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# AN INVESTIGATION INTO CALVIN'S USE OF AUGUSTINE

## ABSTRACT

This article briefly investigates the use of Augustine as an authority from the early church in John Calvin's writings. Calvin frequently referred to and quoted Augustine in his writings. Augustine undoubtedly exerted an influence on Calvin's views and arguments. This article traces Calvin's use of Augustine in his writings chronologically as they were published since 1532. In addition, a data analysis provides relevant information in order to argue a scrutinised exposition of Augustine's influence on Calvin's thinking. The article does not try to compare the theologies of Augustine and Calvin, nor to establish a theory that would reveal Augustine's influence on Calvin's theology. This investigation suggests methodological help for further research in this regard.

## 1. RELEVANCE OF THE INVESTIGATION

In research conducted on Calvin, studies on his reception of the Church Fathers are subordinated by those that explain his theology. However, the underestimation of the influence of the Church Fathers on Calvin erodes a comprehensive understanding of his theology. This presents a challenge to research on Calvin, and should be considered one of the motivations for this contribution on the role Augustine played in shaping Calvin's theological arguments. Investigations that compare Calvin's teachings with those of Augustine have not provided a conclusive and substantive disclosure of this issue. Analyses of the similarities in and differences between the two theologians to a certain extent lack the basic investigation and consultation of primary sources. This should be rectified by means of an accurate and rigorous determination of how Calvin made use of Augustine compared to other ecclesiastical authorities, by focusing on which texts he consulted, and when, taking into account the rhetorical function of his appeals to Augustine (Pitkin 1999:347). The study of Calvin's use of Augustine will provide convincing and enduring results in the search for real influences (Lane 1981:156).

## 2. CALVIN'S USE OF AUGUSTINE IN FIVE PERIODS OF WRITING

Calvin's writings can be divided into five periods: 1532-1536; 1536-1539; 1539-1543; 1543-1551 and 1551-1561. The present investigation focuses on each of these periods, mapping out Calvin's use of Augustine in publications from each of them.

### 2.1 The first period: 1532-1536

In his first work, *Commentary on Seneca's De Clementia* (1532), Calvin displays virtually no specific knowledge of the Fathers (Van Oort 1997:663). It is, however, remarkable how he places Augustine among the philosophers, the poets and the historians such as Cicero, Horace, Ovid, Plutarch, *et cetera*. These Augustinian citations (thirteen of fifteen patristic citations) clearly show that Calvin respected Augustine at the start of his writing career, even before the start of his theological publications. In the *Commentary* quotations from Augustine supplement (CO 5, 23), correct (CO 5, 112), and often conclude entire debates (CO 5, 154).

The *Psychopannychia* poses considerable critical problems. Against which group or groups was it originally intended? How much of the 1542 published version actually represents what Calvin originally wrote in 1534/5? In this work Calvin uses ten Augustinian citations. When he uses a citation within the context of a specific issue, he consequently applies it to a similar issue in another context, with or without adaptations. In his *Instruction contre la secte des Anabaptistes* (1544), Calvin uses the same Augustinian citation for explaining the state of souls after death. This French citation (CO 7, 126) is similar to that which appeared in *Psychopannychia* in Latin (CO 5, 215).

Calvin's use of Augustine in the *Prefatory address to King Francis I* (1535) serves primarily polemical purposes. He cites Augustinian testimonies in support of his opposition to current Roman Catholic and scholastic opinions. He is aware that the Church Fathers had great authority. "If the contest were to be determined by patristic authority, the tide of victory would turn to our side", he remarks (OS 1, 27). In the first *Institutio* more than half of the quotations from Augustine refer to the sacraments. Van Oort is of the opinion that Calvin read Augustine. He illustrates this by referring to Calvin's remark: "We grasp and obtain God's grace, and, as Augustine says, forgetting our merits, we embrace Christ's gifts" (CO 1, 48). This interpretation of Augustine does not appear in textbooks such as Lombard's *Sententiae* or the *Decretum Gratiani* (Van Oort 1997:667).

