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Social Stratification and Calvinism**

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The “First Shall Remain the First”— Social Stratification and Calvinism

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Abstract

This paper argues and demonstrates that Calvinism, contradicting its claim to be the only true Christian and reformed religion, reverses the Christian Biblical injunction and desideratum that the “last shall be the first”. In terms of social stratification, this injunction represents the mass social-psychological manifestation of the revolt of oppressed social classes against their oppressor class. Calvinism, by effectively inverting it into the “first shall remain the first”, becomes an expression and justification of oppression and domination by the ruling social class over other classes. The main argument is that orthodox Calvinism constitutes both the product of a social stratification system in which the “first shall be the first” and, once established as the predominant religion, the religious and ideological reproducer of such a system of perpetual and widespread societal inequality, including economic and political. Specific hypotheses specify this argument with respect to particular dimensions of the system of social stratification. Both historical observations and comparative data largely support the argument and hypotheses. Especially, comparative data confirm that the legacy of Calvinism, including Puritanism, in the US and other historically Calvinist/Puritan countries is pervasive wealth and income inequality and persistent and widespread poverty by comparison to most Western and comparable societies.

KEYWORDS Calvinism; social stratification; class; aristocracy; religion; ideology

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“The “last shall be the first” [was] the psychic expression of the revolt of the oppressed classes”
(Mannheim 1936, p. 45)

Introduction

The relationship of religion and ideology to social stratification or structure as its basis and context is a central issue in the sociology of religion and knowledge or ideas, as especially expounded in Durkheim and Weber and in Mannheim respectively. Yet, the relationship of such a major religion and ideology as Protestantism, specifically Calvinism, to social stratification seems neglected or insufficiently explored in the sociology literature despite many historical studies of this and related matters (Benedict 2002; Brink and Hopfl 2014; Davis 1975; Hauser 1899; Hopfl 1982; Holt 2003; Romier 1922; Squicciarini and Voigtländer 2015; Walker 1937).

More precisely, the problem of whether social stratification and structure influenced the emergence and development of Calvinism and other Protestantism figures less prominently in the literature. This applies especially compared to the question of whether and how Calvinism affected society, including economy, polity, and culture (Acemoglu et al. 2005; Akerlof 2007; Alesina and Giuliano 2015; Clemens 2007; Gorski 2003; Gross 2009; Hillmann 2008; Hoff and Stiglitz 2010; Hornung 2014; Jenness 2004; Kauffman 2008; Loveman 2005; McCleary and Barro 2006). Such an asymmetry holds true since and stems from Weber’s (1930) thesis positing that the “Protestant ethic” had a positive impact on the formation and expansion of the “spirit of modern capitalism”. The Thesis has experienced acceptance and elaboration (Akerlof 2007; Kalberg 1980; McCleary and Barro 2006; Landes 1998; Parsons 1967; Swedberg 2005; Tawney 1962) and a “library of criticism” (Merton 1968) and refutation (Acemoglu et al. 2005; Alesina and Giuliano 2015; Becker and Woessmann 2009; Cohen 1980; Robertson 1933; Samuelsson 1961; Squicciarini and Voigtländer 2015; Young 2009). Consequently, the knowledge or understanding of the relationship of social stratification such as class structure to emergent and developing Calvinism leaves much to be desired in the current sociological literature, especially by comparison to this religion’s assumed connection with capitalism in Weberian sociology.

The preceding raises the problem of whether, to what extent, and how Calvinism during its emergence, development, and expansion is interrelated to social stratification and structure. An instance is what historical research examines as the question of “interrelations between “social forces” and (Calvinist) Reformation” in France during the 16th century (Davis¹ 1975; Romier 1922; Hauser 1899). In general, recent social history of the Reformation has moved from “older questions of why men such as Luther and Calvin left the Roman Catholic Church or questions about the doctrinal differences that most separated Protestants and Catholics” to exploring “more socially infused questions such as who made the Reformation. That is, which social groups or cohorts? by estate, class, sex, occupation, family, etc. actively sought to promote or to sustain the new religious movements, where, when and why?” (Holt 2003,113). This is a path the sociology of the Reformation, in particular of Calvinism (Gorski 2003), is well-advised to reaffirm in order to counterbalance the prevalent emphasis on its impact on the modern economy and society since Weber’s book *The Protestant Ethic And The Spirit Of Capitalism*.

Regarding this prevalent emphasis, as is well-known, Weber (1930, 74) asserts that Calvinism represented the “only consistent” and “most important” influence” on the emergence and development of modern capitalism so that only the “ethics of ascetic Protestantism” supplied an “ethical sanction” to the latter and capitalist entrepreneurs. Especially in his view Calvinism’s “religious valuation of restless, continuous, systematic work” became the “most powerful conceivable lever for the expansion” of the spirit of capitalism, even giving birth to “economic rationalism” (Weber 1930, 172, 259). On this basis, Weber (1930, 180) infers that an “elective affinity” and indeed an identify obtains between the “content of the Puritan worldly asceticism” and the “essential elements of the spirit of capitalism” (“only without the religious basis”). Furthermore, Weber (1930, 109) emphasizes both the “political and economic rationalism of Calvinism”, thus suggesting that the latter had relevant consequences for the polity, notably the modern state (see also Gorski 2003), and the economy alike. More specifically, one of his contemporaries even claimed that only Calvinism produced or promoted “representative government” in that the latter succeeded only the “Calvinistic states” (Mathews 1912). Qualifying and elaborating on Weber, Tawney (1962, 38-9) proposes that “Calvin did for

the Bourgeoisie of the 16th century what Marx did for the proletariat of the 19th, namely by the doctrine of predestination satisfying the “hunger for an assurance that the forces of the universe are on the side of the elect”. Moreover, Parsons (1949, 26) fully embraces Weber’s thesis positing the primary role of the “religious ideas of certain branches of Protestantism in the genesis (of) “rational bourgeois capitalism.”

In addition, contemporary sociologists claim that Calvinism through its “disciplinary revolution” crucially contributed to creating “an infrastructure of religious governance and social control” serving indeed as a “model for the rest of Europe and the world” (Gorski 2003, XV). In this account, the “Calvinist disciplinary revolution” was consequently “a political revolution or set of political revolutions” manifesting the “cultural affinities and historical connections” between Calvinism (“the Protestant ethic”) in religion and morality and the spirit of absolutism” in the polity and society (Gorski 2003, 30-34). Many other sociologists single out the economic and social impacts of Calvinism. These include the “transformation of Calvinist theology into the “spirit of capitalism”” (Kaufman 2004), the first fueling the second (Dobbin 2005) in the style of Weber, the ideology of Calvinism paving (and giving) way to that of capitalism (Vaisey 2009), and its construction of “disciplinary technologies” for inducing and enforcing both religious and political “believer-like behavior” (Clemens 2007). However, what is largely missing or neglected in these and many other studies is the opposite theoretical and empirical problem—the impact of social structure in general and of class and power stratification on the emergence, development and expansion of Calvinism; and this is a task that this paper aims to undertake.

Against this background of an emphasis on its impact on the economy, polity and society, one understands Calvinism as the primary, strongest, and most expansive form of the Reformed Church (Benedict 1999), more precisely as French Reformed Protestantism (Davis 1975; Hauser 1899; Hopfl 1982; Hornung 2014; Romier 1922; Scoville 1953; Squicciarini and Voigtländer 2015). This delineates Calvinism in distinction from Protestantism’s early, secondary, and local forms such as Zwinglianism as the Swiss Reformed Church centered in Zurich, as well as from Lutheranism as the initial German Reformation (Hyojong and Pfaff 2012). In this sense, “not all Reformed churches were created or remained equal”, with Calvinism becoming the most powerful,

expanded, and influential Reformed Church and Protestantism overall, thus eclipsing both Zwinglianism as its proxy and Lutheranism as its precedent² (Benedict 2002).

This paper argues and demonstrates that Calvinism as a religion as well as ideology in the sense of a system of political ideas exemplified in Calvin's Christian polity (Hopfl 2014) initially originated in and was impacted by social stratification, and subsequently perpetuated and sanctioned the latter. It therefore exemplified the general pattern that all religions and ideologies have societal origins and causes, in particular in social stratification, rather than being a unique exception to it. Theoretically, this proposition is in accordance with and first the sociological theory and analysis of religion and ideology, especially Durkheim and Weber's and Mannheim's formulations. What Durkheim (1965) calls societal "classification", notably the "hierarchy" of domination and submission in society, indicates social stratification, in particular class structure, though he hardly ever uses the term, unlike Weber and Mannheim as well as Marx³ (Holt 2003). In this respect, Durkheim's "classification of men" into "dominating and subordinate"⁴ members of society seems convergent to Weber's social, including class, power, and status, stratification⁵ and Mannheim's and Marx's class structure. Consequently, Calvinism represented the outcome and projection of class, power, and status stratification manifesting societal "classification", just as did other religions and ideologies in the context of Durkheim's and Weber's sociology of religion and Mannheim's sociology of ideology. If Durkheim's societal "classification" and "hierarchy" is convergent with Weber's "social stratification" and similar to Marx's class structure, this indicates, in Parsons' (1967) words, a striking convergence between the two and similarity with the third. They thus converge in terms of societal foundations of religion, which Parsons downplays in favor of their convergence on "value integration" and yet treats values and ideas as mostly independent of social factors, i.e., with their "immanent" development, in contrast with Durkheim's and Weber's theories and especially Mannheim's sociology of knowledge (also, Duster 2006; Fourcade 2009; Merton 1968).

In general, during its origin, advent, and expansion on the religious stage Calvinism and social stratification are interrelated and mutually reinforcing. In a more precise specification, however, social stratification represents the explanatory factor and

thus the independent variable, and Calvinism the explained outcome and so the dependent variable in this interrelationship and mutual reinforcement. In that sense, the latter forms a causal-functional relationship involving the action and impact of social stratification on Calvinism and the latter's reaction and feedback upon its foundation, and thus more than a simple covariance between the two variables. Thus, in the "interrelations" between social forces and the Reformation in France, the first, notably what a prominent French Calvinist called the "rank and order"⁶ (Davis 1975) in society, conditioned the rise and spread of Calvinism as their religious expression, in particular expressing as well as perpetuating such a stratification system. Generally, the Calvinist and other Reformed churches in Europe were reportedly molded by the societal conditions of their birth and of the "intellectual formation of their early leaders", including the "conditioning influence of (social) power networks" and the "play of contingent events," in interaction with the "force of religious imperatives"⁷ (Benedict 2002).

The above conceptualization is consistent with Durkheim's and Mannheim's and, to an important extent, Weber's sociological framework. In this framework, social classification or stratification —and the structure of society overall— constitutes as the primary and decisive causal, explanatory factor, and religion and ideology, thus Calvinism, an effect or function with secondary feedback effects on the former. Conversely, conceiving Calvinism as undetermined by and thus an independent variable in relation to social stratification and the overall structure of society is inconsistent and contradictory especially with Durkheim's and Mannheim's and, to a relevant degree, Weber's sociological framework, a non sequitur theoretically and empirically.

