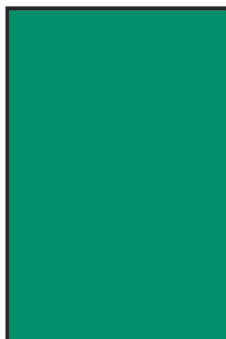


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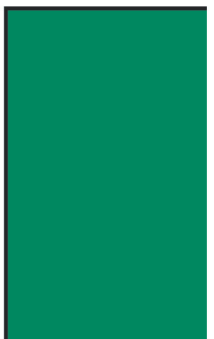


Moral Philosophy on the Threshold of Modernity

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Jill Kraye
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especially in the Renaissance, had recognized a metaphysical unifying function.³¹ Melanchthon remarks that even God is ‘an essence of light’.³²

He envisages this quality of light as especially concentrated in the human brain, the nerves and the spirits.³³ In this description of the celestial matter in man, we have the organs necessary for external human acts: the brain, which is the seat of divine wisdom in man and where the superior activity of judgement takes place; the nerves, which take their origin from the brain and which are necessary for the locomotion of the external members; and, finally, the human spirits,³⁴ which, enlightened by the brain,³⁵ become the organs of the highest human actions and are even capable of unifying the human heart and the will in order to produce an external act.³⁶ When this happens, the external act testifies to man’s vocation to an internal unity, which he must strive after according to his own nature.³⁷

³¹ Marsilio Ficino (1976), *Liber de Sole*, cap. X, p. 971: “Sol primo creatus, et in medio coelo.” Quaeritur inter haec, quid potissimum primo Deus creavit? Respondet Moses, lucem. Merito enim ab ipsa divina luce plusquam intelligibili, statim emanat Lux omnium simillima Deo. Lux quidem intelligibilis in mundo supra nos, incorporeo, id est purissimus intellectus. Lux autem sensibilis in mundo corporeo, id est, lux ipsa solaris.’

³² Melanchthon (1846b), *Liber*, col. 169: “De imagine Dei in homine.” Sunt et in Sole quaedam de Deo significationes. Nam et Deus est lucida essentia, quamquam spiritus est.’

³³ Melanchthon (1846b), *Liber*, col. 106: ‘Cum autem epar, et cor et coetera membra formentur ex sanguine, venae, arteriae, cartilagine, ossa, panniculi, πλευρὰ, ligamenta, ex crassiore seminis parte, simul pars subtilissima seminis, et plena optimi spiritus, quasi colata et expressa ex crassiore massa, sursum pellitur in ampullam tertiam, ut inde cerebrum formetur, et ex cerebro nervi.’

³⁴ Ibid., col. 54: ‘Est autem spiritus vitalis lucidissima et vivifica flamma, similis naturae coelesti, quae calorem et vitam in totum corpus perfert, et praecipuarum actionum organum est.’

³⁵ Ibid., col. 88: ‘Spiritus animalis est ex eodem genere spirituum, qui nati sunt in corde, pars transmissa ad cerebrum, ubi virtute cerebri fit lucidior, et conveniens temperamento cerebri, et in nervos infusa velut lumen, ut eos impellat, et actiones sensuum et motum localem cieat.’

³⁶ Ibid., col. 57: ‘Secunda utilitas [*scil.* cordis], quod spiritus geniti in corde, cum postea cerebri vi temperantur, fiunt instrumenta proxima actionis in cerebro et in nervis, et cient cogitationem, sensum et motum. Cum autem vita sine cogitatione, sensu et motu similis morti esset, intelligi potest magnam esse cordis utilitatem, cum fons sit spirituum, qui harum summarum actionum proxima instrumenta sunt.’

³⁷ Ibid., col. 130: ‘Secunda gubernatio in homine est ea quae nominatur πολιτικῆ, cum non tantum externa membra per locomotivam cohercentur, sed ipsum cor congruit cum recta ratione, et honesta voluntate, motum persuasione. Ut cum filius Thesei Hyppolitus abstinet a noverca Phaedra. Consentaneum est enim, eum corde abhorruisse ab ea, cogitantem incestam consuetudinem non esse leve scelus, et puniri atrocibus poenis. Cumque talis consonantia est recti iudicii, voluntatis, cordis et externorum membrorum, ea actio iuste nominatur virtus. Sed rara est in hac hominum infirmitate. Et sicubi est talis virtus, ut in Scipione, non est sine singulari motu divino, sicut honeste dictum est a Cicerone: Nulla excellens virtus est sine adflatu divino.’

CONCLUSION

At the end of this paper, I must express my admiration for the philosophical and Christian wisdom of Melanchthon. He has protected himself against any deistic or illuministic interpretations of Christianity, which would necessarily ignore the notion that the ethical law and the consequent philosophical religious relation established by man to God are founded on only one part of divine law. But to ignore this notion, as to ignore his distinction between Law and Gospel, is not only a bad interpretation or a distortion of Melanchthon's doctrinal system, but a destruction of it. Since man is composed of spirit and body, Melanchthon takes account of the constant claims of the Reformation for a participation of the whole man—heart, emotions and spirit—in the law of God. He distinguishes, however, God's judgement of man, unknown to human reason, from what man knows in philosophy of God's will and law for humankind.³⁸ With his analysis of moral philosophy as a part of God's law, Melanchthon has laid the foundations of what we would today call an ecumenical movement in the field of law and action. In all his writings and throughout his life, Melanchthon launched an appeal to react energetically against what he considered to be the danger always hanging over human society: that of becoming a society which ignores God and law. His appeal was directed to

³⁸ The fact that Melanchthon divided divine law as natural law into two parts led him to conceive a double order of actions in man: the philosophical order governing external action; and the order established by evangelical revelation, which demands *mundities cordis*. He sees them as separate and related at the same time. The relation between them, according to him, is that between a root and its fruits. He envisaged both of them in the light of the Gospel, which preaches penitence and the remission of sin. He left, however, to moral philosophy and to man as such the dignity of having as their proper object the external act accomplished in agreement with the moral law: The Gospel condemns both the *externa delicta* and the *immundities cordis*. The *externa delicta*, which are also condemned by reason, are then opposed to the *immundities cordis*, which reason alone does not condemn. They are included in God's universal condemnation, which embraces, under the name of *iniustitia*, all sins against God and men; see Melanchthon (1965), *Commentarii*, p. 69: 'Porro evangelium non tantum arguit externa delicta, quae etiam ratio arguit, sed arguit immunditiam cordis in omnibus hominibus. Ideo sic dicit: "Revelatur ira Dei de coelo" h.e. praedicatur in evangelio "super omnem impietatem et iniustitiam hominum". Hebraismus est transposita particula "omnem", q.d. super impietatem et iniustitiam omnium hominum. Postea enim clare dicit se accusare omnes. "Impietas" significat vitia, quae proprie cum prima tabula pugnant, h.e. contemptum et odium Dei. Et significat non tantum externa delicta, sed immunditiam naturalem in cordibus, quae vacant naturaliter timore Dei, fiducia Dei, dilectione Dei etc. "iniustitia" generale est complectens peccata contra Deum et homines.' *Ibid.*, p. 112: 'Ac loquitur Paulus non solum de actualibus delictis, sed de naturali immunditie, de radice et fructibus.'

all those who acknowledge both a divine mind as the author of man and the cosmos and a provident lawgiver. This is why I consider Melanchthon to be a Reformer who speaks to all of us today.

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Ethics in Early Calvinism*

Christoph Strohm
(University of Bochum, Germany)

The various assessments of ethics in early Calvinism could scarcely be more different. On the one hand, Calvin's early Lutheran opponents had already pointed to the danger of a *moralistischen Überfremdung* in the Reformed rediscovery of the biblical message of free grace—an accusation which would later be frequently repeated,¹ and which was popularized by Stefan Zweig's harsh criticism of what he saw as a dangerous moralistic tendency in light of the experience of dictatorship in his novel *Castellio gegen Calvin oder Ein Gewissen gegen die Gewalt*.² On the other hand, we find an emphasis on a particular ethical competence, based on Ernst Troeltsch's rather too sharply drawn contrast between Calvinism and a Lutheranism which he understood to be still trapped in the medieval world. While he saw Luther and Lutheranism as being entirely—and quietistically—focused on an inner holiness of justification, Troeltsch understood the idea of justification to have a different function in Calvinism: 'statt des Charakters der Seligkeit in Gottes sündenüberwindender Gnade den Charakter der Erwählungsgewißheit und der handelnden Kraft'.³ Even though Troeltsch's picture of Luther and sixteenth-century Lutheranism is inaccurate, representing rather the reality of Lutheranism in the nineteenth century,⁴ he did have a precise awareness of the particular significance of ethics in early Calvinism. Luther saw his first task to lie in the reinstating of preaching according to the Gospel. Early Calvinism—and partly also those elements of the Lutheran Reformation which were shaped by Philipp Melanchthon—was grounded

* My thanks to Charlotte Methuen for translating this article.

¹ See, e.g., Bockmühl (1987), p. 433 ('Tendenz zur Gesetzlichkeit').