## 2.2 The second period: 1536-1539

Calvin's excellent knowledge of the Church Fathers (including Augustine) is recorded in the *Minutes of the Lausanne disputation* (1536). He demonstrates this knowledge in public with a series of lengthy quotations, taken from memory. His Catholic opponents at Lausanne could not refute him.

In the second edition of the *Institutio* (1539), Calvin draws attention to the depravation of human nature. The frequency of Augustinian citations reflects his concentration on this issue. Of the one hundred and thirty-one citations, more than fifty deal with this matter. Generally speaking, however, these citations from Augustine are slightly careless and inaccurate. This seems to reflect Calvin's situation in this period. In 1543, he apologised for the lack of detailed quotations in the 1539 edition, and explained that he had been obliged to quote from memory, having only a single volume of Augustine at hand (*CO* 6, 336).

## 2.3 The third period: 1539-1543

In his first commentary, *Commentary on Paul's Epistle to Romans* (1540), Calvin extensively quotes and refers to Augustine. A cautious distinction must be drawn in this instance. In the context of the exposition of doctrine, Calvin unquestionably uses Augustine. However, in the context of his exegetical exposition and treatment of Paul, he often strongly opposes this Church Father. In order to pursue Paul's true intention (*CO* 49, 92), Calvin does not hesitate to contradict Augustine.

In the third edition of the *Institutio* (1543), three characteristic factors are discernible. First, many citations reflect Calvin's profound understanding of Augustine with regard to the Christology (e.g. *CO* 1, 532) which he now incorporates in his views on the church and the sacraments. Secondly, citations relating to the sacraments are more articulated and more refined than in the two earlier editions of 1536 and 1539. For example, in the 1536 *Institutio*, Calvin uses Augustine only briefly (*CO* 1, 142). In the 1543 edition, he explains the meaning of Augustine's words. Thirdly, Calvin's use of citations from Augustine concerning his views on the church is not limited to theory, but progresses to the practical level. This reflects his experience of the ministry in the church of Strasbourg. Smits (1956:47) observes that "the fruit of his sojourn [was] incorporated in the third edition of *Institutio* ..."

## 2.4 The fourth period: 1543-1551

*The bondage and liberation of the will* (1543) includes many citations from Augustine. The main issue in this publication involves the freedom of the human

will and human choice. Calvin's argument is truly Augustinian. Of the seventeen patristic authors quoted, Augustine is used two hundred and thirty-two times. Tertullian comes second with eleven citations. Except for these two Fathers, others are not quoted more than ten times. In this regard Calvin's use of the later work of Augustine is evident. In contrast to Phighius' claim that the *nuda veritas* declines in Augustine's later work, Calvin discovered an increase in the *vera et sana doctrina* (CO 6, 294).

In his *Articuli facultatis theologicae Parisiensis* (1544), Calvin refers to Augustine in eleven of the twenty-five articles. Before clarifying the articles, he explains his working principle in dealing with these matters:

In the admirable words of Augustine, "When an obscure matter is under dispute, no aid being offered by clear and certain passages of sacred Scripture, human presumption, which gains nothing by leaning to either side, ought to restrain itself" (CO 7, 6).

In his New Testament Commentaries,<sup>1</sup> Calvin's most preferred Church Father is John Chrysostom, and not Augustine. Calvin portrays his usual trust in Augustine in theological issues; when it comes to exegetical matters, his reservations are evident. Calvin is critical of Augustine's allegorical method, and points out a discrepancy between Augustine's exegesis and Paul's letters, rejecting the Church Father's interpretations.

In the commentaries of the Old Testament,<sup>2</sup> Calvin evaluates Augustine's exegesis mostly in a positive manner. Chrysostom is of minor significance.

