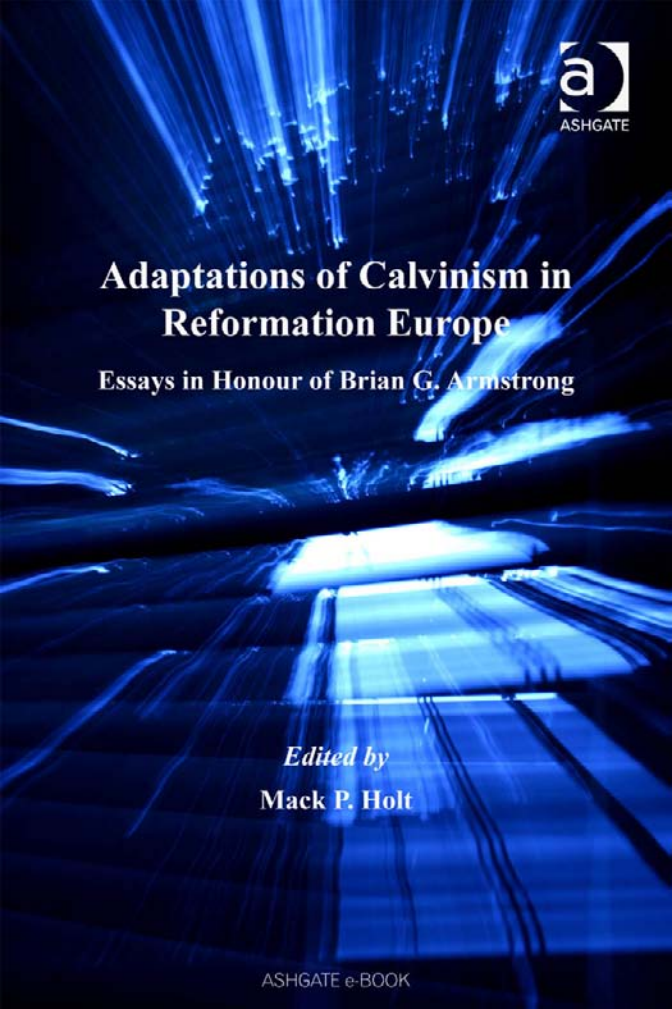
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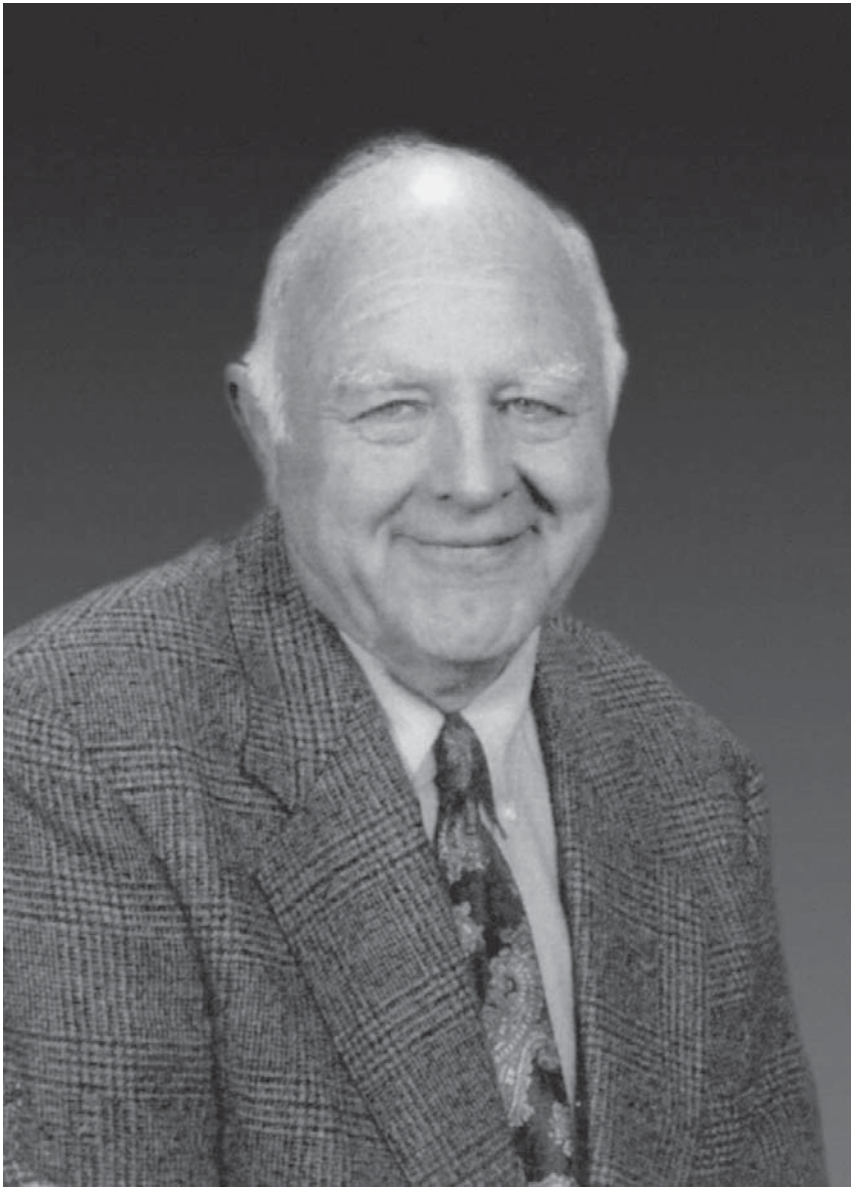

Brian G. Armstrong

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Essays in Honour of Brian G. Armstrong

Edited by

MACK P. HOLT

George Mason University, USA

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Introduction

Mack P. Holt

The purpose of this volume is to explore some of the principal paths the Reformed tradition took from its origins in Zurich, Strasbourg, and elsewhere in the 1520s and 1530s, to its formative phase in Geneva under Calvin, and especially after it expanded outside Geneva in the 1540s and 1550s. While an older tradition tended to view Calvin's Geneva and his theology as the benchmarks against which all other Reformed communities must inevitably be measured, with those communities who did not follow suit both institutionally and doctrinally seen as inferior and incomplete forms of the original – a process that John T. McNeill lamented was the "fragmentation" of Calvinism – this volume follows a very different and more recent historiographical trend in seeing the adaptations of the Reformed tradition outside Geneva as something much more positive that allowed it to adapt to differing political and cultural circumstances throughout Europe.[1] While one volume cannot possibly cover the entire experience of the Reformed tradition in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in its many different shapes and guises, it can highlight some of the different paths that Calvinism followed as it took root in Western Europe. It was these various adaptations of Calvinism, it shall be argued, that allowed for the growth of the Reformed tradition and its ultimate success as the most vibrant and most successful of the Protestant confessions by the early seventeenth century. Particularly in the Netherlands, England, Scotland, southern France, parts of the German empire, and in eastern Europe, Calvinism took root and flourished. While there was every effort on the part of many reformers to try to duplicate the kind of community that Calvin and Beza had established in Geneva, there is no question that these Reformed communities only managed to succeed by adapting to the particular political and cultural landscapes in which they found themselves. The result was that in terms of institutions and doctrines, not to mention the success in establishing the kind of rigorous moral discipline Calvin had sought in Geneva, the Reformed churches elsewhere differed markedly from Calvin's Geneva in explicit ways. And even in Geneva itself Beza began moving away from some of Calvin's original teachings and practices. So, perhaps it is perverse to title this

[1] For the older tradition see John T. McNeill, *The History and Character of Calvinism* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1954). For a good example of more recent approaches see Philip Benedict, *Christ's Churches Purely Reformed: A Social History of Calvinism* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002).

volume *Adaptations of Calvinism* instead of *Adaptations of the Reformed Tradition*, which expresses more accurately the theme and contents of the book as a whole. I can only plead with specialists, however, who are already aware of the problems surrounding the term Calvinism, that the goal of the contributors, just as it was for Brian Armstrong throughout his entire career of teaching and scholarship, is to try to attract non-specialist readers as well as experts on the Reformation (yet another problematic term, especially in the singular with a capital R).

The essays in the volume are divided into four sections. Part I looks at Calvin, Beza, and the Genevan example itself, with the emphasis that not only did Calvin's own ideas evolve over time, but changes began to emerge under Beza's leadership after Calvin's death. Thus, one problem that all Reformed churches had in trying to follow the Genevan model was the evolving and anything but fixed nature of Calvinist ideas and practices in Geneva. In their different ways Bernard Roussel, Tony Lane, David Wright, and Don Sinnema all show how difficult it is to find a permanent and stable definition of the Reformed tradition in Geneva itself. Roussel looks at Calvin's evolving interpretation of Psalm 22 and demonstrates that Calvin's own personal situation in Geneva as a teacher had a major impact on his interpretation of the Psalms. Lane examines Calvin's view of the Lord's Supper and shows that it had a lot in common with Zwinglian, or sacramentarian, views. Wright demonstrates the organic growth of Calvin's views on baptism as expressed in the different editions of the *Institutes*. And Sinnema shows how Beza's own predestinarian views differed from his mentor's.

Part II moves outside Geneva to examine how other reformers sought to refine or adapt Calvin's ideas to other places and situations, or indeed how their experiences came to shape Calvin's own views. Since the Reformed tradition pre-dated Calvin himself – Ulrich Zwingli in Zurich, Martin Bucer in Strasbourg, and Pierre Viret in the Pays de Vaud being only the most obvious examples – this is all the more reason not to consider Geneva the benchmark against which all other versions of Calvinism should be measured. Elsie McKee takes a closer look at Katharina Schütz Zell, an early supporter of reform in Strasbourg from the 1520s. Viewed by many as a spiritualist because of her close links to Kaspar von Schwenckfeld when he came to Strasbourg, McKee argues that despite all the contemporary accusations, Zell cannot be properly labeled as a Schwenkfelder and that her concern for the poor and down-trodden was consistent with the reformed tradition in that city. Willem van't Spijker looks at Bucer in Strasbourg and his views of how Calvinism could be adapted in France and shows how Martin Bucer's blueprint for reform in France was based on his goal of unity among European Protestants and had much in common with Lutheran ideas of Melancthon, which alarmed many Swiss reformers.

Finally, Gerrit Voogt looks at Jean Bodin in France and Dirck Coornhert in the Netherlands, all in the effort to show how Reformed ideas continued to evolve and adapt as they spread across Europe. Voogt examines their respective prominent treatises exhorting religious toleration in some detail: Bodin's *Heptaplomeres* in France (1593) and Coornhert's *Synod on the Freedom of Conscience* in the Netherlands (1582) in order to show that neither emerged from ideas of toleration within the Reformed tradition, but were forged out of the particular political experiences of the French and Dutch Reformed churches.

Part III takes a closer look at the experience of the Huguenots in France. Raymond Mentzer shows how the consistories in France often followed different paths from the Genevan model in their efforts to instill moral discipline and piety in their communities. My own essay demonstrates how Philippe Duplessis-Mornay's attack on the Catholic Mass immediately after the Edict of Nantes highlighted divisions within the French Reformed church. At stake was whether to follow the path of Henry IV and seek some accommodation with French Catholics who made up the majority of the kingdom, as the Edict of Nantes required, or as Mornay proposed, to continue to attack their religious doctrines and practices as erroneous. And Robert Kingdon takes a new look at the Jacques Royer affair to show how it led to tensions between French and Geneva Protestants, with the former becoming much more independent from the latter, while still claiming a strong mooring in Calvin's ideas.

Finally, Part IV focuses on the experience of Protestantism in England and Scotland. Daniel Steere examines the ecclesiastical career of Joseph Hall, a Calvinist cleric whose career spanned the reigns of James I and Charles I. Hall was a moderate Calvinist who sought to bridge the growing gulf between the "Arminians" and the "puritans" in the Church of England in the early seventeenth century. His rise and appointment as a bishop is a useful lens to see how quickly "anti-Calvinist" the English church had become by the time of the Civil War. Brett Armstrong looks at the changing and evolving emphasis on moral discipline as it was enforced through the archdeaconry courts in the deanery of Stottesden in western England near Hereford. Again, the emphasis is on how enforcing discipline depended as much on local political and social considerations as on any doctrinal foundation rooted in Calvinism. Finally, Dale Johnson examines the role of Scottish reformer John Knox and the translation of the Bible into English published in Geneva in 1560, arguing that there is not any evidence to suggest that Knox played any role in the translation itself, though he argues that Know probably did play a prominent role in the writing of the notes and marginalia to aid readers of the text. Although the Geneva Bible was translated and published in Geneva for English-speaking exiles living there in mid-century, Johnson shows how influential

this Bible was in shaping English and Scottish Protestantism in succeeding generations.

This volume makes no claim of being comprehensive; two obvious lacunae are studies of the Dutch Reformed Church, for example, as well as the Reformed churches in central and eastern Europe.[2] Thus, the main purpose of the book is not to construct a comprehensive history of Calvinism in Europe, which others have already done (see the book by Benedict in note 1 above), but to demonstrate that Calvinism changed, evolved, and adapted to local conditions, as well as adapted to internal divisions, especially over theology, wherever it emerged, including in Geneva itself. Thus, the main contribution the volume makes is to provide some flesh to the emerging narrative of Calvinism that stresses how much this adaptation was necessary in order for the Reformed tradition to continue to grow and flourish. This volume hopes to build on this already solid foundation of scholarship that illuminates the adaptation of Calvinism in Reformation Europe.

Brian G. Armstrong's own scholarship demonstrated how far some Calvinists in seventeenth-century France perpetuated ideas that were much evolved and transformed from Calvin's original ideas and doctrines, especially on predestination.[3] His analysis of the Amyraut affair in seventeenth-century France is an excellent example of how Calvinism was

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[2] For recent work on Dutch Calvinism, see Alastair Duke, *Reformation and Revolt in the Low Countries* (London: Hambledon Press, 1990), whose essays are a very good starting point. More localized studies include J.J. Woltjers, *Friesland in Hervormingstijd* (Leiden: Universitaire Pers, 1962; Joke Spaans, *Haarlem na de Reformatie: Stedelijke cultuur en kerkelijke leven, 1577–1620* ('s-Gravenhage: Stichting Hollandse Historische Reeks, 1989); Benjamin J. Kaplan, *Calvinists and Libertines: Confession and Community in Utrecht, 1578–1620* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995); Christine Kooi, *Liberty and Religion: Church and State in Leiden's Reformation, 1572–1620* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2000; Guido Marnef, *Antwerp in the Age of the Reformation: Underground Protestantism in a Commercial Metropolis* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996); Andrew Pettegree, *Emden and the Dutch Revolt: Exile and the Development of Reformed Protestantism* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), and Charles H. Parker, *The Reformation of Community: Social Welfare and Calvinist Charity in Holland, 1572–1620* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998). For reading in English on Calvinism in eastern Europe, see Karin Maag, ed., *The Reformation in Eastern and Central Europe* (Aldershot: Scolar Press, 1997; Janusz Tazbir, *A State Without Stakes: Polish Religious Toleration in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (New York: Kosciuszko Foundation, 1973); Stanislaus Lubieniecki, *History of the Polish Reformation and Nine Related Documents*, ed. George Hunston Williams (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995). Summaries of Calvinism in both the Netherlands and in eastern Europe can be found in Benedict, *Christ's Churches Purely Reformed*, 173–201 and 255–80 respectively.

[3] See Brian G. Armstrong, *Calvinism and the Amyraut Heresy: Protestant Scholasticism and Humanism in Seventeenth-Century France* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1969); "Geneva and the Theology and Politics of French Calvinism: The Embarrassment of the 1588 Edition of the Bible of the Pastors and the Professors of Geneva," in Wilhelm H. Neuser, ed., *Calvinus Ecclesiae Custos* (Franfurt: Verlag Peter Lang, 1984), 113–34; and "*Semper Reformanda*: The Case of the French Reformed Church, 1559–1620," in W. Fred

forced to adapt to internal divisions that first began with Theodore Beza's different emphasis from Calvin on predestination after Calvin's death. These differences – Beza espoused an explicitly supralapsarian version of predestination, while Calvin was totally silent on whether God chose the elect before or after the Fall – were exacerbated by the teachings of Jacob Arminius in the Netherlands at the end of the sixteenth century and quickly spread to England, France, and even across the Atlantic in the seventeenth century. But beyond the single issue of predestination, which never in itself fully defined the Reformed tradition, the many different churches that claimed spiritual and confessional descent from Calvin – both national and congregational, as well as consistorial and presbyterian – remind us that each of these churches, like Calvin's own in Geneva, was forced to adapt its confessional beliefs and practices in order to survive in very different political and cultural environments. It is hoped that this volume can help explain how and why this historical process was so crucial to the growth and expansion of Calvinism in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

I first encountered Brian G. Armstrong as a student in his freshman survey of Western Civilization at Georgia State University in the Fall of 1969. Having just transferred across town from Georgia Tech where I spent my first two years out of high school studying architecture, I was placed in his class completely by chance by some unknown adviser dealing with transfer students. I knew almost nothing about him, except that he was rumored to be a young hotshot in the History Department who recently graduated from Princeton Theological Seminary. I was thus thrust into a class of about 75 students, without any inkling of what kind of impact this instructor was about to make on such an unfocused and naïve undergraduate, who was only taking this course because it was required. I never even thought about majoring in history, much less making a career out of it. From almost the first day, however, Brian actually made me look forward to this class, which happened to meet at 8:00 a.m. I had no idea what was happening at the time, but I realized immediately that this was unlike any history class I had ever taken in high school, where I was largely taught by coaches, and where history just seemed to be one damn thing after another. Brian stressed context and narrative, and for the first time I was turned on to history.

One specific incident stands out from that Fall quarter in 1969, moreover, that made a further impression on me. One day right at the beginning of class one of the other students asked if he could read out a short piece from the university's student newspaper. It was a statement signed by about two dozen faculty members declaring their opposition to the Vietnam War.

Graham, ed., *Later Calvinism: International Perspectives* (Kirksville, MO: Sixteenth Century Essays and Studies, 1994), 119–40.

Because the faculty members were listed alphabetically, the first name on the list was Brian G. Armstrong. The class burst into applause at hearing this, but Brian modestly deflected attention away from himself to make the point that the past was connected to the present and that historians had a duty to speak out and become involved in public issues of the day. To the ears of a freshman, this was a sobering yet exciting revelation. I decided to take another class or two with this professor, and within a year I had switched my major to history, and within another six months I had decided to apply to graduate school to study early modern European history with Brian in Georgia State's MA program. And I even came full circle by serving as one of Brian's graduate assistants in the Fall of 1971 in Western Civilization.

The impact of a teacher in the classroom on a student, as I now know, is both humbling and rewarding. Clearly, if Brian's research specialty had been American history or Latin American history, I might have ended up studying that for my career. Or, dare I even think it, what would I be doing now if I had been put into some other section of Western Civilization that ominous Fall quarter in 1969? I can only say for sure that I eventually decided to study early modern France, and became fascinated with the Reformation and religious wars of the period in the process, because of Brian. And his continued support and friendship over the years have meant a lot to me as well as to many others. As a careful and cautious scholar, not to mention a devoted mentor, Brian was my first role model in the profession. If I can hope to have even a fraction of the influence that Brian had on me on just one of my own students, then I will have had a successful career. All of the contributors in this volume thus salute you on your retirement, Brian, and we ask that you consider these scholarly offerings as interest on the investment in friendship and scholarship that you have made over the years.

PART I

Calvin, Beza and Geneva

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CHAPTER ONE

John Calvin's Interpretation of Psalm 22

Bernard Roussel

Brian Armstrong has enjoyed very strong ties with his French friends and colleagues for more than fifteen years, when he was first invited to become a visiting professor and Director of Studies at the Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes in the Religious Studies department. Moreover, our home in Perray-en-Yvelines was his home away from home whenever he came to Europe to continue his research on the correspondence of Pierre du Moulin in European libraries. Thus, to write about a text of Calvin seems to me a very fitting way to render homage to Brian Armstrong, a historian of Reformed theology. Psalm 22 (numbered as Psalm 21 in the Vulgate) was for Calvin a mirror that reflected the image of David to the reader. In this psalm it is clear that the words of David are not expressions of his despair, but affirmations of his faith. This mirror is in the same way offered to Brian Armstrong and his family. One discovers in such a text sources of Brian's personality, warmth, and strength, as well as the friendship he has offered us, which is sometimes tumultuous, but always generous and loyal.

John Calvin's commentaries on the Psalms were originally texts for teaching before being published in the form of a book. They were first given to students in Geneva at the *Auditoire* (special lectures in the chapel of Notre Dame la Neuve) from 1552, then to those students admitted to the Friday lectures starting in 1555.[1] From then on, however, Calvin was content to remain silent on the subject. When he was asked if some of his students' notes on the Psalms could be published, for example – specifically the notes of Jean Budé, Charles de Jonvillier, and Nicolas des Gallars – Calvin replied that the writings of Martin Bucer or those of Wolfgang Musculus, just published in 1551, were sufficient.[2] Finally,

[1] See Peter Wilcox, "The Lectures of John Calvin and the Nature of his Audience, 1555–1564," *Archiv für Reformatinsgeschichte* 87 (1996): 136–48.

[2] For Bucer's commentaries, see the *Bibliographia Bucerana* complied by Robert Stupperich in Heinrich Bornkamm, *Martin Bucers Bedeutung für die europäische Reformatinsgeschichte* (Gutersloh: C. Bertelsmann, 1952), 37 ff., as well as the first Latin edition of Bucer's own *S. Psalmorum libri quinque, ad Ebraicam veritatem versi, et familiari explanatione elucidati* (Strasbourg, 1529), with revised editions reissued in Strasbourg in

Robert Estienne published a Latin edition of Calvin's commentaries on the Psalms in July 1557, and Conrad Badius brought out the first French translation the following year.[3]

When he did analyze the Psalms – and I will only deal here with Psalm 22 – Calvin joined in a very long tradition of interpreting the Psalter, a tradition whose methods he understood very well. In the pages that follow, I shall try to elucidate what Calvin made of this tradition, but my purpose is not to propose some new and erudite analysis of Calvin's exegesis of Psalm 22. Instead I shall try to show how Calvin's reading of this Psalm was shaped by the particular circumstances in Geneva at the time of his elaboration. To be sure, Calvin was an actor in the politics and religion of his day and was not just a prisoner of his immediate circumstances. Nevertheless, when he was teaching, Calvin encountered the horizon of local expectations and needs to which he was hardly a stranger, as well as the public Calvin addressed and hoped would learn from him. In short, then, his commentary on Psalm 22 is thus a useful text to help us understand not only the history of Geneva, but also the life of Calvin himself in the decade of the 1550s.

The particular circumstances surrounding Calvin's teaching and later publication of Psalm 22 are hinted at in the preface to his commentaries. For example, during the years 1552 to 1555 Calvin's ambition and strategy to direct the church in Geneva encountered two principal hurdles. On the one hand, members of Geneva's municipal councils were opposed to the creation of a rival ecclesiastical power, and they did not want the ministers to be able to use the power of excommunication. At the same time, they were equally cool to one of Calvin's principal doctrines, predestination, and Jerome Bolsec's criticism of this doctrine found some sympathetic ears in Geneva. After a lengthy trial Bolsec was not banished until 23 December 1551, which caused Calvin some concern. Indeed, he indicated in some of his letters that he was often discouraged and regularly suffered bouts of exasperation in this period, at one point even threatening to leave Geneva.

The tide turned in his favor, however, in the autumn of 1552, the result of three separate events. First, on 6 October 1552, in denouncing a partisan of the banished Bolsec named Trolliet, Calvin declared that "[I am] certain that everything that I have ever taught and written is not solely the product of my brain, but I have taken it from God. And I must always maintain it

1531, in Basel in 1547, and in Geneva in 1554. A French translation was published in Geneva by Philibert Hamelin in 1553. Also see Wolfgang Musculus, *In sacrosanctum Davidis Psalterium* (Basel: J. Herwagen, 1551).

[3] For a history and description of these editions, see R. Peter and J.-F. Guilmont, eds., *Bibliotheca Calviniana: Les oeuvres de Jean Calvin publiées au XVIe siècle*, vol. 2: *Écrits théologiques, littéraires et juridiques, 1555–1564* (Geneva: Droz, 1994), nos. 57/4 and 58/3.

if I do not want to be a traitor to the truth." Second, on 9 November the Council finally recognized him as a "good and true minister ... for whom all doctrine is the holy doctrine of God."[4] A system of Reformed orthodoxy was thus recognized and established. Finally, on Sunday 3 September 1553 in the middle of the trial of Miguel Servetus, a man named Philibert Berthelier was excommunicated after he absented himself from the Lord's Supper, evidence that the debate over excommunication was turning in Calvin's favor.[5] At last, as the trial of Servetus himself unfolded from 13 August to 27 October 1553, Calvin seized the opportunity, which he was unable to do in the Bolsec trial, to demonstrate that "true doctrine" was protected in Geneva and that heresy could be effectively defeated there for the benefit of all of Christendom.[6] In fact, two years later the preeminence of John Calvin and his followers would be clearly recognized in Geneva. This very summary account is nevertheless sufficient to suggest that Calvin was able to find in these circumstances several reasons for recognizing the person of the psalmist David as he perceived him in the "mirror" of Psalm 22. According to Calvin, David wrote this Psalm when he was certain of being delivered from Saul and his other enemies, in part as a hymn to sing with the assembly – the Church – of his people as a hymn of trust and gratitude (see verses 23 to 32).[7] Thus, Calvin's place in the hermeneutical circle of interpretations of Psalm 22 can be defined as an original and personal interpretation, which went well beyond traditional borrowings from standard sources.

One observation immediately stands out. It is well known that Calvin was a man busily occupied with multiple tasks and jobs in Geneva, and his work did not leave him with a lot of time to prepare his teaching courses. Thus, it is not surprising that he used only three sources for his

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[4] See *Calvini Opera*, vol. 14, col. 382, in an apology presented to the Senate of Geneva; and also *Calvini Opera*, vol. 21, col. 525, 9 November 1552.

[5] See C. Grosse, *L'excommunicatin de Philibert Berthelier: Histoire d'un conflit d'identité aux premiers temps de la Réforme genevoise, 1547–1553* (Geneva: Droz, 1995).

[6] This trial, which was both unfair and hasty, aimed well beyond the person and writings of Servetus. In fact a wide gulf separated the neo-Platonic discourses of the Spanish doctor from anabaptist interpretations. Thus it is difficult to accept that Servetus truly threatened the work of the Reformed efforts in Geneva, as he was accused of doing, much less all of Christianity.

[7] All references to the verses of the Psalm count the preliminary passage "Au chef de choeur ..." as the first verse, thus making a total of 32 verses for Psalm 22. [Please note that this differs from most other Protestant Bibles, which did not count the preliminary passage as a verse, and contained only 31 verses in Psalm 22.] Calvin noted that in the last ten verses of Psalm 22, David indicated "the common manner of making the church," a very Calvinist church! In effect, the praise and the action of giving thanks are "la principale partie du service de Dieu." See Calvin's *Institution de la religion chrétienne* (1545 edn.), IV, xiii, 4. In verse 26 of the Psalm, food is offered to everyone, as is the "Holy table," according to the terms of the *Discipline*.

commentary, with the exception of verse 17 when Calvin plagiarized an annotation he had read in the *Biblia* of Sebastien Munster (1534–35). The three sources Calvin used were Martin Luther's *Operationes in Psalmos*, an edition of Martin Bucer's commentaries on the Psalms (either the 1532 or 1547 edition), and finally, to gain access to the Hebrew text of the Psalm, the works of Louis Budé.[8]

Calvin's commentary on Psalm 22 offered a clean break from the Catholic tradition, which is hardly surprising by this date, and his translation and commentary were based on the Hebrew text of the Psalm, borrowing from the philological erudition of both Bucer and Budé. The versions of the *Septuagint* (*LXX*), the *Psalterium Gallicum*, and the *Psalterium Romanum* were thus all cast aside, even the *Psalterium juxta Hebraeos* of Jerome, which Jacques Lefèvre d'Etaples had taken for the "Hebrew truth."[9] So, unlike Luther, Calvin made no attempt to try to unify these different versions, which had immediate consequences in his understanding of the Psalm. For example, in the second part of verse 2 the *Septuagint* reads: "Why art thou so far from helping me, from the words of my faults?" The last phrase of the Vulgate supports this translation ("*verba delictorum meorum*"). But in holding to the original meaning of the Hebrew text – "the words of my roaring (*rugissement*)" – Calvin did not read the opening of the Psalm as an admission of any fault. Whoever prays to God is thus in no way responsible for his own misfortune; he is nevertheless in the tragic situation of someone struck down without any apparent motive. Another consequence of this preliminary decision not to try to unify the various texts of the Psalm was very evident in the French translation of Calvin's text: Calvin tried as much as possible to follow the word order of the Hebrew text. Even though he may have smoothed over some Hebrew phrases, Calvin nevertheless retained enough of the original Hebrew word order to indicate to his readers that he could read the ancient language, which only added to his authority. Thus, in verse 13b Calvin mentioned the "bulls de Bashan" and not just "taureaux forts."

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[8] For Luther's *Operationes in Psalmos*, see *D. Martin Luthers Werke, Kritische Gesamtausgabe* (Weimar: Böhlaus Nachfolger, 1883–), 60 vols. to date, vol. 5, 598–672. For Martin Bucer's commentaries on the Psalms, see note 2 above, as well as R.G. Hobbs, "An Introduction to the Psalms Commentary of Martin Bucer," unpublished doctoral thesis, Université de Strasbourg, 1971, as well as Hobbs's article, "Martin Bucer on Psalm 22," in Olivier Fatio and Pierre Fraenkel, eds., *Histoire de l'exégèse au XVIe siècle* (Geneva: Libraire Droz, 1978). For Louis Budé, who came to Geneva in 1549 and was the author of a translation of the Psalms published in 1548, see Rodolphe Peter, "Calvin et la traduction des Psaumes de Louis Budé," *Revue d'Histoire et de Philosophie Relgieuses* 42 (1962): 175–92.