² First published in 1936.

³ Troeltsch (1994), p. 618; and cf. Schneckenger (1855), pp. 63–108 and 158; Hundeshagen (1963), pp. 349–357; Weber (1991), p. 129f.

⁴ Karl Holl and others soon rejected the portrayal of Luther and Lutheranism as quietist and focused instead on an inner sense of justification; see Holl (1927b), pp. 1–110, at 102–107; idem (1927a), 155–287; Elert (1958), especially I.5, p. 357f.; II, p. 6f., 41–44.

in the conviction that the *reformatio doctrinae* must also be complemented by a *reformatio vitae*. The Reformation of doctrine as it had been promulgated by the earliest reformers in the fight against ‘papist superstition’ must be succeeded by a reformation of life. This opinion, formulated by Wilhelm Zepper, Professor at the Reformed Hohe Schule in Herborn in his treatise *Von der Christlichen Disziplin* (published in 1596),⁵ is representative of the self-understanding of many followers of Calvinism.

In recent decades, building on the work of Heinz Schilling and Wolfgang Reinhard, researchers have rightly come to see the process of confessionalization of society as fundamental to and characteristic of the early modern period.⁶ Such analyses have generally emphasized the common role played in the development of the early modern (territorial) state by the three main confessions which established themselves in Continental Europe. It is important to recognize this, but it is also necessary to guard against the danger of understanding the confessions in such a way as to minimize their differences and treat them all as equivalent. It is, therefore, necessary to inquire into the specific characteristics of each confession and to seek to determine the unique circumstances which helped to mould each confession. Did the different confessions influence culture in different ways? Did they shape society to different degrees, or have different implications for the definition of the collective mentality? These questions form the background to the following discussion of the particular character of Calvinist ethics and of the traditions out of which it arose.

I shall present the discussion in four stages. First, I shall sketch the role played by Calvinism in defining the relationship between the experience of crisis and the desire for order at the end of the sixteenth century. Secondly, I shall present the theological decisions which were fundamental to Calvinist ethics. Thirdly, I shall investigate Calvinism’s deep connections to the milieu of humanist jurisprudence and its consequences for ethics. Finally, I shall discuss the ways in which Calvinist ethics, rooted in Aristotelianism, was transformed by the adoption of Neostoic ideas.

CRISIS AND THE DESIRE FOR ORDER: CALVINISM AND ZEITGEIST

Calvinism attained its characteristic shape during the second half, or perhaps the last third, of the sixteenth century in France. The transition

⁵ Zepper (1980); see also Münch (1986), pp. 291–307, at 296f.; cf. also idem (1978), pp. 196–207; Weerda (1964), pp. 162–189.

⁶ Cf. Schilling (1988), pp. 1–45; idem (1986); Rublack (1992); Reinhard and Schilling (1995); cf. also Schindling (1997), pp. 9–44.

from the medieval order, based on interactions between different estates but essentially rooted in personal relationships, to the early modern territorial state was further advanced in France than in other parts of Europe. The civil wars of the late 1560s accelerated the collapse of the old order; and towards the end of the century, Henri IV was able to establish a new absolutist order. The fundamental changes to the traditional structures of authority which resulted from this transformation were generally experienced as a deep crisis.⁷

The sixteenth-century worldview was founded on the idea of a hierarchically structured order in which every detail was worked out and all parts were mutually interdependent.⁸ This worldview expressed the way in which the cosmos, created by God, was realized in nature, in the life of society and in individual people with their own hierarchy of body and soul. The divinely created order was regarded as continually under threat from human sin. In contrast to the modern understanding of progress, this worldview could envisage change only as either a falling away from an all-inclusive hierarchical order, resulting in the eruption of chaos, or as renewal, Renaissance or Reformation. Inevitably, the changes which occurred in the structures of authority at the beginning of the modern period were seen as a profound crisis in this received order. Calvinism was formed in this intellectual and social context, and a number of essential characteristics of Calvinist ethics need to be understood in terms of it.

When studying the ethical writings of early Calvinism, one's eye is caught by the constant bemoaning of moral decline and the destruction of the received order. This lament over the corruption of moral behaviour permeates the work of Lambert Daneau, the most important Calvinist writer on morals and the author of the first systematic discussion of ethics in early Calvinism.⁹ The essential nature of his judgement is expressed above all in his formulation 'corruptissimi huius saeculi mores'.¹⁰ This does not refer to morals and morality in the narrow sense, but rather, on the one hand, to the decline of individual morality and of the moral sense in society and, on the other, to questions of legal order and state authority.¹¹ Of the terms used by

⁷ See Strohm (1996), pp. 542–594; also, for the general context, Salmon (1975).

⁸ See especially Jouanna (1977); Mousnier (1969), especially pp. 60–69.

⁹ See Strohm (1996), pp. 562–576; for Daneau see nn. 23–26 below.

¹⁰ Cf. the subtitles of the treatise *De ludo aleae*, Daneau (1579), cols 214–222: 'libellus adversus corruptissimi huius seculi mores omnino necessarius'; cf. also Daneau (1596), book VI, chap. 4, 426; on the French terms 'moeurs' and 'corruption des moeurs' see also Matoré (1988), p. 151f.

¹¹ Daneau's frequent use of the terms 'anarchia' and ἀταξία to describe his situation refer primarily to this latter dimension; see, e.g., Daneau (1596), II.6, p. 118; *ibid.*, II, p. 140; *ibid.*, III, pp. 225, 229, 248. Like many of his contemporaries, he understood these terms as describing something which was opposed to a successful life. Despite the threatening treatment of Protestants by rulers, who were generally antagonistic towards

Daneau to describe the crisis, the idea of *dissolutio* and related Latin or French phrases play a key role. The struggle against *dissolutio* and the motto ‘contre la dissolution de ce temps’, with which he begins one of his moral treatises,¹² inform all his ethical writings.¹³

The widespread experience of crisis was accompanied by a strong desire for order. Indeed, one can almost say that the ethics of early Calvinism was shaped by a passion for order. Daneau expresses this eloquently with the phrase ‘nihil pulchrius ordine’ (‘nothing is more beautiful than order’).¹⁴ The same words open Johann Heinrich Alsted’s *Encyclopaedia* of 1630, a work of more than 2,500 folio pages.¹⁵ At the beginning of this seven-volume encyclopedia are thirty-eight tables, in which the content of all the sciences is presented with the help of a series of dichotomous classifications.¹⁶ The explanation of how to use these tables

them, Daneau, following ancient tradition, held tyranny to be more acceptable than anarchy: *ibid.*, I.6, p. 52; cf. also *ibid.*, I, p. 66: ‘Omni enim tyrannide, omni corrupto civitatis statu deterior est Anarchia.’

¹² See Daneau (1574).

¹³ The introductory section of the anonymous *Traite de l’estat honeste des Chrestiens en leur accoustrement* (1580), pp. 9–11, sketches a dark picture of the ruinous state of the present. The term ‘dissolutio’ is used three times to characterize this situation. In Daneau’s introduction to biblical hermeneutics, he says that the interpreter should be aware of the contribution a passage can make to the struggles against the ‘dissoluti hominum mores’: Daneau, *Methodus*, (1579), p. 33f. He uses the term most frequently in his late *Politica*: Daneau (1596).

¹⁴ Daneau prefaces his commentary on 1 Timothy with a letter of dedication addressed to Wiliam of Orange. In it, he shows clearly that the idea of a hierarchically structured order which shapes all areas of life is fundamental for his thinking. He regards such an order as of the highest value and the God-given prerequisite for the preservation of life; Daneau, *Commentarius*, (1577), sigs ¶ i^o-¶ ij^o: ‘Vetus est illud, Princeps Illustrissime, etiam ab Aristotele usurpatum, Nihil esse in ipsa rerum universitate pulchrius ordine. Quid enim vel oculis iucundum, vel menti etiam ipsi et animo hominis gratum observari potest, quod sit confusum, et nulla partium apta separatione distinctum? Certe quocunque non tantum oculos, sed omnes animi sensus converterimus, si quae in eos incurrunt, neque ordine digesta, neque apto situ inter se cohaerentia, neque convenienti loco et modo collocata a nobis apparebunt: ea neque utilitatem, neque venustatem aliquam habere statim pronuntiabimus, tantumque ab illis oculorum, animique intuitum avertemus, quantum ea nos ad se rapiunt, quae commoda, propriaque ratione, et dispositione distinguuntur. Hoc in Regno, hoc in Rep[ublica], hoc in oppidis, hoc in pagis, hoc in privatorum aedibus, hoc in hortis, et cultis sedibus, hoc in solitudine, hoc in rebus quae natura gignuntur, hoc in artificijs quae hominum industria efficiuntur, verum esse ipsa rerum experientia, et publica mortalium omnium, non tantum piorum, sed etiam profanorum hominum vox testatur: denique Mundus ipse, pulcherrimum Dei opus, ab ordine κόσμος nominatur.’

¹⁵ Alsted (1989). This work was compiled in the turbulent period of the Thirty Years War, during which the town of Herborn not only suffered frequent occupations but was also burnt to the ground; see Schmidt-Biggemann’s foreword to Alsted (1989), p. VIII.