Small additions are made to the 1550 edition of the *Institutio*. Nearly all the newly added patristic references are from Augustine, with only one from Ambrose. There is also a new but critical reference to Gregory the Great. Smits (1956:82) describes this edition as "the edition of the Holy Scriptures", with six of the seventeen new citations being dedicated to the issue of the authority of Scripture.

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1 *Commentary on Paul's Epistle to the Corinthians* (1546); *Commentary on Paul's Epistle to the Galatians* (1548); *Commentary on Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians* (1548); *Commentary on Paul's Epistle to the Philippians* (1548); *Commentary on Paul's Epistle to the Colossians* (1548); the first and the second *Commentaries on Paul's Epistle to Timothy* (1548); *Commentary on Paul's Epistle to Titus* (1549); *Commentary on Hebrews* (1549); and the first and the second *Commentary on Paul's Epistle to the Thessalonians* (1550).

2 *Commentary on Isaiah* (1549); *Commentary on Genesis* (1554).

## 2.5 The fifth period: 1551-1561

The treatise *Concerning the eternal predestination of God* (1552) discloses Calvin's dependence on Augustine regarding the doctrine of predestination. Except for Augustine (ninety-six citations), the only other Church Father (Ambrose) is quoted once. There are two reasons for this. First, Calvin's main opponent, Phighius, resorted to Augustine. However, according to Calvin, "he [Phighius] explicitly condemns the opinion of Augustine" (CO 8, 259). Secondly, the words of Romans 9:20 *O homo, tu quis es?* are repeatedly advanced in the course of the argument, and Augustine's affirmation that God's grace does not find, but makes men elect, is adduced almost as frequently in various forms. Much of the formal difficulty of his argument is resolved in these two basic structures. The characteristic repetitiveness adds strength to the argument (Reid 1982:10).

In the published debates with Westphal (1555, 1556 and 1557), relatively few Augustinian citations appear in the first two works (thirteen in *Defensio doctrinae de Sacramentis* [1555]; seventeen in *Defensio Secunda contra Westphalum* [1556]). However, in the *Ultima admonitio ad Westphalum* (1557) Augustine is quoted one hundred and thirty-two times.<sup>3</sup>

From 1551 to 1556, Calvin completed a number of New Testament commentaries<sup>4</sup> in which, contrary to those published before 1551, the most frequently quoted Church Father is Augustine. The second author, Josephus, is used as a historical witness and source. In addition, it must be noted that Calvin's assessment of Augustine in these commentaries is not always positive. However, as Lane suggests, even a negative comment still bears a mark of respect in the commentaries.

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3 The first work was basically written for the mutual consent of the churches of Zürich and Geneva with regard to the administration of the sacraments. Though there had still been a slight difference between the two churches, most of the problems were solved by that time. Their mutual understanding of Augustine in this regard did not require further interpretations. The second work was a defence of the first and did contain many citations. When the controversy had hardly died down with the Second Admonition to Westphal, Calvin began to understand the character of the conflict. Because Westphal brought Calvin into controversy with the ancient church under the name of Augustine (CO 9, 148), Calvin decided to cite Augustine, as he believed all his writings proclaimed him to be on his side (CO 9, 149).

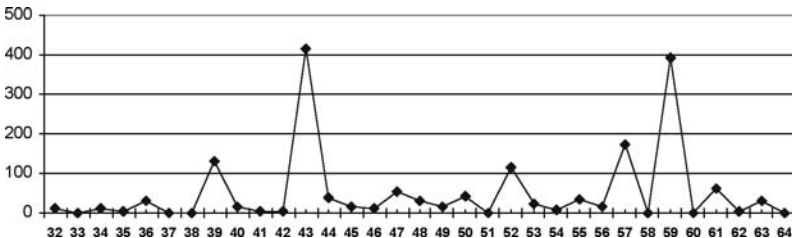
4 *Commentary on First Peter* (1551); *Commentary on First John* (1551); *Commentary on Jude* (1551); *Commentary on Second Peter* (1551); *Commentary on Acts, 1-13* (1552); *Commentary on John* (1553); *Commentary on Acts, 14-28* (1554); *Commentary on a harmony of the Evangelists, Matthew, Mark and Luke* (1555); *Commentary on Philemon* (1556).