[9] For a history of the various versions – both Christina and Hebrew – and interpretations of the text of Psalm 22 in the early centuries of the Church, see Mark G.V. Hofmann, "Psalm 22 (*LXX* 21) and the Crucifixion of Jesus," unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Yale University, 1996; and Gilles Dorival, ed., *David, Jesus et la Reine Esther: Recherches sur le Psaume 21 (22 TM)*, "Collection de la Revue des Etudes Juives, no. 25" (Paris and Louvain, 2002).

Calvin obviously affirmed the authority of the biblical text, but he also emphasized his own personal authority. Thus, twenty-two times Calvin expressed himself in the first person in his commentary – "I" – while most ordinary authors of biblical exegesis were more discreet. That said, I will not analyze Calvin's translation and his commentary of the Psalm verse by verse, but I shall begin by discussing how he understood the structure of the Psalm and how he explained verses 2 and 3, which is the key to the originality of his interpretation. Following this, I shall discuss the critical usage Calvin made of the various methodologies of interpretation of this Psalm.

According to the Christian tradition of reading this Psalm, most recently underscored by Martin Bucer, the Psalm was divided into two parts, supposedly corresponding to the chronology of David's recounting of his own life. Thus, in verses 2–22 David evoked the ever-increasing persecutions that Saul had first inflicted upon him, with David pleading to God for deliverance from his despair. Then, secure and established as king in Jerusalem – almost born again one could say – David intoned in verses 23–32 a hymn of action of thanksgiving, in a vision of his reign that embraced the political and temporal limits of this world.

John Calvin broke with this tradition, however. According to him, David did not write this Psalm to reconstitute two successive stages of his life. On the contrary, he was remembering the experience of having felt two almost antithetical feelings at the same time: hope and despair, an experience very difficult to write about because words and sentences can describe one then the other, but are insufficient to express both simultaneously. David was describing in effect a spiritual wound. I may be risking an anachronism, but David was describing a "Bergsonian moment," not a chronology of his life.[10] In other words, David was not recounting what he experienced in the past and then dreaming about what might happen in the future in this Psalm. Instead, according to Calvin he was remembering both the confidence in God of his foregathers in verses 1a and 5–6 as well as the total human desperation expressed in verse 1b. The Psalm thus opens with verse 2 as an expression of this perception of self, which according to Calvin, consisted of "deux phrases remarquables [qui] semblent être contraires en apparence, toutefois ... etc." These two sentiments thus seemed to be written for whoever could understand them, and they were not "contrary" to one another. Moreover, in his commentary on this verse, Calvin also made a discreet reference to "Jacob's lameness" (see Genesis 32:23–32), which sheds light on his representation of David built up from the beginning of the Psalm. Jacob – renamed Israel – in effect, the man who

[10] Henri Bergson (1859–1941) was a French philosopher who wrote about religion and the mind. See especially his *Matière et mémoire: Essai sur la relation du corps à l'esprit* (Paris, 1896) and *Les deux sources de la morale et de la religion* (Paris, 1932).

fought with God, after he had crossed the ford of Jabboc became lame. Thus handicapped, Jacob was a foreshadowing of David, of Christ, and of the Christian who had been, or was still, divided between confidence and despair.[11] David was thus aware of the paradox of spiritual combat, a struggle that only the "reprobate" dared ignore according to Calvin. It is a paradox – and Calvin notes here the precise order of the words – because David declared his faith before acknowledging his despair in verses 1 and 2: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"[12] His faith did not stifle his despair. David thus found from his ancestors and in "le miroir des promesses" that they extended to him the forces that prevented him from drowning in a sentiment of total abandonment (verses 4–6), even though this was unsuccessful in the short run (verses 7 ff.). The reasons for the sentiment of abandonment that David expressed in the Psalm were real, according to Calvin, but David discovered that his abandonment was not absolute. It was not an empirical experience in "le sens charnel" that revealed this to David, but the witnesses inscribed in the history of Israel and the writings that testified to it. Thus, John Calvin, in a series of erudite and pastoral glosses, rooted his definition of the bond between faith and hope into the Psalm, and he comforted any of his readers who were troubled by this with recourse to the promises made in the Scriptures.[13] Thus, "the courage of hope" will always trump despair.

As a consequence, in his discussion of the composition of the Psalm, Calvin called attention to the noticeable rupture between verses 22 and 23, which he frequently pointed out. He saw this as a shift of emphasis after everything David's faith allowed him to endure and deal with. Starting with verse 23, there was an additional source of comfort. In effect, David was no longer alone and was wrapped in the bosom of a church, an assembly convoked since the transfer of the arch of Jerusalem, and which even seemed to observe a liturgy and a discipline very much like that in Geneva.

To be sure, under the pen of Calvin "David" was hardly a metaphor of human conscience subject to philosophical examination. He was in fact an eminent historical actor. This is why, although with less precision than Martin Bucer, Calvin came to identify the precise circumstances by which David was obsessed by memory and the underlying history of the Psalm.

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[11] On Calvin's interpretation of Genesis 32:23–32, see *Calvin Opera*, vol. 23, c. 447, and David Steinmetz, "Luther und Calvin am Jabbokuffer," *Evangelische Theologie* 57 (1997): 522–36.

[12] Moreover, in his commentary every time Calvin noted signs of unmerited adversity, David said "il semble que ..."

[13] See Calvin's *Institution de la religion chrétienne* (1539–1541 edn.), the last lines of chapter 4, where he explains why "the Scriptures sometimes confuse one with the other two words: Faith and Hope." They are both founded on the promises of a God who can nevertheless differentiate between them.

"David ne parle pas ici d'une seule persecution, mais de toutes celles qu'il a souffertes sous Saul" (I Samuel 18). Moreover, the climb to Jerusalem was discreetly evoked in verses 23 and 28 (II Samuel 6).[14]

This reference to history – and we have only just began to explore the eclecticism of Calvin's hermeneutical methodology – is obviously compatible with humanist pedagogy. David is the example *par excellence* of both prayer and discipline. For just one example, Calvin's David is a member of the same church as that in Geneva in the 1550s. In effect, Calvin deduced from his Bible reading that in the history of salvation he and his contemporaries shared much in common with Abraham, which he explained in more detail elsewhere.[15] He discerned from one book in the Bible to another the progressive revelation of the unique alliance that the God of Abraham and Jesus Christ offered to humankind. Conceived in the time of the "fathers" that David invoked, this revelation was still pertinent to every reader of the Psalm in Calvin's own day. If the form of the revelation changed, such as taking on a physical form in the body of Jesus of Nazareth, its "substance" – the word Calvin used – was perennial. This is why Calvin saw the Psalm as a mirror for readers: its promises were "a mirror of grace" (verse 2); Christ's suffering was "a priceless mirror of His grace to us" (verse 7); and the hope of the eschatological feast promised in verse 27 is "the mirror of God's goodness." In other words, the reality of John Calvin's vision of history is that whether one reads or sings Psalm 22, David and all Christians are contemporaries who all experience the same hope and despair in the presence of their God.

Conceiving the Psalm of David in this historical manner did not prevent Calvin from employing two additional and more traditional hermeneutical tools, even though here, as in other spheres, Calvin was generally critical of tradition. First, was a typological interpretation. Always attentive to the rhetorical devices in the text, Calvin uncovered passages in which David spoke about himself using metaphors and similes (verse 17, for example), and other passages where he expressed himself in exaggerated hyperbole (verse 16). All these rhetorical devices anchored a typological reading of the Psalm: David and the events surrounding him anticipated or prefigured a person of much greater importance – Jesus Christ – and events of much greater consequence – the Passion, the Resurrection, and the conversion of nations to Christianity. This mode of interpretation had a long history, and Martin Bucer underscored once again how it worked: when David

[14] Bucer was more precise. At verse 8 he cited I Samuel 26:20 and the context there. Concerning verse 16, he cited I Samuel 23:24 (the desert of Maon and the episodes associated with it). For verses 23 ff., Bucer cited II Samuel 6 on the entry into Jerusalem. It is astonishing that Calvin did not try to date these allusions in verses 5–6 (Patriarchs? Moses?).

[15] See specifically *Institution de la religion chrétienne* (1539–1541 edn.), chap. 7 on the similarities and differences of the Old and New Testaments.

expressed himself in such hyperbole – when he exaggerated – he was saying that beyond himself was Christ, who will always know explicitly and specifically those situations and sentiments that David experienced personally. In fact, Calvin did not need to make use of this typological exegesis except in verses 16, 28, and 31–2, where it seemed to impose itself on him due to the obvious presence of hyperbole in the text. In order to introduce the person and the works of Jesus Christ without having recourse to allegory, however, Calvin employed yet another traditional mode of explication that he specifically excluded from his commentary on verses 1 ("the hind of the dawn") and 7 ("I am a worm").[16]

This was the prophetic interpretation, in use almost continuously since the days of Justin Martyr (2nd century CE) and Eusebius of Caesaria (3rd–4th century CE), to cite only two of its earliest proponents.[17] John Calvin attributed the invention of this tradition to the authors of the Passion in the gospels: the mocking of Jesus in Matthew 27:39–43, Mark 15:29, and Luke 23:35; Jesus intoning Psalm 22 on the cross in Matthew 27:46 and Mark 15:34; and the casting of lots for Christ's garments in Matthew 27:35, Mark 15:24, Luke 23:34, and John 19:24. But Calvin made only minimal observations in this vein, and he did not even ask if Jesus was content to allude to the Psalm's opening lines, or if he recited it in its entirety, These passages of the New Testament obliged Calvin to write that David was himself a prophet, which it must be remembered, was never mentioned in the Old Testament, only appearing in the New Testament in Acts 2:30 in a discourse attributed to Peter. Calvin took up this argument in his commentary on the opening of the Psalm and also in his glosses on verses 2, 3, 9, 15, 18, 20, 23, 28, and 32.[18] These are the same passages in the New Testament that caused Calvin to link Psalm 22 with the servant song in Isaiah (52:13 to 53:12) despite any philological or lexical connection between them. In short, in limiting his references to the prophetic interpretation of the Psalm, Calvin broke with the ancient and

[16] Calvin had written in *Institution de la religion chrétienne* (1539–1541 edn.), in chap. 2 that "allegories ought not to be employed except where they are grounded in Scripture." He did not notice any of the sub-structure of the Psalm, and he generally held to the methodology employed by Martin Bucer in his commentary on John 3:14 ff. See Bucer's *Enarratio in Evangelion Iohannis (1528, 1530, 1536)*, ed. Irena Backus, vol. 40 of *Martini Buceri Opera Omnia* (Leiden: Brill, 1988), 142 ff. Calvin kept completely silent in regard to Martin Luther's allegorical writing on the *hind* and the *dawn*.

[17] See "Psaume 22 lu par les Pères de l'Eglise," in "'Mon Dieu, pourquoi m'as-tu abandoné?' Psaume 22," *Cahiers Evangile*, p. 21 ff; M.G.V. Hoffman, "Psalm 22," *passim*; and Gilles Dorival, "L'interpretation ancienne du Pasaume 21 (TM 22)," in Dorival, ed., *David, Jésus et la Reine Esther*, 225–314.

[18] Calvin is influenced by Bucer here. The second part of this piece of a dozen lines begins: "Cependant, en sa personne, [David] nous propos la figure de Christ, que, par Esprit de prophétie, il savait devoir être abattu et maltraité, etc." In fact, in this passage Calvin does not clearly distinguish typology and prophecy.

medieval authors, and above all with Martin Luther, all of whom claimed that "no one could doubt that it [the Psalm] ought to be understood entirely as referring to Christ and his prayers on the cross."

These prophetic references to Christ on the cross had two consequences. First, they forced Calvin to wrestle with the conflicting interpretations of verse 17: "they pierced my hands and my feet," which we shall come back to. Second, they also raised a recurring question that went back to Augustine: is there anything in the Psalms that does not refer to Christ?[19] Calvin replied by citing Galatians 3:13, Hebrews 2:17 and 4:15, and by pointing to the distinction of the two natures of Christ: Christ "said" certain words in his human guise, though certainly nothing blasphemous. And third, the reference to the songs of the suffering servants in Isaiah enabled Calvin to establish a link between the verses of Psalm 22 and its representation of Jesus' descent into Hell, from Gethsemane to Golgotha.[20] And finally, this prophetic exegesis led straight to another Augustinian theme: if Calvin did not think that verses 2 and 3 were spoken by Christ in reference to his body, which was the church, then starting with verse 23 he, Calvin, identified the body of Christ with the assembly mentioned in the Psalm. So, forced at least to echo the prophetic reading of the Psalm by the authors of the New Testament gospels, Calvin ultimately used it in only a very limited way. Thus, he distanced himself from Thomas Aquinas, for whom the prophetic and Christological sense was "le sens littéral" of the Psalm, as well as from Lefèvre d'Etaples, Erasmus, and Luther. Calvin no longer accepted the hypothesis of a double meaning, one historical and the other prophetic, and his refusal to do so is analogous to the recent example of Cajetan, another well-know interpreter of Scripture from the previous generation.[21]

John Calvin thus separated three different hermeneutic traditions and ordered them in an arrangement distinctly his own. He privileged the historical interpretation, a product of his philological studies, restoring the exemplary attitude of David. This, with some reservation, led straight to the typological interpretation – announcing the role of Christ – which seemed to require a particular rhetoric in the text of the Psalm itself. Finally came the prophetic interpretation, which was almost a looking back from

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[19] See Martine Dulaey, "L'interprétatin du Psaume 21 (TM 22) chez Saint Augustin," in Dorival, ed., *David, Jésus et la Reine Esther*, 315–40. That the Psalms referred to the person of Jesus Christ had been soundly debated by Erasmus and Jacques Lefèvre d'Etaples in connection with Psalm 8:6 (TM).

[20] See *Institution de la religion chrétienne* (1539–1541 edn.), chap. 4: "De la foi," where he explained the symbols of the apostles, "Est descendu aux Enfers" citing Isaiah 53 and Psalm 22.

[21] See G. Bedouelle, "L'Humanisme et la Bible: Cajetan et le 'nouveau' sens littéral," in G. Bedouelle and Bernard Roussel, eds., *Le Temps des Réformes et la Bible* (Paris: Beauchesne, 1989), 111–14.

the New Testament to the Old. Calvin could not take exception with it, as it was legitimated by the authors of the Gospels, if not Jesus of Nazareth himself.

This helps us understand, then, what Calvin expected from a reading of Psalm 22.[22] The Psalms were "an anatomy of the soul": Psalm 22 did not ask for any admission of guilt, as it was not written by the lover of Bathsheba, but by a man placed in an untenable and wholly undeserving situation by Saul. David, who momentarily thought he had been abandoned and left to himself, was still able to invoke his "pères," inviting the Christian reader to seek out the comfort of a church to get through life's difficulties. The Psalm was thus a "mirror" in which a Christian did not gaze upon a narcissistic image of himself, but upon the image of David reflected back by the mirror.[23] In doing this the faithful Christian who feels aggrieved and under fire can overturn his first impressions by pondering the word order and rhetoric in the first two verses of the Psalm, which is a perfect example of Calvin's belief in the utility of Biblical eloquence.[24] Calvin's David, because he immediately affirmed his faith – "My God, my God" – before crying out in despair – "Why hast thou abandoned me?" – persuaded the reader to follow his example, at least to concede to the "sens charnel" in order to better consent to hope. Thus, in the presence of David, whose image the Psalm was reflecting, the reader discovered that he could "seize courage in order to hope," so that "his soul flowed like water." Calvin's typological glosses only reinforced the effects produced by such a historical reading, and they placed the reader, in effect, in the presence of someone much greater than David ever was: Christ (verses 7 and 23). And the glosses that revealed Calvin's prophetic exegesis grounded a Christian's faith and piety much more securely in the Passion and the Resurrection of Christ. So, in Calvin's reading of Psalm 22, those who were living in the anguish of the contradictions of life's tragedies would no longer have to see them as unending. According to a Calvinist anthropology, they will always remember "the lameness that afflicted Jacob," and they will know that they can also experience tragedy in their own lives. Calvin wrote all this in a theological language. The Holy Spirit imparts in the reader of the Psalm a faith as strong as David's, one that puts complete trust in the

[22] See the preface of Calvin's commentary, as well as that of L. Budé, in R. Peter and J.-F. Gilmont, eds., *Bibliotheca Calviniana*, 185–9.

[23] Such is the metaphor of the mirror in the sixteenth century: you are confronted by the image of another, a model, with which you are invited to identify. On this point, see Michael Mascuch, "The 'Mirror' of the other: Self-Reflexivity and Self-Identity in Early Modern Religious Biography," in Kaspar von Greyerz, Hans Medick and Patrice Veit, eds., *Von der dargestellten Person zum erinnerten Ich: Europäische Selbstzeugnisse als historische Quellen, 1500–1850* (Cologne, Weimar, and Vienna: Böhlau Verlag, 2001), 55–75.

[24] See O. Millet, *Calvin et le dynamique de la parole: Etude de rhétorique réformée* (Paris: Honoré Champion, 1992), 207–24.

promises made to his forefathers, and one that generates hope for a future, both individual and communal, guaranteed by divine Providence.[25]

It is equally clear that any Christian exegesis of the Psalm also included some traits of an anti-Jewish polemic. They were even stronger than Calvin had often supposed due his inability to distinguish between the ancient and the new alliance, suspicions that resurfaced in 1553, on the part of Miguel Servetus and Sebastian Castellion, with references supported by Martin Luther and Johan Brenz. Two aspects of this polemic stand out. First, unlike Luther and Bucer, Calvin deceived his readers by claiming that Jews saw in the Psalm, in the person of David, figures such as Esther and Mordecai, without ever reading any messianic prophecy.[26] Moreover, Calvin never mentioned the names of the authors of all the rabbinical glosses he borrowed from Martin Bucer: Rabbi Salomon ben-Issac (Raschi), David Qimhi, and Abraham ibn Ezra. Second, Calvin adopted a very aggressive tone in discussing the meaning of verse 17. He used extreme language, almost making his meaning unintelligible, in his borrowings from Luther, Bucer, and especially from Münster. He incorporated insulting and aggressive depictions of the Jews, such as "stubborn and pig-headed (*obstinés et entêtés*)," despite all the textual and philological obstacles to such depictions, before returning to a more traditional Christian reading. Moreover, Calvin adopted a similarly scornful tone when he disagreed with the interpretations of others, or when he imitated a diatribe of Luther against the "papists," which twisted the meaning of verse 26. Thus, Calvin's commentary was not only a calm, erudite, and edifying text, it was also a weapon both offensive and defensive, designed for an age in which the outcome of such controversies was uncertain.

In this way, Calvin superimposed Psalm 22 upon the history of the 1550s in the preface to his commentary. He clearly marked out the boundaries between his Reformed interpretation and the Catholic and Lutheran interpretations. Calvin's definition of theological "sites (*lieux*)," and certain aspects of discipline spirituality that he wanted to emphasize were all grounded in the Bible. Calvin added further prophetic stature to the "mirror" of David, which he insisted upon, while at the same time he continued to stress to his fellow citizens of Geneva a specific spiritual and religious identity.

The history of Calvin's commentary on Psalm 22 did not end in 1545. A few years later it would be integrated into another Protestant work very

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[25] See *the Institution de la religion chrétienne* (1539–1541 edn.), on the link between Scripture and the beneficent knowledge of God.

[26] All readers knew this, and there were numerous examples, such as Nicolas de Lyre, See his *Textus biblie ... cum glosa ordinaria et expositiine Lyre litterali et morali ... Tertia Pars*.

typical of this confessional age: *Liber psalmorum Davidis, cum catholica expositioine ecclesiastica*, a work of exegesis compiled by the pastor Augustin Marlorat (ca. 1506–1562) and published for the first time in Geneva by Henri Estienne in 1562. This work stood in opposition to another monument of historical exegesis, this time Catholic, the *Explicationes in Psalmos* of the Jesuit Robert Bellarmine (1542–1621). Also in 1562 the Psalter of Clément Marot and Theodore Beza was published in Geneva for liturgical use, another Calvinist innovation. But in this Psalm-book Psalm 22 was introduced by the expression "Prophecy of Christ," which invited a less explicitly Calvinist reading. But ironies such as this sometimes happen in the history of the interpretation of Biblical texts.

CHAPTER TWO

Was Calvin a Crypto-Zwinglian?

Anthony N.S. Lane

Introduction

I first met Brian Armstrong when I was relatively new to the world of Calvin scholarship. I particularly remember how he encouraged me to proceed with the publication of my thesis and how helpful that was at the time. The paper here offered was originally given as a public lecture at the Meeter Center in Grand Rapids,[1] which is appropriate in that Brian has had a long association with the Meeter Center. My aim in the paper is to draw attention to a much neglected aspect of Calvin's doctrine which casts doubt on some well-known interpretations.

Calvin's *via media*

Luther and Zwingli

It has been claimed that Calvin's doctrine of the Lord's Supper is basically Zwinglian teaching wrapped up in Lutheran language, a charge that we shall examine today. One sure fact is that this runs totally counter to Calvin's own perception of his doctrine. In 1539 he described Zwingli's view as "falsa et perniciosa".[2] While his opinion of Zwingli steadily improved over the years, Calvin continued to feel closer to Luther on this issue.[3]

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[1] It was given as a public lecture at the Meeter Center for Calvin Studies, Grand Rapids, Michigan, on 14 September 2000. It has been revised but some of the features of the lecture format have deliberately been retained. I am grateful to the Meeter Center for the warm hospitality shown on that and other occasions.

The following abbreviations are used: LCC 22 = J.K.S. Reid (ed.), *Calvin: Theological Treatises* (Library of Christian Classics vol. 22) (London: SCM and Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1954); SWJC = H. Beveridge and J. Bonnet (eds.), *Selected Works of John Calvin. Tracts and Letters* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1983 reprint of nineteenth-century editions); OS = P. Barth *et al.* (eds.), *Johannis Calvini Opera Selecta* (Munich: Chr. Kaiser, 1926–68, 1st–3rd editions); CO = G. Baum, E. Cunitz and E. Reuss (eds.), *Ioannis Calvini Opera Quae Supersunt Omnia* (Braunschweig and Berlin: Schwetschke, 1863–1900); Battles = F.L. Battles (tr.), *Institutes of the Christian Religion. 1536 Edition* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986).

[2] F. Blanke, "Calvins Urteile über Zwingli," *Zwingliana* 11 (1959) 66.

[3] Blanke, "Calvins Urteile," 66–92. Ironically, the modest development in Calvin's eucharistic thought discerned by T.J. Davis, *The Clearest Promises of God* (New York: AMS

In his *Short Treatise on the Lord's Supper* (1541) Calvin carefully portrays his teaching as a middle way between that of Luther and Zwingli.[4] Zwingli and Oecolampadius are praised for opposing the idea of a carnal presence of Christ (as had been held for over 600 years) and of an idolatrous worship of the elements. But so preoccupied were they with this that "they forgot to define what presence of Christ one ought to believe in the Supper, and what communication of his body and blood one there receives". Again, they are commended for their opposition to "the local presence of the body of Jesus Christ ... and the adoration which followed from it". But in stressing that the bread and wine are signs, they failed to add that "they are such signs that the reality is joined to them". They thus failed to safeguard "the true communion which our Lord gives us in his body and blood by the sacrament".[5] In the *Institutio* Calvin similarly presents his teaching as a *via media* between Lutheran and Zwinglian errors. There are two faults to be avoided: showing too little regard for the signs and thus divorcing them from the reality and, on the other hand, extolling the signs immoderately and thus obscuring the reality.[6] Zwingli and Luther are not named but are clearly intended.

While Luther rejected the Roman Catholic doctrine of transubstantiation he continued all of his life to believe in the real presence of the body and blood of Christ in the Lord's Supper. He believed that the bread remained bread but that the body of Christ was present "in, with and under" the bread. A crude analogy would be the way in which water fills a sponge in the bath. Luther was inconsistent about whether this presence of Christ's body (and blood) was to be seen as a localized presence, in a place, but his later followers decided that it was not. Luther's fundamental concern was to avoid the reduction of communion to a subjective experience. For him, there is a sacramental union between the bread and Christ's body so what happens to the one happens to the other. In particular, if we eat the bread we eat Christ's body. This means that Christ's body is received

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Press, 1995) is in the opposite direction, away from Zwingli.

[4] *Short Treatise* §§53–9 (LCC 22:163–6; SWJC 2:194–7; OS 1:526–9; CO 5: 457–60).

[5] *Short Treatise* §§56, 58 (LCC 22:164–6 with minor changes. Cf. SWJC 2:195–7; OS 1:527–9; CO 5:458f.). For Zwingli's doctrine of the Eucharist, cf. W.P. Stephens, *The Theology of Huldrych Zwingli* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986) ch. 11; H Zwingli, *On the Lord's Supper* and *An Exposition of the Faith* (G.W. Bromiley (ed.), *Zwingli and Bullinger* (Library of Christian Classics vol. 24) (London: SCM and Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1953) [hereafter LCC 24] 185–238, 245–79).

[6] *Inst*. 4:17:5. (Latin/English citations from the 1539–1559 editions of the *Institutio* are taken from OS 3–5/J.T. McNeill and F.L. Battles (eds.), *Calvin: Institutes of the Christian Religion* (Library of Christian Classics vols 20–21) (London: SCM and Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1960). Page numbers are not given as book, chapter and section numbers suffice.) Calvin already opposed these two positions in the 1536 *Institutio*.

orally, through the mouth, and that *all* who receive the bread (including unbelievers and the unworthy) receive Christ's body.

Zwingli's teaching was much simpler. He rejected the doctrine of the real presence. Christ's body and blood are present only by faith in the mind of the believer, not in any physical, material, bodily or corporeal manner. Jesus has ascended into heaven and his body is now contained there. Being a human body, it cannot at the same time also be on earth. The bread and the wine are materially unchanged, though in the context of the service the bread becomes sacred bread and acquires a dignity. This is not because it has been changed but because of what it signifies: Christ's body. Essentially the bread and wine are just symbols, superb visual aids. Christ is of course present at the Lord's Supper – through his Holy Spirit just as he is present wherever two or three gather in his name. But his body and blood are not present, except in our memories. Zwingli's doctrine has been described as "the doctrine of the real absence". Modern scholarship has pointed to other sides of Zwingli's doctrine of the Lord's Supper that are more positive, but these do not in any way alter his unambiguous and total rejection of any presence of Christ's body and blood in the service except in the memories of the participants. Bromiley perceptively notes that "Zwingli does the negative work of criticism far better than he does the positive work of reconstruction."[7]

Calvin's rejection of Zwingli

Calvin sets out his *via media* by showing where he disagrees with both Luther and Zwingli. In the present context it is the latter that especially interests us. His objections to Zwingli can conveniently be summarized under three headings. First, Calvin agrees with Zwingli that the bread and wine are signs and symbols but denies that they are empty, deceitful or lying signs. In particular, the reality signified by the elements (Christ's body and blood) is in the Supper truly exhibited and offered to us. "Our souls are fed by the flesh and blood of Christ in the same way that bread and wine keep and sustain physical life ... If the Lord truly represents the participation in his body through the breaking of bread, there ought not to be the least doubt that he truly presents and shows his body."[8] The elements, as seen by Calvin, can be compared to a cheque – which is only paper but which effectively offers to us the sum signified. For Zwingli, by contrast, they can better be compared to Monopoly money – which symbolizes real money but has no actual value. For Calvin the bread and wine do not merely symbolize Christ's body and blood, they hold out to us the promise of feeding on them. They do not merely *represent* Christ's body and blood, but they also *present* them to us.

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7 LCC 24:181.

8 *Inst*. 4:17:10 (1559 and 1539).

Here is the second point of difference from Zwingli. What does it mean to say that we eat Christ's flesh and drink his blood? For Zwingli eating Christ's flesh means no more than believing in Christ; it is simply a picturesque way of saying the same thing. For Calvin, by contrast, it is *through* believing in Christ that we actually feed on his flesh and blood, we enter into a real communion with them. Calvin expresses it as follows:

> For them [the Zwinglians] to eat is only to believe; I say that we eat Christ's flesh in believing, because it is made ours by faith, and that this eating is the result and effect of faith. Or if you want it said more clearly, for them eating *is* faith; for me it seems rather to *follow* from faith. This is a small difference indeed in words, but no slight one in the matter itself.[9]

Underlying these two differences is the third point of difference, concerning the nature of a sacrament. Zwingli saw the sacraments as signs or symbols only. Their role is to remind us of God's grace. By means of them we profess our faith and pledge our loyalty to Christ (as in the pre-Christian meaning of the word *sacramentum*). The emphasis lies on what we do. For Calvin, however, the emphasis is on what we receive. In the sacrament, God's Word (the promise of the Gospel) is made visible and the benefit that is promised is received by faith. There is a strict parallel here with preaching. In the audible word, preaching, Christ is offered to people and received by faith. In the visible word, the sacrament, Christ is again offered to people and received by faith.

Calvin objects to those [Zwinglians] who, in explaining the communion that we have with Christ, "make us partakers of the Spirit only, omitting mention of flesh and blood".[10] He vigorously rejects the idea that the bread and wine are vain or empty symbols. Thus, in the Lord's Supper, through faith, by the power of the Spirit, we truly eat Christ's flesh and drink his blood. His anti-Zwinglian teaching is clear and consistent. When Calvin, like Bucer before him, goes to such pains to stake out a third, mediating, position how can it be suggested that he was just a Zwinglian in disguise? Must not Brian Gerrish be right to maintain that "only the most perverse misreading of the sources could conclude that the sacraments have for Calvin a purely symbolic and pedagogical function"?[11]

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[9] *Inst*. 4:17:5 (1539). All emphases in quotations from Calvin are my own.