¹⁶ Cf. Alsted (1989), pp. 1–26. Note, however, that Alsted criticizes an excessive readiness to understand everything in terms of dichotomies (‘διχοτομῖαι superstitiosae’): *idem* (1983), p. 2.

starts with the words ‘ordine nihil pulchrius’. This is followed by a praise of *ordo* and a statement of the essential value of order in all areas of life:

Anyone who is not blinder than Teiresias cannot fail to see that nothing is more beautiful, nothing more fruitful than *ordo*. Since everything in the all-encompassing theatre of this world is given its eminence by *ordo*, it is like the soul of all those things. *Ordo* serves as the sinews of the mystical body of the church of God. *Ordo* is the strongest bond in the political commonwealth and in the family.¹⁷

The passionate desire for order engendered by the experience of crisis also helped to determine the content of Christian ethics. The struggle against any form of ‘letting oneself go’ and any uncontrolled surge of the emotions emerges as a central theme, for such behaviour endangered the continued existence of order. Games, festivals and dancing were understood not only as problematic ‘interruptions of order’ but as genuine threats to the social order.¹⁸ In particular, luxury of every kind, by definition a defamation of what was proper and hence also of order, was heavily criticized. The struggle to enforce strict observance of a detailed

¹⁷ Alsted (1989), p. 1: ‘ORDINE nihil pulchrius, nihil fructuosius esse nemo non videt, nisi forte Tiresia sit coecior. Ordo siquidem in amplissimo hujus mundi teatro rebus omnibus conciliat dignitatem, et ipsarum est velut anima. Ordo in Ecclesia DEI est nervus corporis mystici. Ordo in rep. et familia est vinculum firmissimum. Ordo denique in schola, praeterquam quod est gluten societatis scholasticae, rebus docendis et discendis animam inspirat. Facit enim ad rerum intelligentiam expeditam, et plurimum confert ad memoriae facilitatem simul ac diuturnitatem, sive impressionem, sive recordationem, sive ipsam redditionem intueare: quae tria requiruntur in bona memoria. Haec itaque absque dubio praestat ordo methodicus, quem vocant. Inprimis vero id praestat, quando rerum discendarum synopsis exhibetur certis tabellis, quas non abs re dixeris memoriae matres. Ita enim usuvenit, ut rei amplissimae idea possit animo comprehendi quam facillime, et quam diutissime in memoria conservari. Quae cum ita sint, existimavi me recte facturum, si universae hujus Encyclopaediae methodum perpetuis tabulis adumbrarem, inque iis quasi ossa et nervos disciplinarum delinearem, adeoque illarum quoddam quasi sceleton exhiberem. Tu, lector benevole, spiritum, sanguinem, et carnes pete ex ipsismet systematibus, et ita exple sceleton osseum et nervosum, ut habeas corpus succiplenum.’

¹⁸ Cf., e.g., Daneau (1574); idem, *Deux traittez de S. C. Cyprian* (1566).

dress code also took on central importance,¹⁹ for these regulations offered a visible manifestation of the strictly hierarchical order.²⁰

Such experiences of crisis and the consequent desire for order were not restricted to Calvinism in France during the final third of the sixteenth century. Similar developments could soon be observed in Germany. A recent study of the phenomenon of *Polizey* indicates a process of modernization moving from Western to Eastern Europe.²¹ Calvinist ethics, with its strong endeavour to direct human behaviour—including the deepest desires of the heart—according to the rule of divine law, must be understood in the context of the contemporary tendency towards the detailed regulation of all areas of life. This soon began to affect the other confessions as well. Nevertheless, the ethical programme developed earliest, and probably in its most stringent form, within Calvinism. Calvinism made a more radical break with tradition and, as such (like Ramism and Neostoicism) was a particularly pure incarnation of the *Zeitgeist*.²² Calvinism fulfilled the needs of those who were no longer living

¹⁹ See, e.g., Daneau, *Deux traictes de Florent Tertullian* (1580). In the foreword to his translation of Cyprian's works on this theme, Daneau states his intention that his work should help to prevent the collapse of morals and curb the tendency to let oneself go, both of which he diagnoses as permeating all levels of French society, and that at least the Reformed Church should seek to condemn such proclivities; Daneau, *Traite de S. C. Cyprian* (1566), p. 35: 'Ce qu'aujourd'huy nous experimentons par trop en nos Eglises reformees: tellement qu'il nous conuient restablir et releuer, comme ce saint Pere, ce que nous voyons corrompu entre nous, comme entre autres choses, ceste ci l'est bien fort: assauoir, la dissolution, lasciuete, brauerie et somptuosité des habits, fards et attiffemens des femmes, tant filles que marieer, tant de Cour qu'autres, et n'y a nation plus desreiglee aujourd'huy que la Françoisse en ceci.' Cf. also n. 13 above.

²⁰ See Strohm (1996), pp. 626–637.

²¹ For the first European-wide investigation of the phenomenon of *Polizey*—the construction of internal administration by means of instruction and order, which characterizes the early modern state from the late Middle Ages until the fall of the Ancien Régime—see Stolleis (1996). In the foreword to this volume, Stolleis points to significant differences between European republics and cities and also between the city and the countryside. He observes a process of modernization moving from Western to Eastern Europe; *ibid.*, p. VII: 'Westeuropa schreitet seit dem Spätmittelalter voran, Nord-, Mittel- und Südeuropa haben erste Schwerpunkte im 16. und 17. Jahrhundert, während Ostmittel- und Osteuropa erst in der Mitte des 18. Jahrhunderts zu einer entsprechenden "polizya" in Theorie und Praxis gelangen.' Cf. Schilling (1999).

²² It is not possible to discuss here the range of meanings in the term *Zeitgeist*, which Herder's critical discussion of the ahistorical thought of the Enlightenment has succeeded in elevating to a philosophical term. What is important in the present context is that it can be understood as implying that at the cutting edge between mentality, or the tools of thought, on the one hand, and theological or philosophical theoretical constructions, on the other, people shared experiences and ways of thinking apart from which these theoretical constructions cannot be understood. For the term *Zeitgeist*, see Kreppel (1968), pp. 97–112, especially 97–102; cf. also Hegel (1964), p. 612ff.; Löwith (1958), pp. 220–227; Litt (1935), p. 45f.

in the safe structures of the medieval period but who had not yet begun to live in the modern order. This is an important reason for the attractiveness and effectiveness of Calvinism at the beginning of the modern age. In the second half of the sixteenth century and the early seventeenth, no other confession spread as fast as the Calvinist form of Protestantism. In 1620, however, the catastrophic defeat of Frederick V, Elector of the Palatine and so-called 'Winter King', in the battle of the White Mountain brought the spread of Calvinism in central Europe to an abrupt halt.

FUNDAMENTAL THEOLOGICAL DECISIONS

Systematizing

In 1577 a work appeared in Geneva under the title *Ethices Christianae libri tres*.²³ Its author was Lambert Daneau, the successor of Théodore de Bèze as professor of theology at the Genevan Academy.²⁴ The work was partly written in response to the suggestion of Bèze and others who recognized an urgent need for a comprehensive exposition of Christian ethics.²⁵ Daneau's *Ethices Christianae libri tres* is the first systematic presentation of ethics in early Calvinism—or, indeed, in Protestantism.²⁶ Here for the first time a

²³ Daneau, *Ethices libri* (1577). On this work, see Strohm (1996) and (1999b), pp. 230–254.

²⁴ We have little information about Daneau's early life, but see (also for his biography) Félice (1971), especially pp. 1–23; Fatjo (1976), pp. 1–3, and (1981), pp. 105–120, especially 105–107.

²⁵ Cf. Daneau's comment in a letter to Bonaventura Vulcanius, 10 October 1576: 'Ecce enim, dum quibusdam meas in Legem Dei commentationes communico, tantum precibus suis apud me effecerunt ut Ethicen christianam scriberem tribus libris comprehensam ...', published in: De Vries de Heekelingen (1923), p. 384. See also Daneau to Hieronymus Zanchius, 9 March 1577: 'Ego importunis quorundam precibus adductus disputationem de Ethices praeceptis. Eustachio commisi, quam ad te, ubi reperero qui se hoc onere in mei gratiam velit premi, mittam', published in Zanchius (1613), pp. 72–442, at 419). Cf. also Théodore de Bèze to Josias Simler, 19 September 1575: 'Et certe gaudeo meos collegas Danaeum et Golartium tibi esse amicitia conjunctos, ac te vehementer precor ut illos ad scriptionem quoque cohorteris. Vides enim quam paucos hodie habeamus in recte et solide scribendo exercitatos, quibus tamen nobis opus esse video', published in Meylan (1960–2001), XVI, p. 209.