In the Old Testament commentaries (1555-1565), Calvin uses patristic sources less often. He uses neutral expressions concerning Augustine in the rhetorical sphere, especially in the *Commentaries on the four last books of Moses* (1563). This tendency does not reflect Calvin's reduced esteem of Augustine, but indicates his seasoned understanding and use of this Church Father.

In the final Latin *Institutio* (1559), most of Calvin's explicit references are to Augustine's anti-Pelagian works, such as his *Contra duas epistolas Pelagianorum*, *De correptione et gratia*, *De bono perseverantiae*, and *Contra Iulianum*. In this respect, Calvin claims an essential conformity between Augustine and reformed theology (Van Oort 1997:683). Calvin's strong denial of *merita nostra* or strong emphasis on *sola gratia* is consistent with Augustine. This serves as background to the theological debates on especially sin and grace, predestination and the Lord's Supper.

### 3. DATA ANALYSIS

The following table shows the frequency of Calvin's Augustinian citations over the years.



The high peaks coincide with the publication of Calvin's major work, the *Institutio*, in 1539, 1543 and 1559.<sup>5</sup> The 1536-edition includes twenty-four citations from Augustine. It is significant to note that the citations used in the *Institutio* of 1543 were to be repeated in the next editions and publications. Out of a total of 1 696 references, 1 214 were used in the *Institutio* as well as in the three major polemical works *De libero arbitrio* (1543), *De aeterna Dei praedestinatione* (1552) and *Ultima admonitio ad Westphalum* (1557).

5 This information is based on the data of Smits and Mooi, but 17 citations have been added, because Smits and Mooi did not include repeated citations. This would mean one more peak in 1550, if the repeated citations were to be included.

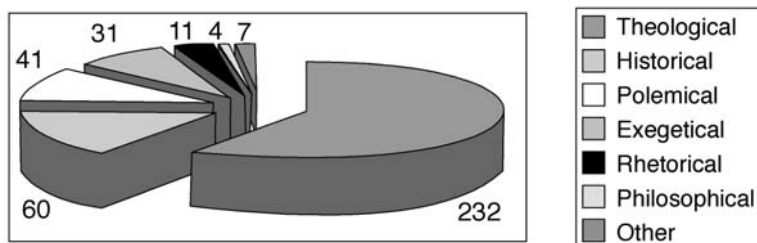
For the purposes of this article, the last edition of Calvin's *Institutio* was selected for a thematic and functional analysis.<sup>6</sup> This multi-dimensional approach was used rather than the ecclesiastical-dogmatic method employed by Smits and Mooi. According to Coertzen (1993:554),

There is a definite need for a detailed analysis of the *Institutes* of Calvin, not only of the well known parts but an analysis of the complete *Institutes*. Important thoughts and themes in this regard have been neglected up to now.

A multi-dimensional approach could assist researchers to focus on these important but neglected areas.

The table on the next page shows data (themes) linked to citations from Augustine, extracted from the fifth edition of the *Institutio*. It represents the comprehensive way in which Calvin made use of the Church Father.

For the functional analysis, the last edition of the *Institutio* was examined in terms of seven categories: theological, polemical, historical, exegetical, rhetorical, philosophical, and others (socio-political, one; references only, four; and hard to identify, two). The result is depicted below.



The *theological* purpose occupies more than half of the references to Augustine (theological, 59%; historical, 17%; polemical, 10%; exegetical, 8%; rhetorical, 3%; philosophical, 1%; and the rest, 2%). The table also confirms that Calvin's main intention in using Augustine in the last edition of the *Institutio* is a theological motive. It is noteworthy that the theological-historical use of the citations outnumbers their theological-polemical usage.<sup>7</sup>

6 A number of citations in this edition had already appeared in Calvin's exegetics, small tracts, confessions, letters and sermons. Moreover, numerous data in this edition were to be used repeatedly in his subsequent works. In this regard, the data of the last edition provide an ideal sample group reflecting all the periods of writing in terms of Calvin's use of Augustinian citations in the case of data analysis.