[10] *Inst*. 4:17:7 (1539).

[11] B. Gerrish, *The Old Protestantism and the New* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1982) 111.

Calvin the cunning sacramentarian?

The charge

And yet the sharp contrast between Calvin and Zwingli was denied by (some) sixteenth-century Lutherans. The *Formula of Concord* (1577) puts it like this:

> There are two kinds of sacramentarians. There are the crude sacramentarians, who state in plain language what they believe in their hearts: that in the Holy Supper there is nothing more than bread and wine present, nothing more distributed and received with the mouth. Then there are the cunning sacramentarians, the most dangerous kind, who in part appear to use our language and who pretend that they also believe in a true presence of the true, essential, living body and blood of Christ in the Holy Supper, but that this takes place spiritually, through faith. Yet, under the guise of such plausible words, they retain the former, crude opinion, that nothing more than bread and wine is present in the Holy Supper and received there by mouth.
>
> For "spiritually" means to them nothing other than "the spirit of Christ" that is present, or "the power of the absent body of Christ and his merit". The body of Christ, according to this opinion, is, however, in no way or form present, but it is only up there in the highest heaven; to this body we lift ourselves into heaven through the thoughts of our faith. There we should seek his body and blood, but never in the bread and wine of the Supper.[12]

Is this also to be dismissed as a "most perverse misreading of the sources" or should it be taken seriously as a critique of Calvin's theology? Support for the Lutheran claim comes from Calvin's own career. In 1549 he reached doctrinal agreement (the *Consensus Tigurinus*) with Bullinger, Zwingli's successor.[13] Calvin even claimed that Zwingli and Oecolampadius, were they still alive, would not change one word in "our doctrine" (i.e. the *Consensus*) – though it should in fairness be pointed out that Calvin made a similar (and unconvincing) claim for Luther.[14] It should, however, be acknowledged that "the consensus did not say all Calvin liked to say about

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[12] R. Kolb and T.J. Wengert (eds.), *The Book of Concord* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2000) 504.

[13] To be more precise, the *Consensio mutua in re sacramentaria ministrorum Tigurinae ecclesiae et D. Ioannis Calvini ministri Genevensis ecclesiae*. Text in SWJC 2:212–20; OS 2:241–58; CO 7:733–48. Cf. E. Bizer, *Studien zur Geschichte des Abendmahlsstreits im 16. Jahrhundert* (Gütersloh: C. Bertelsmann, 1940) 234–74; J.C. McLelland, "Meta-Zwingli or Anti-Zwingli? Bullinger and Calvin in Eucharistic Concord" in E.J. Furcha (ed.), *Huldrych Zwingli, 1484–1531* (Montreal: McGill University, 1985) 179–95; P.E. Rorem, "Calvin and Bullinger on the Lord's Supper," *Lutheran Quarterly* 2 (1988) 155–84, 357–89; T. George, "John Calvin and the Agreement of Zurich (1549)" in T. George (ed.), *John Calvin and the Church* (Louisville (KT): Westminster John Knox Press, 1990) 42–58; Davis, *Clearest Promises of God*, 29–68.

[14] *Mutual Consent in regard to the Sacrament* (SWJC 2:211; OS 2:267, CO 9:11).

the sacraments, only what he was not prepared to omit".[15] Or, as Paul Rorem put it, "the most coherent assessment of the overall process is that they achieved a consensus statement principally because Calvin agreed to omit a crucial component of his position".[16] In particular, Calvin saw the sacraments as instrumental means of grace, where Bullinger saw them primarily as testimonies to God's grace.[17] Thomas Davis has shown how Calvin needed to reinterpret the *Consensus* and read his own ideas into it in order to align it with his teaching.[18]

As an outcome of the *Consensus Tigurinus*, Calvin became, against his wishes, embroiled in a bitter controversy with two Lutherans, Westphal and Heshusius.[19] Does not the history of his relations with his contemporaries therefore suggest that Calvin was at heart a Zwinglian? A critical examination of Calvin's teaching reveals some facts which also point the same way.

Calvin's positive teaching

Before turning to these we should perhaps briefly outline Calvin's positive teaching. For Calvin in the Lord's Supper the body and blood of Christ are offered to all, but are received only inwardly and by faith. This is strictly in parallel with the preaching of the Gospel. There too Christ is offered to all but received only by faith. Perhaps the best short summary of Calvin's view is found in the words of the Anglican *Book of Common Prayer*: "Take and eat this in remembrance that Christ died for thee, and feed on him in thy heart by faith with thanksgiving." Calvin's great achievement was (with Luther) to affirm that we eat Christ's flesh and drink his blood while (with Zwingli) affirming that Christ's body is confined to heaven.

How does he manage this? The body and blood of Christ are offered to us in the symbols of bread and wine and are received by faith. This happens through the Holy Spirit, who unites us with them. British Telecom some years ago ran an advertising campaign in which a bird called Busby brought together people separated by great distances. Through the telephone company I am able here in Michigan to talk to my wife in London. We are neither of us physically or locally present in the other place but we have a real communion. We don't just sit and examine photos of each other,

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[15] Gerrish, *Old Protestantism*, 124. Rorem, "Calvin and Bullinger," 379, quotes from a letter to Bucer in which Calvin regrets the omissions.

[16] Rorem, "Calvin and Bullinger," 383.

[17] Rorem, "Calvin and Bullinger," 360–64, 371–6, 379–83.

[18] Davis, *Clearest Promises of God*, 29–68.

[19] For the background, cf. J.N. Tylenda, "The Calvin–Westphal Exchange," *Calvin Theological Journal* 9 (1974) 182–209; idem, "Calvin and Westphal: Two Eucharistic Theologies in Conflict" in W.H. Neuser, H.J. Selderhuis and W. van 't Spijker (eds.), *Calvin's Books: Festschrift for Peter De Klerk* (Heerenveen: J.J. Groen, 1997) 9–21.

remembering each other, but we really communicate. I cannot remember whether Busby was a dove, but he effectively illustrates the role of the Holy Spirit in Calvin's doctrine at this point.

Calvin did not, of course, use the telephone analogy but he did use another which very effectively illustrates the point that the Spirit brings us communion with Christ's flesh and blood. He compares this to the way in which the sun, by its rays, "casts its substance in some measure" upon the earth to nourish it.[20] Ten years ago I spent the summer at the Meeter Center and one day we verified Calvin's analogy for ourselves. We all went down to Lake Michigan for the afternoon. The water was cold and there was a strong wind so we spent most of the time standing around talking. The wind distracted us from the power of the sun and we paid the price. For the next week there was a competition in the Meeter Center to see who could peel off the longest piece of skin in one go. We had remained firmly on earth. The sun had maintained its distance of some 93 million miles. But thanks to its rays we had enjoyed a real communion with the sun. We had truly participated in the sun's heat, as we were reminded for some days to come. This was no symbolic memorialism. Likewise, for Calvin Christ does not literally descend to the bread and wine and we do not literally ascend to heaven but the Holy Spirit unites us with Christ's body and blood in heaven, feeds us with them and gives us communion with them. "In order to be present with us, [Christ] does not change His place, but from heaven He sends down the efficacy of His flesh to be present in us."[21]

Despite the very un-Zwinglian tone of this teaching there are those who maintain that Calvin differs from Zwingli more in rhetoric than in substance.[22] The grounds for this can be seen by examining three areas of his teaching: on the real presence, on the substance of Christ's body and on perpetual feeding.

Real presence

When it comes to the issue of the presence of the human body and blood of Christ, a number of scholars speak as if Calvin were an unequivocal

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[20] *Inst.* 4:17:12 (1539).

[21] *Commentary on 1 Corinthians* 11:24 (J.W. Fraser (tr.), *Calvin's Commentaries. The First Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Corinthians* (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1960) 248). Cf. CO 49:489.

[22] C. Hodge, in his review of Nevin's *The Mystical Presence*, argues that the Reformed (including Calvin) wished to assert no more than that we receive the virtue or efficacy of Christ's body and blood but bent over backwards to express this in terms as Lutheran-sounding as possible, in the interests of unity (*Princeton Review* 20 (1848) 229f., cf. 227–59). H. Grass, *Die Abendmahlslehre bei Luther und Calvin* (Gütersloh: C. Bertelsmann, 1954) 249 refers to the escalation of realistic terminology in Calvin's controversy with the Lutherans.

supporter of the "real presence".[23] Nijenhuis and Cadier have been criticized for this.[24] Bavinck speaks of being struck by Calvin's emphasis on the real presence.[25] Max Thurian claims that Calvin's "devotion demanded the most positive affirmations concerning the real presence"[26] and in another work assimilates Calvin's doctrine to Luther's doctrine of the real presence in a manner that is at best highly misleading.[27] Killian McDonnell expounds Calvin's position accurately, but unhelpfully uses the term "real presence" to describe this, claiming that none of the Reformers defended it more forcibly than Calvin.[28] Later we shall encounter some better known Calvin scholars who make similar claims But is it in fact accurate to portray Calvin as a supporter of the "real presence"?

At first sight Calvin seems here to be at one with Zwingli, in opposition to Luther. He agrees that Christ's body is ascended into heaven and remains there, seated at the right hand of the Father. Being human it cannot be in more than one place at once. Calvin rejects Lutheran ideas that Christ's body can be omnipresent or present wherever he wills. Since Christ's body is in heaven, it follows that there cannot be a local, bodily or physical presence on earth. In particular, it cannot be in, with or under the bread. It follows from this that we do not feed on Christ orally, through the mouth. That is, Calvin rejects the Lutheran *manducatio oralis*. Since Christ's body is not received through the mouth it also follows that unbelievers who partake do not in fact receive Christ's body. That is, Calvin rejects the Lutheran *manducatio impiorum*. Thus on four crucial points he lines up solidly with Zwingli against the Lutheran idea of the presence of Christ's body and blood "in, with and under" the bread and wine.

On this issue of Christ's presence in the Supper, Calvin's language varies (as does Zwingli's).[29] He never himself affirms the term "real presence". Tylenda comments that "the Reformer's non-use of the expression 'real

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[23] P. Jacobs, "Pneumatische Realpräsenz bei Calvin" in *Regards Contemporains sur Jean Calvin. Actes du Colloque Calvin Strasbourg 1964* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1965) 127, notes this trend.

[24] By J.N. Tylenda, "Calvin and Christ's Presence in the Supper – True or Real," *Scottish Journal of Theology* 27 (1974) 74f.

[25] As cited by G.C. Berkouwer, *The Sacraments* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1969) 225f.

[26] M. Thurian, *The Eucharistic Memorial*, Part II (London: Lutterworth, 1961) 110–19 (e.g. 118).

[27] M. Thurian, *The Mystery of the Eucharist* (London and Oxford: Mowbray, 1983) 44–6.

[28] K. McDonnell, *John Calvin, the Church, and the Eucharist* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1967) 223–7. He inserts the term (within square brackets) into a key quotation from *Inst.* 4:17:32 (p. 255, cf. p. 206).

[29] For this paragraph, cf. J.N. Tylenda, "Calvin on Christ's True Presence in the Lord's Supper," *American Ecclesiastical Review* 155 (1966) 321–33; idem, "Calvin and Christ's Presence in the Supper," 65–75.

presence' seems to indicate that he not only shied away from it, but perhaps even deliberately refrained from using it because of its evident verbal affinity to the teaching of his opponents."[30] But Calvin also stated that he rejected "the sentiments of all who deny the presence of Christ in the Supper," noting that the debate hinges on the kind of presence that is held.[31] In his four works written in response to Westphal and Heshusius, Calvin repeatedly states that the controversy concerns only the *mode* of our communion with and feeding upon Christ's flesh and blood.[32]

As early as the 1536 *Institutio* Calvin rejects the idea that Christ is present "realiter ac substantialiter".[33] Against Westphal he reaffirms this position, setting against such a presence a "vera et reali" communion with Christ's flesh and blood. In that sense Christ is present, but not "in a corporeal manner".[34] "We must establish such a presence of Christ in the Supper as may neither fasten him to the element of bread, nor enclose him in bread, nor circumscribe him in any way."[35] As regards the term "real presence", Calvin considered it barbarous. But if it was taken to mean a true as opposed to fallacious or imaginary presence, Calvin could go along with it.[36] Calvin can, thus, speak of Christ's *presence*, but by this he means the *communion* that we have with his body and blood through the agency of the Spirit.[37] Against the idea of a local presence Calvin affirms: "I hold that Christ is not present in the Supper in any other way than this – because the minds of believers (this being an heavenly act) are raised by faith above the world, and Christ, by the agency of his Spirit, removing the obstacle which distance of space might occasion, conjoins us with his members."[38] It is true that Calvin affirms a "true" presence of Christ's body, but by this he means *only* that we have communion with it by the Spirit. "Thus I teach that Christ, though *absent* in body, is nevertheless not only present with us by his divine energy, which is everywhere diffused, but also makes his flesh give life to us."[39] So does the true presence of Christ reduce to "the power of the absent body of Christ and his merit",

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30 Tylenda, "Calvin on Christ's True Presence," 323.

31 *True Partaking of the Flesh and Blood of Christ* (LCC 22:277f.; SWJC 2:517f. Cf. CO 9:478).

32 *Mutual Consent* (SWJC 2:239f.; OS 2:283; CO 9:31f.); *Last Admonition to Joachim Westphal* (SWJC 2:366, 401, 481, 493; CO 9:157, 182, 241, 249f.); *True Partaking* (LCC 22:270; SWJC 2:510; CO 9: 472).

33 Ch. 4:27 (OS 1:139; OC 1:120. Cf. Battles, 104).

34 *Second Defence of the Sacraments* (SWJC 2:281; CO 9:73).

35 *Inst*. 4:17:19 (1543/1559).

36 *Mutual Consent* (SWJC 2:239f.; OS 2:283; CO 9:32). Cf. Tylenda, "Calvin and Christ's Presence," 72 for the background of this passage.

37 *Second Defence* (SWJC 2:249, 285f.; CO 9:48, 76).

38 *Second Defence* (SWJC 2:280. Cf. CO 9:72). Local presence is already rejected in the 1537 *Confession of Faith concerning the Eucharist* (LCC 22:168; OS 1:435; CO 9:711).

39 *Second Defence* (SWJC 2:285. Cf. CO 9:76).

the accusation of the *Formula of Concord*?[40] Calvin argues that the Spirit brings us communion with Christ's flesh and blood, and compares this to the sun and its rays. The implications of this analogy seem to support the Lutheran charge. Wendel puts his finger on the difference when he says that for the Lutherans "there was a direct relation between the Christ and the elements", whereas Calvin, by contrast, "put the Christ and the elements separately into direct contact with the believer".[41]

The substance of Christ's body

In his talk about the substance of Christ's body and blood, Calvin has been accused of ambiguity at best, inconsistency at worst.[42] In the 1536 *Institutio* Calvin states that, "the very substance of his body or the true and natural body of Christ is not given there; but all those benefits which Christ has supplied us with in his body."[43] But in his 1546 commentary on 1 Corinthians 11:24 he appears to say the opposite:

> Christ does not offer us only the benefit of His death and resurrection, but the self-same body in which he suffered and rose again. … The body of Christ is really (*realiter*), to use the usual word, i.e. truly (*vere*) given to us in the Supper, so that it may be health-giving food for our souls. … Our souls are fed by the substance of His body, so that we are truly (*vere*) made one with Him.

He continues, however, to state "what amounts to the same thing, that a life-giving power from the flesh of Christ (*vim ex Christi carne vivificam*) is poured into us through the medium of the Spirit, even though it is at a great distance from us". It is not surprising, therefore, that he had shortly before expressed his tolerance of the view that it is when come to share in Christ's benefits that his body is given to us, in the sense that the former explains what is meant by the latter. He himself maintains that it is only

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40 As at n. 12, above.

41 F. Wendel, *Calvin* (London: Collins, 1963) 344.

42 Wendel, *Calvin*, 340–43 takes the more charitable view. Gerrish, *Old Protestantism*, 106 reckons Calvin to be "ambiguous, perhaps obscure". D. Willis, "Calvin's Use of Substantia" in W.H. Neuser (hrsg.), *Calvinus Ecclesiae Genevensis Custos* (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 1984) 289–302 sees Calvin as teaching a "real presence". Cf. n. 92, below. McDonnell, *John Calvin, the Church, and the Eucharist*, 232–48, discusses Calvin's use of substance language. Davis, *Clearest Promises of God*, sees development rather than inconsistency. Grass, *Die Abendmahlslehre*, 253f., 258, argues that Calvin's introduction of substance language serves to obscure rather than clarify his thought.

43 Ch. 4:30 (Battles, 107. Cf. OS 1:142f.; CO 1:123), a passage that is omitted from later editions. Davis, *Clearest Promises of God*, 72f. points out that Calvin's later teaching about substantial feeding on Christ is not only absent from the 1536 *Institutio* but is here denied. In the context however, it could be argued that it is the substantial presence of Christ *in the elements* that Calvin is denying.

after we obtain Christ that we share his benefits – i.e. that the two are distinct.[44]

Calvin's mature position is found in his four works written in response to the Lutherans Westphal and Heshusius. There he repeatedly affirms that we have communion with[45] and are fed from[46] the substance of Christ's flesh and blood, which is the source of the benefits that we receive.[47] At the same time he denies any transfusion or transference of the substance into the bread and wine,[48] or any substantial presence in the bread and wine.[49] In particular, the substance of Christ's flesh and blood is not swallowed or digested.[50]

Much of this is found in a passage from his 1556 *Second Defence of the Sacraments* against Westphal, which refers four times to substance, twice positively and twice negatively:

> Though I confess that our souls are truly fed by the *substance* of Christ's flesh, I certainly do this day, not less than formerly, repudiate the *substantial* presence which Westphal imagines: for though the flesh of Christ gives us life, it does not follow that his *substance* must be transferred into us. ... Nor will I ever hesitate to acknowledge that, by the secret virtue of the Holy Spirit, life is infused into us from the *substance* of his flesh.[51]

The key to Calvin's thought is his affirmation that the body and blood of Christ are in heaven and cannot be in more than one place at a time. Given that, there is no question of any substantial presence in, with or under the bread and wine and no question of any oral, physical partaking of the substance of Christ's flesh and blood. But through the work of the Holy Spirit the believer is enabled to have a spiritual communion with Christ's flesh and blood, to feed upon them and to receive from them the benefits won by Christ. Davis helpfully remarks that for the Lutherans the metaphor of feeding on Christ in the Eucharist refers primarily to the

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[44] *Commentary on 1 Corinthians* 11:24 (Fraser (tr.), *Calvin's Commentaries. The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 246. Cf. CO 49:487).

[45] *Second Defence* (SWJC 2:285; CO 9:76); *True Partaking* (LCC 22:278, 287, 290, 328f.; SWJC 2:518, 529, 533, 577; CO 9:478, 486, 489, 521; OS 2:294).

[46] *Second Defence* (SWJC 2:277f., 293; CO 9:70f., 82); *Last Admonition* (SWJC 2:486, 493; CO 9:244, 250); *True Partaking* (LCC 22:264, 270, 278, 308, 314, 329; SWJC 2:502, 510, 518, 553, 560, 577; CO 9:467, 472, 478, 504, 509, 521; OS 2:294).

[47] *Second Defence* (SWJC 2:248, 277, 285, 293, 329; CO 9:47, 70, 76, 82, 109); *Last Admonition* (SWJC 2:401, 416, 445; CO 9:182, 193, 215); *True Partaking* (LCC 22:263f., 328f.; SWJC 2:501f., 577f.; CO 9:466f., 521f.; OS 2:294f.).

[48] *Mutual Consent* (SWJC 2:239; OS 2:283; CO 9:31); *Second Defence* (SWJC 2:248, 277f., 283; CO 9:47, 70, 74); *True Partaking* (LCC 22:329; SWJC 2:578; OS 2:294; CO 9:522). Cf. *Last Admonition* (SWJC 2:401; CO 9:182).

[49] *Second Defence* (SWJC 2:249, 277f., 280, 298; CO 9:48, 70, 72, 86).

[50] *Second Defence* (SWJC 2:298; CO 9:85); *Last Admonition* (SWJC 2:402; CO 9:183); *True Partaking* (LCC 22:268, 329; SWJC 2:507, 577; CO 9:470, 521; OS 2:294).

[51] *Second Defence* (SWJC 2:277. Cf. CO 9:70).

action of eating, while for Calvin it refers primarily to the nourishment that follows from eating. "Calvin believes that the Eucharist shows forth Christ as food because food is nourishing, not because it can be eaten."[52] This can be seen, for example, in the following passage from Calvin's 1561 response to Heshusius:

> When this absurdity [corporeal eating] is out of the way, there is no reason why we should deny that we are substantially fed by the flesh of Christ, because we are truly united into one body with him by faith, and so are made one with him. Hence it follows that we are joined with him by a substantial fellowship, just as substantial vigour flows down from the head to the limbs. … Substantially we become partakers of the flesh of Christ – not that any carnal mixture takes place, or that the flesh of Christ brought down from heaven penetrates into us or is swallowed by the mouth, but because the flesh of Christ, in virtue of its power and efficacy, vivifies our souls just as the substance of bread and wine nourishes our bodies.[53]

But what does all of this mean? In 1937 Helmut Gollwitzer distinguished three possible senses of substance in Calvin.[54] These are very widely cited in the literature, mostly via François Wendel who quoted them in his magisterial *Calvin*.[55] The first sense is "the substance or nature of a thing, thus the substance of the body (subjective genitive), i.e. the real and natural body of Christ". For Calvin we do not actually receive the bodily substance of Christ's flesh and blood, although this remains the *source* of the life that we receive from him and it is this sense that we feed substantially on him. The second sense is "Christ himself as the substance of the sacrament". Calvin affirms that Christ is the substance of the sacrament and that he is received by faith. The third sense is "the substance of what we gain when we receive Christ, i.e. life, benefits, strength, etc. from his body". This is the spiritual substance of the body of Christ and this substance flows into our souls from his body.

It is helpful to recognize that Calvin's use of the word substance varies in meaning, but Gollwitzer's division is not without problems. Calvin denies not that we receive the real and natural body of Christ[56] but rather that we receive it orally. He speaks not so much of a spiritual substance

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[52] Davis, *Clearest Promises*, 168, 173. He argues this from Calvin's commentary on John 6 in particular.

[53] *True Partaking* (LCC 22:328f. Cf. SWJC 2:577; OS 2:294; CO 9:521).

[54] H. Gollwitzer, *Coena Domini* (Munich: Chr. Kaiser, 1937) 120f. I am expounding Gollwitzer from the original, not via his many expositors. Another threefold division is found in the *Institutio*. The *significatio* of the Supper is contained in the promises; the *materia* or *substantia* is Christ with his death and resurrection; the *effectus* is redemption and other benefits that Christ gives to us (*Inst*. 4:17:11 (1543)).

[55] Wendel, *Calvin*, 341f.

[56] Indeed he insists that the body given is "the true and natural body which was offered on the cross" (*Second Defence* (SWJC 2:279f.; CO 9:72)). Cf. *True Partaking* (SWJC 2:509, 529; CO 9:472, 486).

but rather of feeding spiritually upon the substance of the body of Christ.[57] *Gollwitzer makes the distinctions in the adjectives where they might more usefully be placed in the adverbs.*

So is Calvin guilty of the Lutheran charge of reducing our benefits to "'the spirit of Christ' that is present, or 'the power of the absent body of Christ and his merit"'?[58] Does Calvin's Lutheran-sounding "substance language" reduce to our receiving spiritual life and benefits which have their *origin* in Christ's flesh and blood? Calvin says that we ascend to heaven to enjoy the presence of Christ,[59] and that Christ descends to quicken our souls.[60] But of course neither statement is to be taken literally. Both refer to the work of the Spirit in uniting us with Christ's ascended human body. So is the "substance language" equally metaphorical, referring just to the spiritual benefits that we receive? If this were so, Calvin's Lutheran language would turn out to have a largely Zwinglian content. Calvin seeks to refute this charge in his *Institutio*. He states that Christ, from the substance of his flesh breathes life into our souls, though his flesh does not enter into us.[61] He is aware that this lays him open to the Lutheran objection "that we touch only upon the benefit or effect which believers receive from eating Christ's flesh". Calvin responds to this accusation, but his manner of doing so is significant. He points out that "Christ himself is the matter of the Supper". The benefits which we receive flow from him and what he has done.[62]

How adequately does this answer the Lutheran charge? It confirms the impression that feeding upon Christ's flesh and blood means, for Calvin, enjoying through the ministry of the Spirit the benefits which Christ won for us in the flesh. But for Calvin we can receive Christ's benefits only by being united with him. We cannot have the benefits without Christ.[63] The passages just quoted from the *Institutio* are from the 1559 edition and build upon his responses to Westphal and Heshusius. In these he repeatedly affirms that we do not merely receive the benefits won for us by Christ on the cross and the power that flows from his body and blood but that we receive these only after, as the fruit of, a real communion with his flesh and

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[57] A rare exception is found in his letter of 23 July 1563 to Frederick III (Elector of the Palatinate) (CO 20:73). Cf. J. Rogge, *Virtus und Res: Um die Abendmahlswirklichkeit bei Calvin* (Berlin: Evangelische Verlagsanhalt, 1965) 51f. on this.

[58] See at n. 12, above. Grass, *Die Abendmahlslehre*, 251, makes a similar charge.

[59] *Inst.* 4:17:31 (1559). Cf. C. B. Kaiser, "Climbing Jacob's Ladder: John Calvin and the Early Church on our Eucharistic Ascent to Heaven," *Scottish Journal of Theology* 56 (2003) 247–67.

[60] *Inst.* 4:17:24 (1559).

[61] *Inst.* 4:17:32 (1559).

[62] *Inst.* 4:17:33 (1559, changed from 1536).

[63] *Inst.* 3:1:1 (1559, changed from 1536).

blood[64] – "after" in the sense of a logical consequence, not in the sense of a chronological delay.[65] This is a spiritual communion, effected by the Holy Spirit, but the role of the Spirit is to effect communion with the flesh and blood of Christ, not to replace it.[66]

There is an important distinction here. The *Formula of Concord* attacks those who reduce the benefit of the Supper to receiving the benefits won for us by Christ. This might suggest that our relation to Christ is comparable to that of a motorist to an oil refinery, from which he receives the petrol (or gas!) to run his car. But a more accurate portrayal of Calvin's view, building on his own analogy, would be that the relation of the driver of a solar powered car to the sun. The sun is not itself present and the car runs on power that has its origin in the sun, but is able to do so only because of a real communion with the sun through its rays. Calvin claims that the Holy Spirit brings to us not just the benefits of Christ (the Lutheran accusation) but a real communion with and partaking of the body and blood of Christ. But then we are driven back to asking what this communion actually means.

Perpetual feeding

For Zwingli, feeding on Christ is continual and the Supper is but the outward representation of this ongoing inward reality.[67] But it isn't always realized that Calvin is no more keen than Zwingli to restrict feeding upon Christ's flesh and blood to the Supper alone. He repeatedly cites John 6 for his interpretation of eating Christ's flesh and drinking his blood. But in his commentary on John 6:54 he states that this feeding is not confined to the sacrament but refers to "the *perpetual* eating of faith", which is "figured and actually presented to believers in the Lord's Supper".[68] This had already been stated in the *Institutio*:

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[64] *Second Defence* (SWJC 2:281, 285, 292; CO 9:73, 76, 81); *Last Admonition* (SWJC 2:399, 440; CO 9:181, 211); *True Partaking* (LCC 22:263, 276, 287, 329; SWJC 2:501f., 516f., 529, 578; CO 9:466, 477, 486, 522; OS 2:295).

[65] Cf. *Commentary on Matthew* 26:26–8 (A.W. Morrison tr.), *Calvin's Commentaries. A Harmony of the Gospels volume 3* (Edinburgh: Saint Andrew Press, 1972) 136; CO 45:708)) where he states that there is no other eating than that by which the Spirit vivifies us and that we eat Christ's flesh *when* we receive life from it.

[66] A point made by G.P. Hartvelt, *Verum Corpus* (Delft: W.D. Meinema, 1960) 191.

[67] H. Zwingli, *An Exposition of the Faith* (LCC 24:258f.).

[68] *Commentary on John* 6:54 (T.H.L. Parker (tr.), *Calvin's Commentaries. The Gospel according to St John 1–10* (Edinburgh: Saint Andrew Press, 1959) 170). Cf. *Ioannis Calvini Opera Exegetica volumen XI/1: In Evangelium secundum Johannem Commentarius Pars Prior*, H. Feld (ed.), (Geneva: Droz, 1997) 217; CO 47:155. Shortly before (on 6:53, p. 169. Cf. Feld (ed.), 217; CO 47:154) he states that John 6 refers not to the Lord's Supper but to "the continual communication which we have apart from the reception of the Lord's Supper".