²⁶ See Schweizer (1850), p. 23: 'Danaeus ist der erste Protestant, welcher die christliche Ethik als ein besonderes Ganze[s] wissenschaftlich dargestellt hat.' Cf. also Wuttke (1861), p. 187: 'Die wirkliche theologische Ethik der evangelischen Kirche wurde als besondere Wissenschaft zuerst von dem gelehrten Reformirten Danaeus ... in seiner *Ethica christiana* ... ausgeführt.' See also Gass (1886), pp. 117–123; Luthardt (1893), p. 100: 'überhaupt die bedeutendste ethische Arbeit des 16. Jahrhunderts'; Guillot (1896), p. 17: 'Il est l'auteur de la première morale réformée'; Troeltsch (1994), p. 691: 'Begründer der selbständigen calvinistischen Ethik'; Léonard (1982); Sinnema (1993), pp. 10–44, especially 21: 'the first

commentary on Aristotelian ethics, similar to that undertaken by Philipp Melanchthon, is combined with an exegesis of the Decalogue to produce a comprehensive and systematic framework.

Daneau's attempt to offer a systematic account of Christian ethics must be seen in the context of the encyclopedic endeavours which began to be popular towards the end of the sixteenth century.²⁷ The attempts by Calvinist authors to present all the knowledge of their time, systematically ordered and starting from the centrality of the Word of God, played an important role in this process. Apart from Daneau, Johann Heinrich Alsted particularly deserves to be mentioned in this context.²⁸

Besides his Christian ethics, Daneau also published a 'Christian Physics' (initially in 1576),²⁹ a presentation of Christian dogmatics in several volumes (1583–1588),³⁰ a 'Christian Politics' (1596)³¹ and a 'Geography' (1580),³² which summarized the knowledge of the known world. True, it was already possible to find an understanding of the importance of the sciences and of the precise presentation of theology in the work of Calvin; but Calvin was primarily an exegete.³³ In comparison to Melanchthon's presentation of different fields of knowledge for use as teaching aids in schools,³⁴ Daneau's work is characterized by a strong degree of systematization and of methodological rigour. All knowledge was to be measured according to the Word of God and ordered from that vantage point. This project was influenced by the encyclopedic enterprises of the latter third of the sixteenth century, which also arose from the search for order in a world which seemed to have been derailed.³⁵ As can also be

independent Reformed work of ethics'; Reibstein (1958), p. 308: 'der Systematiker des französischen und internationalen Calvinismus'.

²⁷ On the development of encyclopedic knowledge, see Diemer (1968); Dierse (1977); Schmidt-Biggemann (1983); Hotson (2000) and (2001).

²⁸ Cf., in addition to the *Encyclopaedia* of 1630 (n. 15 above), Alsted (1620); see also idem (1626). For Ramist influence on Alsted, see Schmidt-Biggemann (1983), pp. 100–139. On Alsted see also Michel (1969); Klein and Kramer (1988).

²⁹ Daneau, *Physica* (1576); *Physices pars altera* (1580); *Physique* (1581).

³⁰ Daneau, *Christianae isagoges* (1583); *Isagoges Christianae pars altera* (1584); *Christianae Isagoges pars quarta* (1584); *Isagoges Christianae pars quarta* (1586) and (1588).

³¹ See n. 10 above.

³² Daneau, *Geographia* (1580).

³³ See Strohm (2001), pp. 310–343, especially 312–314.

³⁴ Schmidt-Biggemann (1983), p. 82, has rightly rejected Otto Ritschl's derivation of the concept of system from Melanchthon—see Ritschl (1906)—and pointed instead to the Ramist background of this development.

³⁵ The aim of 'Christian physics' was to demonstrate the God-given, hierarchical order in nature. In 'Christian politics' this order formed the basis for the life of society. 'Christian ethics' aimed to focus the whole of human behaviour, including the innermost urges of the heart, on divine law.

seen in the simplifying classifications of Ramist logic, which developed in close association (both chronologically and in terms of content) with Calvinism, this was an attempt to use a systematic investigation of knowledge in its entirety in order to construct a vision of the endangered order—in other words, to constitute order through meaning.³⁶

Daneau's systematic presentation of Christian ethics rests on two pillars: firstly, human beings, born again in the Holy Spirit and thereby constituted as subjects of right action; and, secondly, the law of God. The first book of the *Ethices Christianae libri tres* offers a theory of human action and, based on this, a doctrine of the virtues.³⁷ The second book consists of an extensive exegesis of the Decalogue, which seeks, by drawing particularly on Roman law, to give concrete examples of each commandment in all spheres of life.³⁸ The third book attempts to bring together the doctrine of virtue and the exegesis of the Decalogue by relating individual virtues and depravities to various aspects of the Ten Commandments.³⁹

Human beings as subjects of right action through the Holy Spirit

At least in part because of his encounters with the so-called enthusiasts, Luther was generally reluctant to use pneumatological arguments rooted in the theology of the Spirit. In contrast, such arguments played a leading role in Calvinist theology and ethics, beginning with Calvin. Calvinist criticism of both Roman *superstitio* and the imperfect renewal through Lutheran theology (with the exception of Melanchthon, who was generally acquitted of these charges) was at the centre of its confessional identity. Against *superstitio*, understood as a mixing of God and the world, emphasis was placed on the existence of God as Spirit and on God's transcendence.⁴⁰ True worship was primarily the spiritual and spirit-filled worship of God.⁴¹

³⁶ Cf. Strohm (1999a), pp. 352–371.

³⁷ See Daneau, *Ethices libri* (1577), ff. 1^r–125^v.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, ff. 126^r–331^r.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, ff. 331^v–374^r.

⁴⁰ The emphasis on God's nature as Spirit, central to the whole Reformed tradition, found its quintessential expression in the prohibition of images; *Confessio helvetica posterior IV*, in: Müller (1999), pp. 174–5: 'Quoniam vero Deus spiritus est invisibilis et immensa essentia, non potest sane ulla arte aut imagine exprimi, unde non veremur cum scriptura, simulacra Dei, mera nuncupare mendacia. Reicimus itaque non modo gentium idola, sed et Christianorum simulacra.' Cf. also *Genfer Katechismus*, Qu. 145–148; Calvin (1559), I.11f.; II.8.17; IV.9.9; *Heidelberger Katechismus*, Qu. 97f.

⁴¹ Calvin emphasized this even in the first edition of his *Institutio*; Calvin (1536), I, p. 43: 'Primum ergo mandatum, unum esse Deum tradit, praeter quem nulli alii dii cogitandi aut

This emphasis on the theology of the Spirit was made directly relevant to ethics by the stress on being born again in the Spirit of God. The term *regeneratio* already had a central role in Calvin's *Institutio*,⁴² for Daneau and for other theologians of early Calvinism, being born again, chiefly the work of the Holy Spirit, was the starting-point of ethics.⁴³ Being born again was understood as a consequence of the work of the Holy Spirit, but also, recognizing the life-long need for salvation, as a continuing process which touched the whole life of the reborn individual.⁴⁴ The Holy Spirit thus became the cause of all good actions; indeed, it was the Holy Spirit which constituted human beings as ethical subjects, that is, as doers of good actions.⁴⁵ This solved the problem posed by the radicalizing of the concept of sin within Reformation circles, which had given rise to the belief that human beings were by nature unable to do good deeds. At the same time—and this was a particular characteristic of Daneau's systematic ethics—it enabled the consideration of ancient philosophical discussions of the specific character of human actions in contrast to those of other living

habendi sint. Istud qualis ipse ille sit, docet, et quo cultus genere honorandus, ne quid illi carnale affingere audeamus, aut ipsum sub nostros sensus subiicere, quasi stolido nostro capite comprehendi possit, aut ulla specie repraesentari. Huc advertant qui execrabilem idololatriam, qua multis antehac saeculis vera religio submersa subversaque fuit, misero praetextu defendere conantur. Imagines, inquit, pro diis non reputantur.'

⁴² In the 1559 edition, the last Latin edition of the *Institutio* to appear during his lifetime, Calvin uses the noun 'regeneratio' approximately 70 times.

⁴³ Cf. Strohm (1996), pp. 446–485.

⁴⁴ Daneau, *Ethices libri* (1577), I.14, f. 67^r: 'Certe ... is modus est duplex, ordinarius nimirum, et extraordinarius.' Ibid.: 'Modus autem extraordinarius, per quem renascimur, est is, in quo hominum ministerium non intervenit: sed est huiusmodi, qualis in Paulo converso, et a Deo ipso vocato describitur, nimirum quum ante externam ullam verbi Dei praedicationem a nobis auditam, iam Christum didicimus, ipso Dei Spiritu per se id agente, et eum nobis revelante, quod quum fit, miraculo non caret vocatio et fides nostra.' To speak of the reborn implies a single act in the past, but throughout their lives believers are dependent on the regenerative work of the Spirit if they are to reach even a partial victory in their struggle against the passions of the flesh; *ibid.* I.23, f. 111^f: 'Ac quidem quum ea virtus, atque honesta voluntas ita in nobis est, ut cum foeda carnis libidine et cupiditate non tantum luctetur, sed etiam eam vi Spiritus Dei in nobis agentis vincat, et superet, is status animi ἐγκράτεια, quemadmodum antea saepe diximus, appellatur.' All human impulses remain bad if they are not ruled by God; *ibid.*, I.24, f. 123^v: 'Sunt enim cordis humani infiniti motus, recessus et affectus, qui certo numero omnes colligi non magis possunt, quam arena maris: sed si illi a Spiritu Dei regantur, sunt honesti, et virtutes: sin carnis nostrae sensu ducantur, vitiosi: et vitia sive peccata dicuntur.'