7 The theological-polemical character is not as prominent in the last edition of the *Institutio* as in Calvin's polemical works in which the theological-polemical use of

Themes (data) used in the 5th edition of <i>Institutio</i>	
Themes used more than 20 times	1. The Sacraments (68 times, including baptism and the Lord's Supper) 2. The church (54 times, including church customs, etc.) 3. Will (34 times, including free will, God's will, etc.) 4. Sin (34 times, including concupiscence, total depravity, etc.) 5. Grace (28 times, including gratuitous grace, work and grace, etc.) 6. Christology (22 times, including sole mediator, etc.)
Themes used 10 to 20 times	7. Predestination (17 times, including election, foreknowledge, etc.) 8. Works (16 times, including merits, etc.) 9. The Law (14 times, including the Ten Commandments, etc.) 10. God (13 times, including divine providence, etc.) 11. Faith (11 times, including justification, etc.)
Themes used 5 to 10 times	12. Creation (7 times, including fall, etc.) 13. Scripture (7 times, including the authority of Scripture, etc.) 14. Trinity (6 times) 15. Man (6 times, including human nature, etc.)
Themes used less than 5 times	Adam, the Church Fathers, calling, care for the dead, councils, error, fate, heretics, humility, idolatry, image reverence, indulgence, the Jews, learning and ignorance, limited deliverance, magistrates, the Manicheans, Moses, peace of mind, the particular, the Pelagians, perseverance, prayer, pride, progress in understanding, punishment of an individual fault, proof of something being right, purgatory, responsibility to the truth, the righteous after death, salvation, soul, suffering of the apostles, war (34 themes)

Based on the dynamic data analysis, general patterns in Calvin's use of Augustinian citations can now be identified. First, the number of repeated citations increased in terms of the five identified periods of writing. The later works contained substantially more citations from Augustine. Secondly, this does not mean that the repeated citations were used in the same way or in the same context. Calvin freely used the same Augustinian citations in different genres, in different contexts, or in relation to different topics. Thirdly, it became clear that Calvin never used negative or critical quotations more than three times. Fourthly, the most frequently used quotations can be regarded as a reflection of the enthusiasm with which Calvin agreed to Augustine's specific ideas. According to Smits' data, Calvin's most frequently cited Augustine's *Contra*

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the Augustinian citations is important. For example, the data from Calvin's polemical work *De aeterna Dei praedestinatione* (1552) is as follows: theological, 47%; polemical, 36%; exegetical, 9%; historical, 4%; rhetorical, 2%; and philosophical, 2%.



*maximum arrianum libri duo* (ML 42:772),<sup>8</sup> regarding the authority of Scripture (used twenty-seven times in eighteen different works). Fifthly, Calvin employed rhetorical effects such as *copia*, *brevitas*, *amplificatio*, *inclusio*, *explicatio*, both in his own argumentation (cf. Millet 1992:744-752) and in his use of Augustinian citations. These strategies are used not only for literary eloquence, but also for the readers' convenience. Finally, Calvin ceaselessly endeavoured to express himself according to the readers' capacity of understanding. The use of Augustinian citations in his commentaries, in particular, reveals that Calvin was aware of the effect of interaction between the biblical texts and his readers' sympathy towards them. The Augustinian citations were used as a bridge between the two sides.

## 4. RELATED QUESTIONS

### 4.1 The purposes of Calvin's use of the patristic data

Calvin's works were literally permeated with references to the patristic authors. The frequency of such references is second only to his references to the Scriptures. A similar collection of patristic quotations of such wealth and conciseness could not be found in the writings of other Reformers or of any of Calvin's contemporaries (Todd 1964:169-171).