> The sacrament does not cause Christ to begin to be the bread of life; but when it reminds us that he was made the bread of life, which we *continually* eat, and which gives us a relish and savor of that bread, it causes us to feel the power of that bread. For it assures us that all that Christ did or suffered was done to quicken us; and again, that this quickening is eternal, we being *ceaselessly* nourished, sustained, and preserved throughout life by it.[69]

The point that Calvin is making is not just that feeding upon Christ's flesh and blood can take place even outside the Supper (*etiam extra coenam*) but that it is something that happens to us all the time. This appears to reduce the Supper to a mere reminder of what is continuously true, but elsewhere in this section Calvin portrays it as a means of grace, albeit the same grace as comes through the gospel. Our feeding on Christ "is done through the gospel but more clearly through the Sacred Supper, where he offers himself with all his benefits to us, and we receive him by faith". Thus *daily* he gives his body through the preaching of the gospel, while the "sacred mystery of the Supper" seals this giving of himself.[70] Thus the Supper (like the preaching of the gospel) both reminds us of what is already and continuously true and also provides us with an opportunity by faith to renew and strengthen the communion with Christ that we have. It is true that Calvin opposes those who "make us partakers of the Spirit only, omitting mention of flesh and blood". But while he stresses our partaking of Christ's flesh and blood, this comes about by faith and whether or not that faith takes place in the context of the Supper is incidental.[71]

Similarly in the *Short Treatise*: "This same grace is offered us by the gospel; yet as in the Supper we have more ample certainty and fuller enjoyment of it, it is with good reason that we recognize such a fruit as coming from it."[72] The reason for this is apparent in the next section. There are two things which are presented to us in the Supper. The substance of the sacrament is Jesus Christ as the source of all good. Its efficacy is the grace and blessing which flows from his passion. The same is clearly true of the Word. Calvin goes on to add that "we can only attain to the enjoyment of such fruit by participating in his body and blood,"[73] but for him this is not particularly tied to the Supper.

This issue arose in the negotiations between Calvin and Bullinger that gave birth to the *Consensus Tigurinus*.[74] Calvin wrote a letter to Bullinger in June or July 1548, in which he made a number of statements about the Lord's Supper.[75] In November Bullinger responded, numbering Calvin's

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69 *Inst*. 4:17:5 (1536, as modified in 1543).
70 Ibid., (1543). Cf. *Inst*. 4:14:17 (1536 and 1539) on the sacraments in general.
71 *Inst*. 4:17:7 (1539).
72 *Short Treatise* §10 (LCC 22:145; cf. SWJC 2:169; CO 5:437; OS 1:507).
73 *Short Treatise* §11 (LCC 22:146; cf. SWJC 2:169f.; CO 5:437f.; OS 1:507).
74 These are helpfully expounded in Rorem, "Calvin and Bullinger," 357–65.
75 CO 12:726–31; SWJC 5:168–73.

statements or "propositiones" and adding brief comments.[76] In January Calvin wrote a brief *Responsio ad Annotationes Bullingeri*[77] and in March Bullinger responded with his *Annotata ad Calvini Animadversiones*.[78] In the thirteenth of his *propositiones* Calvin stated that in the Supper we eat and drink the body and blood of Christ. Bullinger objected that the faithful do this always and everywhere. They do so in the Supper by the same faith that unites them to Christ, not as if they did not previously enjoy communion with Christ. In his *Responsio* Calvin repudiated the idea that the faithful have communion with Christ only in the Supper. He had always taught that only they receive Christ in the Supper who already have him. Those who are already members of Christ progress in communion with Christ through the use of the sacrament. Bullinger pronounced himself satisfied and apologized for having misunderstood Calvin through failure to read all of his writings.[79] This agreement is reflected in article 19 of the *Consensus Tigurinus*: "So in the Supper Christ communicates himself to us, though he had previously imparted himself, and perpetually remains in us."[80] The same teaching is found in his treatises against Westphal and Heshusius. The communion which we enjoy in the Supper is perpetual and is also given independently of the Supper.[81]

In short, *while the Supper is a special means of grace, it is not a means of special grace* – what is given there is also found elsewhere. As Joseph McLelland says of the *Consensus Tigurinus*, "the eating of faith never quite seems to need sacramental action."[82] Wendel states the problem clearly:

> Prior to the Supper, and surviving it, union with Christ subsists therefore beyond the Supper itself and is always independent of it; since, according to Calvin, we may attain to it by other means, such as preaching, the reading of the Bible, or prayer. But here we are obliged to ask ourselves, what exactly does the Supper give us that we cannot obtain otherwise? Under these conditions, is there still good reason for the existence of the Supper alongside the preaching of the Word? This problem touches the very nerve of the notion of the sacrament as it was elaborated by the reformers; and the mere fact that it can present itself shows that they did not manage to integrate the sacrament organically into their theological system.[83]

Killian McDonnell refers to this passage and observes that "a theology which deprives the Eucharist of a specific gift will make it slightly

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76 CO 7:693–700.

77 CO 7:701–8.

78 CO 7:709–16.

79 CO 7:697, 705, 714.

80 SWJC 2:218. Cf. OS 2:251; CO 7:741.

81 *Last Admonition* (SWJC 2:470; CO 9:232f. Cf. SWJC 2:374, 409; CO 9:162, 188). *True Partaking* (LCC 22:295f.; SWJC 2:538, 540; CO 9:493f. Cf. LCC 22:291; SWJC 2:534; CO 9:489).

82 McLelland, "Meta-Zwingli or Anti-Zwingli?", 191, referring to art. 19.

83 Wendel, *Calvin*, 353.

superfluous and will make its worth within a theological system somewhat dubious."[84]

In both the *Institutio* and the *Short Treatise* Calvin maintains that the Supper offers this grace "more clearly", with "more ample certainty".[85] Why is this? Presumably because the bread and wine clearly portray and exhibit Christ's flesh and blood. Thus while the Supper is for Calvin an instrumental means of grace, its *distinctive* contribution and the contribution of the *elements* is "purely symbolic and pedagogical".[86] Their purpose is to teach us truth – *in vino veritas*, one might say! Calvin sees a clear parallel between the Supper and the preaching of the gospel. The benefits are the same and so are the dynamics – Christ is freely offered and received by faith.[87] We are brought into no closer relationship to the flesh and blood of Christ in the Supper than in the preaching of gospel. If this is so, is not the Lutheran interpretation correct?

Calvin scholarship

The argument so far points in a direction very different from that taken by a number of well-known Calvin scholars who have sought to portray Calvin in a more Lutheran light. Heiko Oberman suggests, on the basis of a passage from a sermon on II Samuel, that Calvin moved in later life to a more Lutheran position. Calvin says that in the Supper *res* and *effectus* are united with symbol and that we should not separate what God has joined together. Thus, "a *manducatio oralis* seems to be unavoidably implied."[88] But Calvin here is doing no more than reaffirming his standard anti-Zwinglian line that "we should not, by too little regard for the signs,

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[84] McDonnell, *John Calvin, the Church, and the Eucharist*, 381.

[85] Cf. nn. 70, 72, above. Davis, *Clearest Promises*, 114, 128, 212, 214f., affirms a specific eucharistic gift, but is clear that this consists in a fuller understanding and knowledge of the communion that we have with Christ. This is in agreement with the position argued here and does not undermine the criticisms made by Wendel and McDonnell. Davis also (ibid., 216f.) claims that the Eucharist brings a special degree of substantial partaking of Christ's flesh and blood not found elsewhere, something that I do not see in Calvin.

[86] Cf. Gerrish, at n. 11, above. In his *Grace and Gratitude. The Eucharistic Theology of John Calvin* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1993) 133, Gerrish acknowledges that the Supper brings no benefits that are not available elsewhere, "but rather that it graphically represents and presents to believers a communion they enjoy, or can enjoy, all the time".

[87] This is the thrust of *Inst.* 4:14. The sacraments represent more vividly to us the same promises as the gospel (4:14:5 (1539)).

[88] H.A. Oberman, "The 'Extra' Dimension in the Theology of Calvin" in his *The Dawn of the Reformation* (Edinburgh, 1986) 241f., with reference to Calvin's sermon on II Samuel 6:2 (J. Calvin, *Predigten über das 2. Buch Samuelis*, hrsg. H. Rückert (Supplementa Calviniana 1) (Neukirchen: Neukirchener Verlag, 1961) 137; John Calvin, *Sermons on 2 Samuel Chapters 1–13*, tr. D. Kelly (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1992) 236).

divorce them from their mysteries".[89] Gerrish, in an article on "Gospel and Eucharist", also refers repeatedly to Calvin's doctrine of "real presence", though he confesses to be using his own language rather than Calvin's.[90] He himself argues that Calvin comes closer to Luther than to Zwingli, though he understands how Lutherans have thought otherwise.[91] David Willis throws all caution to the winds, claiming that Calvin believed that Christ is present "really" and "substantially".[92]

Gerrish subsequently devoted a whole book, *Grace and Gratitude*, to Calvin's eucharistic theology. Here he incorporates "Six Calvinistic Propositions" taken from the article cited above. In that article he argued for a "Lutheran" interpretation of Calvin and the same tendency is found here, though more muted. For example, his fifth proposition is that "the gift is given to all who communicate, pious and impious, believers and unbelievers," and this is supported by a quotation from the *Institutio* (4:17:33). Now it is true that Calvin says this. But it should have been made clearer that by this Calvin means, and indeed states in the previous sentence (which Gerrish replaces with "…"), that the body and blood of Christ are *freely offered* to all. As it stands, the reader is left with the impression that unbelievers *receive* the body and blood of Christ, but to their condemnation, i.e. the Lutheran view.[93] In the article the next proposition was that "the *benefit* of the gift is received by faith," which could imply that the gift itself can be received without faith. But in the book this becomes "the gift is to be received by faith", which lessens the danger of confusion.[94] Finally, the claim is also made that, for Calvin, in the sacraments "sign and reality are inseparable".[95] Calvin does indeed affirm this in opposition to a Zwinglian divorce between the sacraments and their reality, but is equally clear in his anti-Lutheran claim that they must be distinguished and that receipt of the sign does not guarantee receipt of the reality.[96] Fundamental to his doctrine of the sacraments is the belief that

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[89] *Inst*. 4:17:5 (1539). Cf. *Short Treatise* §15 (LCC 22:147f.; SWJC 2:171f.; OS 1:509; CO 5:439).

[90] Gerrish, *Old Protestantism*, 109, 111, 114.

[91] Gerrish, *Old Protestantism*, 116.

[92] D. Willis, "A Reformed Doctrine of the Eucharist and Ministry and its Implications for Roman Catholic Dialogues," *Journal of Ecumenical Studies* 21 (1984) 297. Calvin plainly denies this, e.g. at n. 33, above.

[93] Gerrish, *Old Protestantism*, 114 (cf. 130); *Grace and Gratitude*, 138. Calvin also in response to Westphal talks of Christ's body being "given" to unbelievers, while making it clear that "given" means "offered" and that unbelievers do not receive it: *Second Defence* (SWJC 2:306; CO 9:90); *Last Admonition* (SWJC 2:367; CO 9:157).

[94] Gerrish, *Old Protestantism*, 114; *Grace and Gratitude*, 138f.

[95] Gerrish, *Grace and Gratitude*, 174.

[96] Cf. at nn. 88f., above.

figure and truth "are not so linked that they cannot be separated".[97] Here again, Gerrish has blurred the distinction between Calvin and Luther.

Calvin the Calvinist

The case for making Calvin a Zwinglian is stronger than is often realized, especially by those who rely too heavily upon Calvin's own propaganda on the subject! But while the parallels are greater than at first sight appears, the differences between Calvin and Zwingli are real (or should I say true?).

For Zwinglians and Lutherans alike, the key issue is whether or not Christ's body and blood are present in the Supper. The claim in the *Formula of Concord* that Calvin is a cunning sacramentarian is in response to the question whether the body and blood of Christ are "truly and essentially present, distributed with the bread and wine, and received by mouth by all who avail themselves of the sacrament".[98] If *this* is the key issue, then there is no real doubt that Calvin stands solidly with Zwingli. But for Calvin this is not the important question. For Calvin the key issue is that we all agree that "we are truly made partakers of the real substance of the body and blood of Jesus Christ". *How* this happens is (for him) a secondary issue.[99] For Calvin it is feeding on Christ, partaking of his flesh and blood, that is the central point – which is why he felt closer to Luther than to Zwingli. But Lutherans and Zwinglians alike were (and are?) more interested in the question of the "real presence".

Perhaps the clearest contrast between Calvin and Zwingli lies in their conception of the sacraments.[100] For Calvin the sacraments confer what they symbolize. The body of Christ is offered, not just signified. The sacrament is a means of grace, not just a visual aid. Gerrish identifies three different strands in Reformed thinking on this subject: symbolic memorialism (Zwingli), symbolic parallelism (Bullinger) and symbolic instrumentalism (Calvin).[101] Calvin and Zwingli are clearly contrasted here. On this interpretation, the *Consensus Tigurinus* is a compromise between the second and third views.[102] How clearly these two views are actually distinguished is open to debate, since for Calvin the benefits of the Supper are received through faith and not just at the Supper. How accurate is it, therefore, to see the *eating of the elements* as for Calvin the instrument by which we feed on Christ? Calvin argues that the elements

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97 *Inst.* 4:14:15 (1543).

98 Kolb and Wengert (eds), *Book of Concord*, 504.

99 *Short Treatise* §60 (LCC 22:166. Cf. SWJC 2:197; OS 1:529; CO 5:460). What Calvin's substance language here actually means is, of course, open to question.

100 For Zwingli's teaching on the sacraments, cf. Stephens, *Theology of Zwingli*, ch. 9.

101 Gerrish, *Old Protestantism*, 118–30, esp. 128.

102 Ibid., 124. Cf. at n. 17, above.

offer and show to us the reality signified.[103] It is the *sacraments*, rather than the elements, that are "instruments [*organa*] by which God acts effectually in his elect".[104] In that case, is there any significant difference between instrumentalism and parallelism, except in the rhetoric?

The different concepts of a sacrament have a profound effect on the actual communion service. Zwingli saw it primarily in terms of what we *do*. He may have spoken of feeding upon Christ, but the overwhelming emphasis for him and his successors is on what we do – remember Christ, give thanks, commit ourselves to him, etc. Calvin acknowledges a role for all of these, but his primary emphasis is on what we *receive*, on feeding on Christ etc. The title of the relevant chapter of the *Institutio* is "The sacred Supper of Christ, and *what it brings to us*".[105] Zwingli defines a sacrament as our confession of faith while Calvin defines it as a means of grace. This is not just an abstract theoretical matter. It makes a profound difference to what happens at the service. Do people come just to *do* something (remember thankfully) or have they come also to *receive* something? This is a "real" difference which manifests itself even without a word being spoken about the theology of the service.

There is also a striking difference in tone between Zwingli and Calvin, as can be seen by a brief comparison of Zwingli's *On the Lord's Supper*[106] with chapter 17 of the fourth book of the *Institutio*. Zwingli is negative and rationalistic where Calvin is positive and sees an element of mystery. This comes especially clearly in one section. Calvin describes the mode of our feeding on Christ as a mystery too high for words: "I rather experience than understand it". This is most un-Zwinglian. He then goes on to reject "absurdities" (Lutheranism).[107] The tone then becomes more Zwinglian, but set in the context of the acceptance of mystery. It should be noted, however, that Calvin does not say that the Lord's Supper is a complete mystery – it is purely the question of *how* we feed upon Christ that Calvin cannot explain.

Conclusion

Was Calvin a Crypto-Zwinglian? There is no doubt that he did not wish to be one and did not see himself as one. Two other facts are certain. Calvin denied that Christ's body and blood were present in the Supper except

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103 *Inst*. 4:17:10 (1539 and 1559).

104 *Mutual Consent* (SWJC 2:224. Cf. OS 2:271; CO 9:18). Cf. M. Tinker, "Language, Symbols and Sacraments: Was Calvin's View of the Lord's Supper Right?", *Churchman* 112 (1998) 139.

105 *Inst*. 4:17 (1559).

106 LCC 24:185–238.

107 *Inst*. 4:17:32 (1543). Cf. also *Inst*. 4:17:7 (1539), 10 (1559), 24 (1559).

inasmuch as we have communion with them by the Spirit. He also affirmed that we feed on them. For him the Supper was an instrumental means of grace. Through it "we are truly made partakers of the proper substance of the body and blood of Jesus Christ". But, stripped of the "Lutheran rhetoric", what does Calvin mean by our feeding on Christ? Does it mean more than receiving spiritual benefits from Christ's absent body? The answer to this question will depend on how we assess his teaching that we are united with the flesh and blood of Christ and have communion with them. Does this mean that we do *more* than receive the benefits that they have won for us or is it just a rhetorical way of saying the same thing? Again, in what sense is the Supper an instrumental means of grace? Since the communion that it brings is "perpetual", does its essential function not become "symbolic and pedagogical"? Is it any more a means of grace than the privilege of prayer which we enjoy moment by moment?

How these questions are answered may to some extent depend on the hermeneutic employed. Those employing a "hermeneutic of suspicion" are likely to decide against Calvin; those sympathetic to him are more likely to take his side. But some points can be agreed by all. Calvin clearly wished to go beyond Zwinglianism and thought he had. But he was pulled in two directions. His heart was more Lutheran, which explains why he made such use of "Lutheran rhetoric". But his head was more Zwinglian and thus the content of his theology came closer to Zwingli than he wished or was prepared to admit. Wendel acknowledges this tension:

> Whatever may be the value of the arguments that Calvin adduces to justify his particular interpretation of the Eucharist, we must acknowledge that his doctrine leaves one with many obscurities, only imperfectly masked by an exegesis that is often peculiar, and by the appeal to mystery. In spite of the function he assigns to the Holy Spirit in establishing contact between the Christ and the believer, it is not easy to see how he could maintain that the faithful "really" receive the body and blood of Christ in the communion. It may be that the decisive reason is not to be sought for in his doctrinal preoccupations but in his piety, which demanded very positive affirmations with regard to the presence of the Christ in the Supper.[108]

Was Calvin a "cunning sacramentarian"? Is the difference between Calvin and Zwingli merely "oral"? Perhaps Calvin's doctrine can been seen in terms of his Lutheran piety seeking to transcend the Zwinglian limitations of *some* of his theological presuppositions. Perhaps the Lutherans were not totally wide of the mark when they feared that he made the Supper too subjective.

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[108] Wendel, *Calvin*, 354.

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CHAPTER THREE

Development and Coherence in Calvin's *Institutes*: The Case of Baptism (*Institutes* 4:15–4:16)

David F. Wright

In the later twentieth century scholars became increasingly hesitant to use the epithet "systematic" in characterizing John Calvin's chief work, the *Institutes of the Christian Religion* (to use its traditional English-translation title), or even John Calvin himself as a theologian. The position may be changing again in the light of Richard Muller's judicious consideration of this and related issues in *The Unaccommodated Calvin* (New York, Oxford University Press, 2000). Nevertheless, students of Calvin remain less certain than their predecessors of earlier generations about his masterful unification of the masses of material gathered up in the final 1559 edition and about its very high degree of internal coherence.[1]

This essay examines a conveniently circumscribed section of the *Institutes* (1559) as a test case in assessing Calvin's effectiveness in harmonizing expositions drawn in very large part from two different earlier editions. Book 4:15 derives mainly from the first edition of 1536, preserving even its title, *De Baptismo*, from that location, except that then it introduced a sub-division of a single chapter on the sacraments rather than a separate chapter.[2] Although the additions it has acquired by the time of 1559 are numerous, so that no one section of Book 4:15 lacks some expansion, five (4, 12 and 20–22) are entirely post-1536 in origin and the half of section 19 which was in 1536 has been fetched from the concluding general pages of the chapter on the sacraments, nevertheless the shape of the 1536

[1] Cf. Francois Wendel, *Calvin. The Origins and Development of his Religious Thought*, tr. Philip Mairet (London: Collins, 1963), 120–21: "Apart from these various additions, it must be said that he modified his text very little ... . [T]his edition of 1559 stands out among its predecessors by its greater coherence. Never did the author succeed so well in mastering the enormous material he had to organize."

[2] For 1536: Calvin, *Opera Selecta*, 5 vols, ed. P. Barth and W. Niesel (Munich: Chr. Kaiser, 1926–62), vol. 1, 127–36 (hereafter *OS*); Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion, 1536 Edition*, tr. Ford Lewis Battles (London: Collins, 1986), 94–102, 277–9 (hereafter Battles 1536). All translations in this paper are my mine, albeit indebted in part to Battles.

treatment is easily recognizable in 1559.[3] Most of the additions are not worth recording in this present enquiry. The 1543 edition has furnished a fresh definition of baptism at the outset of chapter 15. At the end of section 2 the significance of water for spiritual cleansing is expanded, mostly from 1539. Section 4 on repentance and the error of penance comes largely from 1543 but also partly from 1550 and 1559. About half of section 6 on baptism in Christ was first present in the 1539 version. A sizeable addition in sections 7–8 rejects the view of Augustine and other ancients affirming a difference between John's baptism and Christian baptism, deriving very largely from 1539. The new section 12, from 1543, is concerned wholly with Paul's inner struggle set out in Romans 7. Half of section 18 comes from 1539, expanding Calvin's awkward attempt to demonstrate that no rebaptism was involved in Paul's dealing with the Ephesian disciples in Acts 19. The first half of section 19 was added only in the final edition, as an indictment of sundry post-apostolic accretions to the rite of baptism. The last three sections, 20–22, reject emergency baptism by laymen and baptism by women. A major part of them was introduced only in 1559, but the 1543 edition and exceptionally the 1545 Latin edition also contributed to them.[4]

Despite these varied enlargements and other more minor ones, the framework of the original 1536 text is still plainly discernible and its salient emphases have survived intact in Book 4:15 of the ultimate edition. What every edition after 1536 lacks of its treatment of baptism is the long final paragraph (numbered section 23 in Ford Lewis Battles' English translation of the 1536 text) in which Calvin reconciles the practice of infant baptism with his preceding account of the nature and meaning of the sacrament.[5] From 1539 onwards all editions would contain what became the greater part of Book 4:16 in 1559, which could thus be viewed as an extensive elaboration of the discarded conclusion to the 1536 discussion of baptism. Yet Calvin's division of his material on baptism in 1559 is in some ways less felicitous than the unitary section in the first edition, where all, including a brief consideration of infants as proper subjects of baptism, is subsumed under a single sub-heading of "On Baptism". From 1539 to 1550, the (slightly amputated) section from 1536 (which eventually was developed into 4:15 in 1559) was extended by an apologia for infant baptism, which in 1559 became a separate chapter entitled "Infant Baptism Accords Very Well with Christ's Institution and with the

[3] For 1559: *OS* vol. 5, 285–303; Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, 2 vols, ed. John T. McNeill, tr. Ford Lewis Battles (London: SCM Press, 1961), vol. 2, 1303–23 (hereafter McNeill–Battles).

[4] These additions and other alterations can be tracked with skilful care through the edition and translation recorded in the previous note.

[5] *OS* vol. 1, 135–6; Battles 1536, 101–2.

Nature of the Sign".[6] The arrangement is puzzling in the light of the fact that in the life of the churches known to Calvin in France, Geneva and elsewhere almost all of the recipients of baptism were very young children. Yet in 1559 he could expound the essence of baptism with only marginal references to infants.

The first mention of infants in Book 4:15 (1539–1559) occurs in the discussion of original sin in 4:15:10. "Even infants as well bear their own condemnation with them from their mother's womb …. Indeed, their whole nature is like a seed of sin and so cannot fail to be odious and abominable to God." There immediately follows a statement which is left ambiguous in the McNeill–Battles translation. "Through baptism, believers are assured that this condemnation has been removed and withdrawn from them."[7] The Latin *a se*, "from them", can refer only to the subject of the sentence, "believers", and not to the infants who were the subject of the preceding couple of sentences. The two other mentions of infants are found near the end of Book 4:15 (where they provide a useful anticipation of 4:16), in the context of Calvin's rejection of emergency baptism and its necessary concomitant, administration by laymen and laywomen. Twice he denies the need for baptism in haste at the point of death because God has declared that the offspring of believers are adopted as his before they are born. Deprivation of baptism does not bar them from the kingdom of heaven, and if they survive to be baptized, they are baptized because they already belong to the body of Christ.[8] These mentions of infant baptism are clear enough in their own terms, but they appear rather surprisingly near the end of a chapter whose train of thought has scarcely prepared the reader to think of very young children as appropriate subjects of baptism. That this surprise is not solely the product of a modern critical mind is evident from the fact that Calvin's own introduction to the original conclusion of the 1536 part-chapter on baptism (which did not survive into later editions) read as follows:

> But because from what has been said – that the use of the sacrament consists in two aspects, first, that we be instructed in the Lord's promises, and secondly, that we profess our faith before men – doubt could arise why the children of Christians are baptized while still infants who seem incapable of being taught anything by however many lessons or of having an inwardly conceived faith to

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[6] McNeill–Battles' translation of *optime* as "best" is tendentious and probably misleading. Both comparative and superlative forms in later Latin often carry simply emphatic force. If Calvin really meant "best", implying "better than baptism preceded by faith", this would greatly aggravate the charge of incoherence between these two chapters.

[7] *OS* vol. 1, 131, Battles 1536, 97; *OS* vol. 5, 292, McNeill–Battles vol. 2, 1311.

[8] *OS* vol. 5, 301–3; McNeill–Battles vol. 2, 1321–3. A mistranslation in McNeill–Battles may be noted here, about a fifth from the end of 4:15:22, where *Accedit postea sacramentum sigilli instar* should be rendered "The sacrament is added afterwards like a seal."

> which they might give outward testimony, we shall briefly explain the reason for paedobaptism.[9]

From 1539 onwards this task of vindicating the giving of baptism to unteachable and unbelieving infants was fulfilled by what became Book 4:16 in the final *Institutes*.[10] The textual history of 4:16 was much more straightforward than that of 4:15. With the exception of the long refutation of Servetus in section 31, and about half-a-dozen sentences elsewhere, only one of which will merit a mention in due course, the whole of 4:16 was introduced into the 1539 edition. The response to Servetus was inserted in the 1559 edition, as we might expect, after the confrontation between the two of them in 1553.

We can now proceed to a comparison of the two chapters in the last version of the *Institutes*. As we have seen, Book 4:15 presents an exposition of baptism which hardly ever takes cognisance of the baptism of infants. In addition to the mentions noted above, it is presumably implicit in 4:15:17, where Calvin replies to people who questioned the value of Calvin's own, or perhaps everyman's, baptism during the several years after its reception when its word of promise was not accepted in faith. The identity of these questioners is not obvious, although the strangeness of Calvin's rejoinder suggests that they were Anabaptists. For Calvin seems to assume their premise that baptism was devoid of benefit so long as faith was lacking. Hence he responds in terms not of the infant of Christian parents who is within God's promise from before birth but of a responsible person "blind and unbelieving who for a long time failed to grasp the promise given in baptism". During that time baptism "benefited us not a whit" (*non profuisse nobis hilum*). The divine promise remained in force, but it was up to believers to embrace it in faith, for "God will assuredly provide what was promised (i.e. remission of sins) to all believers."[11] At work here there seems an understanding of infant baptism which is congruent with the overall thrust of Book 4:15 but scarcely with the case spelt out in 4:16.

In line with the puzzling reticence just noticed is the silence on circumcision in 4:15:9, where the "Prototype of baptism in the Old Covenant" (McNeill–Battles' heading) is the baptism in the Exodus cloud and sea of 1 Corinthians 10:2. And in the next section, as we saw in part above, Calvin subsumes the newborn within the reach of original sin but immediately goes on to speak not of baptismal forgiveness for such infants but of believers' assurance of the lifting of condemnation for their own guilt (4:15:10).

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[9] *OS* vol. 1, 135; Battles 1536, 101.

[10] *OS* vol. 5, 303–41; McNeill–Battles vol. 2, 1342–59.

[11] *OS* vol. 5, 297–8; McNeill–Battles vol. 2, 1317. Again a minor correction in the translation: just below the middle read "provide the promised [remission]" for "fulfil the promise".

In reality, these features are not surprising in the light of the burden of Book 4:15 as a whole. It repeatedly so emphasizes faith that it might almost have been written solely with believers' baptism in view. It begins (from 1543 onwards) by defining baptism as a sign of initiation into the community of the church and the ranks of God's children, but then continues, as in 1536 and thereafter, with the twofold purpose of baptism: "first, to serve our faith before him and secondly, to serve our confession before other people." From this point in section 1 to the end of section 12 Calvin sets out the three things that baptism brings (*affert*) to our faith. It confirms that our sins are completely remitted, for God "wills that all who have believed be baptized for the remission of sins", with a reference in 1536 to Matthew 28:[19] and Acts 2:[38, 41]. The primary thing in baptism is that we receive it with the promise that "Those who have believed and been baptized will be saved" (Mark 16:16). The second gift conferred by baptism is our mortification in Christ and our rising to new life in him (Romans 6:3–11), which is "truly experienced by those who receive baptism with the required faith" (4:15:5). The third benefit is the attestation of our union with Christ and hence our share in all the blessings he bestows. The faith then to which baptism conveys good things is the faith of the recipients of baptism, who become beneficiaries of threefold blessing themselves. So although infants too are encompassed with original sin, it is believers who are assured that they themselves have had this condemnation lifted from them (4:15:10). In Romans 8:1 Paul teaches that those implanted in Christ and his body through baptism are absolved of condemnation "so long as they persevere in faith in Christ" (4:15:12).[12]

The same prominence for faith is maintained throughout Book 4:15. Since the second purpose of baptism is that it serves our confession before others, it is "the mark (*nota*) whereby we openly profess our desire to be reckoned with the people of God" (4:15:13). This public confessional function of baptism is spelt out emphatically in section 13. Calvin moves on next to the proper conferring and receiving of the sacrament. Since it is given "to arouse, nourish and strengthen our faith", we must take it from the very hand of its author in the confidence that he inwardly fulfils through it everything it outwardly symbolizes (4:15:14). Calvin explicitly disavows any intention to disjoin its reality and truth from the external sign, yet "from this sacrament, as from all others, we obtain nothing but what we receive by faith".[13]

> Insofar as it is a symbol of our confession we ought to bear witness by it to our confidence in God's mercy and to our purity in the forgiveness of sins, which

[12] *OS* vol. 5, 285–6, 288, 289, 292, 294; McNeill–Battles vol. 2, 1303–4, 1307, 1311, 1313.