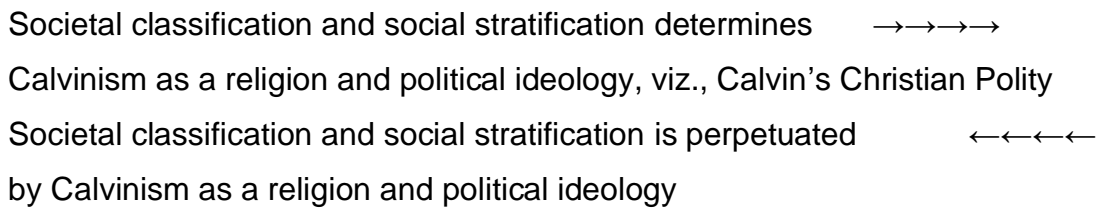
At the minimum, this framework posits that Calvinism as a religion and political ideology does not emerge, develop, and function in a social void as a fiction outside and beyond society, so as unrelated to the latter and its system of classification or stratification, just as neither do any religions and ideologies. This is important to emphasize because of some tendencies to treat Calvinism and religion and ideology generally as independent and even determining of social stratification and structure, including the class system and economy. This tendency starts with Weber's treating of the "Protestant ethic" as the "origin" and "factor" within a matrix of "factors" (analyzed in

General Economic History) and the “spirit of capitalism”⁸ (Akerlof 2007; Ekelund, Hébert, and Tollison 2002; Hill 2017; Iyer 2016; McCleary and Barro 2006; Walker 1937) as the unintended aggregate economic outcome. And the tendency has continued especially in Parsons’ (1967) sociological theory. While such a treatment is compatible with what Weber (1968) recognizes as the “mutual adaptation,” i.e., reciprocal relation (Zaret 1985) and interpenetration (Munch 2001), between Calvinism and social stratification and capitalism, religion and economy, it is in tension with Durkheim’s and Mannheim’s sociological framework. This framework considers religions and ideologies societal constructions, in particular creations and representations of social classification or stratification, albeit with their recursive, feedback effects on the latter.

The following adopts and applies the major postulates of Durkheim’s and Mannheim’s sociological framework for analyzing religion and ideology as the most coherent theoretically and the most plausible empirically. At least, even if being agnostic about the explanatory value of that framework, this essay attempts to assess whether and to what extent Durkheim’s and Mannheim’s sociology of religion and ideology, respectively, can contribute to better explain, understand, and possibly predict Calvinism’s emergence, development, and destination or future. This theoretical framework combines with Weber’s historical observations of Calvinism as well as his comparative sociology of religion, which usually compares and even substantively equates Calvinism with Islam, for example, as two main predestination theologies and prophetic and theocratic⁹, revolutionary, and warlike religions. In addition, it conjoins with and complements Pareto’s and related theories of elites, aristocracies, oligarchies and the like.

The preceding results in the following general hypothesis H1: Societal classification in Durkheim’s meaning and in particular social stratification in Weber’s and Mannheim’s sense conditions Calvinism as a religion and political ideology, including Calvin’s Christian Polity. In turn, Calvinism once originating as a religion and political ideology, including Calvin’s Christian Polity, exerts a recursive influence on societal classification, in particular social stratification. For the sake of clarification, this hypothesis appears in the form of path-analysis as follows.

Hypothesis 1



As in path-analysis, the left-to-right arrow → indicates the initial, primary causal path or historical link from the system of social classification or stratification to Calvinism by causing the latter to emerge, develop and expand as a theology, religion, church, and political ideology epitomized in the “Christian Polity”. The second right-to-left arrow ← represents the subsequent secondary, and reverse causal path from Calvinism to social classification or stratification through the former’s recursive, feedback effects on the latter by reproducing and justifying it. The remainder of the paper specifies and explores this causal-historical link from social classification/stratification to Calvinism as a religion and political ideology—and back from the second to the first. For simplicity and following the current usage, the term “social stratification” runs throughout the analysis but to encompass Durkheim’s societal “classification”, alongside Weber’s and Mannheim’s notions of “class stratification.”

The rest of the paper proceeds as follows. The first section argues that Calvinism originated, functioned, and especially expanded as the theological expression and justification of privilege and dis-privilege within the system of stratification– the “theodicy” of privileged versus dis-privileged social strata. The second section contends that orthodox Calvinism represented the religion and political ideology of societal elites, especially during the wars of religion in France and its expansion in Europe. The third section proposes that Calvinism developed as a class religion and ideology or utopia in Weber’s and Mannheim’s meanings, respectively. The last section concludes by comparing and contrasting early Christianity and orthodox Calvinism in terms of their social-stratification origins.

The Calvinist “Theodicy” of Privileged Versus Dis-Privileged Social Strata

The path from the preexisting system of social stratification to Calvinism as an emergent, developing, and expanding religion and political ideology— and back— unfolds as follows. The question arises as to what the path consisted of in respect to the specific form of social stratification as the societal point of origin and setting of Calvinism. Specifically, this is the causal path from the upper stratum and its superior wealth, power, and status as a specific form of social stratification to Calvinism as a particular religion and political ideology, i.e., the religious sanctification and ideological rationalization of this group versus other groups. Thus, this path caused Calvinism to emerge and develop as primarily the religion, ideology and utopia of the highest, ruling stratum, or what Weber would call the “theodicy” of a privileged stratum against dis-privileged strata in society.

The preceding holds true for Calvinism in its later stage of expansion¹⁰ (Benedict 2002) and growing militancy, notably the Calvinist wars of religion, in France and Europe after the 1560s (Davis 1975; Dunthorne 2017; Hauser 1899; Marnef 1996; Romier 1922), as distinct from its birth and early phase during the 1530-50s. The Calvinist French Reformation was “captured” by a mostly privileged social stratum (the gentry) after 1560 in a process of transformation from a religious revolution to a “political party” (Hauser 1899). Furthermore, after 1561-2 privileged strata such as nobles became “protectors of the (Reformed) Churches” in France and ultimately their military commanders whose authority often counterbalanced that of Calvinist pastors (Bost 1929; Romier 1922). Among these strata that became Calvinist aristocrats as “Huguenot nobles” (Mukerji 2010), the preeminent, together with the prince of Condé, was admiral Coligny who joined the Reformed Church at a state-organized Catholic-Calvinist assembly in Paris 1561, making the civil war in France “inevitable”, and often being placed alongside Calvin and Beza in importance for Calvinism (Bost 1929; Romier 1922). More precisely, the result of this and related events was the first religious-civil war in France in 1562 (Benedict 1999). Therefore, admiral Coligny and the prince of Condé became the “two chief aristocratic protectors of the French Protestant movement” in alliance with other oppositional Calvinists in Europe, such as William of Orange in the Netherlands (Benedict 1999). In particular, an association between

privileged “economic position” and the Calvinist religion emerged in parts of France around 1565. For example, in the printing industry of Lyon, publishers and masters are “more likely” to remain in the Reformed church than journeymen (Davis 1975). In this account, the movement of these dis-privileged strata (journeymen) away from the Reformed Church started in 1566 and was “almost complete” by 1572 (Davis 1975). A similar pattern was observed in some parts of the Netherlands (Antwerp) in that the leaders of Calvinism represented mostly privileged social strata groups, including property owners, lawyers, and intellectual professions, after 1566-1567 (Marnef 1996).

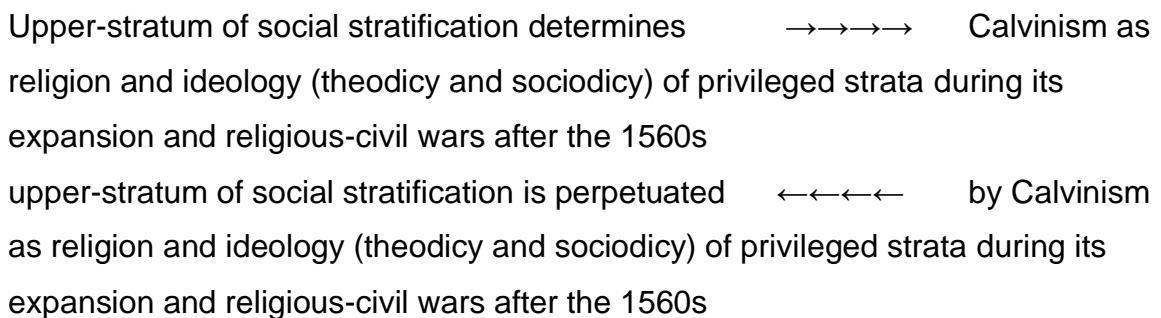
Hence, the above path rendered this “reformed” religion and “new” political ideology into the “sociodicy”¹¹ (Bourdieu 1998) of privilege, power, domination, and honor for a few select— “God’s elect” in Calvin’s words— and of deprivation, oppression, submission, and dishonor for the rest of society. In short, it caused Calvinism to become the mode of sanctification of the ruling group against oppressed groups¹², of masters versus slaves, servants, or “subjects”¹³. Solving the theological problem of theodicy, Calvinism moved from it as the demonstrated proof of what Parsons (1967) denotes the “goodness of God”¹⁴ to the demonstration of the “goodness” and immutability of social stratification— i.e., a sharp and persistent hierarchy of super- and sub-ordination and differentiation in terms of wealth, power, and status— as “Divinely ordained”. Calvinism continues this demonstration indirectly through its heir, “Puritanical”, moralistic (Mueller 2009; Roth 2018) conservatism that rationalizes and reproduces as “Divinely ordained” (Bendix 1974; Keister 2008; McCloud 2007) economic inequality in the US (Jacobs and Dirlam 2016; Hung and Thompson 2016; Piketty 2014; Redbird and Grusky 2016; Wodtke 2016). For instance, while extoling Puritan theocracy (Munch 2001) modeled after that of Calvin’s Geneva as the “shining city upon a hill”, Reaganism’s program reportedly aims to affect the “redistribution of wealth in favor of the wealthy and of power in favor of the powerful” (Solow, Budd, and Weizsacker 1987).

Moreover, Weber (1968) implies that Calvinism represented the “theodicy of privilege” from its inception and emergence in the 1530-50s, and not only during its consolidation and expansion, including the wars of religion, after the 1560s in accordance with the pattern of origination and development of prophetic, militant, or salvation religions of which it is a major exemplar. In his view, such religions, including

Calvinism, originate and develop within “socially privileged classes” and only later are embraced and reproduced by “disprivileged social strata”¹⁵.

The above yields the following hypothesis H2: the upper-stratum of social stratification determines and shapes Calvinism as a religion and ideology, namely the theodicy and sociodicy of privileged strata during its expansion and religious-civil wars after the 1560s. Conversely, Calvinism once established as a religion and ideology perpetuates and sanctifies the upper-stratum of social stratification by recursive influences on the latter. The following diagram represents this hypothesis below.

Hypothesis 2



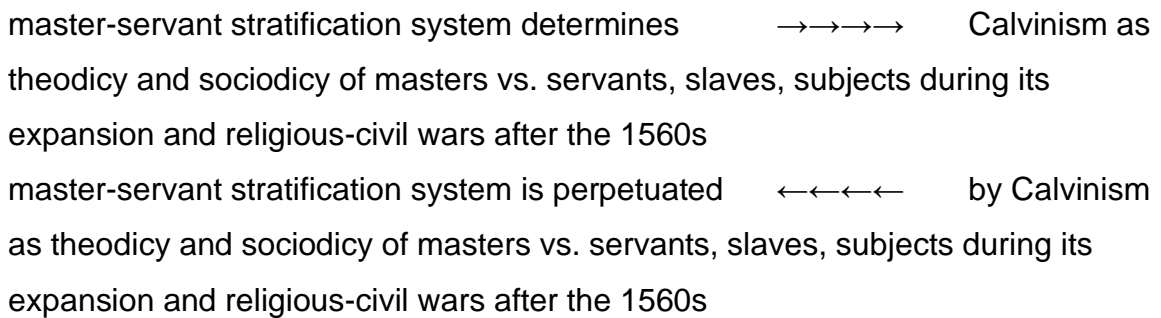
The left-to-right arrow → symbolizes the initial, primary casual path or historical link from the upper stratum, defined by superior wealth, power, and status, of the system of social stratification to Calvinism’s origin and creation, and especially its expansion and religious-civil wars after the 1560s. The right-to-left arrow ← means the subsequent secondary path or feedback in that once created, especially in expansion and such wars, Calvinism perpetuated and sanctified its upper-stratum basis by operating as the religious theodicy and ideological sociodicy of privileged and powerful strata in society.