Calvin used the Church Fathers in several ways. First, the patristic sources most frequently employed by Calvin served to guarantee the integrity and the catholicity of the Reformation. They affirmed that reformed theology was not a new innovation, but that it continued the doctrines of Scripture (*CO* 1, 9-26). Secondly, in attempting to set forth the "perfect doctrine" contained in Scripture, Calvin was forced into doctrinal discussions and controversies. The Church Fathers were part of these discussions (*CO* 1, 16). Thirdly, the Fathers were quoted to support Calvin's exegetical conclusions. Fourthly, the patristic views functioned as vivid historical testimonies of the early church, particularly in the last edition of the *Institutio*. However, this use of the Church Fathers does not indicate the recognition of an ecclesiastical authority of the Fathers. Smits (1956:272) is wrong in thinking that Calvin substituted the authority of the Roman Catholic Church with that of the ancient church. Calvin substituted the authority of the Church of Rome with that of Scriptures. In his opinion, authority was truth derived from Scripture (*CO* 2, 862).

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8 Augustine, *Patrologiae cursus competus: Series Latina*, eds. J.P. Migne & A. Hamman, vols. 32-46 (Paris: Garnier Frères, 1861).

As early as in the first stage of his writing career, Calvin consciously articulated his views on the role of antiquity and on the proper use of the Fathers in the *Prefatory address to Francis I*. Calvin wanted to make it clear that any authority which he attributed to the Fathers was a result of their faithfulness to Scripture (CO 1, 18). In other words, he claimed the authority of the Fathers (insofar as they were faithful to Scriptures) as historical proof for the Reformation doctrine of *sola Scriptura*. In referring to the authority of Christian antiquity, the assertion was made not on the basis of the Reformation's agreement with the consensus of the church, but on the basis of its continuity with God's eternal truth (Todd 1964:149-150).

## 4.2 What constitutes Augustine's distinctive position in Calvin's writings?

Neuser (1998:155) commented on the relationship between Augustine and other Church Fathers:

I doubt that Calvin understood these Church Fathers as independent theologians. Didn't they serve him as additional evidence to support his doctrines, which he in turn took from the Bible? ... An exception is Augustine, the most influential theologian of the early and medieval church. His ideas were also the nearest to the reformation.

As Neuser suggested, Augustine's distinctive position in Calvin's writings can be found in relation to his normal use of patristic sources and in the way in which he used Augustine differently.

First, no one can compete with Augustine as far as the frequency with which he is quoted is concerned. According to Mooi's data, Calvin used Augustine 1 708 times and this represents more than 50% of all the patristic citations (from 33 authors). Calvin's interest in and use of Augustine were enduring and constant in all his writings, while his interest in and use of other Church Fathers were thematic and periodical.

Secondly, Calvin used Augustine exclusively for certain doctrines such as "justification by faith alone", "predestination" and the "Lord's Supper". For example, as Calvin noted in his *De aeterna Dei praedestinatione* (1552), he based his doctrine of predestination on evidence from Augustine's books.<sup>9</sup> Except for Augustine (ninety-six times), Ambrose is cited once, and then because of Augustine's reference to him.

9 Further, Augustine is so much at one with me that, if I wished to write a confession of my faith [on predestination], it would abundantly satisfy me to quote wholesale from his writings (CO 8, 266).

Thirdly, in Calvin's personal evaluation of the early Church Fathers, Augustine is given exclusive status. Calvin presents Augustine as a representative of the whole of antiquity (*CO* 2, 441). Even negative comments are evidence of respect (*CO* 13, 374). Although Calvin praised John Chrysostom for being "the greatest exegete" and Augustine for being "the greatest theologian", he added that Augustine's overall interpretation of revelation and the doctrine of Scripture was superior to that of Chrysostom (*CO* 9, 833-836). Did Calvin notice that he had a personal preference for this African Father? It seems so:

Perhaps I may seem to have brought a great prejudice upon myself when I confess that all ecclesiastical writers, except Augustine, have spoken so ambiguously or variously on this matter that nothing certain can be gained from their writings (*CO* 2, 193).