[13] *OS* vol. 5, 294–5, 296; McNeill–Battles vol. 2, 1313–14, 1315.

> has been won for us through Jesus Christ, and to our entry into the church of God in order to live unitedly with all believers in a single harmony of faith and love. (4:15:15)[14]

This backcloth explains the sharpness of the question addressed in section 17, where Calvin responds with some earnestness to the probing query "what faith of ours followed baptism for some years". The questioners' aim was to expose the baptism as invalid, since baptism "is not sanctified to us except when the word of promise is accepted by faith".[15] The very same backcloth was itself illumined beyond any uncertainty by Calvin's own question in the 1536 edition's concluding paragraph on baptism: why were children baptized when they had no faith to be instructed in the Lord's promises or to be publicly professed?[16]

The dominant emphases of Book 4:15 find their explanation in the 1536 edition from which it mostly derives. Although at a few places others' errors may be in view, the main target is undoubtedly the sacramental theology and practice of the Roman Church. Zwingli's minimalism, and perhaps that of the Anabaptists also, is apparently in Calvin's mind when he dissents from regarding baptism as "nothing more than a badge or mark" (*tesseram et notam*; 4:15:1).[17] The conclusion in 1536 was obviously directed against Anabaptist rejection of infant baptism, although, as we have seen, the logic of the preceding bulk of the section makes the raising of the question why then infants were baptized inescapable. Elsewhere the "Catabaptists" are explicitly faulted for rebaptizing those earlier baptized by immoral or godless ministers (4:15:16, 1559), and the desire to undermine the Anabaptist case may lie behind Calvin's strange exegesis of Acts 19:1–6 (4:15:18). Yet the brevity of the attention paid to infant baptism in the 1536 treatment rules out Anabaptism as his chief concern, while several elements plainly identify the Old Church as the opposition: the misconception, responsible for multiple abuses, that baptism cleansed only from past sins, the extravagant claim that baptism delivered entirely from original sin, the "theatrical pomp" and "outlandish defilements" which cluttered up a simple rite, and above all the pervasive stress on the necessity of faith. This last led Calvin in 1536 to declare somewhat hazardously ("if this argument fails us") that "none are saved except by faith, whether children or adults, and baptism rightly belongs to infants because they have faith in common with adults."[18]

The polemic against Roman errors had become more accentuated by the last edition of 1559, with extended treatment of penance and liturgical

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14 *OS* vol. 5, 296; McNeill–Battles vol. 2, 1315.
15 *OS* vol. 5, 297; McNeill–Battles vol. 2, 1317.
16 *OS* vol. 1, 135; Battles 1536, 101.
17 *OS* vol. 5, 285–6; McNeill–Battles vol. 2, 1304.
18 *OS* vol. 1, 136; Battles 1536, 101.

accretions, for example, and added sections debarring clinical baptism, especially by women. These serve only to throw into clearer relief the ubiquitous highlighting of faith throughout Book 4:15. The argument with the Anabaptists was developed separately, in what ended up as Book 4:16, almost entirely introduced in 1539, as we have noted. It is to this that we must now turn.

The first feature that merits notice is Calvin's calling this chapter an "appendix" added to curb the ravings of the Anabaptists, which carries surprising implications. Would Calvin have given no direct treatment of infant baptism without the need to refute the radicals? Does he believe that Book 4:15 has adequately dealt with baptism including paedobaptism – apart, that is, from responding to Anabaptist clamour? The introduction of 4:16 as an "appendix" does not help readers wishing to know how the relationship between the two chapters is to be understood.

Calvin deems it necessary *de novo* to enquire into the *vis* and *natura* of baptism, which he finds in its indicating the purging of sins and the mortification of the flesh, which consists in sharing in Christ's death, through which in turn believers (*fideles*) are reborn. Everything in Scripture concerning baptism can be referred to this *summa*, except that baptism is also a symbol (or badge, *tessera*, 1539–1554) attesting our religion before the world (4:16:2).[19] This differs from the definition given early in 4:15 only in that the elements of the *summa* were there presented under the head of serving our faith before God.

Calvin immediately embarks upon the parallels between baptism and circumcision, which, together with the continuity of the Abrahamic covenant, occupy much of sections 3–6 and 10–16.[20] He introduces Jesus' blessing of the children, and argues that, if it is objected that it was not baptism, his "receiving, embracing, laying on of hands and prayer, by which Christ present in person makes it clear both that they are his and are sanctified by him", was surely far greater than baptism (4:16:7). To reason from the silence of the New Testament makes no more sense on baptism for infants than on women's presence at the Lord's supper. However, the statement that "When we attend to the purpose for which [baptism] was instituted, we see plainly that it belongs no less to infants than to older persons" is left unpacked at this point (4:16:8). The benefit of infant baptism to parents is confirmation of God's promise that he will be the God of their seed also. As for the infants themselves, they do receive some benefit (*Nonnihil … emolumenti* –"a modicum"?): by being engrafted

[19] *OS* vol. 5, 306; McNeill–Battles vol. 2, 1325.

[20] A banal mistranslation in McNeill–Battles, vol. 2, 1328 has to be indicated, about three-quarters into 4:16:5. Instead of "the word 'baptism' is applied to infants", read "the word of baptism is intended for infants", that is, the promise of the covenant, the substance of baptism.

into the church they are "that much more commended" (*aliquanto commendatiores*) to the other members, and as they grow up, knowledge of their having received this early symbol of adoption will sharpen their zeal for godliness (4:16:9). In an *ad hominem* rejoinder to the Anabaptists Calvin insists on the prior regeneration of elect infants – and hence their fitness for baptism on Anabaptist premises – who die young (4:16:17).[21]

Eventually, in sections 19ff., Calvin comes to the crucial issue of faith, and at times almost appears as if answering questions raised by his own arguments in Book 4:15. Faith may indeed come from hearing (Romans 10:17), but this is not God's invariable rule; the Spirit may illumine apart from preaching. What is at risk if "infants are said to receive now part of that grace whose full bounty they will shortly hereafter enjoy?" Then, in a couple of sentences expanded by Calvin in 1550 and again in 1559 but still reflecting his wrestling with the issue, he muses:

> So, if he pleases, why should the Lord not in the present enlighten with a faint glimmer those whom he will later illumine with the full brilliance of his light, *especially if has not stripped them of ignorance before snatching them from the prison of the flesh*? I have no wish rashly to assert that they are endowed with the same faith as we experience in ourselves, **or have at all a knowledge similar to faith** – a question I prefer to leave unresolved (4:16:19).[22]

The italics indicate the addition in 1559, the bold the one in 1550, where I translate *notitiam fidei similem* differently from McNeill–Battles' "the same knowledge of faith".

Circumcision too was a sign of repentance and faith, so that any attack on infant baptism for its supposed lack of these also impugns circumcision (4:16:20). In fact, as circumcision again shows, the sequence of understanding followed by sign which obtains in adults need not hold for infants. Infants are "baptized unto future repentance and faith … and the seed of each is hidden in them by the secret operation of the Spirit" (ibid.). For their baptism, "nothing more of present efficacy is requisite than the confirmation and sanctioning of the covenant made with them by the Lord" (4:16:21). Biblical verses apparently putting repentance and faith before baptism do not apply to infants, who "must be assigned to another category (*catalogum*)", for "There are found many statements in Scripture whose interpretation depends on their context" (4:16:23). Abraham and Isaac exemplify the difference in sequence (4:16:24). The "law and rule of baptism" must not be derived from Matthew 28:19 and Mark 16:16 as though it was first instituted then, since Jesus had from the outset taught his disciples to baptize. Mark 16:16 has nothing to do with infants (4:16:27–8). As for the parallel alleged between baptism and the Lord's supper, whereas self-examination is prescribed before the

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21 *OS* vol. 5, 311, 312, 313, 321; McNeill–Battles vol. 2, 1330, 1331, 1332, 1340.

22 *OS* vol. 5, 323; McNeill–Battles vol. 2, 1342.

latter, in Scripture "the Lord makes no choice of ages" as far as baptism is concerned (4:16:30).[23]

It remains to pinpoint more precisely the *prima facie* discrepancy between chapters 4:15 and 4:16, but first we should chart the clear water between 4:16 and the discarded last paragraph of the 1536 sub-chapter on baptism. In the latter, of course, Calvin quite explicitly faced up to his original two-part purpose of baptism in setting out to vindicate the baptizing of babies. He first proposes, as in 4:16:19 (1539–59), the propriety of God's giving a foretaste of blessedness to those who will enjoy it in full hereafter. He then emphatically insists on the universal application of Mark 16:16, dissenting unambiguously from the reading which he would endorse from 1539, that it applied only to those of age to respond to the gospel.

> But I assert to the contrary, that this a general statement, so often inculcated and repeated in Scripture that it cannot be evaded by so flimsy a solution…. The principle remains fixed, that none are saved except by faith, whether children or adults.[24]

Thus Calvin is led, like Luther before him, to credit infants also with faith. His meaning is not that "faith always begins from the mother's womb", but rather that "all God's elect enter eternal life through faith, at whatever age they are removed from this prison of corruption." If, however this reasoning proves defective, Calvin says he falls back on Jesus' blessing of the children, circumcision and 1 Corinthians 7:14.[25]

It is also on the use of Scripture that Book 4:15 and 4:16 markedly diverge. It would be an exaggeration that the former chapter builds its case from the New Testament and the latter from the Old, but this is not far from the truth. A number of baptismal texts come up for consideration in 4:16 only to be declared irrelevant to the discussion of infant baptism: Matthew 28:19, Mark 16:16, Acts 2:37–8 (although 2:39 is welcomed as evidence for the covenantal promise), 8:37, Romans 6:4, Galatians 3:27 and 1 Peter 3:21. The problem would be lesser if Calvin had not cited some of these verses in establishing his fundamental understanding of baptism in 4:15, where, for example, at the very outset "the primary point" of baptism is its acceptance with the promise of Mark 16:16, "He who believes and is baptized will be saved." The difficulty is by no means confined to one or two isolated texts, but pervasive throughout these chapters. The only baptismal texts which Calvin retains for infant baptism in 4:16 are Jesus' blessing of the children, 1 Corinthians 7:14, 12:13, Colossians 2:11–12 and Titus 3:5.

No less problematic for the coherence of Calvin's account of baptism in the *Institutes* is his basic emphasis on faith for its reception and the

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[23] *OS* vol. 5, 324, 326, 328, 335; McNeill–Battles vol. 2, 1343, 1345, 1346, 1352.

[24] *OS* vol. 1, 135–6; Battles 1536, 101.

[25] *OS* vol. 1, 136; Battles 1536, 102.

enjoyment of its benefits. In Book 4:15 the requirement of faith is built into the essential structure of baptism. The provision of a new opening definition in 1543 – "Baptism is the sign of initiation …" – does not compromise Calvin's affirmation that its twofold end is to serve our faith before God and our confession before our fellow human beings. Baptism "brings (*affert*) three things to our faith" and from it, as from all other sacraments, "we gain nothing except what we receive in faith." How universally Calvin understood this insistence is evident in 1536 in his attributing faith to infants also. Such a stress is scarcely to be squared with the manner in which he defends the baptizing of the newborn in Book 4:16.

This incoherence prompts many questions. How can Calvin have been so unaware of what seems so obvious to modern readers? In adding the 1539 defence of paedobaptism to his 1536 exposition of the meaning of baptism, he can hardly have failed to re-read the latter, for he made several additions to the 1536 text for the 1539 edition. It is true that in 4:16:1 from 1539 on, Calvin declared that he will "endeavour so to compose this discussion that by explaining the mystery of baptism *clarius* it will carry considerable weight (*non parum … momenti*)". The force of *clarius* is probably not strictly comparative. If it is, it would have to imply "more clearly than what is now Book 4:15". Much more likely is meaning akin to "particularly clearly".[26] It is scarcely plausible to seek an explanation of this apparent incoherence in Calvin's working methods in the series of revisions of the *Institutes*.

What we see in effect in this one compilation by Calvin is a close parallel to what we observe in successive separate writings by Luther. For example, in a work of 1521 in response to the papal bull of excommunication the previous year, *Defence and Explanation of All the Articles*, that is, the articles condemned in the bull, he is far more emphatic than Calvin in 1536 on the absolute necessity of faith in the recipient of baptism, which led him almost irresistibly into that notion of the faith of infants which Calvin had come to share, as we have seen, by 1536 and which he had not conclusively rejected even in 1559. Luther himself was singing to a different song-sheet by 1528, the year of his major attack on the Anabaptists in *Concerning Rebaptism*. By then, he is still arguing that no one can prove that infants do not have faith, but the extraordinarily strong insistence of 1521 on faith is heavily muted. The development in Luther's thought and writing, occasioned of course by his shifting his aim from the Old Church to the Anabaptist radicals, finds a parallel in Calvin, except that attacks on both fronts over a shorter span of years are bound together

[26] *OS* vol. 5, 304; McNeill–Battles vol. 2, 1324. The translation in the latter omits a brief phrase in the Latin at this point. See also the long editorial note on the composition of 4:16 (1539) in *OS* vol. 5, 303–4.

within the covers of one work. This circumstance has the effect not only of making the movement in his teaching that much more obvious, but also of rendering it less plausible, if not downright impossible, for his interpreters to argue that since his early anti-Catholic treatise his mind had matured and come to soften its bold outlines.

Another reading of the situation merits an airing which views Calvin in a much more favourable light. In the impressive exhibition held in the Grossmünster in Zurich in 2004 to mark the quincentenary of the birth of Heinrich Bullinger, the printed commentary at one point stated that the Reformers recognized only one form of baptism in the Bible, that of infant baptism. Well, one can understand how that impression has gained currency. The English *Book of Common Prayer* contained no service for the baptism of those of riper years until shortly before the 1662 revision, and then only grudgingly. Similarly, the Scottish *Forme of Prayers*, often known as Knox's Liturgy, took no cognisance of other than infant baptism. Yet the impression is absurd as far as Calvin's *Institutes* are concerned – as though Book 4:15 were kept solely in order to undergird 4:16. In reality, as we have seen, it appears to undermine it more than undergird it. The truth may be somewhat different, that the scrupulously biblical Calvin knew that faith-baptism was the norm and that infant baptism, if he was to adhere to a proper biblical perspective, had to be approached only from that angle and not in its own independent terms. Despite the near-universality of infant-baptismal practice, it is then Book 4:15 which contains the heart of the matter and remains appropriately titled "On Baptism". Infant baptism had to be justified, to be sure, but not by abandoning the foundations – biblical and, at that time, Lutheran foundations – laid in 1536, as Luther had been inclined to do in confronting the Anabaptists. Although the weight of attention in the Reformed tradition which looks to Calvin as one of its most productive fountain-heads has undoubtedly leant more preponderantly on Book 4:16's defence of paedobaptism, this has not done justice to Calvin himself – unless, that is, he is to be faulted for maintaining 4:15 in place as his basic statement on baptism, which must take precedence over 4:16.

If Calvin is to be read in this way, he turns out to be a remarkably modern theologian of Christian baptism. Only since the later twentieth century has a consensus been building among major infant-baptizing confessions acknowledging that in an important and proper sense – one which does not disqualify infant baptism – faith-baptism is the normative expression of baptism, and constitutes the starting point of reflection on the baptism of the newborn. This far-reaching shift in baptismal thinking, already clearly foreshadowed in the Faith and Order text of the World Council of Churches, *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry* (1982), and inspired powerfully by a revisiting of the New Testament sources of Christian

initiation, is already well integrated into liturgical theology and revised rites of baptism within the Roman Catholic and Anglican communions, and its influence is being felt elsewhere also, even within churches in the Reformed family, as is evident in the new statement on baptism and the revised baptismal section of the Act anent the Sacraments approved by the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland in 2003.[27] The redirection in baptismal understanding that this represented may be gauged from the fact that until the very last years of the twentieth century this Church had never in all its history made legislative provision for the baptism of other than infants. The extraordinarily extensive labours of a Special Commission on Baptism during 1953–63 had issued in a new Act (1963) which at no point envisaged any subjects of baptism except the newborn. In the experience of the Church of Scotland the turn taken in respect of baptism in the early years of the twenty-first century was a return to the New Testament but also in effect to a major emphasis of Calvin's *Institutes*.

This interpretation of the two chapters on baptism in the *Institutes* may prove unduly generous. The alternative would be to censure him for an egregious instance of maladroit composition. There is an inherent attraction in hailing Calvin as the unwitting trailblazer well in advance of the most promising development in centuries towards bridging the baptismal divide.

[27] *General Assembly 2003* (Edinburgh: Church of Scotland Board of Practice and Procedure, 2003), 13/1–17.

CHAPTER FOUR

God's Eternal Decree and its Temporal Execution: The Role of this Distinction in Theodore Beza's Theology

Donald Sinnema

Theodore Beza (1519–1605) was John Calvin's long-time successor as pastor and theologian in the church and academy of Geneva. For some forty years after Calvin's death in 1564, Beza exercised a wide-ranging influence in Reformed circles as an advocate and defender of the Genevan understanding of the Reformed faith at a time when Protestantism was developing from a reform movement into institutionalized orthodoxy.[1]

This article seeks to explore the structure of Beza's theology. Specifically it seeks to understand what role the distinction between God's eternal decree and its execution in time plays in Beza's thought. This is done by examining a broad cross-section of his theology – his more systematic writings, predestinarian works, exegetical writings, and more popular treatises with a meditative or pastoral focus.

Beza's decree-execution framework

The distinction between decree and execution is a truism. It is royal language describing a king who issues decrees and sees that they are carried out or executed. Applied to God as King, the imagery of God's decrees and his execution or outworking of them can be found throughout the history of theology. This imagery is implicit in Scripture (e.g., Psalm 115:3,

[1] The best biography of Beza is Paul Geisendorf, *Théodore de Bèze* (Geneva: Alexandre Jullien, 1967). A major recent study is Scott Manetsch, *Theodore Beza and the Quest for Peace in France, 1572–1598* (Leiden: Brill, 2000). Brief introductions to Beza include: Jill Raitt, "Theodore Beza," in *Shapers of Religious Traditions in Germany, Switzerland, and Poland, 1560–1600*, ed. Jill Raitt, 89–104 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981); and Richard Muller, "Theodore Beza," in *The Reformation Theologians*, ed. Carter Lindberg, 213–24 (Oxford: Blackwell, 2002).

Ephesians 1:11, 1 Peter 1:20) and it is evident, for example, in Aquinas[2] as well as in Calvin.[3]

While Calvin occasionally makes explicit reference to decree and execution, especially in writings on predestination and providence, it is clear that for Beza the distinction plays a larger role. In Beza the distinction claims the status of a totally comprehensive framework. It encompasses all of biblical history, indeed, all of reality: whatever God by his will has decreed from eternity, he executes or carries out within the course of time, and everything that happens in time is the outcome of what he has eternally decreed.

It is important to note Beza's terminology in describing this framework. From eternity (*ab aeterno*), that is, before time (*ante omne tempus*) or before the foundation of the world, the triune God by his will (*voluntas*) decreed (*decrevit*) or ordained (*ordinavit*) whatever happens (*evenit*, *fit*, *geritur*) within time (*in tempore*). This eternal decree (*decretum*) or purpose (*propositum*) or plan (*consilium*) is to be distinguished from the execution (*executio*) of this decree which God himself executes (*exequitur*) or accomplishes (*perficit*) or effects (*efficit*) in the course of time. To execute his decrees God uses temporal means (*media*) or instruments (*instrumenta*) to achieve the end (*finis*) to which he has destined all things. The intermediate (*intermedii fines*) or medial ends (*medii fines*) are salvation or damnation, but the ultimate end (*ultimus finis*) is God's glory. Individual elements of this scheme can be found here and there in Calvin's writings, but for Beza they form a cohesive framework.

A distinctive feature of Beza's position is that he closely links causal categories to the decree-execution distinction. Thus God's decree is the primary cause (*causa primaria*) or highest cause (*causa summa*) of what happens in time, and God executes his eternal decree by using (*utitur*) or working through (*per*) temporal secondary causes (*causae secundae*) or lower causes (*causae inferiores*) or middle causes (*causae mediae*) or intermediate causes (*causae intermediae*) or proximate causes (*causae proximae*). Such secondary causes produce effects (*effecta*) which may in turn be the cause of further effects. Thus Beza speaks of the order of causes (*ordo causarum*) or series of causes (*series causarum*) by which God executes his decrees in steps or stages (*in gradis*) until the proposed end is achieved.[4]

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[2] See, for example, his *Summa Theologiae*, I, q. 22, arts.1 and 3; q. 23, art. 2 and 8; *Scriptum Super Libros Sententiarum*, I, dist. xl, q. 1, art. 2; dist. xli, q. 1, art. 1.

[3] The distinction is clear, for example, in Calvin's *Institutes*, 1.13.18, 1.14.5, 1.16.8, 1.18.1, 1.18.4, 3.24.12, in his commentaries on Matthew 6:10, 26:39, John 6:38, 40, 10:16, Acts 2:23, 4:28, Ephesians 3:11, 1 Peter 1:20, and in his sermons on Job 1:9–12 and 2:1–6.

[4] This summary of Beza's terminology is drawn from the multitude of passages where he employs these categories. The quotations in the present article provide a typical sampling of such cases.

Depending on the circumstances, it is appropriate to approach this framework from the top down or from the bottom up. In dealing with *doctrine* the theologian may thus begin with God's decree and descend (*descendere*) by stages to its execution.[5] But when it comes to the *use* or *application* of doctrine it is better to ascend (*ascendere*) or mount (*conscendere*) from the lower stages of the execution to the decree, for example, when one is preaching or seeking assurance of salvation.[6]

This whole cohesive complex of categories (combining decree-execution, eternity-time, means-end, and primary-secondary causality) is what I am calling the "Trinitarian decree-execution framework". It is readily apparent in Beza's predestinarian writings, such as his *Summa Totius Christianismi* and his *De Praedestinationis Doctrina*, and it is clearly the framework that structures Beza's thinking about predestination. A major question that this paper addresses is whether this framework also shapes the rest of his theology. Is the decree-execution scheme the main structural framework of Beza's whole theology?

Summa Totius Christianismi (1555)

The decree-execution framework is clearly the fundamental structural principle of Beza's early *Summa Totius Christianismi, sive Descriptio & Distributio Causarum Salutis Electorum & Exitii Reproborum, ex Sacris Literis Collecta*.[7] The title itself suggests a comprehensive causal framework in treating the doctrine of predestination. The first chapter is introductory, using quotations from Augustine to argue the need to preach the doctrine of predestination – a point intended to counter Bern's 1554 prohibition of preaching of this doctrine.[8] The rest of the work treats the

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[5] This is the order of Beza's *Summa Totius Christianismi*. A theologian may also begin from the bottom and ascend to the decree, as Beza himself seems to do in his *Quaestionum et Responsionum Christianarum Libellus*.

[6] Beza refers to these two approaches in his *Summa Totius Christianismi* (in his *Tractationes Theologicae* (Geneva, 1582), 1:197; hereafter referred to as *TT*), and more clearly in his *De Praedestinationis Doctrina* (*TT* 3:435) and *Ad Acta Colloquii Montisbelgardensis* (Geneva, 1588), 2:150. In a 1590 Geneva disputation on predestination, over which Beza presided, his student Johannes Polyander identifies these two approaches as the synthetic (cause to effects) and analytic (effects to cause) methods, *Theses Theologiae in Schola Genevensi* (Geneva, 1591), 21.

[7] *The Sum of All Christianity, or the Description and Distribution of the Causes of the Salvation of the Elect and the Destruction of the Reprobate, Collected from the Sacred Writings*. The original 1555 edition of the *Summa* is not extant (see *Correspondance de Théodore de Bèze*, ed. H. Aubert (Geneva: Droz, 1962), 2:37). The revised second edition of 1560 (also not extant) is printed in *TT* 1:170–205.

[8] Ian McPhee, "Conserver or Transformer of Calvin's Theology? A Study of the Origins and Development of Theodore Beza's Thought, 1550–1570" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Cambridge, 1979), 67.

doctrine itself (chapters 2–6) and its use (in preaching) and application (to the individual) (chapters 7–8).

The central section on the doctrine (chapters 2–6) is explicitly structured by the decree-execution distinction. Chapter two deals with the decree of predestination, chapters three–six with its execution. Chapter two is titled "On God's Eternal Plan (*Consilio*), Hidden in Him, But Finally Known from its Effects", and it begins with the significant principle that "without his eternal and immutable decree (*decreto*) nothing happens (*fit*), anywhere by anyone, in general or in particular, including those things that are evil" (2.1). In this chapter Beza also distinguishes between the purpose (*propositum*) of election and election itself, and between the purpose of reprobation and reprobation itself; that is, between the decrees of election and reprobation and their execution (2.6, 7). Chapter three is titled "On the Execution (*Exequutione*) of the Eternal Plan in what is Common to the Elect and the Reprobate". To execute his plan God created humanity as pure and it was necessary for him to place both the elect and reprobate under sin. Chapter four then focuses specifically on the order of causes (*causarum ordine*) by which the Lord makes known and executes (*exequendae*) election. God ordained not only the end, but he also ordained in a series of causes (*serie causarum*) all the stages by which he conveys the elect to salvation – including designating his Son to become incarnate at the appointed time, giving his Son to the elect and the elect to him, effectual calling by the preaching of the Word and the internal power of the Spirit, faith, justification, and sanctification. Chapter five, on the other hand, focuses on the order by which God begins to execute (*exequi*) and make known the plan of reprobation. God not only purposed to create the reprobate to the end that he might be glorified in their own just condemnation; he also ordained the causes, by which it happens, step by step, that the whole fault of their destruction lies in themselves (5.2). The sixth chapter deals with the final execution (*executione*) of God's plan in both the elect and reprobate. For each Beza outlines three final stages of the execution of God's judgment, leading to the ultimate outcome – the manifesting of God's glory in revealing his mercy to the elect and his justice to the reprobate.

The decree-execution framework plays a significant role even in the last two chapters on the use and application of the doctrine. In chapter seven Beza treats how the doctrine of predestination should be preached. He advises that preachers should almost always proceed from the lowest stages to the highest (that is, from the execution to the decree) rather than from the highest to the lowest. But whether they ascend from below or descend from above they should not jump from one extreme to the other and neglect the means or proximate causes of salvation and damnation. Chapter eight, dealing with the application of this doctrine to individuals,

likewise advises that for assurance of predestination one should not begin at the highest stage (the decree) but at the lowest stages. Sensing the effects (*effectis*) of the Holy Spirit in one's life (sanctification and justification), a person can then infer whether he or she has faith, is called, and is predestined (8.2).

It is important to understand the *Summa* within the historical context of the Bolsec controversy, as Ian McPhee and Richard Muller have stressed.[9] They have shown that in the aftermath of this controversy Beza's decree-execution distinction served several functions: (1) It helped prevent speculation into the decree and the causes of predestination, since all we need to know is revealed in the Word which focuses on the execution of the plan of salvation rather than on the inscrutable decree hidden in God. (2) It refuted Bolsec's confusion of faith and election by identifying faith as a step in a sequence flowing out of but distinct from the decree of election. (3) It combated the notion that from eternity God, simply at his whim, condemned some people to hell, by distinguishing reprobation and condemnation and their respective causes, so that the reason for condemnation lies wholly with the sinner and not with God reprobating.[10] (4) It helped avert the charge that Calvinists make God the author of sin, by putting distance between the divine will as the primary cause of all things and evil as the product of secondary causes. (5) It countered the view that predestination is based on God's foreknowledge of one's faith or works, because God's decree is constituted by his will alone and has no temporal causes.[11] While these points are convincing, it is clear that the decree-execution distinction has an even greater role in the *Summa* – it forms the structural framework around which Beza organizes his thinking about predestination.[12]

As Muller has argued, the *Summa* is not a system or compendium of theology, since its focus is on predestination and the work does not address the full range of doctrines.[13] Still, it is certainly a systematic treatment in that Beza shows the systematic interconnection of other doctrines with that of predestination within the decree-execution framework.[14] Thus, he

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[9] McPhee, 66–84; and Richard Muller, "The Use and Abuse of a Document: Beza's *Tabula Praedestinationis*, the Bolsec Controversy, and the Origins of Reformed Orthodoxy," in *Protestant Scholasticism: Essays in Reassessment*, ed. Carl Trueman and Scott Clark, 33–61 (Carlisle: Paternoster Press, 1999).

[10] Muller, "Use and Abuse," 49, points out that Beza was also responding to Sampaulier and others in his own classis at Lausanne who denied the distinction between reprobation and damnation.

[11] McPhee, 70–71, 75–9, 301, 304–5, 310; Muller, "Use and Abuse," 49–50, 55, 59.

[12] Cf. McPhee, 304.

[13] Muller, "Use and Abuse," 33–4, 56–7.

[14] Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1967), II/2:78; McPhee, 101. According to his 21 January 1552 letter to Calvin (*Correspondance*, 1:81–2), Beza wanted to treat the predestination issue "methodically (*methodice*)," that is, in a systematic

addresses, sometimes only briefly, the place of God, providence, creation, humanity, sin, Christ, the *ordo salutis* and *ordo damnationis*, the Holy Spirit, the sacraments, and the last things within this context. As the title suggests, this work presents the "Sum of all Christianity" in relation to predestination.[15] While it is crucial to view the *Summa* as a historical response to issues in the Bolsec controversy, this does not negate the fact that Beza addresses the matter in a systematic way.

De Praedestinationis Doctrina (1582)

The decree-execution framework continues to play a pervasive role in Beza's other writings on predestination.[16] This is evident especially in his mature thought on the issue, in his *De Praedestinationis Doctrina et Vero Usu Tractatio Absolutissima*.[17] This work is the product of lectures Beza presented on Romans 9, a passage often viewed as the *locus classicus* of predestination.

