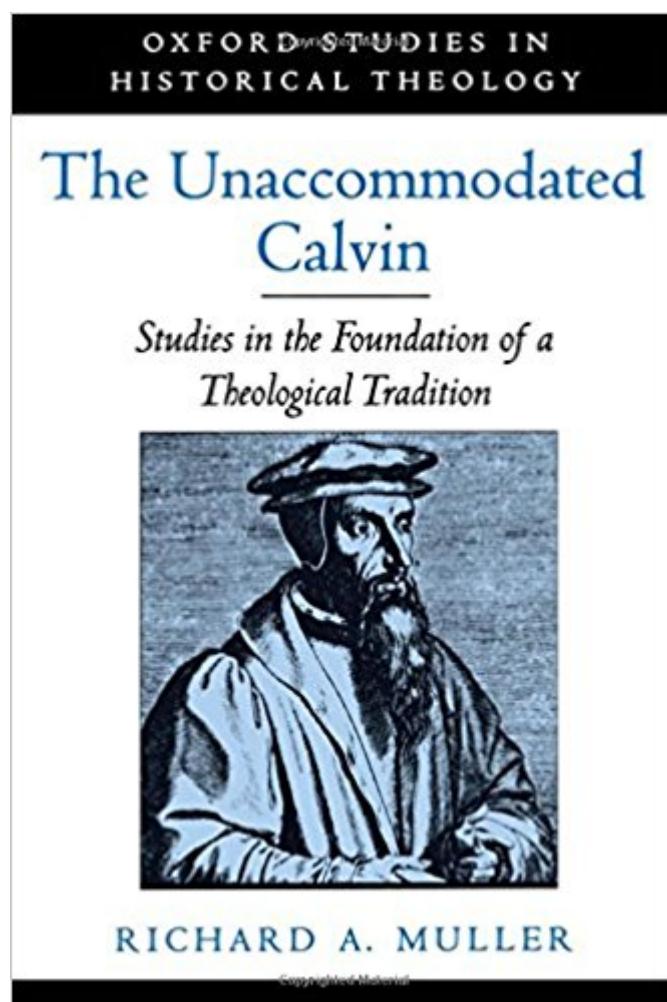


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The Unaccommodated Calvin: Studies In The Foundation Of A Theological Tradition (Oxford Studies In Historical Theology)



Synopsis

This book attempts to understand Calvin in his 16th-century context, with attention to continuities and discontinuities between his thought and that of his predecessors, contemporaries, and successors. Muller pays particular attention to the interplay between theological and philosophical themes common to Calvin and the medieval doctors, and to developments in rhetoric and method associated with humanism.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"Muller's scholarship is so strong and his arguments so convincing that future Calvin scholars will only be able to ignore this book at their peril...essential reading for anyone wishing to study Calvin's theology and exegesis, both as a model of critical historical methodology and for its illumination of Calvin's program and the development of his thought." *Sixteenth Century Review*"Muller begins this extraordinary book by doing something modern scholars too seldom do: he puts John Calvin and his thought back into their sixteenth-century historical context...Muller shows how Calvin's view of faith was not radically different from that of medieval scholastics such as Thomas Aquinas. This buttresses Muller's assertion that many of Calvin's attacks were aimed not so much at scholastics as at theologians of Paris in his day... [a] Stimulating and impressive analysis." *American History Review*"This detailed and perceptive work will be crucial for all interested in Calvin studies. . . . No Calvin scholar - or theologian - should work with Calvin without reading this learned

book."--Religious Studies Review"One of the many virtues of this book is that Muller names names, providing a useful guide to scholarly debates on Calvin's thought. Another strength of the book is its proposal of principles that can-and should-be applied in all historical theological studies. His arguments are made forcefully and are supported with rich documentation. His handling of both primary sources-Latin and French-and European and North American Calvin scholarship is adept and broad ranging. This book is an important contribution to Calvin studies specifically and historically theology generally."--Journal of the American Musicological Society"This is an insightful and rigorous study of John Calvin as a sixteenth century theologian, and it is without a doubt one of the best written in recent years.... the book is a must-read for anyone who cares at all about John Calvin. It contains a wealth of knowledge, research, and scholarly insight; and it is not being too 'accommodating' to Muller to say that with this book he has distinguished himself as one of John Calvin's finest and most illuminating contemporary theological interpreters."--IRT Bulletin" Muller's academic treatment places Calvin in his historical context and challenges various misconceptions and rabbit trails in 20th-century Calvin scholarship."--Christianity Today

Richard A. Muller is at Calvin Theological Seminary.

I am not a seminarian. I hardly have a knowledge of the reformers' lives and works. I'm a US history student. However, I'm interested in the Reformation and Post-Reformation period. I chose Muller's book to help me understand Calvin and his work (the Institutes, I'm reading through them). More than this, I chose this book because Muller wrote it. And I'm glad I read it. Muller is a historical theologian who stands heads and shoulders above most historians in any field, including that which he specializes in. His ability to analyze pertinent material is incredible. You'd also think he's read everything written in the sixteenth century. He does such an amazing job presenting his theses, and then forcefully making his conclusions. To say something about the text for readers: he shows how we must understand the historical context of Calvin and his Institutes in order to properly understand Calvin and his Institutes. He does this by comparing Calvin and his Institutes to reformers contemporary to him. Sorry I can't say more. I'm not going to sit here and give a book report. I will put it simply: get the book if you dare. A warning: this is heavy reading. It is also reading that greatly rewards its readers, I mean deeply. Muller is a phenomenon. He truly presents an unaccommodated Calvin, i.e. Calvin on his own terms.

By writing this book Richard Muller has done a wonderful service, both for serious students of Calvin

as well as the casual reader who has the slightest interest in the Reformer's thought. Muller presents Calvin's thought in its own context, demonstrating in the process how often his writings have been misconstrued by modern scholars asking modern questions of texts that were written over four hundred years ago. One of the keys to Muller's work is his use of original documents, whereby he unfolds the relationship between the various genres in Calvin's body of works. He shows that Calvin's magnum opus, *The Institutes of the Christian Religion*, serves a limited purpose in his corpus, and must be carefully read in the context of both his sermons and his biblical commentaries. This insight alone clears away generations of false conclusions, and reveals details that other scholars have failed to note. Further, Muller provides important insights into the development and structure of *The Institutes*. This book is a must-read for anyone who seeks to understand Calvin. It is also a model for how documents from earlier ages of church history ought to be read and studied. No serious student of church history should be without it.

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