As a corollary, the above indicates a causal path from a master-servant stratification system to Calvinism as a religion and ideology— and back through the Calvinist sanctification and justification of that system, specifically masters versus servants, subjects, or even slaves. And for Calvin the “Christian slave is a prompt and obedient slave, but still a slave (and) the Christian subject is a reliable and submissive subject still” (Hopfl 1982, 195) to a Christian master too, as Calvin became in Geneva (Benedict 2002; Ward 2016). As implied in Weber’s account of its origin in and

propagation and defense by “socially privileged classes”, Calvinism arose and expanded as their religious theodicy and ideological sociodicy of a master-servant society, of masters against subjects.

The preceding leads to the hypothesis H3: the master-servant stratification system conditions Calvinism to emerge as the theodicy and sociodicy of masters vs. servants, slaves, subjects during its expansion and religious-civil wars after the 1560s. Alternatively, once Calvinism emerged perpetuates and sanctifies the master-servant stratification system through feedback effects on the latter. The hypothesis has a diagrammatic representation as follows.

Hypothesis 3



The arrow → indicates a primary, initial causal path and historical link from a master-servant stratification system to Calvinism as a corresponding religious and ideological phenomenon, notably during its expansion and religious-civil wars after the 1560s. The path initially proceeded from the feudal system of masters and servants in Europe such as the *Ancien Règime* in 16th-Century France to the birth and spread of Calvinism as the French Protestant Reformation starting in Paris and expanding to Geneva and beyond. Conversely, the arrow ← symbolizes the secondary, subsequent trajectory or feedback from Calvinism to a master-servant stratification system in that once thus produced and expanded the former in the process reproduced and justified the latter by functioning as the theodicy and sociodicy of masters against subjects. Specifically, emergent and especially, as after the 1560s, expanding Calvinism starting with Calvin et al. helped perpetuate and sanctify its social-stratification origin and context, the master-servant *Ancien Règime*, including the tyranny of aristocratic masters over servants, as “Divinely ordained” in certain societies of late medieval Europe and

beyond. These societies spanned from France's Huguenot sections and Geneva under Calvin's autocratic rule through Calvinist-ruled Holland and Scotland and in part Prussia and to Puritan England and America. They existed during the Calvinism's heroic times of rebellions and theocratic revolutions, religious and civil wars, starting with the war of religion in France (Benedict 1999; Holt 1993; Romier 1922), heroes and martyrs, elect-saints and rulers, as in the 16th-17th centuries. Thus, some analysts suggest that the American theology and ideology of social classes as "divine hierarchies" closely connects with "Calvinist predestinarianism" by asserting that societal inequalities are "divinely ordained" (McCloud 2007).

Calvinist Elite Rule, Sentiments, and Rationalizations

The preceding discussion points to a causal path and historical link from political-economic elites to Calvinism as a consequent religion and political ideology—and back from the latter to the former. This reverse path consisted in Calvinism perpetuating and justifying elite power and rulers as "Divinely ordained", as Calvin et al. declared. In Pareto's (1963) framework, Calvinism developed and functioned, especially expanded and launched religious-civil wars, as a particular form of religious and ideological reflections and rationalizations ("derivations") of elites and their rank and sentiments ("residues"), specifically "sentiments of social ranking (i.e.) hierarchy"¹⁶. Recall that Viret, the third most prominent early Calvinist, after Calvin and Beza, warned that the "special vocation" in the Reformed Church (including the consistory formed in Lyon) should retain or not disturb the "rank and order" in society (Davis 1975).

In this sense, Calvinism reflected and rationalized what Pareto considers the cyclical domination, "circulation" of "social elites" after the image of the history of society as the "graveyard of aristocracies"¹⁷, thus being an exemplar of elitist, aristocratic religion and ideology, especially during its expansion and wars of religion in France and beyond after 1560 (Dunthorne 2017). After 1560 a major "portion" of the French aristocracy (e.g., the Condes, the Chastillons, plus Coligny, etc.) joined the Reformed church and thus political-religious opposition, causing the "Huguenots of Faith" to become "Huguenots of State", and the nobility to appropriate the "great Protestant stream" (Hauser 1899). Many French aristocrats, including admiral Coligny and the

prince of Condé, became the “protectors” of the Reformed Churches (*protecteurs des Eglises*) to the point of becoming their military commanders (Romier 1922). Moreover, indicating the rapid expansion of the Reformed Church from France to Europe (in contrast to Zwinglianism that remained a local phenomenon), in 1568 these “two chief aristocratic protectors of the French Protestant movement” formed a “formal alliance” with the Calvinist aristocratic “leader of the Netherlands opposition”, William of Orange (Benedict 1999), a precursor of the Dutch stadtholder William of Orange III whom the Glorious Revolution imported and installed as the King of England (Hillmann 2013).

Relatedly, Calvinism emerged and expanded as a religious-ideological expression and justification of oligarchy and its domination and interests (Michels' 1968) sense, an extremely narrow, exclusive, and oppressive ruling group monopolizing power, wealth, and status. Michels' “iron” law of oligarchy or aristocracy (Acemoglu and Robinson 2006) becomes “who observes oligarchy or aristocracy as a ruling group and political system, observes a causal path to Calvinism as a religion and political ideology and conversely”, as during its emergence, development, and especially its expansion and wars in 16th-17th- century Europe (Acemoglu et al.¹⁸ 2011) and America. This does not mean that oligarchy or aristocracy causally linked solely to the development and expansion of Calvinism. Within the Paretian framework, such elites were causal forces in the rise of any theocratic religions and ideologies, including what Pareto (2000) denotes the “Roman theocracy” into which the “religion of Christ”¹⁹ mutated, or of Weberian prophetic and warlike, militant religions of which Calvinism (along with Islam) is an exemplar. Instead, the above signifies that among various social strata, aristocracy or oligarchy as elite, first and foremost, entailed a causal path or historical link to the rise and, as after 1650, the expansion and wars of Calvinism. Conversely, it means that the latter arose and especially expanded and launched wars or rebellions as a religious and ideological reflection and justification of the former and its sentiments of power and hierarchy.

These historical studies confirm and illustrate the causal path from elites like aristocracies or oligarchies to Calvinism as a “reformed” religion and yet the old political ideology of elite aristocratic or oligarchic power and power-holders in Pareto-Michels' sense during its expansion and religious-civil wars in France and beyond since the

1560s. In addition, sociological analyses show that the emergent militant Calvinist elite engaged in conflicts against other elites during the formation of early modern states in 16th-century France and 17th-century England. Their conflicts specifically consisted of the “struggle between Protestant and Catholic nobles” in the first country and the “conflict between a state elite and a (Puritan) gentry”²⁰ (Lachmann 1989) and the “Puritan aristocrats” (Hillmann 2008), alongside in part middle classes (Wrightson and Lavine 1995), in the second. Thus, the religious-civil wars in these two countries expressed Calvinist/Puritan “elite mobilization”²¹ (Hillmann 2008) and ultimately political revolution or religious war, though ultimately failing in their attempts at state capture and political control in both France and England with the military defeats of Huguenots in the first and Puritans in the second (Joosse 2017; Pelz 2016).

Another related instance involved Calvinist/Puritan elites exerting near-total economic and political control, repression, and domination in colonial New England²² and bequeathing an enduring elitist anti-egalitarian and theocratic or repressive legacy in the American economy and polity (Kaufman 2008). In this respect, New England Puritanism represents the extant source of the American theology of class stratification as “divine hierarchies” by linking it with “Calvinist predestinarianism” in the shared claim that “socioeconomic differences” are “divinely ordained” (McCloud 2007). Also, the “persistence” of power elites holds for the “neo-Puritan” (Samuelsson 1961) US South during both ante- and post-bellum times (Acemoglu and Robinson²³ 2009). Moreover, Puritan descendants such as evangelicals reportedly seek to attain “elite cohesion” and infiltrate the “power elite” in America (Lindsay 2008; also, Hicks 2006; Madsen 2009; Vaisey 2009; Wilde and Glassman 2016) in the function of reestablishing what analysts (Phillips 2006) denote “American theocracy” and thus of elimination of liberal-secular democracy (Mueller 2009). Evidently, they almost completely fulfill their elite aspirations, as especially witnessed in the South subjected to near-total evangelical and conservative dominance (Bailey and Snedker 2011; Bonikowski and DiMaggio 2016; Jacobs, Carmichael, and Kent 2005; Hicks 2006; Lloyd 2012) consistent with illiberal, proto-conservative (Dromi 2016; Elwood 1999) Calvinism. They have thus recreated, and perpetuate by exceptional coercion, repression, discrimination and exclusion targeting the “godless”, including mass imprisonment and executions, an epitome of

Weber's (1930) Calvinist "Biblicocracy" and the neo-Puritan "Dominion of God" (Davis 2010; Hedges 2006; Juergensmeyer 2003) via the proto-totalitarian "Bible Belt" (Bauman 1997; Putnam 2000).

The aforesaid allows formulating the next Hypothesis 4: Elite dominance and sentiments through oligarchy determines and shapes Calvinism as the religious and ideological reflection and justification of elites, specifically oligarchies, especially during its expansion and wars since the 1560s. On the other hand, once thus established perpetuates and sanctifies elite dominance and sentiments by feedback effects on the latter. A condensed formulation of Hypothesis 4 is below.

Hypothesis 4

Elite dominance and sentiments, oligarchy determines →→→→ Calvinism--
religious and ideological reflection and justification of elites, oligarchies especially
during its expansion and wars since the 1560s

Elite dominance and sentiments, oligarchy is perpetuated ← ←← ← by
Calvinism--religious and ideological reflection and justification of elites,
oligarchies especially during its expansion and wars since the 1560s

The arrow → signifies that initially the causal path moved from elite dominance and sentiments ("sentiments of social ranking"), oligarchy as a ruling group and political regime, to the birth, expansion and wars of Calvinism as a religion of "reform" and an ideology of power in 16th-century France and Europe and via Puritanism England and America. The arrow ← means that subsequently the path was reversed in that once "born and raised", expanding and launching wars, in this social system and time Calvinism perpetuated and justified elite domination and sentiments by becoming a complex of theological and ideological rationalizations of elites or oligarchies as "Divinely ordained", Calvin's "God's eternally elect".

Calvinism's Class Religion and Ideology and Utopia

The preceding suggests that emergent and expanding orthodox Calvinism at the time of Calvin, Beza, Coligny, etc. in France and Geneva, as after 1560, and Europe and America constituted a particular class-based religion and ideology/utopia in Weber's

and Mannheim's sense. Calvinism developed and functioned as Weber's (1968) "class religion", expanding and launching religious-civil wars as one of the upper and "warrior" caste such as medieval aristocracy, just as did Islam in his account. Calvinism hence epitomized, along with Islam, the pattern that, as Weber (1968) observes²⁴, prophetic, militant, and warlike religion is "naturally compatible with the status feeling of the nobility". He suggests that this pattern applies to both the emergence and the early operation and the expansion and wars of Calvinism (and Islam). By contrast, the present analysis posits that Calvinism represented a class religion of aristocracy such as the warrior nobility especially during the second phase of its development, as after 1560 in France and Europe. Alternatively, this suggests that Calvinism was far from being a unique exception to this pattern, at least not during its stage of expansion and wars, as since the first religious-civil war of 1562 in France through its sequels in the Netherlands, Scotland, and elsewhere (Benedict 1999; Lawson-Peebles 2016).

In Mannheim's (1936) sociology of knowledge terms, Calvinism arose, expanded and remained for long after Calvin et al. as the political ideology and utopia of aristocracy as the paradigmatic upper, ruling class-- i.e., elite and oligarchy in Pareto's and Michels' sense-- as within the pre-modern feudal structure of class stratification. This is epitomized by Calvin's design of a *Christian Polity* as the political ideology (once established) and utopia (if not instituted yet) and system of aristocracy with "theocratic orientation" (Hopfl 1982), while extolled as the "best" and "Divinely ordained" polity. In aggregate, Calvinism originated, developed, and expanded as the composite religion and ideology and utopia of aristocracy, specifically the medieval nobility as the ruling, warrior caste or estate. At the minimum, this holds true of Calvinism as Calvin and his followers expounded and elaborated on it in theological writings *and* expanded and established it as the "only true Christian religion" from France/Geneva to Europe and beyond through political-religious revolutions and wars during its "heroic" age after the 1560s.