⁴⁵ Daneau, *Ethices libri* (1577), I.14, ff. 122^v–123^f: 'Principium enim actionum nostrarum honestarum est ... ipse Dei Spiritus nos regenerans, et voluntatem nostram e prorsus mala bonam, beneque affectam efficiens et commutans. Itaque commutati iam bene velle incipimus, et bene consultare. Itaque fit hoc modo etiam homo ipse suarum actionum principium.'

beings. Such arguments now served to describe the actions of those who had been born again in the Spirit.

Calvinism's emphasis on the Spirit and its development of a theology of rebirth meant that it was quicker than the other two confessions to contribute to modern understandings of the subject, which reached their peak a century later in the Pietist theology of rebirth. Early Calvinism's emphasis on the Spirit also provided the grounds for Max Weber's focus on the Calvinist tendency towards inner-worldly asceticism.⁴⁶ Luther had already provided the essential impetus in this direction by his marked differentiation of the two regiments and his development of a work ethic. The Calvinist struggle against superstition and its emphasis on the transcendence of God, however, reinforced an understanding of the world as merely the raw material of human actions.

The law of God as the starting-point for ethics

The second starting-point of Calvinist ethics, as set out in the second book of Daneau's *Ethices Christianae libri tres*, was the law of God, summarized in the Decalogue. In his belief that the *usus legis in renatis* ('the use of the law in those who have been born again') was the most important task of the law, Calvin diverged from Luther.⁴⁷ Luther had seen the primary purpose of the law as its demonstration of human sinfulness, which was a necessary preliminary to hearing the Gospel. He paid little attention to the role of the law in the life of those who had been born again, for fear that this could come to be understood as necessary for salvation. Early Calvinism, by contrast, unhindered by such theological scruples, referred to a multiplicity of biblical examples which supported the development of ethics. In this way, Daneau derived a comprehensive material ethics from his exegesis of the Decalogue. He was helped not only by a wide range of biblical texts but also by the propositions of Roman law. For example, his explication of the commandment against stealing ranged from a condemnation of the watering down of wine, through questions of legal contracts, to the ethical problems of so-called 'sea usury' (*foenus nauticum*), a theme which, on account of the high risks involved and hence high interest rates, had been particularly controversial in Roman law.⁴⁸

Daneau's exegesis of law is characterized not only by its focus on the regimentation of external actions, but also by the endeavour to radicalize the claim of law to include the obedience of the heart. The Decalogue is

⁴⁶ Cf. Weber (1991), pp. 115–165.

⁴⁷ As already expressed in the *Institutio* of 1539, III, CO 1, col. 433.

⁴⁸ See Daneau, *Ethices libri* (1577), II.15, ff. 248^r–271^v, especially 266^v.

understood as a spiritual law, as it is in the Sermon on the Mount, and its call for obedience extends to the deepest instincts of the heart. Daneau sees the commandment against covetousness⁴⁹ as a sort of summary of the Decalogue and of the whole of divine law.⁵⁰ This double focus on the detailed regimentation of external action and on the innermost instincts of the heart gave to Calvinist ethics its particular severity.

The life of the creature should increase the glory of the Creator

In Max Weber's understanding of Calvinism, the *syllogismus practicus*, that is, the search for visible proof of one's own election through the attainment of prosperity, was a decisive element in determining action.⁵¹ The *syllogismus practicus*, however, plays no part in Daneau's *Ethices Christianae libri tres*. Instead, he portrays human beings as have been created so that they might increase the glory of the Creator, and he teaches

⁴⁹ Cf. *ibid.*, II.17, ff. 302^v–312^v.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, f. 307^r: 'Est enim in tota hac Lege decimum et ultimum, et ordine et iure.' The commandment against covetousness had particular value and played a special role because it focused on the hidden depths of the human heart and thus, with Romans 7:7, gave rise to knowledge of the fact of sin; *ibid.*, f. 303^r: 'Quanta sit huius Legis divinae prae omnibus aliis legibus dignitas et praestantia, sive eae politicae sint, sive naturales et philosophicae. Id quod optime ex hoc praecepto intelligemus, quanquam numero decimum, et in tota hac lege ultimum est. Eo igitur pertingit haec Lex, ut abdita cordis humani scrutetur, et pravus illius cogitationes et concupiscentias damnet. Id quod certe alia nulla Lex praeter hanc unam facit aut sancit. Itaque ait Paulus Roman. 7. versu. 7. non nossem Concupiscentiam esse peccatum, nisi Lex dixisset, *Non concupisces*.' Daneau gives three further reasons for placing the commandment against covetousness at the end of the Decalogue. First, it makes sense to move from what is known to what is unknown; *ibid.*, f. 307^r: 'Est autem hoc peccati genus, quod in concupiscentiis versatur, ignotius vulgo iis, de quibus supra dictum est, i[d est], homicidio, furto, adulterio.' Secondly, a movement from more serious and obviously wrong crimes to hidden and more subtle sins makes it easier for us to be freed from them; *ibid.*, f. 307^{r-v}: 'Secundum, quod postquam lex ea peccata exposuit, quae in factis vel certa constitutaque voluntate versantur, nunc de iis agit, quae solae concupiscentiae dicuntur, ut ordine a turpioribus gravioribusque vitiis incipientes ad obscuriora et magis tecta bene vivendo perveniamus, nosque ita facilius expurgemus.' Finally, placing the commandment against covetousness at the end expresses the status of the Decalogue as a spiritual law laid down by a spiritual lawgiver; *ibid.* f. 307^v: 'Prima ducta est ab ipsius legislatoris natura, est autem Deus, qui cum sit Spiritus, similem sui legem dedit, nimirum spiritalem, id est, quae ad intima usque humani cordis penetraret, eaque perscrutaretur, et tractaret: non ea tantum, quae oculis, aut humano iudicio damnantur, et perspici possunt. Itaque haec Lex dicitur spiritalis. Roman. 7. vers. 14.'

⁵¹ See especially Weber 1991, 332–337; of the extensive literature on this theme, see recently: Schellong (1995), pp. 74–101; Lehmann (1996).

that the Creator had a right to this.⁵² This—alongside his understanding of rebirth in the Holy Spirit and his concept of law as unbroken by the dialectic of Law and Gospel—forms the foundation of his ethics.⁵³

As Ernst Troeltsch rightly recognized in his discussion of Calvin,⁵⁴ this intentional orientation of all human action towards the *gloria Dei* was an important driving force in the ethics of early Calvinism. The whole of life

⁵² God's legal claim to the lives of human beings is fulfilled when one worships him and when one contributes to the furtherance of his glory. Daneau argues this primarily on the basis of the theology of creation; Daneau, *Ethices libri* (1577), I.17, ff. 84^v–85^r: 'Est autem hic actionum nostrarum non tantum universarum, id est, totius vitae nostrae, sed etiam singularum, id est, cuiusque in ea operis nostri finis summus sive summum bonum, sola Dei veri, vivi, immortalis, aeterni, et rerum omnium, quae conditae sunt, conduntur, et condentur, creatoris et sustentatoris laus et gloria, quae a nobis ipsa per se et propter se expetenda et spectanda est. Quare et omnia et singula opera nostra debent ad solam unius illius veri Dei, et in sacro verbo patefacti gloriam a nobis referri, si illa bona, honesta, sancta, et legitime ad suum scopum collimantia esse volumus'; cf. also the thought that at the Last Judgement a person's life will be judged according to what he or she has contributed to the glory of God: Daneau (1588), III.6, f. 105^r. The Creator has the right to interfere, unhindered, in the lives of his creatures; Daneau, *Ethices libri* (1577), I.17, f. 85^r (referring to Col. 1:16; Acts 17:28): 'Nam uti a Deo condita sunt omnia, uti ab eo sumus, et movemur in singulis actionibus omnes, ita illius causa, et ad ipsius gloriam conditi sumus, et moveri atque agere debemus.' This is true for all people without exception; *ibid.*: 'Atque eo pertinet quod omnes hominum ordines, omnis sexus, aetas ad Deum laudandum invitatur.' The aim of the creation of human beings, in whom the treasure of divine righteousness and mercy is most richly manifested, is the increase of the *gloria Dei*; cf. Daneau (1588), II.2, f. 24 [*recte* 32]^v). *Ibid.*, f. 31^v: 'Homo Deum opificem suum agnoscere debuit et colere praeter quam qui domus ad Dei gloriam creata sunt Ergo ad Dei gloriam Homo conditus fuerit, necesse est.' *Ibid.*, f. 24 [*recte* 32]^v: 'Caeterum quae primi Hominis creandi causa fuit, eadem quoque caeterorum etiam nunc procreandorum ratio est, et a nobis statui debet, ut nos ad unius Dei gloriam nasci gignique intelligamus.' See also his severe criticism of idolatry, based on the decreasing of the *gloria Dei*: in Daneau, *Ethices libri* (1577), II.8, f. 142^r. The Church was created for the particular purpose of increasing the *gloria Dei*, since after the Fall this was not otherwise possible; Daneau (1588), II.2, f. 31^v: '... Hodie tamen, et post corruptum hominem Ecclesia dicitur esse populus praecipue a Deo ad suam gloriam conditus.' For the focus on the increase of the glory and praise of God as a *leitmotiv* in Calvin's ethics, see Leith (1989); for the legal background and the implications of Calvin's concentration on the majesty and sovereignty of God, see Beyerhaus (1910), pp. 52–129; Bohatec (1950), p. 326; Baur (1965), pp. 7–24; Lecercf (1929), pp. 256–270, especially 258f.; Le Gal (1984), pp. 73–76.

