordings

For our friends who cannot attend, Meeter Center Lectures and Colloquia are recorded, with speakers' permission, and are accessible on the Center's website via podcasts:

<http://www.calvin.edu/meeter/publications/lectures/>



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Summer French Paleography Workshop, *continued*

Calvin College apartments for students who are not from the local area.

For more information or to apply for the course, contact the Meeter Center at meeter@calvin.edu or visit the French paleography webpage on the Center's website at:

<http://www.calvin.edu/meeter/paleography/>

New Books

Belligni, Eleonora. *Renata di Francia (1510-1575): Un'eresia di corte*. Turin: UTET libreria, 2011.

De Boer, Erik. *The Genevan School of the Prophets: The congregations of the Company of Pastors and their Influence in 16th Century Europe*. Geneva: Droz, 2012.

Gilmont, Jean François. *Insupportable mais fascinant: Jean*

Calvin, ses amis, ses ennemis et les autres. Turnhout: Brepols 2012.

Hart, D. G. *Calvinism: A History*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013.

Hemel, Ernst van den. *Tracing Circles: Literary Dimensions in John Calvin's Institutes*. Amsterdam: Universiteit van Amsterdam, 2011.

McKim, Donald K. *Coffee with Calvin: Daily Devotions*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2013.

Hugh and Eve Meeter Calvinism Awards for High School Seniors

The 2014 research paper topic is:

John Calvin and the Lord's Supper

For further details and application instructions visit:

<http://www.calvin.edu/meeter/new/fellowships-and-scholarships/high-school.htm>