More than a century ago, a historian noted with apparent disapproval that "historians usually see in the Huguenot party above all else a party of noble-men. They think that the aristocracy preferred the rigidity of Protestantism to the pomp of the Roman Church" and asked "why is the statement constantly repeated in France that the

French Reformation was an aristocratic movement?” (Hauser 1899,217-9). It seems, however, that historians had valid grounds and good reasons for such a characterization of the “Huguenot party” and the “French Reformation” to become known as Calvinism as the most important, powerful, widespread, and influential “Reformed” religion (Benedict 2002), and a revolutionary, radical political ideology (Gorski 2003; Hopfl 1982; Walzer 1965). This also holds for sociologists after Weber, who are typically characterizing Calvinism as a class religion of aristocracy, in particular the warrior nobility. After all, Calvin was an aristocrat himself by birth or conditioning, as indicated by his view that the Christian is a “prompt and obedient slave, but still a slave”, and “a reliable and submissive subject still” (Hopfl 1982), providing the overarching ground for treating the French Reformed Church as an “aristocratic movement,” especially during its expansion and wars after 1560.

Beyond this implicit and individual ground, historians as well as sociologists have other explicit and social—in the sense of social history of the Reformed Church (Holt 2003)—grounds for such a treatment of Calvinism, as during its expanding and war stage. Relevant historical research shows that many members of the French aristocracy embraced Calvinist beliefs and joined the Reformed Church, as epitomized by Coligny and Condé (Bost 1929; Romier 1922) becoming its two main “protectors” and military commanders after 1561 with countervailing authority vis-à-vis the chief pastors like Beza, Viret, etc., along with Calvin in Geneva. For instance, they, especially Coligny’s public conversion to the Reformed church in Paris 1561, effectively launched (Bost 1929; Romier 1922) the 1562 first civil war in France (Benedict 1999). The “defining characteristic of the civil wars” overall in France was precisely the crucial role of these and other aristocratic Calvinist converts (Holt 1993).

Alternatively, while some non-aristocratic groups like merchants, artisans, and others provided support, generally the Calvinist Reformation was not a popular movement, with the activities of peasants and the urban poor dismissed as “jacquerie” (Bost 1929; Romier 1922). Even if assuming it was such a movement, it admittedly ceased to be after 1560 when “in order to counteract the influence of the Lorraine princes, a portion of the French nobility— the Condes, the Chastillons and their followers— rushed into political and religious opposition; the Huguenots of Faith became

Huguenots of State. From that time the great Protestant stream was appropriated by the nobility” (Hauser 1899, 277). And this is what the present study argues. For example, as indicated, in some parts of France (Lyon) from 1565 “notable families” tended to join or remain in the Reformed church more than others like journeymen who completely moved away from it by 1572, indicating “some correlation” between the Calvinist religion and higher “economic position” since that year (Davis 1975). Even when journeymen initially joined the Calvinist movement “no egalitarian or communistic millennium of the future danced before their eyes” and they “did not draw upon the Bible to justify their secular demands” (Davis 1975,10), casting doubt on the depiction of the Reformation as a social or religious revolution²⁵ (Alesina and Giuliano 2015; Gorski 2003) of “lower classes” (Hauser 1899). And when the chief Calvinist pastor Viret admonished against disturbing the “rank and order” in society by the “special vocation” in the Reformed church (Davis 1975), that was an admonition not to disturb aristocratic societal rule, the highest rank of aristocracy within that hierarchy.

In sum, the lamented statement of most historians as well as sociologists since Weber that the “French Reformation was an aristocratic movement” is not without a cogent basis, involving not only Calvin as an aristocrat or apologist for aristocracy, but also the critical role of aristocrats as a social stratum especially during Calvinism’s expansion and wars of religion after 1560. Hence, the answer to why that statement is “constantly repeated” is two-fold. It is, first, because most historians acknowledge that the leader of the Reformed Church in France and beyond Jean Calvin was an aristocrat, and second, that aristocracy as a class primarily protected and militarily led Calvinism during its “heroic” age of expansion and religious wars after 1560 as our focus.

As with virtually all the main theological and political attributes of Calvinism, its attribute as the “reformed” religion and political ideology and utopia of aristocracy commenced with Calvin as the founder, prophet, and leader. Calvin held aristocracy as the ideal, preferred political system— more precisely “Christian polity” (Hopfl 1982)— glorified as the rule of the superior, “best” over the inferior, and “ordained by God”, thus setting the standard for most Calvinists. In his theological magnum opus *Institution of the Christian Religion* (the last, French edition of 1560) Calvin (1880,683) notes “three kinds of civil regime”. They are “Monarchy, which is the domination of one, either named

King or Duke, or else Aristocracy, which a domination governed by the superiors and men of appearance (*les principaux et gens d'apparence*), and Democracy, which is a popular domination in which every one of the people has power". Then, Calvin (1880, 683) attributes to aristocracy--i.e., of "those (superiors) who govern the people"--"preeminence" and urges that the latter should be "appreciated more" than the other "kinds of civil regime". In his view, this is "because the vice, at the fault of men, is the cause that the most proper and secure kind of superiority is that a few govern (etc.). For this has always been proved by experience: and God has confirmed it by his authority when he has ordained (aristocracy as) the best possible condition (as among the people of Israel)" (Calvin 1880, 683).

In general, Calvin (1880,684) warns that "if those who by the will of God live under the Princes, and are their natural subjects, transfer that (will) to themselves, to try to make any revolt or change, this will be not only a useless and foolish speculation (*folle spéculation et inutile*), but also wicked and pernicious (*meschante et pernicieuse*).” Alternatively, Calvin (1880, 684) stipulates that "because it is (God’s) good pleasure to institute Kings over the kingdoms and any other superiors over the free peoples: we must be subjects and obedient persons (*sujets et obeissans*) to any superiors who dominate where we live". Calvin (1880, 730) summarizes his conception of the polity or civil government (*police ou gouvernement civil*) in that the "fault which is in men makes it more secure and tolerable that several govern than if only one rules. But because all these kinds of government are of God, and he thus arranges the things differently according to his pleasure, the duty of individuals is to obey, and in no way to change the state to their appetite".

As known, Calvin during his rule in Geneva—comparatively analogous to that of Mohammad in early Islam in Weber’s view²⁶— fully implemented the ideal of aristocracy as the domination by a few "superiors" and "proved" it as "ordained by God"²⁷ and the "best possible condition" of the polity²⁸ (Hopfl 1982; Walzer 1965). So did Calvin’s early "children" during Calvinism’s "heroic" age of expansion and intensifying militancy climaxing in religious-civil wars in France and beyond since the 1560s, more precisely the first French civil war of 1562. These disciples did this by visiting and being instructed by Calvin in Geneva, such as the Huguenots (Beza, Coligny, Condé, etc.) in France,

Presbyterians (Knox et al.) in Scotland and early English Puritans, or after his death (1564) and motivated by his Genevan legacy. This was what Calvinists in Holland (William of Orange) and Prussia (the House of Hohenzollern), Puritans Cromwell and Winthrop in England and New England, etc. demonstrated.

Calvin's theological design and political practice of "domination by aristocracy" in Geneva thus provided a model, inspiration and legacy for Calvinist societies (Benedict and Backus 2011; Brink and Hopfl 2014; Davis 2010; Dromi 2016; Hedges 2006;), with secondary variations in implementation and intensity of aristocratic rule. This was to be expected because no major Calvinist "reformed" figure worthy and proud of that self-designation would have diverged— especially those residing (Beza, Viret) with or making pilgrimage to and "sitting on the feet" (Knox, the first Puritans) of— from "father" Calvin in Geneva in his ideal and prescription of "domination by aristocracy". For instance, Puritan Winthrop driven by "austere Calvinism" (Kloppenber 1998) and his successors as "stodgy Calvinists" (Gould 1996) predictably followed their master and established Weber's (1930) "spiritual aristocracy of the predestined saints of God within the world" (also, Bénabou, Ticchi and Vindigni 2015; Fischer and Mattson 2009) or aristocratic theocracy²⁹ (Archer 2001; Munch 2001; Tawney 1962) in New England. They did so theologically in accordance with the "aristocratic idea of predestination" (Troeltsch 1966; also, Hopfl 2014) experienced as "especially terrifying" (Rawls³⁰ 2010), such as "Calvinist predestinarianism" grounding the "American theology" of classes as "divine hierarchies" and thus "divinely ordained" (Bendix 1974; McCloud 2007; also, Benedict³¹ 2002). They did politically according to Calvin's prototype of an aristocratic "Christian Republic" in Geneva (Hopfl 1982; Ward 2016). Winthrop et al. therefore instituted in the manner of Calvin in Geneva Weber's (1968) "aristocratic rule by the ecclesiastically qualified"³² defining the "theocracy of New England", named *mixt aristocracie* (Bremer 1995) based on "hereditary nobility"³³ and ruled by "large property-owners"³⁴ (Kaufman 2008).

The previously mentioned helps derive Hypothesis 5: *Societal* domination by aristocracy, including Calvin as an aristocrat, shapes Calvinism as an aristocratic religion and ideology or utopia especially during its expansion and wars since the 1560s. Conversely, once established Calvinism justifies and reproduces *societal*

domination by aristocracy through recursive influences on the latter. Hypothesis 5 becomes in path-analysis as below.

Hypothesis 5

Societal domination by aristocracy (Calvin) determines →→→→ Calvinism as aristocratic religion and ideology or utopia especially during its expansion and wars since the 1560s

Societal domination by aristocracy (Calvin) is perpetuated ←←←← by Calvinism as aristocratic religion and ideology or utopia especially during its expansion and wars since the 1560s

The arrow → symbolizes the initial, primary causal path and historical link from Calvin’s “domination by aristocracy” as the rule of several “superiors and men of appearance”, to Calvinism as a religion and ideology developing, expanding within and expressing the medieval aristocratic system of France from the 16th century to the French Revolution (Acemoglu et al.³⁵ 2011). Alternatively, it implies that Calvinism, like any religion and ideology, did not develop and expand in a social vacuum, outside of society³⁶ in independence and isolation from the prevalent stratification structure, political system, or the ruling class such as aristocracy embodied in Calvin’s few “superiors and men of appearance”. The arrow ← represents the subsequent, secondary path in that Calvinism functioned and expanded to perpetuate and sanctify its class foundation, “domination by aristocracy” as “ordained by God”, developing, expanding and warring as a primarily aristocratic religion and ideology. This was demonstrated by Calvin’s ruled Geneva and, with some variations, early Calvinistic societies like the Huguenot-ruled parts of France, Netherlands, Prussia under Calvinism, Puritan-ruled England and New England³⁷, the neo-Puritan evangelical US South, etc.

Calvin’s theological writings and religious-political activities show that Calvinism emerged, revolted, and spread as Weber’s (1930) Protestant “Church Militant” of aristocracy, specifically the medieval warrior nobility. Especially since the 1560s, orthodox Calvinism did so as the mirror and apology of aristocracy as the preexisting ruling class or political system. In the process it became— i.e., Calvin³⁸ et al. claimed to

be– the aristocracy of God’s “designed elect” vs. the “reprobate” as, in Weber’s (1930) words, the “eternally damned remainder of humanity”, thus becoming “Divinely ordained”, “heavenly” (Zaret 1985) oligarchy, as witnessed from 16th-century Huguenot France and Geneva to 17th-century Puritan New England³⁹.