⁵³ Daneau adopted, for instance, the belief found in the works of Pseudo-Cyprian, which he had translated, that games of chance were idol worship and an offence against the glory of God because they encouraged players to trust in luck rather than in God. The devil introduced games of chance into the world in order to destroy the order of the world: Pseudo-Cyprian, *De aleatoribus* VIII, CSEL 3 III,100, ll. 12–20; *De aleatoribus* IX, CSEL 3 III,102, l. 2f.; Daneau, *Deux traittez de S. C. Cyprian* (1566) and (1574). The unbreakable connection between idolatry and disorder, or the decline of morals and authority, was an important factor even in his earliest published work, a translation of Tertullian's *De idololatria*. It shaped his entire *oeuvre*; cf., for instance, Daneau, *Traite de Florent Tertullian* (1565).

⁵⁴ See Troeltsch (1994), p. 622.

was to be oriented towards the one decisive aim of increasing the glory of God, and this had consequences for all areas of human life. Apart from its effects on material ethics, this focus on one, comprehensive aim led to a sharpening of the claims on human beings. Every action must be done in such a way as to serve the larger goal, which was the only reason for the existence of creation and of human life.⁵⁵

CALVINIST ETHICS AND HUMANIST LAW

The conviction that human beings were created in order to increase the glory of the Creator and that the Creator had a right to this response indicates the juridical background of Calvinist ethics. A significant majority of early Calvinist authors had spent their formative years engaged in the study of humanist law.⁵⁶ Daneau, who studied in Orleans and Bourges, centres of humanist jurisprudence, from 1553 until 1559 and who was became a Doctor of Law, is a typical example. His later theological works show clear indications of this early training.

⁵⁵ Daneau formulated this connection clearly in his discussion of gambling. We will be expected to justify not only our life as a whole, but each action in every moment; Daneau, *De ludae aleae* (1579), I, col. 215a: 'Atque ut, unde tota res altissime potest accessi, ordiamur ex eo loco, ex quo commodissime debet, quaerunt et viri quidem graves, utrum homini pio et Christiano sit ullo modo concedendum, ut aliquo ludi genere sese recreet. Neque vero, cum de eo disputant, carere ratione prorsus videntur. Afferunt enim haec, primum, Reddendam esse Deo rationem a nobis non solum de hac universa vita: sed etiam de singulis ipsius vitae nostrae actionibus et momentis.' The question of whether one was allowed to spend time playing futile games which produced no result had to be answered in light of the fundamental decision to dedicate one's life to increasing the *gloria Dei*; *ibid.*, referring to 1 Cor 10:31: 'Nam quaecumque facimus, ita debemus agere, ut in ipsius Dei gloriam ... fiant. Cum autem ludendo tempus vitamque terimus, illudne obsecro a nobis in Dei gloriam intuentibus agi dici potest?' From there, once he had again emphasized the creation of human beings for the glory of God (*ibid.*, col. 216a), Daneau was able to come to a limited justification of playing such games as a way of improving the health of both body and soul, which was necessary in order to work effectively towards the increase of the *gloria Dei*; *ibid.*: 'Nec enim Dei gloriam non spectasse dicendus est is, qui cum se oblectat, id agit, ut integris viribus maiorique postea et animi et corporis contentione redeat ad illud sum munus, ad quod a Deo ipso vocatus est, inserviatque et Reipub[licae] et familiae commodius, quia firmiori corporis valetudine utitur.' Directing one's entire existence—individual acts in every area of life—towards this aim was indicative of a move to a comprehensive understanding of discipline.

⁵⁶ For more detail (including references and literature) see Strohm (1996), pp. 219–225; cf. also Bonet-Maury (1889), pp. 86–95, 322–330, 490–497. For Calvin's legal training and its consequences for his theology, see Beyerhaus (1910), pp. 26–84; Hall (1966), pp. 202–216; Le Gal (1984), pp. 66–76; Reid (1992), pp. 57–72; Monheit (1988), pp. 106–210; Millet (1992), pp. 43–55.

Daneau's compendium of Christian theology appeared in 1595, the year of his death. This work closes not with eschatology, but rather with a section discussing the correct worship of God,⁵⁷ which ends with a warning against idolatry, supported by texts from Roman law.⁵⁸ It was no coincidence that he chose to conclude his summary of Christian doctrine with this topic, which had also provided the starting-point of his theological work: his first publication after his move from law to theology had been a translation of Tertullian's *De idololatria*.⁵⁹ Here the rigid classification of the various situations in daily life in which Christians might find themselves confronted by the danger of idolatry clearly suited the former lawyer.⁶⁰ His concentration on questions concerning the correct veneration of God grew out of his legal interests, while his understanding of this veneration (worship) as *spiritual* was part of Daneau's humanist heritage.

For Daneau, the Bible was an absolutely essential charter of divine, as distinct from human, law, the latter having reached its ideal formulation in Roman law. In contrast to Calvin, the character of Holy Scripture as a

⁵⁷ See Daneau (1595), book VI, ff. 148^r–156^v.

⁵⁸ Cf. the chapter 'De idololatria quae vero Dei cultui adversatur': *ibid.* VI.5, ff. 155^v–156^v. Not only human behaviour, but also aspects of the search for theological knowledge, must be directed towards the proper service of God; *ibid.* VI.1, f. 148^r: 'Q. *Cur hanc* tractationem superioribus omnibus subjicis? R. Quoniam totius superioris Dei cognitionis verissimus finis et scopus est Deum verum vere colere, Luc. 12. v. 47. Ioan. 17. v. 3. 1. Ioan. 2. v. 3. 4. idcirco haec de vero Dei cultu disputatio superiori prorsus est subnectenda'; see also *ibid.* I.1, f. 3^r. The reference to Tertullian (*ibid.*, VI.5, f. 155^v) indicates the influence of Roman juridical religion, but Daneau also makes this background to his theological thought explicit. The section closes with a discussion of the law 'Iulia maiestatis'. This ancient Roman law, preserved in the Digest and in the Codex Iustinianus (see *Cod. [Corpus iuris civilis]*, II] 9.8; *Dig. [ibid.]*, I] 48.4), does not allow any confusion between true service or worship of God and the service of idols or false gods. *Ibid.* VI.5, f. 156^v (referring to *Dig. [Corpus iuris civilis]*, I] 48.4.4.1 and *Dig. [ibid.]* 48.4.6): 'Nam quod aiunt nonnulli honorem, qui imagini mortuae tribuitur, redundare in prototypum ipsum vivum, falsum est, quum ea quae sunt prototypo tribuenda, et illi propria, imagini eius tribui non possint: sed toto genere imago mortua, et Prototypum vivum differunt. Et quid excipitur, qui principis statuam violat, principem ipsum violat, eatenus est verum, quatenus lex humana interpretatur, id fieri in contemptum principis ipsius, quum imago violatur. Sic lege Iulia Majestatis ab Ethnicis damnatur, qui in contemptae imperatoris in illius imaginem lapides iactarit: sed in his imaginibus id cessat. Nunquam autem vel ab ipsis adeo Ethnicis praeceptum fuit, ut quisquam coram effigie Imperatoris transiens, aut iuxta eam sedens caput aperiret, illam salutaret et foveret. At Dei lex execratur huiusmodi in imagine cultum Numinis.' Further clear references to Roman law can be found in Daneau (1595), III.12, f. 66^r; *ibid.* III.13, f. 70^r; *ibid.* IV.4, f. 87^r.

⁵⁹ See n. 53 above.