He begins by pointing out that in this chapter Paul deals with the primary cause (*primaria caussa*) of salvation – God's eternal purpose (*propositum*). A lengthy preliminary discussion includes a section on "the middle causes God has laid out for executing the eternal plan of election" and a section on "the means by which God executes the plan of reprobation".[18] Throughout

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order, rather than follow the polemical order of his opponent (*adversarii ordinem*), as Calvin had done in his *De Aeterna Dei Praedestinatione* (1552); he preferred that Calvin would have begun his work from the head or top (*mallem tamen ut eam a capite esses exorsus*), that is, from the decree. Cf. *Quaestionum*, Q196 (*TT* 1:683): "*Caput enim utriusque est decretum Dei*."

[15] John Bray, *Theodore Beza's Doctrine of Predestination* (Nieuwkoop: B. DeGraaf, 1975), 72, and Muller, in "Use and Abuse," 33–4, and in his *Christ and the Decree* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1988), 206, have downplayed the comprehensive significance of the title, without offering a satisfactory explanation. The fact that the Latin title speaks of the sum of *Christianity*, rather than of theology, no more dispels the broad theological character of the work than Calvin's title "Institutes of the *Christian Religion*" dispels the theological comprehensiveness of his work. It is important to take Beza's title seriously, as the titles of the early translations also make evident. The title of the French edition (1560) is *Brefve Exposition de la Table ou Figure contenant les Principaus Poincts de la Religion Chrestienne*. Likewise, the titles of the English translations of both Whittingham (1556) and Stockwood (1576) indicate that the work deals with the "chiefe poyntes of Christian religion", and the Dutch translation (1571) calls it *Een Cort Begryp der Gansche Christelicke Religie*. See Frédéric Gardy, *Bibliographie des Oeuvres Théologiques, Littéraires, Historiques et Juridiques de Théodore de Bèze* (Geneva: Droz, 1960), 47–53.

[16] See Beza's 29 July 1555 letter to Calvin (*Correspondance* 1:169–71), *Ad Sebastiani Castellionis Calumnias…Responsio* (1558, in *TT* 1:337–424), and his *Ad Acta Colloquii Montisbelgardensis Tubingae edita, Theodori Bezae Responsionis, Pars Altera* (Geneva, 1588).

[17] Printed in *TT* 3:402–40.

[18] *TT* 3:404, 406.

this prolegomenal section and the detailed commentary that follows on Romans 9, Beza interprets this chapter in terms of God's decree and its execution by means of middle causes. Among the several dozen explicit references to the distinction, Beza sometimes highlights it as an important distinction that must not be confused.[19] For example, in countering the view that predestination is based on God's foreknowledge of a person's faith or unbelief, Beza writes:

> Those who disagree with us in this matter continually confuse God's decree (*decretum*) and its execution (*exequutione*). Although the execution and its middle causes (by the intervention of which God executes his eternal plans (*consilia*) in his own time, in the order of causes and effects) follow God's decree, these people, on the contrary, suppose that middle causes are prior in God's mind and that God forms his plan from a foreseeing of them.[20]

Beza also used the decree-execution distinction to respond to the accusation that God is unjust if he predestines the elect and reprobate from eternity as an act of his mere will without consideration of anything in the persons themselves. God is not unjust, he contends, because in the case of the reprobate the cause of the decree is different than the cause of the execution of the decree. The cause of the decree to reprobate is found in God's will alone, not in sin or in a foreknowledge of unbelief; but the causes of actual damnation are human corruption in Adam and its sinful fruits, not God's decree.[21] Decree and execution have different causes, because sin intervenes between the decree and its final execution in time.[22]

> God cannot be considered unjust …. For even though he destined (*destinavit*) those whom he pleased to love and salvation by his mere will and without regard for any worthiness of their own, yet by his eternal decree he loves and saves them in actuality (*reipsa*) only through the gracious righteousness imputed in Christ and by those stages that we mentioned above. On the other hand, although he destined those whom he pleased to hatred and destruction by his mere will from eternity, without regard for any unworthiness of their own, yet he actually (*reipsa*) hates and destroys only those who deserve hatred and destruction by their own corruption or unrestrained obstinacy. For to destine to love is different than actually loving and saving, and to destine to hatred is

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[19] *TT* 3:421, 422–3, 426, 430.

[20] *TT* 3:419, cf. 421, 426.

[21] Beza emphasizes the different causes of the decree to reprobate and actual damnation in *TT* 3:406, 416, 417, 419, 422, 426, 432; *Summa* (*TT* 1:176), *Annotationes* (1556) on 1 Timothy 2:5, *Quaestionum*, Q205 (*TT* 1:686), *Ad Sebastiani Castellionis* (*TT* 1:340), *Ad Acta*, 2:9, 147, 158, 161, 162, 163, 165, 172, 213–14, and especially 188: "For the cause of damnation, which is certainly known and transparent, is different than the cause of eternal destination to damnation, as I have taught already a thousand times."

[22] The idea that sin comes between (*intercedit*) or intervenes (*intervenit*) between the decree and its final execution is a common theme for Beza, *Summa* (*TT* 1:179), *Annotationes* (1556) on Luke 2:34 and 1 Peter 2:8, *Quaestionum*, Q207 (*TT* 1:687), *De Praedestinationis Doctrina* (*TT* 3:417, 421), and *Ad Acta*, 2:158.

> different than actually hating and destroying. That is because middle causes ordained by God come between (*intercedant*) the destination and its execution, absolving him of any kind of injustice (Romans 9:14–18).[23]

Confession de la Foy (1558)

Though the decree-execution distinction clearly forms the structural framework of Beza's predestination thinking, a key question is whether it also functions as the basic framework of Beza's whole theology. Though Beza did not write a full systematic theology, some of his works have a comprehensive character covering the full range of theological doctrine. The most comprehensive and best organized of these is Beza's *Confession de la Foy Chrestienne*.[24] The *Confession* consists of two parts: a confirmation section laying out the basic teachings of the Reformed faith, followed by a section refuting the contrary Roman Catholic views. The confirmation section (chapters 1–6) has a literary structure that follows the Apostle's Creed. Nevertheless, the decree-execution way of thinking appears at crucial points within this creedal literary structure.

Thus the first chapter (the Trinity) consists of two articles on the unity of God and the Trinity of persons, followed by a final article on eternal providence, which is understood in terms of the decree-execution distinction:

> Nothing happens (*se fait*) by chance and without the very just decree (*ordonnance*) of God, although God is not at all the author of, or culpable for, any evil that is committed. For his power and his goodness are so incomprehensible that he even ordains and does (*ordonne & fait*) well and justly what the devil and humans do wickedly and unjustly (1.3).[25]

It is very significant that this article appears within the first chapter on the Trinity and before the elaboration of the persons of the Trinity in chapters 2–4. This placement implies that it is the triune God who decrees and carries out the decrees.[26]

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[23] *TT* 3:438, cf. 422–3, 426.

[24] Beza wrote the original 1558 French edition of the *Confession* to convince his Catholic father of the orthodoxy of his Reformed faith. I am using the Geneva 1559 reprint. The revised 1560 Latin edition was intended for a broader audience, and is printed in *TT* 1:1–79. A modern English translation by James Clark is titled, *The Christian Faith* (East Sussex: Focus Christian Ministries Trust, 1992).

[25] The Latin edition reads: "*Nihil temere, & sine iustissimo Dei decreto accidit, tametsi Deus nullius omnino peccati sit author vel particeps. Eius enim tum potentia, tum bonitas tanta est, adeoque comprehendi non potest, ut tum quoque quum Diabolum, vel pravos homines adhibet in opere aliquo perficiendo, quos postea merito punit, ipse nihilominus bene iusteque sanctum suum opus efficiat*" (*TT* 1:1).

[26] In his *Annotationes* (1556) on Ephesians 1:5 and in his *Ad Acta*, 157, 200, Beza more clearly states that from eternity the Father along with the Son and Holy Spirit decided the decrees.

Chapter two (God the Father) introduces the person of the Father and then explains how he is creator and preserver of all things. He created all things by his Word, and "has arranged and ordained (*rangé & ordonné*) everything, as he also sustains and governs (*soustient & gouverne)* everything according to his eternal providence, by his infinite and essential power, which is the Holy Spirit" (2.2). Here Beza appears to identify the Spirit as the power by which the Father executes what he has ordained.[27]

Chapter three (Christ the Son of God) is shaped by the decree-execution theological framework in four significant ways. (1) Near the beginning of the chapter Beza somewhat unusually includes two articles dealing with the immutability of God's plan and its execution by secondary causes:

> 3.4 God is Immutable
> God is immutable in his plans (*conseils*),[28] of which it follows that everything that happens (*advient*) to humans was ordained (*ordonné*) eternally by him, following what we said about his providence.
>
> 3.5 The Plan (*Conseil*) of God does not Exclude Secondary Causes (*Causes Secondes*)
> That does not prevent but establishes secondary causes[29] through which all things happen. For God, in ordaining that which must take place (*advenir*), also ordains the means (*moyens*) through which he is pleased that such a thing takes place, even to the point that when some vice is found in the secondary cause, there is no vice in the eternal plan of God.

(2) After an initial article on the divinity of the Son, the second article of the chapter deals with "the Son eternally ordained (*ordonné*) as the sole Mediator between God and the elect" (3.2). Correlated with this article – as its execution – are articles 17 and 21, which deal with Christ as Mediator, who was promised under the Old Testament Law (3.17) and finally fulfilled when "the eternal Son of God, at the time ordained by the Father, took the form of a servant" (3.21).

(3) A similar structural correlation of decree and execution occurs in chapter three in regard to the creation of humanity. Article 3.6 states that God "eternally ordained (*ordonné*) to create man to manifest his glory" in saving some and in condemning others.[30] Correlating with this is its execution in article 3.9: "The Lord, at the time that seemed good to him to execute his eternal plan (*executer son conseil eternel*), created man, male and female."

(4) After a section on original sin, article 3.16 deals with how God has turned human sin to his glory. It focuses on the means by which

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27 This idea is also found in Calvin's *Institutes*, 1.13.18.

28 Here the 1561 edition adds: "and cannot be mistaken in them or be prevented at all from executing (*executer*) them."

29 Here the Latin has: "*causas secundas & intermedias*".

30 The next article states: "In order to execute this plan (*executer ce conseil*), it was necessary that God create man good and pure" (3.7).

God executes his plan of salvation: God "has eternally ordained a means (*ordonné un moyen*) to turn all these things [evils] to his great glory" by manifesting his goodness in saving his elect and manifesting his power and wrath in condemning the others. "This sole and unique means (*moyen*) is the mystery of the incarnation of the Son of God, with all that flows from it" (3.17).

In chapter four (the Holy Spirit), the decree-execution theological framework again appears in four ways: (1) After introducing the person of the Holy Spirit as the power of the Father and the Son, article 4.2 focuses on the effects (*effects*) that the Holy Spirit produces in the children of God, that is, faith and the graces of the Spirit, "in order to bring them step by step to the end and goal (*degre en degre à la fin & au but*) to which they were predestinated before the foundation of the world". In such persons the Holy Spirit creates faith, "the sole instrument (*instrument*) to apprehend Jesus Christ when he is offered to us".[31]

(2) In Article 4.4 Beza treats the means (or instruments) the Holy Spirit uses to create and preserve faith in us:

> [The Spirit] employs two ordinary means (*moyens*) (without, however, imparting his power to them, but working through them) in order to create in us this instrument (*instrument*) of faith and also to support and form it more and more, that is, the preaching of the Word of God and the sacraments (4.4, cf. 4.21).

In article 4.21 Beza begins to elaborate on these two instruments or means (*instrumens ou moyens*). The Word consists of two parts, the Law and the Gospel (4.22), and "the Gospel is the only means (*moyen*) by which from the beginning of the world, God has always saved his elect" (4.26). "The sacraments are the other means and instrument (*moyen & instrument*) by which the Holy Spirit applies to us that which is necessary for our salvation" (4.30).

(3) In discussing the effects (*effects*) of faith (4.4) Beza includes several lengthy articles on assurance of faith and of election. Specifically addressing the temptation that raises doubt whether one has faith, Beza advises that one should ascend from the effects of faith to its cause which ultimately is election.

> In order to resist this second [temptation], it is necessary to know if we have this faith or not. The means is to ascend (*monter*) from the effects (*effets*) to a knowledge of the cause (*cause*) which produces them. Now, the effects (*effets*) that Jesus Christ produces in us, when we have apprehended him by faith, are two. In the first place, there is the testimony that the Holy Spirit gives to our spirit, that we are children of God …. Secondly, … when by faith Jesus Christ has given himself to us eternally in order to dwell in us, his virtue produces and reveals there his powers, which are known in Scripture by the word

[31] Beza frequently refers to faith as the instrument by which believers apprehend Christ; see 4.4, 4.5, 4.7, 4.19, 4.21, 4.46, 4.50.

> "regeneration" …. This regeneration has three parts …. The power of Jesus Christ coming to take possession of us produces three effects (*effets*) in us: the mortification of this corruption which Scripture calls the old man, his burial, and finally, the resurrection of the new man …. To know this regeneration it is necessary to come to its fruits. Thus, … the man, being set free from sin … begins to do what we call good works (4.13).

In his subsequent discussion of good works, Beza likewise points out that one can derive assurance by ascending from good works as an effect to its cause in God's plan of election.

> [Good works] make us more and more certain of our salvation, not as causes of it, but as testimonies and effects (*effets*) of the cause (*cause*), that is, our faith …. Since good works are for us sure testimonies of our faith, it follows that they also make us certain of our eternal election …. So then, when Satan puts us in doubt about our election, it is not necessary to first go and search for the decision of the eternal plan (*conseil*) of God; his majesty would dazzle us. But, on the contrary, it is necessary to begin[32] with the sanctification which one experiences in oneself, and to climb higher (*monter plus haut*). Since our sanctification, from which proceeds good works, is a sure effect (*effet*) of faith, or rather of Jesus Christ dwelling in us through faith, and whoever is united to Jesus Christ is necessarily called and elected by God to salvation, … it follows that sanctification with its fruits is the first step (*le premier degre*) by which we begin to ascend (*monter*) all the way to the first and true cause (*la premiere & vraye cause*) of our salvation, that is, our eternal and gratuitous election (4.19).

(4) At one point in the Latin edition, in discussing whether God ever totally removes his grace from believers, Beza replies by appealing to two axioms: "These two axioms are very certain (*axiomata certissima*)[33] and without any exception – that God never changes his mind, and whatever he once decreed (*decrevit*) is necessarily accomplished (*perfici*)" (4.20).

Chapter five, which presents a rather lengthy treatment of the Church and its offices, reveals hardly a hint of decree-execution thinking. Apart from references to Christ governing the church in such a way that he uses people as instruments (*instrumens*) to plant and water it (5.6), members of synods as executors of God's will (5.15), and pastors and teachers as instruments by which God conducts the ministry of the Word (5.27), Beza does not work out the implications of the decree-execution scheme in the doctrine of the church.

Chapter six (the Last Judgment) is very brief and mentions that at a time ordained (*ordonné*) by God Christ will return from heaven. Though this chapter naturally relates to the "end" in terms of the final execution of God's decrees, Beza does not explicitly develop this thought.

What can be concluded about the role of the decree-execution distinction in Beza's *Confession*? First, the *literary* structure of the *Confession* is creedal

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[32] Here the Latin adds: "from the lowest stage (*ab infimo gradu*)".

[33] The French calls these: "*deux points infaillibles*".

or Trinitarian, and within this context Beza's *theological* framework of Trinitarian decree-execution thinking surfaces at crucial points in the work. This theological framework is not incompatible with the literary structure; decree-execution thinking can well correlate with a Trinitarian structure. Second, he does not fully work out the implications of decree-execution thinking in all parts of the *Confession*, especially in the doctrine of the church. Third, use of the decree-execution theological framework does not mean that it is a predestinarian framework. In fact, though there are references to predestination in the *Confession*, it does not contain a separate section on this doctrine.

Quaestionum et Responsionum Christianarum Libellus (1570)

Beza's other major work that presents a rather comprehensive range of doctrines is his *Quaestionum et Responsionum Christianarum Libellus*.[34] This work is not a catechism; it is an apologetic work that presents replies to objections to the Reformed viewpoint especially on a variety of controversial issues. The questioner is a friendly objector. Within the question and answer format the topics covered are rather loosely organized.

The *Quaestionum* begins with the end or purpose for which God has placed us in the world (Q1–3), then treats the Word of God (Q4–7), the Trinity (Q8–18), the Son of God (Q19–78), and finally the way (*via*) to eternal life (Q79–213). The latter soteriological section ends with a lengthy part on the sources (*fontes*) of faith – providence and predestination (Q170–213). The introductory question, "For what purpose (*Quorsum?*)," is answered, "So that we might worship him; indeed, that he might be glorified by granting us eternal life" (Q2). Such an introduction points immediately to the ultimate end – God's glory.[35] Thus, in a general way, the work begins with the end and moves to the decree (of predestination) – an order opposite that found in the *Confession*.

The sections on the Word, the Trinity, and on the person of the Son show little evidence of decree-execution thinking. In the first part of the section on the way to eternal life there is occasional evidence of it. There Beza again identifies faith as an instrument (*instrumentum*) by which a believer apprehends the obedience of Christ (Q110, 118). He compares the relationship between faith and the apprehension of Christ in their temporal order with their causal order:

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[34] Printed in *TT* 1:654–88. There is a modern English translation by Kirk Summers, *A Little Book of Christian Questions and Responses* (Allison Park: Pickwick Publications, 1986). I use the numbering of the questions found in this edition.

[35] It is noteworthy that Calvin's Catechism of the Church of Geneva (1545) begins in a similar way: "What is the chief end (*praecipuus finis*) of human life?"

> If you consider the moment of time (*temporis momentum*), we both believe and apprehend Christ who is offered to us at the same time. For a cause cannot actually be working (*efficiens*), unless at the same time an effect comes forth. But if you consider the order of causes (*causarum ordinem*), I confess that the rudiment of true faith is before the apprehension of Christ (Q119).

Likewise, Beza examines the relationship between the first grace and human cooperation in receiving God's grace by comparing their temporal order with their causal order (Q99).

In the sections on providence and predestination, which make up fully one third of the work, the decree-execution framework is pervasive. I will mention only some highlights by way of illustration.

Beza defines providence primarily as God's eternal decree (*decretum*) by which everything happens (Q171). "It is that which ordains (*ordinat*) all causes (*causas*), and controls even the smallest effects (*effecta*) of them, so that they are carried to their decreed end (*decretum finem*)" (Q172).

At some length Beza goes on to explain that even sin and the wicked are not outside of God's decree; and yet that does not make God the author of sin (Q173–94). Beza uses the analogy of a clock mechanism to show how the wicked are included in God's decree (Q174). The wicked are instruments (*instrumenta*) moved by God in such a way that they also move themselves but in a contrary evil motion (Q175). "Evil people are also moved well and efficaciously by God, so that he might execute (*exequatur*) his own work through them" (Q177). Evil people do the will of God if his will is understood in the general sense of what God has willingly decreed. Thus "the Lord executes (*exequitur*) his will through evil people also, because he decreed (*decrevit*) it from eternity." But if his will is understood in the sense of what is pleasing to God, they do not do his will but do contrary to it (Q180).[36]

All this does not make God the author of sin (Q181). For God's decree does not take away the human will; it only ordains it (Q183). "The unchangeable necessity of the divine decree does not remove the contingency of the secondary cause (*secundae causae*), but disposes (*disponit*) it" (Q185). Summarizing what he has said about providence, Beza states:

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[36] Elsewhere Beza also draws a distinction between these two senses of God's will: the broader sense is the will of his good pleasure or his decree; the narrower sense is the will of command or his revealed will. For example, in *Jobus* (London, 1589), 61, he states: "Sometimes in the broadest sense we understand by the term will whatever God decrees. In this sense, without exception, is necessarily understood whatever has ever happened in the world, or is now happening, or will happen thereafter…. But sometimes, in a narrower sense, God is said to will that which is good in itself and agreeable to the nature of God himself, and therefore is commanded by him." See also *TT* 1:376, *Ad Acta*, 2:152–3, 174–5. Calvin also distinguished these two senses of the divine will, *Institutes*, 1.17.2, 1.18.3 and 4, 3.20.43.

> Nothing at all happens without God's will or knowledge (that is, by chance or accident), but entirely as God himself decreed (*decrevit*) it from eternity, disposing all the intermediate causes (*causas omnes intermedias disponens*) powerfully and efficaciously, so that they are necessarily, in respect to his decree, brought to their destined end (*destinatum finem*). Nevertheless, he is not the author or approver of any evil, since he always acts most righteously, with whatever instruments he executes (*exequatur*) his work (Q187).

In the final section of the work Beza goes on to describe predestination as God's decree in regard to its end and goal (*finis & scopi*). It is "the eternal and immutable decree, preceding in order all the causes of salvation and damnation, whereby God has decided to be glorified by saving some in Christ by mere grace, but by damning others in Adam and in themselves by his just judgment" (Q195). In Romans 9:22–3 Paul "is not concerned with salvation or destruction [i.e., the execution], but with the decree (*decreto*) of salvation or destruction, which disposes the very causes of the execution (*exequutionis causas disponit*), yet so that it does not depend upon them" (Q197).

If the decree of election is the cause of faith, does that make the decree of reprobation the cause of unbelief? Beza replies: "Not at all. For that decree is truly the efficient cause (*causa efficiens*) of faith; but corruption or unbelief with its fruits is subordinated to the decree in such a way, that the will of man is the first efficient cause (*prima causa efficiens*) of them, and yet they are subject to the decree." By God forsaking the will of man, sin comes to humanity,[37] so "they are the cause of their own destruction" (Q202).[38] Here the cause of the decree is different than the middle cause of its execution.

> For the decree to save the elect is different than the very glorification of the elect; and the decree to damn the reprobate is different than the damning of the reprobate, since the decree itself must necessarily be distinguished from its execution (*decretum ipsum necessario sit distinguendum ab eius executione*). Therefore, the execution (*executio decreti*) of the decree of election (the salvation of the elect) depends upon faith apprehending Christ; and the execution of the decree of reprobation (the damnation of the reprobate) depends upon sin and its fruits …. But, of the decree (*decreti*) of electing certain people to be saved by grace, and of reprobating certain people to be condemned by their own sins, we know no other cause than this one (*causam hanc unam*), that the most merciful and most just Lord wills to be glorified in this way (Q202).[39]

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[37] Beza later describes it in this way: "between the decree and its execution sin intervenes (*intervenit*)" (Q207).

[38] Likewise, Beza states: "With respect to the middle causes, whereby the vessels of wrath are carried to the wrath destined for them, they alone are the cause of their own destruction" (Q197).

[39] Later Beza makes the same point: "No less should the cause of the decree (*decreti*) of reprobation be manifest than the cause of the execution of the decree (*decreti exequutionis*), that is, the cause of the damnation of the reprobate, namely corruption" (Q205).

In the *Quaestionum* Beza again advises that for assurance doubters should turn to the effects (*effecta*), from which their spiritual life and consequently their election may be discerned, by being transported up the steps (*gradibus*) by which God draws the elect to himself – thus, from one's sanctification and the testimony of the Spirit to faith to Christ to one's election (Q209).[40]

Beza also provides a summary of the middle causes (*medias causas*) ordained by God's decree of election and reprobation (Q208). It closely reflects his famous chart of causes in his *Summa Totius Christianismi*.

Catechismus Compendiarius (1575) and *Altera Brevis Fidei Confessio* (1559)

Beza also wrote two short works that present a somewhat comprehensive range of doctrines, his *Catechismus Compendiarius* and his *Altera Brevis Fidei Confessio*. Neither explicitly uses the decree-execution framework, although both contain hints of it.

The *Catechismus Compendiarius*,[41] like the *Quaestionum*, begins with the question: For what purpose or end (*Quorsum*) has God placed us in this world? It then covers topics relating to Scripture, the Creed, the Law, and ends by describing the three instruments (*instrumentis*) the Holy Spirit uses to make us children of God, that is, preaching of the Word, prayer, and the sacraments.

The *Altera Brevis Fidei Confessio*[42] presents a summary of the way of salvation in terms of the satisfaction view of atonement and how it is applied to believers. Thus this work begins with God's justice which only a divine-human mediator can satisfy. The necessity to have a mediator was fulfilled when God sent his Son at the time destined and established from eternity (*tempus ab aeterno destinatum atque constitutum*) (art. 13). Addressing how this remedy of Christ is applied to the believer, Beza points out that God works this message externally by the preaching of the Word and internally by the power of his Spirit. The effects (*effecta*) of the Holy Spirit working internally include: giving us a consciousness of our sin, which is the first step (*gradus*) to salvation; applying the remedy of Christ to the conscience by implanting faith, which is the instrument (*instrumentum*) by which we apprehend salvation in Christ; and sanctifying our hearts (arts. 16–20). This faith is nourished and increased by hearing and reading the Word and by partaking of the sacraments.

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[40] Beza's clearest summary of the stages by which doubters should seek assurance by ascending from effects to their predestination is found in *De Praedestinationis Doctrina* (*TT* 3:435). Here he speaks of ascending from good works to sanctification to faith to efficacious calling to election to predestination in Christ.

[41] *TT* 1:689–94.

[42] *TT* 1:80–84.

While both of these short works offer hints of the decree-execution framework, it is certainly not clearly worked out in either. Since both are intended for a popular audience, one should not expect Beza to focus on divine decrees; such a context calls for emphasis on the lower stages.

Annotationes on the New Testament

Moreover, one should not expect the decree-execution distinction to be as evident in Beza's exegetical writings as in his more systematic works, since here he is governed by the content of the text. Yet the distinction does appear in these writings, especially – as one might expect – in comments on texts that relate to providence, predestination, or God's will, but also occasionally in comments on texts where analysis in terms of decree and execution would not seem very pertinent.

Thus in Beza's New Testament *Annotationes* of 1556, a work in the Christian humanist tradition of philological annotation, one can readily find the decree-execution framework in his annotations on predestinarian texts such as Romans 8 and 9, Ephesians 1, etc.[43] For example, commenting on 1 Peter 2:8, which speaks of those destined to disobedience, Beza seeks to safeguard God from the blame of sin by use of the distinction:

> Indeed, most just is he who condemns no one except those in whom he has found the very cause of condemnation embedded in them. For (as I have often said) between God's decree (*decretum*) and the execution (*executionem*) of the decree the cause of damnation intervenes (*intercedit*), namely the depravity of those who are damned by the just judgment of God, so that they can blame no one but themselves.

Here it is especially noteworthy that already in 1556, in this early work of his career, Beza observes that he has "often" used the decree-execution distinction to explain how God can decree sin and yet not be blamed for it.

Outside of such texts the distinction is not evident in most of Beza's annotations. Still, on occasion he does use the distinction to explain non-predestinarian passages, for example, Romans 3:24, 11:24, 1 Timothy 2:5, and 2 Timothy 2:21. Regarding the latter text, which speaks of cleansing oneself from dishonor, Beza comments:

> It does not reveal the cause of [God's] purpose (*causam propositi*), but its execution (*executionem*). For we are at last actually elected (*re ipsa elegimur*) when we are cleansed again by the Spirit of God from that inborn corruption,

[43] *Novum D. N. Iesu Christi Testamentum. Latine iam olim a Veteri interprete, nunc denuo a Theodoro Beza versum, cum eiusdem Annotationibus* ([Geneva], 1556). I have found the distinction also in comments on similar texts such as Luke 2:34, Acts 4:28, 13:48, 1 Timothy 2:4, 2 Timothy 1:9, Titus 1:2, 1 Peter 1:2, 1:20, 2:8, 2 Peter 1:10, and Jude 4. This list is by no means complete.

> in which others who have been destined to a just destruction are swallowed more and more.

Commentary on Job (1589)

In Beza's commentary on Job, he states that the intention (*scopus*) of this book is not to explain God's providence (a broader topic, though copiously treated), but more specifically to address the issue of divine justice and human righteousness; in particular, whether it runs against God's justice that the wicked prosper in this life and the godly suffer adversity, and whether prosperity indicates righteousness and adversity sinfulness.[44]

In this commentary the decree-execution framework figures prominently, and indeed, Beza views the personal interactions of the book in terms of this framework. Chapter one first introduces Job and his prosperity, and then focuses on God's decree, in the conversation between the Lord and Satan. "So far [in verses 1–5] we have heard what happened (*gereretur*) to Job on earth. But then [beginning in 1:6] is explained what the Lord decreed (*decreverit*) from heaven about these things."[45] The debates that follow between Job and his three friends, as well as Job's own lament, betray ignorance of the divine decree. The execution of God's decrees, regarding prosperity or adversity, begins, continues, and at last ends at times appointed from eternity, as is seen in chapter 38, when the Lord finally steps into the fray and addresses Job.[46]

Job 1:6, which speaks of the "day" when the sons of God (angels) and Satan presented themselves before the Lord, does not seem to lend itself to analysis in terms of decree and execution. Yet, since this passage appears to show God making a decision within the course of time, when he agrees to allow Satan to afflict Job, Beza comments that, properly speaking, God is not subject to time and he decided everything from eternity:

> But this point is established, that God decides nothing within time (*nihil Deum in tempore statuere*), but he has from eternity determined (*constituta*) all things in general and every single thing in particular by his immutable and inscrutable plan (*consilio*). Truly, as God has decreed all things from eternity (*ab aeterno omnia decrevit*), so he has also prearranged (*praefixit*) for the execution of his decrees (*decretorum suorum executioni*) their moments of time, which he alone holds in his power (Acts 1:7) and which cannot in any way be hastened

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[44] *Jobus, partim Commentariis partim Paraphrasi Illustratus* (London, 1589), 14. Beza provides a commentary on the first two chapters, and chapter summaries and a paraphrase of the rest of the book. It was the product of lectures on Job at the Geneva Academy, commencing in January 1587.