Weber (1968) observes that it was “nobles” that were the military and political leaders of the Calvinists in France and Scotland “at the height of their great struggles”⁴⁰ after 1560, while noting that aristocracy ceased “fighting for Calvinism”⁴¹ during its later stages. In particular, he points to the “Huguenot nobility” in France representing the initial Calvinist aristocracy given that the French Huguenots were the earliest Calvinists, Calvin’s first “children” (Hornung 2014; Scoville 1953; Squicciarini and Voigtländer 2015). Hume⁴² in an earlier classic account recounts that the military and political “leaders of the French Protestants” were, above all, the nobles (e.g., Condé, Coligny, Andelot) located in the parts of France controlled by the Huguenots succeeding to create an “empire within empire” after the 1560s. Among these nobles Hume⁴³ notes the Prince of Navarre who became a Calvinist provincial leader and even the King of France– Henry IV, though later converting to Catholicism– during the late 16th century (Benedict 1999; Mukerji 2010; Romier 1922).

Subsequent sociological and historical studies reaffirm Hume’s and Weber’s accounts that aristocracy, including the Huguenot Prince of Navarre⁴⁴ (Benedict 1999, Kingdon 1964; Ramsey 1999, Roelker 1972) who ruled France (Mukerji 2010), largely dominated and thus played a stronger role than bourgeoisie in developing and expanding Calvinism in France (Heller 1986) and elsewhere in Europe. The French nobility strongly influenced and dominated Calvinism from the second half of the 16th to the first third of the 17th century, with between a third and half of the nobles converting from Catholicism to Calvinist Protestantism, though its domination of the “Protestant movement” ended after 1629 and its connection with it was severed after 1685 (Scoville 1953). A similar historical account emphasizes the “subordination” of emerging Calvinism to the aristocracy, so that the nobility dominated the “Calvinist movement” in France⁴⁵ especially since the 1560s (Heller 1986). Notably, “noble leaders” for the Calvinist cause reportedly led the “rebel armies” in France and Holland, in alliance with “foreign princes” induced by “religious solidarity”, plus “strategic interest” (Benedict

1999). Thus, as initially in France, the Calvinist “revolt” during its initial stage (1559-68) in the Netherlands represented “essentially a rebellion of the nobility”⁴⁶ (Gorski 1993), joined with related strata such as large merchants, lawyers, and intellectual professions (Marnef 1996). The preceding indicates that Calvinism epitomized the tendency of prophetic, militant religions for appealing to, as Weber (1968) puts it, the noble “warrior in the cause of religion”⁴⁷ rather than being a unique exception to this pattern, of other religions, also exemplified by Islam.

During its later stages, Calvinism may have become the specific religion and ideology and utopia of bourgeoisie, the capitalist class and even middle and lower classes (Heller⁴⁸ 1986), this possibility being particularly likely for Puritanism in England (Wrightson and Lavine 1995). The present focus is, however, on Calvinism’s development, expansion and wars during the 16th and 17th century, its “heroic” times as the “Church Militant” of aristocracy since the 1560s, and its orthodox version as epitomized by Calvin and his early followers, including those residing with and visiting him in Geneva, such as Beza, Huguenots, Knox, the first Puritans, etc. Suffice to say that aristocracy as the ruling class in medieval Europe dominated, including militarily led, Calvinism, as in France’s 1562 civil war, while bourgeoisie and middle-classes joined, fervently embraced, showed predilection for, and made this originally aristocratic religious instrument its own religion⁴⁹, thus the means of sanctification of bourgeois interests and capital’s domination. Hence, the first class played the main, constitutive role, and the second a supporting, derivative part, in the critical process. This is the development and expansion of Calvinism⁵⁰ during Calvin’s founding in 16th-century France and its institution (as the title of his theological magnum opus envisioned), expansion, and imposition in the latter in part and Geneva starting during his life in the 1560s, then Scotland and Holland afterwards, plus parts of Prussia, England, and New England later.

In that historical point and social space of 16th -century France/Geneva, Calvinism thus conformed with religion’s origin in and determination by social classes, status and power groups, i.e., the phenomenon of class, status- and power-based religions expressing the type of religiosity of different social strata. In particular, it exemplified Weber’s (1968) causal link between prophetic, warlike or militant religions

and aristocracy⁵¹, especially its warrior type, as well as salvation religion and “socially privileged classes”. In his account, Calvinism formed, alongside Islam, a paradigmatic instance of prophetic, warlike and militant religion (the “Church Militant”) and thus causally linked with the warrior nobility. It also represented an epitome of salvation religion originating within “socially privileged classes” and only later reaching into “disprivileged social strata”.

Equally, Calvinism illustrated the tendency of religion to also arise, function, and expand as an expression and justification of political power and domination. Moreover, Calvinism affirmed and aimed to reinstitute--as Calvin’s *Institution of the Christian Religion* declares--what Simmel (1955) identifies as the “primitive identity of religious and political group-affiliation” through its total involvement in and control of politics and society and its “greater dogmatic intolerance” to and “cruel suppression” of heretics and non-Calvinists.⁵² This tendency ultimately reaches the point of what was widely experienced as “Puritan murderousness” and the “hateful and hypocritical piety” of Puritan-ruled Britain and America (Helmets 2015) “infested by Calvinism” (Jasnow⁵³ 2015). Particularly, Calvinism’s emergence confirmed Pareto’s (2000) “waves” in religion, specifically the “ascending period of the religious crisis”, unfolding in connection with the “circulation” of political elites, notably the “rise of a new elite”, and as the instruments and justifications of their domination, interests, and sentiments⁵⁴.

Relatedly, emergent Calvinism exemplified the emergence and acceptance of political ideology as the creation and instrument of social classes, thus class ideologies in Mannheim’s framework. At this juncture, orthodox Calvinism represented a specific class ideology, as well as the “ideology of the sect” (Wilson 1959) in the form of Calvin’s sects⁵⁵ and sectarian followers like the French Huguenots as his earliest “children” (Hornung 2014; Scoville 1952) and English-American Puritans as exemplars of Weber’s (1968) “pure sect”. Reportedly, Calvinism arose and expanded as an “ideological system”, simply “ideology” of a certain class, as witnessed in France before and during Calvin’s exile and Geneva under his autocratic rule (Walzer⁵⁶ 1965) and other settings. In these settings, a salient instance was the expansion of Calvinism through “Puritan ideology” in England (Walzer 1965). Reportedly, the English Civil War demonstrated the strong “role of ideology” in the form of Calvinist Puritanism (Goldstone 1986; Mayhew

1984) and related “ascetic Protestant ideologies”⁵⁷ (Swidler 1986). Since prior to the Civil War Puritanism as the “English version of Calvinism” (Jonassen 1947) arose in “theocratic revolt” against the existing political and religious structures and nascent secularism (Juergensmeyer 1994; Zaret 1989), this generated the “puritan utopia”⁵⁸ (Goldstone 1986) in Mannheim’s sense of an alternative ideology. And this Puritan utopia persists as it is perpetuated or resurrected through American evangelicalism revolting against Enlightenment liberalism, secularism, rationalism, and individualism (Davis and Robinson 2009; Mueller 2009), in particular the accelerating process of secularization and modernization in Western society (Emerson and Hartman 2006), including even the US (Voas and Chaves 2016). (Table 1 summarizes the preceding discussion.)

Data/Evidence

The question may arise as how the central claims of this analysis can be falsified so that evidence would have to arise to suggest that the argument and resulting hypotheses are not valid. Overall, the falsifying or disconfirming evidence would be that the legacy of Calvinism, including Puritanism in Anglo-Saxon countries, was a lower level of social stratification, notably of class, economic inequality in historically Calvinist, in particular Puritan societies than in others within the Christian religion and generally. In particular, such evidence would be that its legacy was the lowest level of social stratification, especially class-economic inequality in the US as a quintessential (Finke and Stark 2005; Gorski 2003) and even sole remaining (Kaufman 2008; Munch 2001) major Calvinist, more precisely Puritan, society. However, such evidence does not exist so far to falsify the argument and hypotheses of the analysis. On the contrary, the overwhelming evidence seems to be that the legacy of Calvinism, including Puritanism, represents a comparatively higher level of social stratification, notably of class, economic inequality in historically Calvinist/Puritan societies than in others within Christianity and Western and related society overall.

First, what Weber and other sociologists denote as social stratification by wealth is more persistent and salient in historically Calvinist/Puritan societies than in others, albeit with some variations. This indicates Calvinism’s over-determination of social

stratification in these societies or conversely their path-dependence on it in these terms. Thus, wealth concentration and inequality are substantially higher in the US as the prime and sole remaining major exemplar of a Calvinist, more precisely Puritan, society than in other Western and similar societies such as OECD countries. Table 1 provides comparative data on wealth concentration and inequality such as the share of top one percent of the population of societal wealth among OECD countries. It shows, for example, that the wealth share of top one percent is among all OECD countries by far the highest in the US at 42 percent, incidentally followed by the Netherlands (28%) as another historically Calvinist (and presently a mixed Catholic-Protestant) society. To that extent, these findings largely confirm that Calvinism effects over-determination of severe social stratification by wealth in the US and to some extent the Netherlands or alternatively that, these historically Calvinist societies are path-dependent on the first in these terms.

Second and related, social stratification by income is more pervasive in historically Calvinist/Puritan societies than in others, with some variations. This again indicates Calvinism's over-determination of social stratification in these societies or their path-dependence on it in this regard. As with that of wealth, income concentration and inequality are significantly higher in the US as well as other historically Calvinist or more precisely Puritan countries such as Great Britain than in other Western and comparable societies, like those grouped within OECD. Table 2 presents comparative data on income concentration and inequality such as the Gini Index for OECD countries. It shows again that the Gini Index of income concentration [(with a range from 0 to 100, or from 0 to 1)] is the highest in the US at around 40 (or .4) among OECD countries with a few non-Western exceptions (Chile, Mexico and Turkey), thus among all Western societies, followed by Great Britain with 35, as another historically, even if partially Puritan society. More broadly, the table shows that within the Western world (thus excluding Eastern and Southern Europe, plus South America and Asia), historically Puritan and generally Protestant societies, including the US and Britain together with Australia, Canada and New Zealand tend to have among the highest Gini Indexes and thus the most severe income concentration. On this account, these data corroborate the argument that Calvinism over-determines through its legacy severe social stratification

by income primarily in the US and to some extent Great Britain and other Anglo-Saxon countries and conversely that, these historically Calvinist-Puritan societies remain path-dependent on this religion in terms of economic inequality.

Third and a consequence of severe social stratification by wealth and income, poverty tends to be more persistent and widespread in historically Calvinist/Puritan societies than in others, again with some variations. Such a tendency hence points to Calvinism's direct or indirect over-determination of such poverty in these societies and alternatively their path-dependence on their historical religion in this respect. Thus, mostly consequent to sharp social stratification by wealth and income, the level of poverty, including both that of adults and children, tends to be substantially higher in the US as well as other historically Calvinist-Puritan societies than in most other Western and comparable countries such as OECD member states. Table 3 contains data on general poverty and child rates for OECD countries. Following the preceding patterns for social stratification by wealth and income, the table reports that the general poverty rate is the highest in the US at around 18 percent among all 36 OECD countries (even Chile, Mexico and Turkey have lower rates) and not just Western societies. More broadly, it shows that historically Puritan and other Protestant Anglo-Saxon societies, thus including the US, Britain, as well as Australia, Canada and New Zealand, manifest a clear tendency to having among the highest general poverty rates within Western society and even OECD, which confirms previous observations (Sysmonds and Pudsey 2006; also, Smeeding 2006). In addition to and consistent with these rates, the table shows that the US child poverty rate at about 21 percent is the fifth highest among all OECD countries and indeed the single highest among Western societies. More broadly, the table shows that historically Puritan or Protestant societies from the US and Britain to Australia, Canada and New Zealand tend to cluster among those with the highest child poverty rates among OECD and even Western countries, again confirming previous observations (Smeeding 2006). Altogether, these two sets of findings support the proposition that the legacy of Calvinism over-determines through determining severe social stratification by wealth and income persistent and widespread adult and child poverty in the US and other Anglo-Saxon societies, and conversely that the latter remain path-dependent on the former in these terms.

