

## PREFACE

*“Omnes aliquid novi ex Africa”*

Most probably few scholars will expect a bibliography of this size on a European reformer from the African continent. Once again however, the above-mentioned Latin proverb has been proved true, you can always expect something novel from this “dark” continent. Some explanation of this exceptional “spark of light” from South Africa necessitates a brief preface.

*The Institute for the Advancement of Calvinism*

The aim of the Institute for the Advancement of Calvinism (established some ten years ago at Potchefstroom) is to encourage research on Calvin and Calvinism. In order to attain this end one of its first tasks was a bibliographical study to ascertain the amount of research material which had become available after the previous bibliography compiled by W. Niesel up to 1959. The result of this enquiry, which has continued over the last five years, is contained in the present bibliography. The sincere wish of the I.A.C. is that this bibliography will render valuable service to Calvinologists all over the world and stimulate scientific research about Calvinism.

*International co-operation*

This 1959—1974 bibliography should be regarded as the first contribution of the I.A.C. towards international Calvin-research. Our Institute is firmly convinced of the absolute necessity of international co-operation in this field. It has already established contact with various similar organizations and institutions throughout the world and it will be glad to get into touch with institutions and persons of the same interest in future. To facilitate this contact a brief introduction may be appropriate.

*Bibliographical research by the I.A.C.*

Building upon the material contained in this bibliography the I.A.C. is publishing in Afrikaans a series of Calvin causeries which is indispensable to students and interested readers. These

causeries are annotated bibliographies mainly of books and articles available in the Ferdinand Postma Library of the University of Potchefstroom on for instance the following subjects: Calvin's view on Scripture, state and the law, state and church, ethics, music, education, culture, economics, science, ecclesiastical ecumenical relationships, church government and church discipline, pastoral care, his attitude towards missionary work, ecclesiastical councils, his doctrine about God, anthropology etc.

The preparation of these causeries by different authors is made possible by the Calviniana collection available in the Library of the University of Potchefstroom. A continuous effort is made to enlarge this collection, already of a high standard. The I.A.C. will therefore be very willing to exchange publications on a mutual basis or to be informed not merely about recent publications but also about valuable older stuff available. We are especially interested keeping our existing collection of doctor's and masters' theses up to date.

*Publications of a different nature*

Apart from the abovementioned causeries the I.A.C. issues three other types of publications.

The first is a pamphlet series on important issues. These pamphlets on topical matters, composed and duly elucidated from a Calvinist-Biblical point of view by authorities in their respective fields, appear monthly. Nearly one hundred numbers have thus far been published. About 3 500 of these studies are sent monthly to recipients in Southern Africa and various countries. To increase the number of readers some of these pamphlets will be issued in English in future.

The second is a brochure series which provides for a more extensive discussion from a Calvinistic point of view of different topics, e.g. the Calvinist and art; human rights; dramatic art, film and T.V. In these series are also included studies on different aspects of Calvinistic thought.

The third type of publication by our Institute comprizes our efforts towards international co-operation. The I.A.C. aspires to publish more comprehensive works at least every five

years containing the contributions of Calvinists throughout the world. Two volumes of this nature entitled *Die atoomeeu — „In U Lig”* (The atomic age in the light of the Word of God) and *Reformasie en Revolusie* (Reformation and Revolution) were published in 1969 and 1974 respectively. Most probably the next volume will contain the acts of an international Calvinistic conference (on the various aspects of tertiary education) to be held at Potchefstroom towards the end of 1975.

#### *Other activities*

In an extensive research programme, which will be carried out during the next decade, we shall try to ascertain the impact of Calvinism on the South African society. In this project the links between South African and European Calvinism will be traced. In addition to the Reformational heritage of the 16th century, its background will be studied as far back as the Pre-Reformation, Late Mediaeval and even Patristic period. The I.A.C. does not aim to revive the past in an anachronistic way with the help of historical research. Because of many possible deviations during the four centuries of Calvinistic thought it is important, however, to get to the primogenitor. We regard the study of the original sources as of the utmost importance. The idea is not to canonise the thought of Calvin, but to build on the firm foundation of most of his ideas which clearly echo Biblical revelation.

In the different ways briefly described above the I.A.C. endeavours, by means of unswerving loyalty to Scripture, to be a tower of light of the Calvinistic life and world view in the contemporary darkening world.

Hopefully, we work and pray under the same motto as that of Calvin's Geneva: *Post tenebras lux!*

B. J. van der Walt,  
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