[45] *Jobus*, 38. Beza identifies three parts to chapter one. After the first five verses introduce Job's prosperity, "the second part includes God's decree (*decretum*) to test his servant, whom Satan strives to overthrow." The third part, beginning with verse 20, describes Job's victory in this first encounter (18).

[46] *Jobus*, 91–2.

> or slowed down. Therefore, in this passage God is not introduced conceiving some new plan about Job (for he had determined (*definierat*) all that from eternity), but on the coming of that day which he had destined for executing his plan (*consilio exequendo destinarat*) for him, on that day finally he revealed that plan to Satan, otherwise ignorant of the whole thing, whose works he had determined would execute (*exequi constituerat*) it.[47]

Frequently in this commentary, in one form or other, Beza asserts "the universal principle (*universali principio*), that what happens (*gererentur*) on earth was first decreed (*decerni*) in heaven".[48] Although God is not subject to time and "all things are always present to him,"[49] Beza usually states that God's decree is "from eternity, and therefore precedes all time (*tempus omne antecedit*)," or is "before all time (*ante omne tempus*)".[50] "For he certainly has not decided (*statuit*) anything within time, since he is unchangeable (Mal. 3:6) and beyond all variableness and shadow of turning (James 1:17)."[51]

Not only has God decreed everything, but "he has also appointed secondary causes for executing those eternal decrees of his (*causas secundas exequendis illis decretis*)."[52] "He has made and disposed (*disposuit*) causes … whose motions he uses … most freely, to accomplish (*peragendum*) whatever pleases him."[53] In this case, God used Satan as such a secondary cause or instrument to test Job.

> Satan could not decide and execute (*exequi*) anything but that which God had decreed, all secondary causes and their effects, by a hidden motion, being obedient to God's decree, without exception.[54]
>
> God decrees even those things which are evil by their own nature …, not, however, in so far as they are evil, but in so far as it is also good that they are evil, by which he justly punishes the wicked and chastens or tests the good.[55]

This raises the most troublesome issue that Beza grapples with in this commentary: if God has from eternity decreed everything that happens on earth, also evil, and he even uses Satan as an instrument to execute his decrees, how can one avoid the conclusion that God is the author of

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47 *Jobus*, 42. Likewise, in his comments on Job 2:1, which speaks of another day when Satan presented himself before the Lord, Beza contends that the reference to a certain day refers not to God's decree, but to the execution of his decree, *Jobus*, 91.

48 *Jobus*, 39. Other instances of this principle can be found on pp. 38, 41, 56, 77, 80, 156, 209, and 287. Scores of instances also appear in various other writings of Beza.

49 *Jobus*, 40, cf. 42. When explaining the biblical language, "before the foundation of the world", Beza affirms the biblical usage, but also asserts that all things are present to God, *Annotationes* (1556), on Ephesians 1:4–5, 1 Peter 1:20, 2 Timothy 1:9, and Titus 1:2. Cf. *Summa*, 4.1 (*TT* 1:180).

50 *Jobus*, 91, 40. Cf. *Annotationes* (1642 edn.) on Romans 8:28, and *TT* 1:371.

51 *Jobus*, 38, cf. 42.

52 *Jobus*, 94.

53 *Jobus*, 78.

54 *Jobus*, 59.

55 *Jobus*, 61.

sin? Beza answers that "God is not the author of sin, even if he is said not simply to allow or permit, but also willingly (*volens*) to work through an evil instrument."[56] Beza considers this issue at length when commenting on Job's words, "The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away" (Job 1:21), as he seeks to explain how the evil actions of Satan and his helpers could be so attributed to God. He contends that God's will and actions are at work (*intervenire*) to the utmost extent in all the evil deeds that are committed in the world, and yet God is not the author of sin. In nine axioms, he argues the case in terms of God accomplishing his decree by justly using instruments, which at the same time move themselves wickedly.[57] In the ninth axiom, for example, he states:

> As pertains to God himself and his proper work, he always wills, decrees, and does well (*bene*), whatever he does in the world, by whomever, whenever, and however he does it; that is, whatever happens and occurs in the world, in general or in particular. But with respect to the middle instruments (*instrumentorum mediorum*) that also move themselves, although he always moves them well, yet, properly speaking, he is said to act and … work in the good instruments … creating in them good motions … so that the glory of the good work of the instruments that move themselves is properly given to him as its true author and principal cause. But with respect to evil instruments that move themselves wickedly, namely demons and all the unregenerate …, he is not at all said to act (*agere*) in them as one who puts into them or breathes into them any depravity, but, not restraining what he finds in them, he permits and gives them the ability to move themselves wickedly and to use it in an evil act. But he always uses their depravity rightly, either as a just judge pitting the wicked against each other, or as a loving father chastening his children even through wicked instruments.[58]

Psalmorum Davidis (1579) and *Chrestiennes Méditations* (1582)

In other exegetical writings, for example, in his books on the Psalms, Beza barely alludes to the decree-execution framework.

In his *Psalmorum Davidis*, Beza has a section on the argument (a summary of the psalm's occasion and main content) and use of each of the 150 psalms; then he gives a paraphrase of the psalm to clarify its true sense, and finally he offers a poetic rendering of the psalm in Latin.[59] While he observes that the Psalms frequently refer to God's providence, Beza usually does not elaborate on this theme in terms of the decree-execution framework.[60] The place where he does so most explicitly is on Psalm 91:

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[56] *Jobus*, 56.
[57] *Jobus*, 77–80.
[58] *Jobus*, 80.
[59] Beza, *Psalmorum Davidis et Aliorum Prophetarum Libri Quinque* (London, 1580).
[60] There are references to providence in the *argumenta* on Psalms 11, 33, 36, 37, 73, 91, 92, 94, and 107.

> [In this psalm] the universal providence of God, but especially his particular providence, which directs all secondary causes most justly and moderately and is watchful for the well-being of his own, is set forth so graphically … that nothing more can be desired in this matter.[61]

This Latin work was probably intended first of all to aid pastors in preparing sermons on the Psalms. If this is the case, it is not surprising that Beza does not focus on God's decrees in this work; he is following his own advice that preaching should focus on the lower stages.

Again, there are only hints of the decree-execution scheme in Beza's *Chrestiennes Méditations* on eight penitential psalms. For example, the meditation on Psalm 6 mentions that "it is ordained (*ordonné*) of all men once to die."[62] In his meditation on Psalm 51 Beza likewise states that the temple "was ordained by you because you willed it," and David began to build it by the ordinance of the Lord.[63] Since this book of meditations was a spiritual guide for those who no longer observed the Roman Catholic sacrament of penance, it was intended for a popular audience. The nature of the topic and the audience did not call for discussion of God's decrees or secondary causality.

De Peste (1579)

However, one can find the decree-execution scheme at work when Beza writes in another pastoral context, when he responds to two issues about the plague.[64] In a recent time of plague, some persons – including ministers – contended that the plague is not contagious, since it is sent by angels or ordained by the hand of God, and thus it does not arise from natural causes. They also found fault with Christians who sought to avoid the plague by withdrawing from places afflicted by it, no matter what the circumstance, because such flight runs against the providence of God, whose decree determines the time and manner of one's death. How can one avoid what God has decided?[65]

Beza responded that the plague is indeed infectious, and he defended the right of Christians, in appropriate circumstances, to withdraw from places struck by the plague. He argued that, while in his providence God appointed by his immutable decree whatever comes to pass, he uses natural

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[61] *Psalmorum*, 412. See also his comments on Psalm 107, where he criticizes the Stoics for binding God to secondary causes.

[62] Beza, *Chrestiennes Méditations*, ed. Mario Richter (Geneva: Droz, 1964), 55.

[63] *Chrestiennes Méditations*, 78.

[64] Beza, *De Peste Quaestiones Duae Explicatae: Una, Sitne Contagiosa; Altera, An & Quatenus sit Christianis per Secessionem Vitanda* (Geneva: 1579). See also *Psalmorum Davidis*, where Beza deals with the plague in treating Psalm 91.

[65] *De Peste*, 7–8, 19.

causes (*causae naturales*) to bring about the plague.[66] Sin, by a certain spiritual infection, is the true and primary cause (*primariam causam*) of this disease, but God raises up inferior causes (*inferiores causas*) that are natural to bring about the plague as a just punishment.[67] Infected air and infectious contact are such secondary causes (*causas secundas*) of this disease.[68] God governs these natural causes and their effects as it pleases him, so that the infection does not touch everyone in danger; nor is it deadly to everyone infected.[69]

Moreover, he argued, "as God by his eternal and immutable decree has determined (*praefinit*) the course of our life, so he also ordained middle causes (*causas medias*) which we should use to preserve life" from this disease.[70] As physicians advise, one of the chief such remedies is to withdraw oneself from an afflicted setting. And since sin is the principal cause of the plague, the only proper remedy is that ministers should not dispute about infection (the task of physicians), but stir people to repentance and charity to one another.[71]

Conclusions

1. Compared to Calvin's occasional use of the decree-execution distinction as one distinction among many, Beza clearly gave it a more prominent role.[72] With him it becomes a technical distinction. Thus he often explicitly insists that decree and execution must be distinguished and he criticizes those who confuse the two. He calls it a "very certain axiom" that whatever God has decreed is necessarily accomplished, and a "universal principle" that what happens on earth was first decreed in heaven. It appears that Beza has taken one form of biblical imagery that portrays how God relates to creation and elevated it to a dominant distinction in his theology.

2. The decree-execution framework is clearly the governing structure of Beza's thinking about predestination and providence. From a sampling of the rest of his theology, it is evident that this framework sometimes surfaces in his non-predestinarian writings as well. It does so at crucial points in his most systematic and comprehensive work, the *Confession*, and it appears here and there in his other writings. With some qualification

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66 *De Peste*, 12, 15–16.
67 *De Peste*, 9, 32.
68 *De Peste*, 6, 14.
69 *De Peste*, 18.
70 *De Peste*, 27.
71 *De Peste*, 32.
72 On the role of the distinction in Calvin as compared to Beza, see my article, "Calvin and Beza: the Role of the Decree-Execution Distinction in their Theologies," in *Calvinus Evangelii Propugnator: Calvin Champion of the Gospel*, ed. David Wright, et al. (Grand Rapids: Calvin Studies Society, 2006), 191–207.

I conclude that the Trinitarian decree-execution framework is the dominant structural framework of Beza's theology.

3. For Beza such a framework does not displace the fundamental role of the Trinity. It is the triune God who decrees and executes his decrees. The Word and Spirit participated with the Father in forming the decrees from eternity. The Spirit is the power by which God executes the decrees. And God executes the decree of election through the incarnate Christ as mediator for the salvation of the elect.[73]

4. It must be admitted, however, that Beza does not develop the decree-execution framework and its implications thoroughly or consistently throughout every part of his theology. That is especially true in his treatment of the doctrine of the church.[74] The section on the church in the *Confession*, for example, scarcely gives a hint of the framework. The first half of the *Quaestionum* likewise shows little evidence of the framework, as do popular writings such as the *Catechismus Compendiarius*, *Altera Brevis Fidei Confessio*, and *Chrestiennes Méditations*.

5. While the framework is evident primarily in Beza's writings on providence and predestination, one cannot simply conclude that it serves as a framework only for these two doctrines. The comprehensiveness of the framework, enveloping all of reality and all of history, includes a place for all other doctrines, even though Beza does not always develop these implications. The fact that the framework surfaces in contexts that do not focus on providence or predestination is significant.

6. If the Trinitarian decree-execution scheme is the dominant structural framework of Beza's theology, one would expect to see it clearly in his more systematic writings. That is the case. But how should one explain the virtual absence of references to the distinction in some of his other writings? (a) One need not expect frequent reference to the framework in all exegetical and polemical works, especially when the content is determined by the text (as in the case of philological annotations) or by an opponent's views. (b) In writings meant for a popular audience, one should not expect Beza to feature the divine decrees and how they are carried out, since he himself advised that in a popular context, such as preaching or pastoral care, one should always focus on the lower stages. (c) Even in the more systematic writings, one need not expect this framework to be explicit in every part of his theology for it to be operative. Such a framework can well operate in one's theology without having to explain it continually

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[73] *Annotationes* (1556) on Eph. 1:4–5.

[74] Tadataka Maruyama, in his *The Ecclesiology of Theodore Beza* (Geneva: Droz, 1978), esp. 139–48, 198–9, examines Beza's idea of the church as the congregation of the elect, and the relationship between the divine decree and the visibility of the true church, its ministry, and assurance, but otherwise he does not see implications of the decree-execution scheme developed in Beza's ecclesiology.

or even refer to it in all of one's writings. Therefore silence about the framework in some subordinate part of the theology need not negate its overarching role in his theology as a whole. Thus, for example, once Beza has identified the sacraments as a "means" or "instrument" that the Holy Spirit uses to create and increase faith,[75] the placement of the sacraments in the decree-execution framework is established and it is not necessary for him to continually relate the sacraments to the decree and its execution when he elaborates on the details of baptism or the Lord's Supper.[76]

7. Literary structure should not be confused with theological framework. The literary structure of Beza's writings vary, depending on the purpose and social context of the particular work; compare, for example, the creedal structure of the *Confession*, the question and answer format of the *Quaestionum*, the philological annotations of the *Annotationes*, and the commentary format of *Jobus*. Yet the same theological framework undergirds Beza's thinking in all these works. Thus the creedal literary structure of the *Confession* does not negate or contradict the decree-execution theological framework that is evident in this work. Only in Beza's *Summa* does the literary structure coincide with the theological framework.

8. A decree-execution framework does not contradict a Christological center or focus to Beza's theology.[77] But such a Christological focus must be viewed within the larger Trinitarian decree-execution framework. Christ is at the center of the framework. Understood in reference to the incarnate Christ, this focus finds it place within the execution of the triune God's decrees.

9. If the Trinitarian decree-execution distinction forms the dominant structural framework of Beza's theology, that does not make it a predestinarian system. The decree-execution framework encompasses more than predestination; it is also the framework for other doctrines, especially providence, which for Beza is broader than predestination. Nor

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[75] *Confession*, 4.4, 4.21, 4.30; *Catechismus Compendiarius* (*TT* 1:692); cf. *Summa*, 4.10–11 (*TT* 1:186–7). Jill Raitt, in her *Eucharistic Theology of Theodore Beza* (Chambersburg: American Academy of Religion, 1972), 13, 15–16, 18, 59, notes that Beza uses instrumental causality to explain the function of the Lord's Supper and its elements.

[76] Another illustration of this silence is the fact that in *Psalmorum* Beza usually does not mention decree or execution when he sees reference to providence in the psalms, whereas the framework is prominent in his usual discussions of this doctrine. Likewise, in his treatment of Psalm 41, he states that the psalm deals with the same issue as the book of Job. Although Beza prominently uses the decree-execution framework in his *Jobus* commentary, his comments on the psalm are silent about it.

[77] Richard Muller has made a case for a Christological focus or center to Beza's theology, *Christ and the Decree*, 82–3, 85, 95, and "Use and Abuse," 46, 57–8. Cf. Jeffrey Mallinson, *Faith, Reason, and Revelation in Theodore Beza 1519–1605* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 157–60.

is the decree-execution structure the central dogma of Beza's thought; a framework is more than a central doctrine.

10. Beza's framework is not a deterministic scheme with a strict chain of causality. A distinctive feature of his position is that human agency and sin intervene or come between God's decree and its execution in time. By creating something of a disjunction between the decree and its execution, and ascribing separate causes to each, Beza makes room for human responsibility, while at the same time maintaining God's sovereignty over all.

11. Since for Beza God's decree and his execution of it are all-encompassing, even including sin, this creates a constant problem for Beza – how to explain that God is not the cause or author of sin. Here the decree-execution framework provides a solution for Beza: God executes his decrees by use of secondary causality. Though moved by God, human agents as secondary causes also move themselves. Sin "intervenes" between the decree and its execution. Hence the cause of the execution is not always the decree, so God is not to blame for sin. In a similar way the decree-execution framework offers Beza a solution to another sensitive problem: Who is to blame for the damnation of the wicked? Beza replies that the cause of the execution must be distinguished from the cause of the decree to damn, which is God's will. Since sin is the cause of the execution (damnation), the wicked have only themselves to blame. This prompted Jacobus Andreas, Beza's Lutheran opponent at the Colloquy of Montbéliard, to probe what is indeed a soft spot in Beza's position: How is God's decree not the cause of its own execution?[78]

12. While Beza acknowledges that God as eternal sees all things as present, his formulations usually locate the divine decrees before the foundation of the world. The result is a framework that assumes that all God's decisions were made from eternity, before time, and that all God's actions, enacting his decisions, occur within the course of time.

[78] *Ad Acta*, 2:161. For Beza's response, see 2:178–9.

PART II

Reformed Ideas Outside Geneva

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CHAPTER FIVE

A Lay Voice in Sixteenth-Century "Ecumenics": Katharina Schütz Zell in Dialogue with Johannes Brenz, Conrad Pellican, and Caspar Schwenckfeld

Elsie Anne McKee

The age of the Reformation has been described in a number of ways, but "ecumenical" is not a word that immediately springs to mind. Yet, at least in the sense of a will to seek forms of koinonia – even sometimes sacramental communion – across apparent differences of religious language and formulations, the phrase "proto-ecumenical" can be used of the Reformed tradition.

Martin Bucer is the name most often associated with this mediating project, and his long struggle to bring Lutherans and Zwinglians together has frequently been celebrated in the twentieth-century search for sixteenth-century antecedents of ecumenism. It is essential to remember (and even emphasize, in an age which has great difficulty appreciating the otherness of the past), that Bucer and his colleagues – the "Lutheran" Philip Melanchthon, the "Roman Catholic" Gasparo Contarini, the "Zwinglian" Heinrich Bullinger, the "Reformed organizer" John Calvin, the "ecumenical liturgist" Thomas Cranmer, the Spanish "Spiritualist" Juan de Valdes, and others – lived and worked in a very different world. Nonetheless, it is appropriate to use "ecumenical" or "proto-ecumenical" to point to a characteristic of their theology which might be called a dynamic tension between doctrinal purity and ecclesial unity. The time span during which the mediating voices in most traditions were active was relatively circumscribed, but in the Reformed communion a certain "ecumenical orientation" was institutionalized. The family of Reformed churches continued to manifest theological variety – within limits – as is evident in its collection of credal statements and range of ecclesiastical polities.

All of this is a familiar story. What is not commonly remembered is that the clerical mediators were not the only theologically articulate voices

working for an "ecumenical" church. Among these lay advocates of a consciously ecumenical theology one of the most interesting and incisive and down-to-earth was Katharina Schütz Zell of Strasbourg. Virtually all the men who struggled for an understanding across the developing confessional lines were members of the Latin-educated elite. Even those who were technically lay men and not trained in traditional theology shared some theological language and university culture. What could a woman, one of the "common people" with only a vernacular education, who had never even been a member of a religious order, have to say about ecumenical theology? Where would she find the self-confidence to enter the conversation with her "betters"(!)? Why would such a person even be interested in such an apparently esoteric subject? Are there specific angles of vision which a lay woman could bring to the ecumenical discussion which would make her contribution distinctive?

The present essay seeks to answer these questions. The first section outlines Katharina Schütz Zell's life, first sketching the religious context, then focusing on her "ecumenical" contacts: the people she knew, the books she read, her travels. The second section explains Schütz Zell's understanding of necessary and second rank teachings, and the appropriateness of distinguishing between them, to show how she came to engage in "ecumenical"activity. The third and main section develops the most complex and interesting instance of Schütz Zell's work as a theological mediator, her concerted effort to bring Lutherans (in the person of Johannes Brenz) and Zwinglians (in the person of Conrad Pellican) into a more ecumenical dialogue with Caspar Schwenckfeld. The conclusion sums up the distinctive character of Schütz Zell's project as a Protestant ecumenical theologian working from an essentially lay perspective.

I: Katharina Schütz Zell's Context

The life of Katharina Schütz Zell (1498–1562) spanned three of the most exciting – and challenging – generations of the early modern world.[1] A native of the Alsatian free imperial city of Strasbourg, Katharina Schütz grew up in a time when the religious and intellectual life of late medieval Latin Christendom was being shaped in new ways by ever more intense demands for reform. At first these projects were mostly aimed at moral and institutional reforms, but then increasingly doctrinal as well. The great Strasbourg preacher of her childhood, Johann Geiler von Kaysersberg, cried out for clergy and laity alike to repent and reform, and the young Katharina vowed celibacy in her own home, like a beguine. However, the structure and teaching of the church did not change and, looking back on

[1] The following is drawn from McKee, E.A. (1999), *Katharina Schütz Zell. Volume One: The Life and Thought of a Sixteenth-Century Reformer*, Leiden: E.J. Brill.

her girlhood, Schütz Zell remembered that she had not found peace for her soul, no matter what she did.[2]

Then came the Biblical teaching of Matthew Zell, bringing Katharina, her family, and others the amazing "gospel" which Martin Luther was proclaiming: justification by faith alone, Christ as sole Savior, the Bible as God's one true Word. And – more practically – the teaching that all believers are equally welcome to come to God by Christ's grace, which the the Holy Spirit gives to women as well as men, to married as well as celibate, to poor and illiterate as well as learned. In this central "revolutionary" gospel, which turned old truths upside down, Katharina Schütz found both new freedom and a reshaping of her vocation. No longer needing to do anything to earn God's love, the dedicated young Christian now turned to her task as a "fisher of people" to teach and care for others and love her neighbors. Marriage to Matthew Zell was an expression of Katharina Schütz's faith in God's Word and her love for her neighbors, because the Bible teaches that priests may and should marry, and it was evident that most clergy could not live chaste lives without wives.

The initial Reformation truths and experience not only reshaped Katharina Schütz's earlier religious convictions but also definitively ordered them for the rest of her life. However, the world around her did not share her sense of theological completion. The tumultuous years of the 1520s brought both new religious freedom and new sources of religious conflict, and there were soon more and more divisions among those who had begun with the idea that they were all following the one true gospel. The very importance of the gospel led to bitter struggle; only if it had been a matter of indifference could those who read the Bible in unlike ways have agreed to disagree. The one true gospel is not a matter of indifference! Serving God's will and finding assurance of salvation are central and vital for everyone.

By the latter years of Schütz Zell's life, the growing drive to have an ever more precisely defined confessional identity had begun to achieve clear institutional form. Thus, the generation of her old age was a significantly different one from that of her young adulthood – almost as different as the "new" gospel of the 1520s had been from her childhood church. In fact, Schütz Zell herself was conscious of having lived through and actively participated in three major states of the church. She knew what she valued and what she rejected in each. She was not afraid to make her commitments public, to explain and defend the truth as she understood it, to opponent or friend: that was confessing her faith in God and loving her neighbor.

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[2] Schütz Zell, Katharina (1999), *Katharina Schütz Zell. Volume Two: The Writings. A Critical Edition*, ed. E.A. McKee, Leiden: E.J. Brill., pp. 170–71. Part of autobiographical statement, cited here and also in the next paragraph, is translated in McKee, *Life and Thought*, p. 428.

The common "classical Protestant" affirmations seemed to Schütz Zell (as to most laity) sufficient basis for fellowship. Thus she viewed with ever increasing distress the fragmentation and especially the conflicts among followers of the gospel, and worked to defend the teachings and the initial "brotherly love" and community of the 1520s.

The Scope of Schütz Zell's Acquaintance

The religious world of Katharina Schütz's childhood had been very parochial, but her contacts and experience as the wife of Strasbourg's first Protestant reformer and most popular preacher changed that dramatically. From the tiny circle of her parish clergy, Schütz Zell moved gradually to acquaintance with a much wider community. To some, like Johannes Kessler, she was known only by name or through her early pamphlets.

With others she developed a personal acquaintance, mostly through their visits to Strasbourg but also occasionally by her travels with her husband, or sometimes after Zell's death. These included "Lutherans" and "Zwinglians" and "Schwenckfelders," as well as the Strasbourg theologians. Schütz Zell corresponded with Luther at intervals and in 1538 she and Matthew made a long journey to northern Germany where they met Luther and Katharina von Bora, as well as Melanchthon, Nicolas Amsdorf, and others. Ulrich Zwingli and Johannes Oecolampadius stayed in the Zells' home for two weeks in 1529 on their way to Marburg. After Matthew's death in 1548, his widow traveled to Basel and Zürich, where she met Oswald Myconius, Bullinger, Rodolf Gwalther, and the English reformer John Hooper, while staying in the home of fellow Alsatian Pellican. The Blaurer family in Constance were close friends of Bucer and became well acquainted with both Zells. Schütz Zell corresponded with Ambrose and his sister Margaret Blaurer, and in the long years of widowhood she remained in frequent contact with Ambrose by mail and through the various Blaurer sons and nephews who studied in Strasbourg. When Schwenckfeld came to Strasbourg in 1529 he lived with Wolfgang Capito's family for two years, then briefly with the Zells, before moving to the home of another friend. After he left Strasbourg, the Zells remained in intermittent contact with the Silesian nobleman, as they did with Lutherans and Zwinglians.[3]

Caring for travelers, or the poor and sick and needy, gave Schütz Zell other personal contacts with both great and small in the religious world of her day. Refugees were in and out of the Zells' home all the time. Some, like Jacob Otter in 1524, brought their whole male parish (150 men) with them for a short stay. Others, like Melchior Ambach and Johannes Mantel in 1528, needed to find new places; the latter and his four small children

[3] McKee, *Life and Thought*, pp. 65–6, 79–80, 84, 89–90, 102–3, 217–18, *et passim*.

remained with the Zells all winter. Yet others, like Peter Martyr Vermigli or Calvin, Valerand Pullain or Juan Diaz, were temporarily resident in Strasbourg and probably only in and out for meals or meetings; yet they were still within the circle of acquaintance, even if differences of language made communication limited. And still others, like Urbanus Rhegius or Melchior Hoffmann, needed care for physical ills. Records reveal that Schütz Zell asked and received permission to visit Hoffmann in prison; she probably offered pastoral comfort as well as the medicines he needed. She herself speaks of arranging a dinner party for "thirty honorable learned men from Wittenberg, Saxony, Hesse, Nuremberg, Schwabia, and other places" who had gathered for the colloquy at nearby Hagenau, but then she had to leave the serving to others and hurry off to minister to Rhegius who was seriously sick.[4] And the list goes on.

Although she loved to be involved in actual conversation with the reformers, Schütz Zell knew many of them best through their writings. Luther was her favorite, but she also read very widely in the German publications of others. Most of her library has disappeared, though her numerous references to specific texts make it clear that her claims to know what particular reformers said is by no means empty rhetoric – and probably not exaggerated, either. The only part of her own book collection which survives, ten pamphlets against the Interim, give an idea of how Schütz Zell read; notes, comments, and other marks in her distinctive hand indicate a careful attention to the authors' words and arguments. The writings and sermons of her contemporaries were Schütz Zell's main source of extra-Biblical theology, though she can also cite some of the church fathers like Augustine or especially Ambrose. She could not read them for herself, of course, since she did not know Latin, but she was quick to pick up stories or sayings from the clergy, to add to the historical ones she probably culled from traditional lives of the saints – filtered through Protestant lenses, naturally.[5]

The Lay Christian's Role and Confidence

It is notable that Schütz Zell's reading was not indiscriminate, or rather, that this lay member of the priesthood of believers took with great seriousness her dual obligation to be a careful student of the preachers, and their devoted critic as well. The educated lay woman was sure that every Christian must learn and know the faith for herself, himself. That means regular attention to the preached Word, and personal study. While only the Holy Spirit can move the heart inwardly, God has chosen to use human instruments to

[4] McKee, *Life and Thought*, pp. 56–7, 77–8, 105–7; quotation from Schütz Zell, *The Writings*, p. 244.

[5] See McKee, *Life and Thought*, pp. 139–42, 288–94.

proclaim the gospel outwardly. Thus a learned ministry is God's plan for the church, though in Schütz Zell's view preaching (at least informal) is not restricted to the officially ordained. Like the elderly prophetess Anna [Acts 2:36–8], Schütz Zell herself felt qualified to teach publicly in particular circumstances, such as the failure of the ordained clergy to carry out their office rightly. Not everyone is fitted to teach publicly; Biblical knowledge is the criterion – not claims for special inspiration or reliance on a university degree. However, all Christians should be sufficiently educated in their faith to make good use of the Biblical knowledge provided to them, to teach their own households, and to identify when the clergy manifestly contradict the faith or love of the neighbor.[6]

The "lay" woman's conviction about the priesthood of believers and her own personal Biblical study provided Schütz Zell with the basis for and confidence to engage in theological activity. Along with this, her wide acquaintance with contemporary reformers and her great dislike of party-spirit led her to "ecumenical" efforts to bring her fellow Christians together. She believed that her knowledge of the Bible and love for her neighbors called her to speak with the clerical reformers about their unchristian disputes.

II: Katharina Schütz Zell's Understanding of "Adiaphora"

Like other Protestants Katharina Schütz Zell clearly insisted that the only source of all necessary religious knowledge is the Bible. There were a number of different ways that *sola scriptura* could be interpreted, but at first the appeal to the Bible overruled all else. In time, most Protestants came to agree that not all doctrine is of the same weight, but clerical and lay reformers did not always identify what was necessary and what was secondary in the same fashion. Like Protestant clergy, Schütz Zell believed that some "abstract" doctrines are more important than any "practical" moral failures, but like most laity, she tended to limit those essential teachings more than did some clergy. It is this context which helps to explain the nature of her "ecumenical" project.