Table 1. Wealth Share Of Top One Percent, Selected OECD Countries OECD Countries, 2017 Or Latest Available

Country	Wealth Share
Australia	15.00
Austria	25.53
Belgium	12.06
Canada	15.50
Chile	17.40
Czech Republic	NA
Denmark	23.62
Estonia	21.23
Finland	13.31
France	18.65
Germany	23.66
Greece	9.16
Hungary	17.23
Iceland	NA
Ireland	14.18
Israel	NA
Italy	11.69
Japan	10.77
Korea	NA
Latvia	21.39
Lithuania	NA
Luxembourg	18.81
Mexico	NA
Netherlands	27.83
New Zealand	NA
Norway	20.13
Poland	11.73
Portugal	14.44
Slovak Republic	9.32
Slovenia	23.03
Spain	16.32
Sweden	NA
Switzerland	NA
Turkey	NA
United Kingdom	20.50
United States	39.1

Source

Share of Top 1% of Wealth OECD Statistics

<https://stats.oecd.org/Index.aspx?DataSetCode=WEALTH>

Table 2. Gini Coefficient, OECD Countries, 2017 Or Latest Available

Country	Ginix100
Australia	33.7
Austria	27.6
Belgium	26.8
Canada	31.8
Chile	45.4
Czech Republic	25.8
Denmark	26.3
Estonia	33.0
Finland	25.9
France	29.5
Germany	29.3
Greece	34.0
Hungary	28.8
Iceland	24.6
Ireland	29.7
Israel	34.6
Italy	33.3
Japan	33.0
Korea	29.5
Latvia	34.7
Lithuania	37.2
Luxembourg	30.6
Mexico	45.9
Netherlands	28.5
New Zealand	34.9
Norway	27.2
Poland	29.2
Portugal	33.6
Slovak Republic	25.1
Slovenia	25.0
Spain	34.5
Sweden	28.2
Switzerland	29.5
Turkey	40.4
United Kingdom	35.1
United States	39.1

Source

OECD Data <https://data.oecd.org/inequality/income-inequality.htm>

Table 3. General And Child Poverty Rates After Taxes And Transfers, OECD Countries, 2017 Or Latest Available

Country	Poverty Total	Poverty Child
Australia	12.8	13.0
Austria	8.7	9.6
Belgium	9.8	11.0
Canada	14.2	17.1
Chile	16.1	21.1
Czech Republic	6.4	10.5
Denmark	5.5	2.9
Estonia	16.1	12.1
Finland	5.8	3.3
France	8.1	11.3
Germany	10.1	11.2
Greece	14.9	18.9
Hungary	10.1	11.8
Iceland	6.5	7.2
Ireland	9.8	10.8
Israel	17.7	23.2
Italy	14.4	18.3
Japan	16.1	16.3
Korea	13.8	7.1
Latvia	16.7	13.0
Lithuania	16.5	19.1
Luxembourg	10.9	13.7
Mexico	16.7	19.7
Netherlands	8.3	10.9
New Zealand	10.9	14.1
Norway	8.1	7.3
Poland	11.1	13.4
Portugal	12.6	15.5
Slovak Republic	8.4	14.8
Slovenia	9.2	7.0
Spain	15.3	22.1
Sweden	9.1	8.9
Switzerland	9.1	9.5
Turkey	17.2	25.3
United Kingdom	11.1	11.8
United States	17.8	20.9

Source

OECD Data <https://data.oecd.org/inequality/poverty-rate.htm#indicator-chart>

Discussion and Conclusion

In essence, Calvinism and Protestantism overall deviated from and reversed Christianity in terms of social-stratification origins, just as Puritanism inverted the Christian code of ethical values involving compassion, caritas, tolerance for sins, and the like. Within Durkheim’s sociological framework, Christianity appears as the product and “collective representation” of “social classification”, specifically hierarchy in its downward aspect of

“subordination” or “subordinate” members. Thus, it originated and expanded as what Pareto (2000) calls the religion of lower social classes of the dis-privileged, “poor and humble” (also, Stark 1964), including, in Weber’s (1968) words, the “itinerant journeymen”, hoping that “the last shall be the first”⁵⁹ (Mannheim 1936) in society, just as the next world, although, in his view, such eschatological hopes were never fulfilled.

By contrast, early Calvinism and Protestantism represented the result and “collective representation” of “social classification” such as hierarchy in its upward dimension of domination or “dominating” members in Durkheim’s framework, especially during its expansion and religious-civil wars in France and Europe after the 1650s. Hence, it developed, expanded and warred as the religion of upper social classes of the wealthy, privileged, and powerful instead seeking that “the first shall always be the first” and “the last shall always remain the last” in the social stratification system, as well as beyond through “Divine election”⁶⁰. In Pareto’s (1963) account, the Calvinist Revolution and the Protestant Reformation (Hyojoun and Pfaff 2012) in general exemplified a type of “revolution” against, rather than, as usually supposed, in favor of, social change, innovation, and progress, thus an adverse “religious reaction”, resulting in the “new (Reformed) elite”⁶¹ replacing, but not being essentially different from, the old (Catholic).

Consequently, with respect to social stratification, orthodox Calvinism (and Protestantism) as the religion or theology of the “first shall remain the first” class constituted a deviation from and reversal of Christianity as the religion of the “last shall become the first” classes. In Mannheim terms, like conservatism⁶² of which it is a religious form, Calvinism by developing and expanding as the ideology and/or utopia of the ruling class such as aristocracy or oligarchy contradicts and reverses Christianity as arising and expanding as the utopia of lower, oppressed classes, simply the masses.

The point is not whether and to what extent Calvinism and other “ascetic” Protestantism in its initial form and expansion was the truly and only, as Calvin claimed in the title and content of his *Institution*, “Christian” religion and “Reformed” church, which is a theological problem outside sociology and other social science. Rather, it is whether and how the social-stratification origins and causes of orthodox Calvinist during its “heroic times” of rapid expansion and wars and heroes and martyrs like Calvin et al. compared with those of early Christianity. This forms instead a legitimate sociological

and historical problem in the sociology and history of religion, notably its relation to class and overall societal structure. And on account of these conditions, Calvinism developed, expanded and warred its “enemies” as essentially different from and even contradictory to Christianity and instead closer to Islam with its aristocratic origins in the warrior caste among Weber’s world religions. It is only in the sense of social-stratification conditions of its development, expansion and wars that the “Reformed” religion of Calvin et al. reversed Christianity, and became functionally equivalent to Islam, as in Weber’s comparative sociology of religion and other analyses⁶³. It did so by reversing the anti-aristocratic and anti-oligarchic “last (strata) shall be the first” tenet or hope of early Christianity by the aristocratic, oligarchic “first (stratum) shall always remain the first” opposite. Calvinism’s stratification point of origin of its development, expansion, and wars primarily consisted in medieval aristocracy such as French nobles providing its critical protection and military leadership since the 1560s.

Directions for further research especially include exploring and analyzing the reasons for the changing social stratification basis and support of Calvinism during its later stages after its “heroic” times during the 16th-17th centuries. Specifically, this involves the question of why aristocracy, in particular the medieval warrior nobility, first developed, dominated, expanded, and militarily lead Calvinism, as in France and Scotland, and eventually, as Weber puts it, “stopped fighting” for it. Instead, bourgeoisie and middle classes embraced and defended Calvin’s “Reformed” religion with “heroism”, as in England and America. In short, the problem is how and why Calvinism has evolved from the religion, ideology and utopia of aristocracy, notably the warrior nobility, during its expansion and wars into those of the capitalist class and middle classes within the system of social stratification in its later stages.

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NOTES

¹ Davis (1975, 1) suggests that the “printing industry of Lyon provides an excellent case study by which to examine the interrelations between “social forces” and Reformation in the city”.

² Benedict (2002, 2) identifies “two rival varieties of Protestant state churches: the Lutheran and the Reformed”. Specifically, he notes that Calvinism belonging to the second churches “superseded Lutheranism within a generation as the most dynamic and widely established form of European Protestantism” (Benedict 2002, xiv). Also, one may caution that Calvinism “is a slippery term. Most historians now prefer to speak of “Reformed Protestantism” or “the Reformed” to designate the family of post-Reformation confessions shaped by the theology of Zwingli and Calvin and to reserve the term Calvinism for certain theological options within the broader Reformed tradition.” The present author uses the term Calvinism in this suggested sense, i.e., as French Reformed Protestantism distinct from both Zwinglianism as the Swiss (Zurich) Reformed Church and Lutheranism.

³ Holt (2003, 114) comments that “the earliest attempts to think of the Reformation in social rather than theological or doctrinal terms tended to be German, and they were built upon either the class-based paradigm established by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels in the nineteenth century or upon the ideas of two German sociologists at the turn of the twentieth century, Max Weber and Ernst Troeltsch.”

⁴ Durkheim and Mauss (1903, 11) state that the “classification of things”, in particular that into sacred and profane ones, including divine and human, “reproduces the classification of men”, thus social division or stratification into classes. Durkheim (1965, 148) explains the social origins of totemism as an “elementary religion” in this way. Within the society in which it originates (clan) there are “dominating members and others who are subordinate to the first (i.e.) really relations of subordination and co-ordination, the establishment of which is the object of all classification, and men would never have thought of arranging

their knowledge in this way if they had not known beforehand what a hierarchy was. But the hierarchy is exclusively a social affair. We have taken (hierarchical orderings) from society and projected them into our (religious) conceptions of the world.” And in a classic sociological coup de grace Durkheim (1965, 236) infers that the “god and the society are one and the same (because) the god of the (society) (is) nothing else than the (society) itself.”

⁵ Weber (1946, 286-7) observes that the “nature of the desired sacred values has been strongly influenced by the nature of the external interest situation and the corresponding way of life of the ruling strata and thus by the social stratification (though) the reverse also holds.” Weber (1968,599-600) notes that the “Christian doctrine of the perpetuation of class distinctions into the next world” provided a “foundation for the traditional stratification of vocations”, though a “much less secure” one than that of Hinduism.

⁶ Davis (1975, 11) cites Pierre Viret, the chief Calvinist pastor of Lyon saying that the “special vocation” in the Church (consistory) could not disturb too much the “rank and order” in society.

⁷ Benedict 2002, xxi) infers evoking Marx that “beliefs make history, but not under circumstances of their own choosing. They are also themselves the products of history” and emphasizes the “interplay between the force of a religious tradition and the contexts in which it arose and took root.”

⁸ In Walker’s (1937, 6) view, the “question of the cause of the Reformation has hardly been broached at all in the whole Weber controversy. Weber set out to disprove the materialist conception of history (asking) Did the Calvinist ethic and attitude to work precede and largely influence the application of this ethic in the capitalist world? The conclusion must be that ideas that came to birth in the mind effected economic and material developments and not vice versa.” Walker (1937,6) criticizes Weber because “his type of argument can throw no light at all upon the validity of the materialist conception of history, because it is debarred from facing the vital problem of the origin of the ideas whose reaction upon the material world it is engaged in discovering”. Zaret (1985,10) cautions that the “relation of Puritanism and economic life is far more reciprocal than Weber thought it was” in that the economy impacted “Puritan beliefs”, just as conversely. In his view, Weber somewhat downplayed the “organizational and social contexts in which Calvinist beliefs were developed and disseminated in England” through their “connections” with “Puritan ideology”, which showed the “social and organizational contexts of ideas” and the “existential conditioning of ideas” (Zaret 1985,6). Goldstone (1986,273) explains Calvinist Puritanism’s surge in England by “rapid population growth, struggles by artisans with falling wages, and frequent disorders” rather than explaining rising capitalism by the Puritan religion and ideology. Ekelund et al. (2002, 649) suggest that Calvinism and Protestantism overall “emerged in areas of highest economic development, i.e., those most favorable to a “revolution in the Church” (Weber’s expression)”, so “not only molded the social and economic order but was molded by it”.