### 4.3 Calvin's own *schola Augustiniana*

When and through whom did Calvin first encounter Augustine? Did he really attend one of John Major's theological courses at the *College de Montaigu* in Paris? In spite of Reuter's (1981) suggestion and Torrance's (1988) lengthy speculations, their opinions lack both historical and textual proof. What Reuter and Torrance regard as proof of Calvin's indebtedness to Major, McGrath (1987) views as evidence of the influence upon him of the *schola Augustiniana moderna*. McGrath's theory presents some textual evidence but also contains abundant counter-evidence.<sup>10</sup>

In addition, what is a conceivable influence? There is the possibility of "Calvin's own wide reading in Augustine" (Van Oort 1997:666-667), leading to his own *schola Augustiniana* (Lange van Ravenswaay 1990:180) with a "bypass of the circuitous road of scholastic reception" (Oberman 1994:121). First, Calvin denies any intermediate transmission of medieval Augustinianism (*CO* 2, 214).<sup>11</sup>

Secondly, Calvin may have read Augustine by means of the new reading method of the Renaissance, which differed from various medieval readings of Augustine (Stinger 1997:473-475). According to Smits (1956:248-253), Calvin

10 We find no evidence of citations from Gregory of Rimini or from Bradwardine in Calvin's use of authorities. A lack of proof does not vindicate a theory as true or false, as McGrath argued in his *The intellectual origins of the European Reformation*. The lack of proof, however, will not substantiate the truth of McGrath's theory.

11 My readers hence perceive that the doctrine which I deliver is not new, but the doctrine which old Augustine delivered with the consent of all the godly, and which was afterwards shut up in the cloisters of monks for almost a thousand years.

adopted seven principles of interpretation, namely *sensus literalis*, *simplicitas*, *brevitas*, *perspicuitas*, *mens scriptoris*, *circumstantia* and *intentio*.<sup>12</sup> These principles are to a large extent identical with the new Renaissance method of reading and interpreting texts.

Thirdly, it appears that Calvin started to read the Bible in correlation with Augustine or to understand and use Augustine in relation to the Bible, after his conversion. This is evident in Calvin's general use of Augustine linked to the Bible (e.g. *CO* 2, 217; 9, 771-772). Calvin adopted unique principles of interpretation for his exegetical works. First, the exegesis of Scripture had to be "natural" and "literal" in the grammatical-historical sense (*CO* 9, 835; 22, 123). *Simplex et verum* is Calvin's primary principle for interpreting Biblical passages. Secondly, if Paul and Augustine differed on exegetical matters, Calvin always followed Paul (*CO* 49, 92; 51, 187). Thirdly, he believed that a time would come when it would be better not to pursue further interpretation (*CO* 7, 6; 36, 130; 48, 301). The latter two principles testify to Calvin's firm acceptance of the authority of Scripture in exegetical matters (*CO* 48, 188).

## 5. CONCLUSION

There is no one as influential as Augustine in Calvin's writings, though Calvin did not use the opinions of Augustine for the sake of using them. He judged and criticised them, like those of any other Church Father and any council, according to their dependability upon the single standard of Scriptures. He showed little appreciation for Augustine in certain doctrinal positions. He could accept neither the allegorical exegesis of the Biblical texts, nor the philosophical subtlety of the speculations. He regarded Augustine as the Father of the Church who had comprehensively grasped all the doctrines of the Scriptures and who is the best qualified representative of the old Church of the first five centuries, in terms of faithfulness to the Scriptures. In this context, I confirm Calvin's own proclamation of *Augustinus totus noster est*.<sup>13</sup> In other words, Calvin's Augustine is the Augustine who was interpreted and used uniquely by Calvin in the sixteenth century.

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12 That is, literal sense, simplicity, brevity, clearness, author's opinion, circumstances and intention.

13 "Augustine is absolutely on our side!"

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Keywords

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