⁶⁰ Daneau wrote this work not only from the perspective of a servant of the Word of God, but also from that of a Doctor of Law. After his move to theology, he did not stop thinking of himself as a lawyer. Even after he became a pastor in the Reformed Church in 1562, he continued to try to publish the commentaries on civil law which he had written before his appointment: see Daneau to Pierre Daniel, 7 March 1565, published in Félice (1971), p. 274.

witness to God's salvific role for his people rather sinks into the background. The first biblical book on which Daneau wrote a commentary was 1 Timothy.⁶¹ He interpreted this epistle as a collection of those propositions of ecclesiastical law which are essential for the external, legal order of the Church. His description of how Tertullian, known in the early church as a lawyer, became a theologian is also telling: with a clearly autobiographical slant, Daneau presents Tertullian as having moved from the study of Roman civil law—that is, human law—to the study of divine law, in which he made soon good progress.⁶²

Daneau's six years of training in Roman law taught him a particular approach to legal and legislative texts which also shaped his biblical exegesis. He was particularly interested in those aspects of texts which regulated life or which had ethical dimensions. In his *Methodus Sacrae Scripturae tractandae*, a treatise on the method of interpreting the Bible, he followed contemporary legal hermeneutics in distinguishing three approaches to the text.⁶³ In addition to explaining rhetorical figures and the structure of the argument, it was necessary to inquire into the *locus theologicus* of a biblical text. Fundamental to this question was the content of the text as a promise of salvation; but Daneau also focused on its implications for the improvement of morals.⁶⁴ This tended to blur the

⁶¹ See n. 14 above.

⁶² Daneau, *Augustini de haeresibus* (1576), f. 206^v: 'Tertullianus quis fuerit, notius est ex Hieronymo, Augustino, Historia ecclesiastica, et ipsius adeo Tertulliani scriptis, doctisque in ea Beati Rhenani commentarijs, quam ut explicari debeat. Carthaginensis fuit, Patre proconsulari et centurione natus, iuris civilis studijs primum addictus, in iisque clarus habitus, quemadmodum etiam Euseb. lib. 2. Histor. cap. 2. tradit, quando etiam hodie in corpore Pandectarum a Triboniano ex diversis Iurisconsultis collectarum extant quaedam scriptorum et responsorum Tertulliani fragmenta docta et erudita. Sed ex perpetuo ipsius stylo et dicendi genere summum fuisse Iurisconsultum apparet.' See Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* II.2.4, SC 31.53.

⁶³ Daneau, *Methodus* (1579), p. 12: 'Haec fere mea est ratio et methodus Tribus igitur locis, iisque solis uti consuevi, quibus omnia superiora facile et breviter complector. Hi autem loci sic a me nominantur, Locus Rhetoricus, Locus Dialecticus, Locus Theologicus: quos tres, quantum quidem fas est, atque suscepta materia patitur, etiam in cuiusque sacri versiculi tractatione censeo adhibendos atque coniungendos.' In his work of 'juridical hermeneutics', *Iurisconsultus, sive de optimo genere iuris interpretandi*, p. 60, the lawyer François Hotman, of whom Daneau had a high opinion, also distinguishes three approaches to the text: 'Triplicem omnino Iuris interpretandi rationem invenio: quarum prima Grammaticorum, altera Dialecticorum, tertia Iurisconsultorum propria est.'

⁶⁴ In the *locus theologicus*, the contrast between the reborn and those who are not reborn is most apparent in the reminder that dimensions of the text which focus on the reform of life and the improvement of morals must be emphasized; Daneau, *Methodus* (1579), p. 33: 'Atque hic locus in exho[r]tationibus ad bene vivendum occurrit frequentissime, estque imprimis necessarius.' In the course of the final stage of exegesis, that is, in the clarification of the situation about which the Scriptures speak, particular attention should also be paid to the errors of the Church and the decline of human morals; *ibid.*, p. 33f: 'Quod si ad thesin

distinction between the *locus theologicus* and the third approach used in legal hermeneutics: the legal question of what a text said about the good or the just, or what it might contribute to attaining *aequitas*.⁶⁵

The extent to which Daneau's legal training influenced his biblical interpretation is even more apparent in his *Ethices Christianae libri tres* of 1577. To cite just one example, his detailed exegesis of each of the Ten Commandments is partly structured around an ancient principle drawn from Roman law. The *Institutiones*, part of the Justinian codification and the most important legal teaching resource in the late Middle Ages, are organized according to a scheme based on a particular definition of law: 'Omne autem ius, quo utimur, vel ad personas pertinet vel ad res vel ad actiones.'⁶⁶ With certain modifications, this principle also defines the exegesis of prescriptions and prohibitions which makes up the largest part of Daneau's material ethics: the laws against killing, adultery, theft and

extendi doctrina poterit, colligendum erit ex loco a te suscepto et tractato πόρισμα i. corollarium generale, quod pro ratione et usu Ecclesiae persequendum erit, id est, quantum vel dissoluti hominum mores, vel iam nascentes in Dei Ecclesia errores, id fieri postulant atque patiuntur.' In addition, Daneau includes in his guidelines for exegesis two 'commandments', one of which requires that the moral meaning of the text be adequately considered. Those who have the responsibility for exegesis and preaching should take particular care that the individual aspects of their teaching are accompanied by living reminders of how the people might change their lives; *ibid.*, p. 33f.: 'Addenda tamen duo quaedam restant, in quibus debet esse peculiaris Pastorum concionantium cura et cogitatio. Ac primum quidem ut vivas exhortationes ad singulas suae doctrinae partes adiungant, ut non tantum sana doctrina ab illis pie tradatur: sed ad eius praxin homines commoveantur. Sic enim et vitae turpitudine corrigetur, et Deus pie coletur, et charitas Christiana vigeat, id est, temperanter, pie et iuste a Christianis vivetur, ut ait Paulus [Tit. 2:12], quae est summa omnium exhortationum, quae fiunt a piis pastoribus. Atque haec ex variis exhortationum locis, qui passim in Prophetarum concionibus occurrunt, (si modo Pastores recte et diligenter eos notauerint) illi consequentur.' Daneau's second consideration of the fundamentals of hermeneutics, his *Brevis methodus totius S. Scripturae interpretandae*, appears at the beginning of his commentary on Matthew's Gospel, *In Evangelium Domini nostri Iesu Christi secundum Matthaenum commentarii brevissimi, in quibus tamen et doctrina, et methodus huius Evangelii, itemque aliorum in eodem argumento, perspicue traditur et explicatur*. It shows the same dominance of ethical interests in exegesis (see especially *ibid.*, pp. 5–7). For this theme see also Fatjo (1976), p. 73: 'On notera qu'ici aussi le but ultime de l'exégèse est la prédication morale.'

⁶⁵ Cf. Hotman (1559), pp. 89–126. Because Hotman understands jurisprudence to be a part of moral philosophy, the boundaries between such exegesis of law and the moral formation of life are fluid; *ibid.*, p. 12f.: 'Moralem [philosophiam], quae revera hoc erat digna nomine, hoc est, non ad vanas quasdam et inanes verborum conversationes, sed ad mores et actionem usumque pertinebat, singulari quodam studio a Romanis excultam fuisse, vel hinc licet intelligatur, quod in Iure civili praeclare et sapienter instituendo tantopere elaboravit. Praeclare namque Ulpianus, Iurisconsultos ait veram, ac non fucatam philosophiam amplexos esse.'

⁶⁶ *Inst. [Corpus iuris civilis, I] 1.2.12*. For the structural scheme see also Troje (1969), pp. 63–88, especially 73–77, 82f.

speaking falsehoods. Further classifications—for instance, different people or groups of people, such as men and women,⁶⁷ the sane, the mentally ill, or children,⁶⁸ persons *sui iuris* and persons *alieni iuris*, such as slaves, sons and wives,⁶⁹ or private persons and office holders—are entirely derived from Roman law. Daneau refers to the individual cases cited in the *Corpus iuris civilis* as examples of a wide range of concrete applications of Roman law. After the Bible, the *Corpus iuris civilis* is the source most frequently quoted by Daneau in his discussion of Christian ethics. In general, however, the proverbial humanist *Moralismus*, which led humanists to regard jurisprudence as a part of moral philosophy, was also present in Calvinist ethics.⁷⁰

THE INFLUENCE OF NEOSTOICISM ON ARISTOTELIAN ETHICS

The final third of the sixteenth century exhibited a further development characteristic of Calvinist ethics, in contrast to the Lutheran and Tridentine Catholic ethics. This was the use of philosophical arguments, in particular of Stoic ideas transmitted by Cicero, to complement the reigning reception of Aristotelian thought. For Daneau, Aristotle was and remained the single most important ethical thinker, despite his ignorance of human sin, shared by all pagan philosophers. After the Bible and the *corpus iuris civilis*, Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* and Cicero's *De officiis* are the most frequently cited sources in Daneau's *Ethices Christianae libri tres*. Aristotelian philosophy both offered a comprehensive theory of human behaviour and action in contrast to that of other living beings, and defined the framework within which questions of the goal of good actions and of the *summum bonum*, the supreme good, could be considered. This background accounts for the particular power of the appeal to Stoic tradition which is found in the work not only of Daneau but also of many of

⁶⁷ Daneau, *Ethices libri* (1577), II.13, f. 201^v: 'Ac personarum quidem ad quas pertinet hoc praeceptum, aliae sunt Mares, aliae sunt Foeminae. Utrique vetantur occidere. Ratione enim sexus non excusantur.'

⁶⁸ Ibid.: 'Item hominum, alij sunt Sanae mentis, alij sunt Furiosi, et Infantes, qui nondum capaces sunt rationis. Infans et furiosus non tenetur, nisi per dilucida intervalla necauerit, quia rationis iudicio caret. l. 12. D. Ad l. Cornel. de Sicar. [*Dig. (Corpus iuris civilis)*, I] 48.8.12.'