⁹ Weber (1968, 573) suggests that Calvinism, including Puritanism, shared with Islam the “same faith in predestination”. Also, Weber (1968,594) remarks that Protestant “inner-worldly asceticism reached a similar (theocratic) solution (as did Islam) to the problem of the relation between religion and politics wherever, as in radical Calvinism, it represented as God’s will the domination over the sinful world, for the purpose of controlling it, by religious virtuosi belonging to the “pure” church”. Notably, he adds that “this view was fundamental in the theocracy of New England.” In particular, he registers that “discipline in the faith (in predestination) during wars of religion was the source of the unconquerableness of both the Islamic and Cromwellian cavalries” (Weber 1968, 573).

¹⁰ Benedict (2002,7) observes that the “Reformed tradition, not the Lutheran, galvanized this diffuse dissatisfaction with the church of Rome into the second great wave of Protestant expansion”, which evidently applies above all to Calvinism and less to Zwinglianism. Weber notes that Zwinglianism “after a short lease of power it rapidly lost in importance.”

¹¹ Bourdieu (1998,43) states citing Weber that dominant groups always need a “theodicy of their own privilege” (i.e.) a sociodicy (as) a theoretical justification of the fact that they are privileged. Competence is nowadays at the heart of that sociodicy (accepted) naturally by the dominant (in their interest) but also others. The Anglo-American ideology, always somewhat sanctimonious, distinguished the “undeserving poor” from the deserving poor”. Alongside or in place of this ethical justification there is now an intellectual justification. The poor are not just immoral (or) degenerate (but) stupid (with no) intelligence.”

¹² Hobsbaum (1972, 48-9) remarks that “one of the social consequences of Calvinism is a willed disregard of the lower classes. Calvin accepted quite cheerfully the idea that there would always be rich and poor, and his followers used this as a further means of defining the Elect. If property was a sign of grace, then this other must be true: to be poverty-stricken was to be sinful (as was) to be unemployed

(lacking) the systematic character that Calvinism demands. (Thus) the Capitalist was enjoined to be heartless about the working man. It is always the Elect who decide who the Elect are”.

¹³ The first Puritan ruler of New England Winthrop induced by “austere Calvinism” immediately upon arriving in the “new world” (aboard the ship *Arabella* in 1630) reportedly proclaimed the “divinely ordained and irremediable “Condicion of mankind” (such that) some must be rich and some poore, some high and eminent in power and dignitie; others meane and in subjection” (cited in Kloppenberg 1998, 13).

¹⁴ Parsons (1937,7) states that an “important change in our knowledge of fact” means “not that the new facts are vaguely “interesting,” that they satisfy “idle curiosity, “ or that they demonstrate the goodness of God.”

¹⁵ Weber (1968, 486-7) allows that “religion of salvation may very well have its origin within socially privileged classes. For the charisma of the prophet is not confined to membership in any particular class; and it is associated with a certain minimum of intellectual cultivation. Salvation religion changes its character as soon as it has reached lay groups and after it has reached into the disprivileged social strata.” In particular, Weber (1946, 290) acknowledges that “partly, the social environment exerted an influence, above all, the environment of the stratum that was decisive for the development of such religion (as) Occidental and asceticist Protestantism” epitomized by Calvinism.

¹⁶ Pareto (1963, 516-9) includes “sentiments of social ranking; hierarchy” into “Class IV Residues connected with sociality”.

¹⁷ Pareto (1963, 1429) states: “Aristocracies do not last. History is a graveyard of aristocracies”.

¹⁸ Acemoglu et al. (2011, 3298) note that “before the French Revolution, much of Europe was dominated by two kinds of oligarchies: the landed nobility in agriculture and the urban-based oligarchy controlling commerce and various occupations.”

¹⁹ Pareto (2000,86-7) notes that the “religion of Christ, which seemed especially made for the poor and humble, has generated the Roman theocracy” and in extension its Calvinist counterpart such as the “new (Protestant) elite leaned on the poor and humble; as usual they were deceived, and the yoke weighed even heavier on their shoulders than before.

²⁰ Lachmann (1989,152-3) registers the “English “crown’s defeat by and the French monarch’s victory over (Calvinist) aristocratic rebels”, and suggests that “wars of religion were the archetypal conflicts of 16th century France ((i.e.) the struggle between Protestant and Catholic nobles to control provincial institutions, clerical tithes, and urban governments”. Also, he describes the English Calvinist Revolution as a “conflict between a state elite and a (Puritan) gentry class whose interest was defined by its new monopoly of control over agrarian production” and concludes that “conflicts among the three principal elites--the clergy, monarchy, and lay landlords--are the critical dynamic” in both France and England (Lachmann 1989,159).

²¹ Hillmann (2008,428) identifies Puritan “elite mobilization” before the English Civil War” in that Puritans--seen as a “hotter sort” of Protestants--pushed for further church reforms amid an established Calvinist orthodoxy”. Hillmann (2008, 436-41) suggests that the English Civil War was a “conflict between competing (elite) claims to (Calvinist) religious orthodoxy”, such that the “Puritan aristocrats among the parliamentary leadership collaborated closely with the new colonial merchants”.

²² Kaufman (2008, 422) remarks that New England’s Puritan colonies were “governed primarily by and for large property-owners.”

²³ Acemoglu and Robinson (2006, 329) characterize the US post-bellum South as a “low-wage, low-education, and repressive economy (i.e.) remarkably like (slavery) gone (with the wind), but (came) the Ku Klux Klan and Jim Crow”. Referring to Michels-Musca’s elite theory, Acemoglu and Robinson (2006, 329) note that “despite losing the Civil War, antebellum political elites managed to sustain their political control of the South”. Acemoglu and Robinson (2008, 269) elaborate that the “persistence of labor repression in the US South is (due to) the exercise of de facto (elite) power (i.e.) policies designed to impede labor mobility, political disenfranchisement, intimidation, violence and lynching”.

²⁴ Weber (1968, 473) observes that “periods of strong prophetic or reformist religious agitation have frequently pulled the nobility into the path of prophetic ethical religion, because this type of religion breaks through all classes and status groups. As a rule, a prophetic religion is naturally compatible with the status feeling of the nobility when it directs its promises to the warrior in the cause of religion.”

²⁵ Hauser (1899, 217) claimed that the Reformation “had the two-fold character of a social and of a religious revolution. It was not solely against doctrinal corruptions and ecclesiastical abuses, but also

against misery and iniquity that the lower classes rebelled; they sought in the Bible not only for the doctrine of salvation by grace, but for proofs of the primitive equality of all men”.

²⁶ Weber (1968, 444) compares Muhammad’s “position in Medina” to “that of Calvin at Geneva”. Weber (1968, 572) also suggests that “among the prophets and persons of faith, predestination forcefully energized a drive for rational and religious power, as in the case of Calvin and Muhammad, each of whom convinced that the certainty of one’s own mission in the world came not from any personal perfection but from his situation in the world and from god’s will.”

²⁷ Hobsbaum (1972, 50) objects that “Calvin’s God has nothing to do with Christianity at all (and is even) a highly personal invention. Though Calvin behaved as though God were speaking through him, he does not explain how he knows God is speaking through him. What inner need for reassurance drove Calvin to create this God we cannot know: the facts of his conversion remain obscure. But the need to dominate is widely enough shared to ensure no shortage of ministers for his creed. Those with anti-social tendencies may very well require divine sanction to force home their desires (as) a weapon. In requiring others to prostrate themselves before that God, the Calvinist leaders are in fact demanding that they may themselves be worshipped. But no human sacrifice can give them the assurance they crave. Behind the supreme arrogance of Calvin’s God is the paranoid posture of defence (i.e.) the inferiority complex.”

²⁸ Walzer (1965, 10) observes that “Calvin pursued power in Geneva with all the artfulness of a Machiavellian adventurer (as did) his (Puritan) followers in England.” Swidler (1986, 280) comments that “as the ruler of a small theocracy, Calvin certainly had immediate interests in controlling the citizens of Geneva, and he bent his doctrine to those ends. The wider appeal of Calvinism was to those displaced clergy and insecure gentry who were looking for new ways to exercise authority and a new ethos to regulate their own conduct as elites.” Also, Gorski (2000, 175) notes that the “members of the Calvinist consistories, for example, were usually drawn from the ranks of the political elite, sometimes exclusively so, as in Geneva.”

²⁹ Archer (2001, 276) suggests that the “founders of New England colonies were the Ayatollah Khomeinis of the early 17th century. The Puritan state was a minority “dictatorship of the holy” (and) an authoritarian theocracy. The idea that there should be a separation of church and state was completely alien to (Puritanism) (but) the unity of religion and politics was axiomatic (and) central to the very rationale for founding these new societies.” According to Munch (2001, 225), the New England Puritan colony was “under such a strong religious leadership (Winthrop) that it can be called a theocracy”.

³⁰ In Rawls” (2010,264) personal account, “unless one made an exception of oneself and assumed one would be saved, I came to feel the doctrine of predestination s terrifying once one thought it through and realized what it meant. Double predestination as expressed in its rigorous way by St. Augustine and Calvin seemed especially terrifying, though I had to admit it was present in St. Thomas and Luther also, and actually only a consequence of predestination itself. These doctrines all became impossible for me to take seriously, not in the sense that the evidence for them was weak or doubtful. Rather, they depict God as a monster moved solely by God’s Own power and glory.”

³¹ Benedict (2002, xxii) remarks that Calvinism is the “high predestinarian theology often summarized in five points (e.g.) TULIP: Total depravity, Unconditional election, Limited atonement, Irresistible grace, and the Perseverance of the saints”.

³² According to Weber (1968, (1208), if a pure sect “concludes such an alliance (with the political power), as the Independents (Puritans) did in New England, the result is an aristocratic rule by the ecclesiastically qualified.”

³³ Weber (1930, 279) remarks that the New England “colony (under Winthrop’s leadership) was inclined to permit the settlement of gentlemen in Massachusetts, even an upper house with a hereditary nobility, if only the gentlemen would adhere to the Church. The colony remained closed for the sake of Church discipline.”

³⁴ Kaufman (2008, 422) finds that the New England colonies “were thus governed primarily by and for large property-owners. The modern American corporate system has adopted an incarnation of this institutional frame: profit-sharing with employees is rare, and corporate governance is run in the interest of management and shareholders rather than employees or society as a whole”. He also remarks that “religious dissenters looking to escape persecution in Puritan Massachusetts founded Rhode Island” (Kaufman 2008, 410).

³⁵ Acemoglu et al. (2011, 3287) observe that the French Revolution’s major goal (was) destroying the grip of the aristocracy, oligarchy, and the clergy on political and economic power.”

³⁶ Becker (1940,51) implies this stating that “cultural structures cannot be concocted in the laboratory; Calvinistic Scottish society or Frankfort Jewry cannot be made to order (but) must depend on the accidents of past “deposit” or of future “stratification.”

³⁷ Rossel (1970, 912-4) remarks that the “particular admixture of utopian and materialistic interest that brought the Puritans to the New World. Neither had they been driven out of England nor had they left in flight from persecution (yet the Puritan) theologians and magistrates were (unsure) of the extent to which their utopian order could be maintained in terms of religious devotion alone”. Also, Rossel (1970, 918) notes that in New England “pietistic and evangelical sects such as the Quakers and Baptists were gathering many converts among the lower classes (vs. Puritan upper class).”

³⁸ Calvin (1536, 140) initially states (in the first, Latin edition of *Institution*) that by “God’s incomprehensive wisdom” (*incomprehensibilem Dei sapientiam*) humans are divided into, “as established to us, those who are eternally his designed elect (*aeterno eius consilio electi*), those who are reprobate (*reprobati*)”.

³⁹ For example, Weber (1930,242) notices that in Puritan-ruled New England “the attempt was made to constitute the Church as an aristocracy of proved saints”, resulting in what Winthrop et al. established and extolled as *mixt aristocracie* (Bremer 1995,90).

⁴⁰ Weber (1968, 1180) mentions that the English “Puritan Revolution was successful because of the cavalry provided by the rural gentry” as a seeming exception to the aristocratic leadership of Calvinist revolutions, as witnessed in France and Scotland (plus Holland, Prussia, etc.).