⁶⁹ Ibid.: 'Praetera hominum alij sunt Sui iuris, alij Alieni, ut Servus, Filius, Uxor. Sunt enim hi in potestate domini, patris et mariti.'

⁷⁰ See Mortari (1956), pp. 17–38; Kisch (1972), pp. 34, 53–54; Burmeister (1974), p. 192–3; Troje (1977), pp. 615–795; Strohm (1996), pp. 204–5, 236–252 and, for the continuing influence of humanist moralism in Daneau's work, 21–78.

his contemporaries. As with the ethics of the early Church, the reception of Stoic thought expressed itself in the form of a strict asceticism. Both the life of the individual and that of the state were shaped by the struggle to allow reason to triumph over the dangerous emotions. Order, discipline and reason determined the success of all of human life. Daneau follows Cicero's criticism of Aristotle's belief that the soul is necessarily affected by the passions and that, therefore, only a moderate measure of reason can be expected.⁷¹ According to Cicero, and with him Daneau, it is not possible here to speak of moderation, for such moderation is, in reality, disobedience to reason and thus depravity. To speak of a moderate response is to make the same mistake as a person who falls off a cliff and believes himself or herself able to halt his fall in mid-air.⁷² For Daneau, as for Cicero, passions are dangerous as soon as they arise, for even the weakest passion represents the loss of a degree of reason.⁷³

Although Daneau sought to distance himself both from a sweeping condemnation of all emotions and from the Stoic ideal of apathy, the emotions still received the same verdict as the passions.⁷⁴ The question of the extent to which their power had been broken came to be the criterion for measuring the level of virtue. In his discussions of the specific situations and concrete examples of Christian ethics, Daneau therefore includes much of the negative attitude towards emotions found in Stoic moral philosophy. An example of this is his repeated affirmation of the rigorous sexual ethics of the Roman Stoic Musonius, to whom he refers in preference to Plato, Aristotle and other ancient philosophers.⁷⁵

Daneau's use of the fundamental Stoic opposition between reason, order and discipline, on the one hand, and emotions, passions and chaos, on the other, was made possible by two fundamental decisions. Firstly, the Pauline opposition of *pneuma* and *sarx*, spirit and flesh, is partly identified with the opposition of reason and passion. And secondly, reason and the

⁷¹ Cicero, *Tusc. disp.* IV.20.46 : 'Haec tamen ita disputant, ut resecanda esse fateantur, evelli penitus dicant nec posse nec opus esse, et in omnibus fere rebus mediocritatem esse optimam existiment'; cf. Daneau, *Ethices libri* (1577), I.9, ff. 97^v-98^r.

⁷² See Cicero, *Tusc. disp.* IV.17.39 and IV.18.41.

⁷³ Cicero takes up Zeno's definition of the passions against Aristotle and the Peripatetics. According to this Stoic view, the passions are movements of a spirit which has turned away from reason and opposes nature, or, in short, an overly vehement attraction, that is, one which goes beyond the reasonableness of nature; *ibid.*, IV.21.47: 'Definitio perturbationis, qua recte Zenonem usum puto. Ita enim definit, ut perturbatio sit aversa a ratione contra naturam animi commotio, vel brevius, ut perturbatio sit adpetitus vehementior, vehementior autem intellegatur is, qui procul absit a naturae constantia'; cf. *ibid.*, IV.18.42.

⁷⁴ See Daneau, *Ethices libri* (1577), I.15, f. 69^r; *ibid.*, II.15, f. 268^r; *ibid.*, III.7, f. 373^v; cf. also *idem* (1588), I.11, f. 15^v; *ibid.*, II.7, f. 40^{r-v}; *ibid.*, II.13, f. 50^r; *idem* (1595), III.2, f. 38^r; *ibid.*, ff. 42^v and 43^r.

⁷⁵ Cf. Daneau, *Ethices libri* (1577), II.14, ff. 233^v, 235^r, 237^r.

law of God were regarded as interchangeable when dealing with the emotions and passions. Obedience to the law of God was thus seen as essentially equivalent to the assertion of reason over and against the passions. It became one of the primary aims of Christian ethics to implement discipline and order according to this understanding.⁷⁶

This model is closer to Stoic than to Aristotelian ethics; for, given Daneau's understanding that God's law required perfect obedience, he could not but view Aristotle's ideal of moderation and the golden mean as insufficient. In the context of the biblical doctrine of creation, he does speak of the moderation of certain emotions, but the emphasis is always on the struggle to overcome or extinguish the passions. The detailed systematic structure he learned from Aristotle offered him a framework within which the pugnacious spirit of the Stoa could be expressed in terms of a comprehensive system of discipline.

The increased attractiveness of Stoic ethical traditions to which Daneau's *Ethices Christianae libri tres* bears witness is representative of the Calvinism of the time. Also representative is the dominance of Neostoicism in Daneau's later political ethics, the *Politices Christianae libri septem* of 1596.⁷⁷ Aristotle was no longer understood to be the single most important ethical theoretician. In an age of rapid change, widely experienced as profound crisis, Aristotelian ethics, focused as it was on the *polis*, could no longer be regarded as adequate. The appeal of Stoic philosophy was not only strengthened by its recommendation of withdrawal from an external world shaken by crisis to a safe inner world. It was also particularly well suited to the epoch because it was a philosophy of crisis, which after the end of the order of the ancient *polis* could argue from a higher cosmic order. In contrast to Aristotelian ethics, trapped in the world of the ancient *polis*, Stoic ethics had turned decisively towards an ethics of the individual. Moreover, its leading theme of the rule of reason over dangerous emotions offered a useful model for reaching both inner peace of the soul and political stability.⁷⁸

⁷⁶ As a Reformed theologian, Daneau understood the rule of sin, which was expressed in terms of the clouding of human reason and the human will's total lack of freedom to do good. He attempted to deal with the problems which this presented for understanding reason as the measure of good actions—or, indeed, for the development of a Christian ethics—by his fundamental choice of approach (see §2.2 above). The active subject of reasonable knowledge and of good actions was the human being who had been reborn through the work of the Spirit. According to the Pauline opposition of spirit and flesh, the Spirit becomes the true and final opponent of the passions and lusts of the flesh.

⁷⁷ For bibliographical details see n. 10 above. For the dominance of Neostoicism, see Strohm (1996), pp. 166–194.

⁷⁸ Günter Abel has pointed to the relationship between the renaissance of the Stoa, or the spread of Neostoicism, and the experience of crisis. See especially Abel (1978), p. 2f.: 'Mit Lipsius kommt es zu einer bewußten Erneuerung besonders des römischen Stoizismus im

CONCLUSION

It was decisive for the character of early Calvinist ethics that it did not begin to be formed until the second half of the sixteenth century. For this reason, it was more deeply anchored in the *Zeitgeist* of the end of the century than the ethics of the other confessions, which were more closely bound up with tradition. This difference manifested itself in four ways. In the first place, there was the orientation of Calvinist ethics towards a God-given order in church and society, a reaction to the radical changes to traditional structures of authority which were widely experienced as a crisis. Secondly, it could be seen in the relationship of this ethical approach to the encyclopedic endeavours and methods which found particular expression in the rapid spread of Ramism. Thirdly, this approach to ethics was characterized by its close relationship to the milieu of humanist jurisprudence, from which was drawn the ‘new élite’ of legal thinkers, trained in Roman law, which in the course of the establishment of the early modern territorial state would take the place of the clergy. Fourthly, the particularity of this tradition was expressed in its broad reception of Neostoic thought, which sought to react to the crisis of change in Western Europe with rationalization, internalization and the strengthening of the authority of the state. This was the basis of the ‘modernity’ of Calvinism and also of its astonishing appeal during the decades which followed.

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- Abel, Günter (1978) *Stoizismus und Frühe Neuzeit. Zur Entstehungsgeschichte modernen Denkens im Felde von Ethik und Politik*, Berlin and New York: de Gruyter.

Interesse einer die Sicherung des Individuums voraussetzenden Verwirklichung des Ideals der Apathie und Ataraxie angesichts der Leben und Existenz des einzelnen Menschen bedrohenden Situation der Bürgerkriege, des Ordnungsschwundes, der Krise.’ Abel has, therefore, rightly criticized the accounts by Dilthey and Cassirer of the renaissance of Stoicism in the early modern period on the grounds that they focused exclusively on the emancipatory dimension, which they valued very highly. They therefore concentrated on the contribution to the modern autonomy of human beings made by the Stoic focus on nature, its anthropocentrism and the participation of human reason in the universal *Logos*. Against this trend, it must also be recognized, however, that, in the face of the contemporary experience of crisis, the call for discipline and order—indeed, the entire tendency of Neostoicism towards order and discipline, which always favoured norm over drive when the two came into conflict—was just as important (see *ibid.*, p. 15f.). Cf. also Strohm (2000), pp. 190–194 (further literature is cited there).