⁴¹ Weber (1968,1180-1) adds that the “Huguenot and Scottish nobility later stopped fighting for Calvinism, and everywhere the further development of ascetic Protestantism became the concern of the bourgeois middle classes”. Weber (1968, 473) notes that “at the time of the religious wars in France (there were) the conflicts of the Huguenot synods with a leader like Conde over ethical questions. Ultimately, the Scottish nobility, like the British and the French, was completely excluded from the Calvinist religion in which it, or at least some of its groups, had originally played a considerable role.” Weber (1968,1180) explains this reversal by that “in the long run, however, an elective affinity between spiritually prescribed conduct and the socially conditioned way of life of status groups and classes asserts itself as the eschatological expectations recede and the new religious beliefs are routinized. Horizontal stratification increasingly displaces vertical divisions.” Specifically, he suggests that the “routinization of prophetic religion had the effect of separating the nobility from the circle of religious enthusiasm”, even though “(a)s a rule, prophetic religion (like Calvinism as well as Islam before) is naturally compatible with the status feeling of the nobility when it directs its promises to the warrior in the cause of religion. This conception assumes the exclusiveness of a universal good and the moral depravity of unbelievers who are his adversaries and whose untroubled existence arouses his righteous indignation” (Weber 1968, 473).

⁴² Hume elaborates that the “Hugonots, though dispersed over the whole kingdom, formed a kind of separate empire; and being closely united, as well by their religious zeal as by the dangers to which they were perpetually exposed, they obeyed with entire submission the orders of their leaders, and were ready on every signal to fly to arms. The Hugonots, who, being possessed of many privileges, and even of fortified towns, formed an empire within empire,.” For example, he mentions that Rochelle was the “most considerable bulwark of the Protestants”, along with Orleans as the “seat of the Hugonots” power”, and that “most of the province of Normandy was possessed by the Hugonots.”

⁴³ Hume describes Henry as “far from being a bigot to his sect; and as he deemed these theological disputes entirely subordinate to the public good, he had secretly determined, from the beginning, to come some time or other to the resolution required of him. He had found, on the death of his predecessor, that the Hugonots, who formed the bravest and most faithful part of his army, were such determined zealots, that if he had at that time abjured their faith, they would instantly have abandoned him to the pretensions and usurpations of the Catholics.”

⁴⁴ Kingdon (1964, 394) mentions the Calvinist “court of Navarre” and its “young prince who was eventually to become King Henry IV of France”, while Roelker (1972) mentioning the King’s conversion to Catholicism in 1593. Also, Benedict (1999, 4) registers the “emergence of the Protestant Henri de Navarre as the heir apparent to the throne of France”, as after 1584. Ramsey (1999, 214) implies Henri de Navarre observing that the “royal succession crisis in the 1580s and 1590s threatened to bring a Protestant to the throne of France precisely at a time when the monarch’s failure to eradicate heresy had already compromised the institution of the monarchy itself.”

⁴⁵ Heller (1986: 242-4) observes that “it was the deliberate policy of the Calvinist party to attract aristocratic support. The subordination of the Protestant movement to the aristocracy hardly disturbed

Calvin (as) was in complete accord with Calvin's belief in the inviolability of the secular order and of the duty of the individual Christian to subordinate himself to the divinely ordained social and political order." Heller (1986, 247) concludes that "because of the strategy or political theory of the Calvinist leadership (the nobility) came to dominate the Calvinist movement (and) the fact is that on the eve of the civil wars the Calvinist bourgeoisie were eager to subordinate themselves to the nobility."

⁴⁶ Also, Gorski (1993, 301) remarks that "in 16th-century Poland, for instance, Calvinism became a rallying cry for the defense of noble privileges."

⁴⁷ Weber (1968, 473) adds that "this conception assumes the exclusiveness of a universal god and the moral depravity of the unbelievers who are his adversaries".

⁴⁸ Heller (1986:257) notes that Calvinism as an ideology, while initially dominated by aristocracy, became a "reflection of a developing middle-class" in France and Geneva. Rettig and Pasamanick (1961:22) comment, referring to Sombart, that "ascetic Protestantism (i.e.) Calvinism in the 16th century and Puritanism in the 17th century (were) movements of the lower middle class (which) must be morally rigorous because otherwise it would jeopardize its own existence and (its) moral rigidity (expresses) resentment against the higher classes." Moreover, Hyma (1938, 339) observes that "the poorest classes tended more and more to become fanatical Calvinists" in Holland.

⁴⁹ Howe (1978, 368) refers to Weber's assumed "elective affinity of the bourgeoisie for certain life-styles," including "those of ascetic Protestantism." Also, Kalberg (1980, 1162) comments with reference to Weber that the "businessmen who joined Calvinist sects simply in order to acquire reputations for impeccable honesty and thereby secure the trade of sect and other community members."

⁵⁰ Weber (1968, 1180-1) suggests that bourgeoisie and the low middle-class played a later derivative role in the development of Calvinism observing that once aristocracy (as in France and Scotland) ceased "fighting" for the latter, "everywhere the further development of ascetic Protestantism became the concern of the bourgeois middle classes". He also implies analyzing "bourgeois religiosity" that bourgeois classes merely joined rather than founded Calvinism in that capital "acquisition has been in the past combined frequently with a rational, ethical congregational religion among (them) (as in ascetic Protestantism and sectarianism)" (Weber 1968,479). He does more explicitly for low-middle classes observing that "petty-bourgeoisie, by virtue of its distinctive pattern of economic life, inclines in the direction of a rational ethical religion" (Weber 1968,482) like Calvinism and other ascetic Protestantism, thus merely joining the latter once created and led by nobility (as in France, Scotland, Holland, etc.) rather than forming it. Weber (1930, 36) also admits (in an apparent concession to "economic interpretation") that "those sections of the old (German) Empire which were most highly developed economically and most favoured by natural resources and situation, in particular a majority of the wealthy towns, went over to Protestantism in the sixteenth century (so) the districts of highest economic development at the same time (were) particularly favourable to a revolution in the Church". Weber (1930, 37) also implies its later and derivative role in the development of Calvinism by stating that the rising bourgeoisie "not only failed to resist this unexampled tyranny of Puritanism but even developed a heroism in its defense."

⁵¹ Weber (1968, 473) emphasizes that "a prophetic religion is naturally compatible with the status feeling of the nobility when it directs its promises to the warrior in the cause of religion. This conception assumes the exclusiveness of a universal god and the moral depravity of the unbelievers who are his adversaries." Also, he notes that the "religion of salvation (has) its origin within socially privileged classes (and after) reach[e]s into the disprivileged social strata" (Weber 1968, 487), as exemplified by ascetic Protestantism, in particular Calvinism. Howe (1978, 368) refers to Weber's "elective affinities between the various social strata and their characteristic forms of religiosity (in particular) the greater prominence of such elective affinities among the burgher strata".

⁵² Simmel (1955,159) registers that in China during his time the "primitive identity of religious and political group-affiliation is still unbroken", just as was in Calvin's Geneva and other historically or remaining Calvinist societies, including Puritan New England and the US South cum the "Bible Belt". He implies that this "primitive identity" remains in Calvinism and Protestantism overall by observing that the "Protestant clergy as a matter of principle is entirely enmeshed in civil life" Simmel (1955, 145) unlike its Catholic counterpart. Also, Simmel (1955,94-8, 159) notes that Calvinist and other Protestantism has "much greater dogmatic intolerance" than Catholicism, as indicated by that the first effectively does not have "any real heretics" completely extirpated by contrast to the second, citing the "cruel suppression of the Irish Catholics in England."

⁵³ For example, Jasnow (2015, 327) notes that the “legends of the sexual escapades of James V developed in a time when Scotland was infested by Calvinism, and thus looking back fondly on days of sexual freedom.”

⁵⁴ Pareto (2000, 81) suggests that the “emergence of the new elite manifests itself also in the religious crisis.” In particular, he notes that the “governing classes wished to use the old religious beliefs in order to keep the people subdued (but) the people are now becoming more detached from these beliefs.” (Pareto 2000, 91-2). Also, Pareto (1963, 1568) states that the “divine rights” (of rulers) have not the slightest experimental validity”, just as by implication Calvin’s doctrine of predestination cum Divine “election” (and “reprobation”), as its equivalent and other Calvinist doctrines. In turn, Troeltsch (1966, 112) describes Calvinist predestination as an “aristocratic idea”. Also, Weber (1968,573) comments that predestination “provides the individual of faith with the highest possible degree of certainty of salvation, once he has convinced that he belongs to the aristocracy of the few who are the chosen.”

⁵⁵ Weber (1968, 1205) states that “Calvinism resembles the sects by virtue of its aristocratic charismatic principle of predestination”.

⁵⁶ Walzer (1965, 9) observes that the “people in Geneva (did) discover in Calvin” a revolutionary movement and a political ideology.

⁵⁷ Swidler (1986, 283) remarks that “in the early-modern period, those groups armed with ascetic Protestant ideologies very often won their social battles” and points to the “links between ideology and social organization, such as the popular egalitarianism of Cromwell’s Puritan army”.

⁵⁸ Goldstone (1986, 295) concurs with the observation that the “Puritan utopia would not look much like capitalism”.

⁵⁹ Pareto (2000, 86) states, however, that “the religion of Christ, which seemed especially made for the poor and humble, has generated the Roman theocracy”. Mannheim (1936, 25) suggests that Biblical “last shall be the first” proclamation was the “psychic expression of the revolt of the oppressed classes (driven by) resentment.” Mannheim (1936, 45) adds that the “ethics of the earliest Christian communities (is understandable) in terms of the resentment of the oppressed classes and (some) unpolitical outlook (with) yet no real aspirations to rule (“Render into Caesar the things that are Caesar’s)”. Also, Stark (1964, 698) comments that “a long tradition in Western thought views religion, and Christianity in particular, as a haven for the dispossessed. From its beginning, the special salience of the Christian faith for those disappointed and frustrated in this world has been remarked (so) even the Apostles were aware of this special feature of their movement. (I.e.) it had great appeal and support among the deprived classes in the Roman world-the slaves, the poor, and the subject peoples.”

⁶⁰ Stark (1964,699) comments that Weber “described how religion glorified the suffering of the dispossessed, but he also reported the opposite (viz.) Calvinists took worldly success as a sign of Divine Election, which in turn justified exploiting those with less material success, since they were not Elect. Surely this theology was no comfort to the lower classes. Instead of heavenly glory in recompense for their suffering, Calvinism offered them only the prospect of damnation in the next world too. Yet social theorists have been virtually unanimous that religion does indeed comfort the poor.”

⁶¹ Pareto (1963,2235) registers that there are “movements tending to restore to the ruling classes certain residues of group-persistence (i.e.) a revolution may be made against (change, innovation, progress)-- a revolution of that type founded the Roman Empire, and such, to some extent, was the revolution known as the Protestant Reformation.” In short, Pareto (2000, 40) treats the Reformation as a case of “religious reaction” with a “Christian form”. Pareto (2000, 86-7) adds that the Reformation involved the “emergence of the robber barons (or) a revolutionary knighthood (i.e.) the new (Protestant) elite.”

⁶² Mannheim (1936, 120) finds that the “sociological roots” of conservatism consist in that it “expressed the ideology of the dominant nobility in England and Germany and it served to legitimate their claims to leadership in the state (i.e.) to justify government by an aristocratic class.” Mannheim (1936, 230) adds that conservatism arose as the “ideology of absolutism” and displayed the “tendency to reflect in a rather cold-blooded way on the technique of domination (i.e.) Machiavellianism.”

⁶³ Also, y (1912, 762) suggests that “Mohammedanism, Hebraism and Puritanism are instances of (religion) as the excellent carrier of suggestion (manipulation and as) associated with conservatism.” Harrold (1936, 477) proposes that all Calvinism entails fatalism shared “in common with Mohammedanism.”