Doctrine and Love of the Neighbor

Katharina Schütz became a "follower of the gospel" soon after Matthew Zell began preaching Luther's new insights in 1521. Like most religious reformers in the early 1520s, she expected that if people really understood the gospel they would follow it together, in joyful fellowship. In fact, time was to prove that disagreements over the meaning and practice of faith would multiply rather than diminish. Schütz Zell was not blind to

[6] See McKee, *Life and Thought*, pp. 390–418.

these developments. However, she responded to them consistently with a strong sense of the difference between essential and secondary issues, and an intense commitment to recognizing the vital role of treating one's neighbors – i.e., everyone – as one would wish to be treated oneself.

This meant that on the basic issues of salvation, which she understood in classic Protestant fashion as Christ alone, faith and grace alone, scripture alone, Schütz Zell was prepared to stake her life, and to break with all that she had been taught to the contrary. It meant also, though, that she accepted as Christians all who shared these tenets, even if they disagreed on other matters. With regard to these secondary matters, the rule of love should apply, not because these other issues are not important but because love for the neighbor is more important. Even in cases where someone rejected fundamental teachings such as trusting "only in the blood and death of Christ and no other creature or thing," Schütz Zell did not believe force should be used. In fact, coercion is ineffective as well as wrong, because faith is a gift ("it is not everyone's thing" [Eph. 2:8]).[7]

Rome, The Interim, Rabus, and Anabaptists

In practical terms, for Schütz Zell these convictions meant two things. One was a concerted effort to teach what she believed and to argue vigorously with those whom she wanted to persuade – whatever their confession! In 1524 she wrote a lively polemical letter to the Bishop of Strasbourg demonstrating the sole authority of scripture and the wrongness of some traditional church doctrines. (This was later incorporated into a pamphlet to explain clerical marriage to her fellow citizens.) The confident young lay woman explicitly states that the problem is theological (doctrines), not simply moral (abuses), and makes it clear that breaking fellowship with Rome is justified. In 1527, another glimpse of her argument with representatives of the pope comes to light indirectly in the diary of Jacques von Gottesheim. This genial Roman priest, a Strasbourg resident of considerably higher social rank than the Schütz family, noted that "Master Zell's wife invited him to come to dinner because she would like to argue with him."[8] Whether or not he took her seriously, Gottesheim's comment on Schütz Zell indicates both her commitment to her beliefs, and the

[7] See Schütz Zell, *The Writings*, quotations pp. 136, 5, 205. The argument with Rome is especially found in the *Apologia for Matthew Zell*, 1524; a summary of the argument with Rabus is found in the 1553 letter to Schwenckfeld, the full scope in the exchange with Rabus. Because of its length the latter is the only one of KSZ's writings not included in the forthcoming in translation in the series "The Other Voice." K. Schütz Zell, *Church Mother: The Writings of a Protestant Reformer in Sixteenth-Century Germany*, ed. and trans. E.A. McKee (Chicago: University of Chicago, 2006).

[8] See McKee, *Life and Thought*, pp. 62–4, 77; quotation p. 77 n. 82.

ways she was prepared to advocate them to an opponent – or potential convert?!

Schütz Zell was too perceptive to divide friends and opponents by their names, and she rejected all party claims, whether "Lutheran" or "Zwinglian" or "Schwenckfelder" or "Anabaptist." Her ability to distinguish between "the gospel" and "false teaching" was also too sophisticated for her to miss the changes which some second-generation Protestants were making in the preaching Luther and Zell had proclaimed in the early 1520s. This took two forms. One was surprising but fairly straightforward: the intense objection of the lay woman to the clergy who would compromise with Rome in the Interim. In her marginal comments on a pamphlet published by the Meissen theologians in 1548, Schütz Zell sharply takes them to task for calling the Lord's Supper "Mass" and tolerating "*Mitteldingen*" more than she thought was right; she also cites Christ and Paul against them![9]

The second example is more complex. In the 1550s Schütz Zell gradually found herself repeating with young Ludwig Rabus something of the same critique, argument, and final break as she had with the Roman clergy of her youth. She saw Rabus, her foster son and Matthew's successor, as having changed the faith and practice for which the Zells and their fellow Protestants had risked their lives. Indeed, while he loudly claimed Luther and Zell and equally vociferously abused Rome, Rabus had in fact re-adopted Roman teaching in a number of significant ways, especially on the sacraments and clerical dress. Furthermore, he violently attacked Anabaptists and others whom he considered heretics, especially Schwenckfeld and Zwingli, seeking to bring force to bear on at least some of them. For Schütz Zell, the first step in responding to this wrong teaching and behavior was to reason with Rabus in private; then to argue; and finally to break with him publicly after he accused her of heresy and apostasy and causing trouble in the church. In her view, it is never permissible to appeal to the church [Matt. 18:17 "go public"] unless or until all other channels have been exhausted.[10]

The conflict with Rabus brings to light Schütz Zell's conviction that among Christians it is also possible to have significant differences on a number of important secondary issues. Sometimes these are sufficiently serious that church fellowship is not feasible. (The Zells distinguished sacramental fellowship from ordinary hospitality, which they believed did not require agreement in faith, so they continued to welcome into their home all sorts of people.) Zell's widow explicitly recognizes that

[9] See McKee, *Life and Thought*, p. 140. For specific objection to party names, see Schütz Zell, *The Writings*, pp. 131, 225.

[10] See McKee, *Life and Thought*, pp. 151–5, 174–210. For insistence on dealing with matters privately as much as or as long as possible, see Schütz Zell, *The Writings*, pp. 174, 221, 285–6.

the teachings of the Strasbourg church and those of the people she calls "the poor baptist brethren" diverge on so many points that the latter are not part of the visible church. For all that, however, these folk do share the fundamental conviction of Christ as sole Savior, and even if some are wicked, many practice an admirable discipline. They are still followers of the gospel; certainly coercion in faith must never be used with them, since it is not appropriate even with regard to Jews.[11]

It is clear that Schütz Zell regarded some points of teaching, some theological aspects of faith, as essential and necessary to defend even at the cost of breaking fellowship at the Lord's Table with others who claimed to be Christian. Whether Roman priest or Protestant minister or "ordinary" Christian, what one believes does matter – intensely.

Disagreements on Secondary Matters among Followers of the Gospel

Perhaps the most subtle aspect of Schütz Zell's "ecumenical" thinking, however, is not her relationship to Roman doctrine or Anabaptist teaching, but the way she addresses disagreements among those whom she considers good followers of the gospel: Luther, Zwingli, the Strasbourgers, Schwenckfeld. To the intelligent, engaged lay theologian, the preaching and pamphlets of the early 1520s set the standard for the true gospel. It is by that standard that she measured all other and later religious teaching, including that of Luther himself, as Rabus would find to his dismay when his old foster mother quoted the early Luther at him. According to this canon of truth, Schütz Zell calls Luther to account for his lack of love in the Marburg dispute with Zwingli, not on the grounds that Zwingli is right (although her own sacramental theology was always closer to Zwingli's than to the ubiquity of the later Luther), but on the grounds that love is more important than agreement on secondary matters.[12]

Schütz Zell's key difference from Protestant clergy may be the classification of secondary matters. For her, as for most lay theologians, things not clearly defined in scripture are naturally subordinated to the plain words of the text. While clerical or university-trained men might insist on the "necessary" philosophical implications of particular Biblical formulations, the vernacular educated "common people" tended to consider academic theological distinctions very much less important than love for the neighbor. And loving your neighbor means not calling him or her a heretic when he or she is following scripture!

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[11] See McKee, *Life and Thought*, pp. 318–21; Schütz Zell, *The Writings*, pp. 205, 209.

[12] See McKee, *Life and Thought*, pp. 80–81, 251–6, 273–88.

III: Katharina Schütz Zell the Ecumenical Correspondent

The most neglected but intriguing example of Katharina Schütz Zell's "ecumenical" project is found in a three- (or four-) sided exchange of letters in the mid-1540s, in which she tried to bring some understanding between Lutherans and Schwenckfeld, and Zwinglians and Schwenckfeld. The more significant part of this effort involved Johannes Brenz and Schwenckfeld. Before taking up the unsuccessful efforts, it is useful to see what the lay reformer would consider a fruitful one.

A: Matthew Zell and Schwenckfeld In 1542 Schwenckfeld wrote to Schütz Zell on the same issue which would cause trouble later, the "glorified Christ." This time the questions were raised by Matthew Zell, and his wife served as an intermediary between him and Schwenckfeld. Zell did not fully accept Schwenckfeld's views but he was open to considering an explanation, which their noble friend was happy to offer both Matthew and Katharina. This letter is wholly in German, but with references to Latin sources. Schütz Zell is requested to ask her husband to read her a certain text by Jerome, and Schwenckfeld also apologizes for citing Latin. The point was to encourage Zell to reconsider his objections, but also to provide for Schütz Zell's lack of Latin, since the assumption is that Matthew will translate the passage in question for his wife. Zell never fully agreed with Schwenckfeld, as his wife told Rabus later, but he was both prepared to learn from anyone and also refused to condemn what he could not understand. For Schütz Zell, those were the marks of a successful ecumenical correspondence. The object was not convincing someone against his or her will, because each must retain the right to test the other's writings by scripture and make his or her own informed judgment. However, one must always give respectful attention to the other's words and courtesy even in the face of continuing differences.[13]

B: Schwenckfeld and Brenz Before discussing the correspondence it is useful to have a summary of the argument. The issue was Schwenckfeld's teaching on the "glorified Christ," especially the question of whether the man Jesus was a creature. To avoid the conclusion that Jesus Christ shared the sinful nature of Adam's descendents, Schwenckfeld affirmed that He was the Son of God by nature. Brenz and others insisted that this constituted a denial of Jesus' true humanity and therefore implied the Eutychean heresy. Schwenckfeld countered that Jesus was true man, Brenz and his colleagues argued that man(!) is a creature and therefore Jesus

[13] The letter to Zell is *Corpus Schwenckfeldianorum*, 19 vols., Leipzig: Briefkopf & Hartel, 8, #392, pp. 402–7, Latin references pp. 403, 407. For KSZ's later reflections on Zell's response to Schwenckfeld, see Schütz Zell, *The Writings*, pp. 130–31, 138, 279–82, *et passim*.

must be a creature.[14] Schwenckfeld rejected the identification of "man" and "creature," while insisting that Jesus was truly human, suffering cold and hunger and other human ills in His earthly life.[15]

The Usual Story

The way the story is usually told makes Schütz Zell basically a cipher. In 1543 she sent one of Schenckfeld's writings, *Summarium ettlicher Argument*, to Brenz with a request for his comments. Essentially, she wanted him actually to read the text and explain his objections, and thus justify (or have to retract) his criticism of Schwenckfeld. When Brenz wrote back, Schütz Zell passed the letter to Schwenckfeld, who then sent her two letters, one for herself, the other to be copied and sent over her signature to Brenz. Brenz's answer to this was handled in the same way, and when he received Schwenckfeld's second letter copied by Schütz Zell, he made no further reply. The reason could be variously interpreted, but that ended this three-sided correspondence.[16] [Note: simply for convenience, the 1543 letters to Schütz Zell and Brenz are labeled "A," and those dated 1544 are designated "B."]

The First Round of Correspondence "A"

Close analysis of the actual letters – only Schwenckfeld's are extant – leads to a much more interesting and complex picture, particularly of Schütz Zell's role in this exchange. The first part of the revised story is not very different in fact but does offer some more nuanced perspectives

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[14] Schwenckfeld via KSZ cites Brenz to Brenz: *Corpus Schwenckfeldianorum* 8, #409, p. 589: "ihr schreibt: *Cavendum à scriptis ejus, & ea retinendaque perspicue tradit scriptura, videlicet Christum esse & manere perpetuo verum Deum, qui est creator, Et verum hominem, qui est creatura*" [translation] ... "Kan ich mich nicht erinnern/ daß die Schrifft/ so viel ich gelesen/ ihrgend also von Christo rede/ daß er Creator und Creatura sey ..." He cites another Lutheran to KSZ: *Corpus Schwenckfeldianorum* 8, #408, p. 573: "Eben solches Philosophia bracht auch Frecht auff die ban: *Omnis homo est creatura, Christus est homo, Ergo*, ..."

[15] For Schwenckfeld's response via KSZ, see the summary of "A" letter to Brenz in Appendix I. Here is the explanation for KSZ in her "A" letter: *Corpus Schwenckfeldianorum* 8, #408: "so wenig wir ein solche creatur (oder *accidentia corruptibilia creaturae*) meinen/ Sonder durch das Wort creatur verstehen wir alhie mit der heiligen Schrift alles/ was aussem werck der Schöffung seinen ursprung/ natüerlichen lauff unnd grund hat..." (pp. 571–2). "Wie denn auch ein creatur sein/ nicht der substantz des menschens ist/ sonder leib und seel/ bluot und fleisch/ vernunfft und sinnen haben/ das ist *Hominis substantia*/ deßhalben wol ein mensch sein kan/ der doch nicht ein creatur sey/ das ist/ der nit (ex *ordine creationis sex dierum* noch) seinen ursprung aussem alten creaturischen menschen hat/ dagegen aber kan kein mensch one leib/ seel/ bluot und fleisch sein." (p. 574). "Denn Gottes natüerlicher Son und Gottes creatur sein/ seind füer Gott in Theologia gerichts wider einander/ so wol als *creare & generare in Deo*, Das ist auß Gott geboren/ unnd von Gotte sein geschaffen/ ..." (p. 575).

[16] *Corpus Schwenckfeldianorum* 8, pp. 568–9, 583–4; 9, pp. 85, 93–4.

on Schütz Zell's participation. The evidence for her sending Brenz a copy of Schwenckfeld's *Summarium* is circumstantial but generally convincing, given the correspondence which resulted and the fact that in 1544 she would again send other booklets, as she also later did with Rabus. (It was actually a common occurrence for one reformer to present a second person's book to a third, though most clerical exchanges were not accompanied by a request for a critique.[17]) The fact that Schütz Zell sent Brenz's comments on the *Summarium* to Schwenckfeld and served as the latter's mouthpiece for a response might be interpreted as deceptive, but the language of the correspondence offers a logical explanation. Although Brenz's two letters are not extant, at least the first one ("A") was apparently (largely or entirely) written in Latin. The response, composed by Schwenckfeld and copied by Schütz Zell, gives a number of quotations which are both in Latin and deal with scholastic terminology.[18] Schütz Zell did not know either. It would be in character for her to object to deception but to consider that promoting this fragile dialogue was worth borrowing Schwenckfeld's assistance, so she sent Brenz's comments on to Schwenckfeld.

When he answered in 1543, Schwenckfeld sent Schütz Zell herself a letter, along with the one for Brenz. There are similarities in the two letters, especially the use of Latin and references to the church fathers as well as scripture, but there are also important differences. The letter to Schütz Zell herself is much the longer, because Schwenckfeld rehearses a great deal of the patristic argument to support his position. It may be inferred, since this letter was different from any of his others to her, that Schwenckfeld was explaining to his friend what he wanted her to pass on to Brenz, so that she could satisfy herself that she understood what she was writing even if she could not compose it herself. The letter to Schütz Zell is also lengthened by the fact that Schwenckfeld translates almost all the Latin, not only the one extensive Latin quotation from Cyril of Alexandria, but also most of the shorter phrases, and the citations from Brenz's 1527 commentary on

[17] See Schütz Zell, *The Writings*, p. 136; thanks to Rabus' preaching against Schwenckfeld, Strasbourgers also came to KSZ to borrow Schwenckfeld's books to see what he actually said, p. 284. KSZ also recommends other books to Rabus, pp. 209ff. For other books sent to Brenz, see n. 38 below.

[18] At least a few of the Latin quotations are marked as Brenz's: *Corpus Schwenckfeldianorum* 8, #409: "wenn ihr schreibt: *Si verè homo est, certe quod ad substantiam attinet vera adhuc & creatura, homo enim (inquis) Creatura est & manet perpetuo quamdiu homo est, id es*, ..." [followed by translation] ... "da ihr schreibt: *Quod Christus assumpserit etiam juxta humanitatem proprietatem divinae majestatis*," [translation, then question]: "Was da heisse *Assumere proprietatem divinae majestatis* ..." "als ihr sagt: *Quod propter infinitam gloriam Christi natura humana non ideo sit evacuata aut absorpta in divinitate, etiamsi omnes proprietates divinae majestatis & naturae obtineat*" [repeats *propietatem divinae majestatis* and translates that but not the rest] ... "ihr weiter anzeigt: *Quod scriptor non est vocatus publice ad docendum, latet in angulis, Non didicit artes*" [no translation] (p. 588). See also n. 14 above.

John.[19] The letter for Schütz Zell to copy for Brenz is much shorter and includes many more Latin references, both direct quotations from Brenz's critique of the *Summarium* and others which Brenz himself had probably used. However, it provides few translations and offers only one very short patristic quotation from Tertullian.[20] Thus the style, language, and content of the two letters have similarities but also significant differences.

The subject matter of the two letters is, however, generally much more alike. One of the central points in both is the rejection of academic theology and scholastic terminology in favor of Biblical. Here Schwenckfeld translates Brenz's Latin criticism for Schütz Zell.

> Finally, this Master [Brenz] writes that I have never learned the school arts [university theology] which are necessary for one who wants to be a writer. So one should beware of my writings, and hold closely to what scripture clearly says: namely, that Christ is and remains true God, Who is the Creator, and a true man who is a creature or is created.[21]

Schwenckfeld's answer to this is to say that the apostles "as poor fishermen were uneducated, totally ignorant of the dialectic school arts." He goes on to demand that Brenz tell him where scripture calls Christ "a creature according to His humanity."[22] To Schütz Zell Schenckfeld adds evidence that the church fathers did not call Christ a creature. That material is not made a part of the reply to Brenz, where the argument is conducted in a more scholastic fashion, as if to prove Schwenckfeld's competence in academic theology.

It is not surprising that the lay theologian Schütz Zell found Schwenckfeld's argument convincing. Scripture is the authority, and the ideas of university philosophy are not. The scholastic definition of a human being as a (rational) creature carried no weight by comparison with the

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[19] *Corpus Schwenckfeldianorum* 8, #408, p. 575, lines 15–25: Cyril of Alexandria, "*Non considerant profecto... intelligemus, &c.* Solliches lautet auff deutsch also: Die Ketzer bedencken ... leeren." Translated or explained: "das da fleisch worden (*Verbum incarnatum*)," p. 573, and more in n. 15 above. A few which are not translated: "*Accidentibus* und *Substantia*" (p. 571); "Ists *accidens* oder substantia? ... So sag er Ob solch ding nach der *Dialectica, Physica, Metaphysica*, oder *Theologia* sol erkant werden" (p. 572); "*Omnis homo mendax, &c.*" (p. 574); "*Concilium Ephesium*" (p. 575), and n. 14 above. Translations of Brenz's commentary, pp. 579–80.

[20] See Appendix I, which gives Latin phrases along with also some of the Latinate German (such as "statuiren" or "inferiret") which are foreign to KSZ's vocabulary.

[21] *Corpus Schwenckfeldianorum* 8, #408, p. 576: "Beschießlich schreibt dieser Meister [Brenz]/ Ich hab die Schuolküenste nit gelernet/ so einem Büechlenschreiber von nöten sein wöllen/ drumb soll man sich füer meinen Schriften hüeten/ und das fest behalten/ was die h. Schrifft klerlich sagt/ nemlich daß Christus sey und bleibe ewig warer Gott/ der der Schöpffer ist/ und ein warer mensch/ der ein creatur oder geschöpfft ist/ etc." For Brenz's Latin, see above n. 14.

[22] *Corpus Schwenckfeldianorum* 8, #408, p. 576: "als arme Fischer in den Dialectischen Schuolküensten ungelerte lauter idioten gewest sein. ... nach der menscheit ein creatur." The letter to Brenz answers similarly, Appendix I.

evident words of the Bible – or rather, its silence on the point of calling Christ a creature, though rationality was accepted as Biblical. Brenz's dismissal of Schwenckfeld's logic, on the grounds that the latter had not studied theology at university, did not lessen Schwenckfeld's authority in Schütz Zell's eyes. On the contrary: she put no stock in scholastic theology and (as would later be made explicit in her reply to Rabus) she thought the first reformers had been right to reject academic titles and all that went with them.[23]

The Second Round of Correspondence "B"

It is assumed that Brenz's reply to this letter from Schwenckfeld via Schütz Zell followed the same route as the first, i.e., handed over to Schwenckfeld to answer. This, though, is where the revised story takes a very different turn, not only in subtle nuances but also in fact. The *Corpus Schwenckfeldianorum* publishes two letters, dated April 23, 1544, and April 24, 1544 – the "B" letters. The first is from Schwenckfeld to Schütz Zell. The second is labeled by the modern editors "Second Letter to Johann Brentz, composed by Schwenckfeld and transcribed by Katharina Zell" and entitled by the early modern editors "Der LXIX. Sendbrieff an M. Johan Brentzen von Fraw Katharina Zellin geschrieben und von C. S. gestelt."[24] (The numbering of the letter reflects its place in this collection of Schwenckfeld's correspondence, not the exchange with Brenz.) The attribution to Schwenckfeld was added by the editors, but there is nothing in this "B" letter itself to identify the writer, and the content and language suggest that it was actually composed by Schütz Zell. Schwenckfeld's editors appear to have assumed that Schütz Zell would not or could not have written to Brenz on her own; they state that this letter "was unquestionably enclosed with the one written to Katharina Zell the previous day" (April 23).[25] If this date is accurate, the linking of the two "B" letters is logical.

Arguing for Schütz Zell's Authorship

It is the hypothesis of this essay, however, that this letter was composed by Schütz Zell and then included in Schwenckfeld's correspondence because it concerned him and fitted with the pattern already perceived in the earlier exchange. (In fact, she may have sent him a copy herself.)

There are four arguments for changing the attribution of this 1544 "B" letter from Schwenckfeld to Schütz Zell. First, it should be noted that this "B" letter is wholly in German, including the quotations from Brenz's answer to the "A" letter of 1543. This fact would not exclude

[23] See Schütz Zell, *The Writings*, pp. 267–8. For acceptance of rationality, see Appendix I.
[24] *Corpus Schwenckfeldianorum* 9, pp. 93, 95.
[25] *Corpus Schwenckfeldianorum* 9, p. 94.

Schwenckfeld's authorship but it makes it less likely, since he previously took such care to use Latin in writing to Brenz. Secondly, the content of the two "B" letters is significantly different. The one to Schütz Zell herself dated April 23, 1544, does not actually deal with Brenz, but is concerned with more recent polemic, specifically Luther's *Malediction* of December 1543, and thus it does not have anything in particular in common with the "B" one for Brenz dated April 24, 1544. Thirdly, the two letters addressed to Brenz are quite different. Comparison of the "A" and "B" letters to him makes obvious the considerable dissimilarities between the 1543 one copied by Schütz Zell and the 1544 which this essay argues that she actually produced.[26] Certainly the language and logic of this text have noticeable affinities with her other writings. Fourthly, this "B" letter to Brenz makes obvious use of the German quotations of Brenz in the "A" letter to Schütz Zell, something which would make more sense if she herself composed the letter than if Schwenckfeld did so.

Developing the Evidence

In this "B" letter dated April 24, 1544, the quotations from Brenz's reply to Schütz Zell's earlier letter are entirely in German. This suggests that he had figured out that Schütz Zell could not handle Latin. Perhaps he had realized that the previous letter she had sent was not her own composition, and so he wrote now in a language she could understand so that she might answer him herself. Also, Schütz Zell quotes a comment by Brenz in which he corrects her and she now explains what she had meant.

> That I wrote, however, that "one cannot attribute too much honor to Christ" did not flow from my pen by evil design, as you think; that is as little fitting as the proverb which says: "too late and too much spoils every game." But it does not have the meaning that one attributes to Christ a false invented honor, as some [people] do: ones who do not want to allow that He took flesh from Mary; it also does not have the sense that the suffering of Christ is denied. But we attribute to Him of the honor of which scripture speaks.[27]

The phrase to which Brenz objects is not found in the previous "A" letter to him from Schwenckfeld copied by Schütz Zell, but in fact it sounds like something she might have written herself. (This raises the question of some possible correspondence between Brenz and Schütz Zell falling between

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[26] Compare the two letters in Appendix I.

[27] *Corpus Schwenckfeldianorum* 9, #441, p. 97: "Daß ich aber geschrieben/ daß man Christo nicht zuo viel Eer könne zuolegen/ ist mir nicht ongefehrlich auß der Feder entfallen/ wie ihr meinet/ so wenig sich das Sprichwort: zuolüetzel und zuoviel verhönet alle spil/ allhier wil reimen/ Es hat aber nicht die meinunge/ als ob man Christo drumb damit ein falsche selberdachte Eer ausser der Schrifft wolte zuolegen/ wie etliche/ so ihnen nicht sein Fleisch von Maria wöllen angenommen lassen haben/ oder daß man drumb das leiden Christi wölle auffheben/ Sonder wir reden von der Eere/ davon die heilige Schrifft redet/ ..."

the two letters collected here in the *Corpus Schwenckfeldianorum*. Might there have been another exchange, to which she is now replying?[28])

Be that as it may, it is clear that the language used in this "B" letter is typical of Schütz Zell. Repeatedly she addresses Brenz with the courtesy and appreciation found in her other correspondence,[29] and noticeably different from the formal words of the first letter to Brenz shaped by Schwenckfeld. There the greeting was: "Greetings, highly honored sir [Salutem, hochgeleerter Herr...]"[30] Here she writes: "The grace of our Lord Christ, and so forth. I have received the answer which you sent in response to my letter with special thanks and joy. Die Gnad unsers HERREN Christi/ &c." She closes with similar words "... as you have written that you consider it a holy, useful dispute, in which the truth of Christ will be saved; for that, as I am able, I want to serve you and yours in all Christian love."[31] Along the way there are also typical phrases of good will.[32]

Not only the language but also especially the arguments are characteristic of Schütz Zell. There are several significant points. The most obvious is the appeal to the authority of scripture and the fact that this letter makes no reference to the church fathers. In explaining to Brenz why she does not think Schwenckfeld is wrong, Schütz Zell repeatedly bases her justification on her understanding of the Bible. Implicitly she asserts her knowledge of what "the holy Scripture" attributes to Christ and what it does not, so she can judge Schwenckfeld's use of scripture is right. "However, I also ask you that you will clearly show me where or how Schwenckfeld attributes to our Lord Christ any inappropriate honor which the holy Scripture does

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[28] See below, n. 40.

[29] See Schütz Zell, *The Writings*. Greetings and closings: pp. 99, 101 (to Blaurer), 103 (Melchior Ambach), 105, 106, 109 (Pellican), 111, 113 (Bucer and Paul Fagius), 122, 153 (Schwenckfeld), 168, 178 (Strasbourgers), 178, 213, 277, 299, 302 (Rabus). In addition there are many incidental words of courtesy such as "lieber herr," "hertzlieber herr," or expressions of thanks or prayer: pp. 100, 106, 108, 112, 123, 124, 125, 126, 139, 141, 145, 149, 151, 152, 182, 183, 188, 192, 194, 204, 278, 286.

[30] *Corpus Schwenckfeldianorum* 8, #409, p. 585.

[31] *Corpus Schwenckfeldianorum* 9, #441: "Die Gnad unsers HERREN Christi/ &c. Ewer antwort so ir in vergangener zeit auff mein schreiben gethan/ hab ich zuo sonderm danck mit freuden angenommen/..." p. 95 (greeting); "... wie ihr denn schreibet/ ir haltet es füer ein heiligen nüetzlichen zanck/ darinnen die warheit von Christo errettet werde/ wamit mir dann möglich/ wil ich solchs in aller Christlichen lieb umb euch und die ewern verdienen." p. 98 (conclusion).

[32] *Corpus Schwenckfeldianorum* 9, #441: "... welchs mich denn euch als meinem lieben Herren und freund in diser zeit weiter zuoschreiben hat verursacht/ bit gar freundtlich/ wöllets in guotem also von mir auffnemen/ und mir hierin claren underricht zuogeben euch nicht beschweren." (p. 95) "... geliebter Herr ..." (p. 96) "[glory of Christ] drumb daß ich ihr auch hoffe theilhafftig zuo werden/ welchs ja mir/ und allen Christen billich viel soll zuoschaffen geben ..." (p. 98).

not attribute to Him, so that I may know to beware of it."[33] The likeness between Schwenckfeld's teaching and the explicit words of scripture is Schütz Zell's key argument here as elsewhere, including in her later defense of Schwenckfeld to Rabus.[34]

Two other patterns of argument are familiar forms for Schütz Zell, as for many lay writers. One is the practical evidence provided by the probity and piety of the person being attacked. Schütz Zell recognizes that the issue is doctrine, but she also affirms that Schwenckfeld's life does not contradict what he says.

> Schwenckfeld's piety does not give me much concern, nor am I bound to it as you say. Nonetheless I happily grant to each person what God gives him [recognizing God's gifts], and yet also know that true piety, the grace of the Lord and the Holy Spirit must accompany the teaching if it is to bear fruit and be a blessing for people. However, here I am concerned with Schwenckfeld's teaching about the knowledge of Christ and His glory.[35]

For clergy, the relationship between doctrine and life could sometimes be more complicated than it appeared to lay people. Bucer had once written to Margarget Blaurer that Schwenckfeld's noble courtesy flattered Schütz Zell and thus she did not see the danger he presented to the church.[36] For Brenz, also, the problem with Schwenckfeld's piety is not public scandals but something more dangerous: Schwenckfeld deceives people like Schütz Zell by appearing to be an angel of light in order to teach a new gospel [Gal. 1:8]. To this she replies that as far as she can tell Schwenckfeld has not produced any strange teaching. "Therefore I do not consider Schwenckfeld an angel, insofar as I can understand how or where he teaches or introduces any other gospel about Christ than Paul's – as you seem to think."[37] Characteristically, Schütz Zell again claims to be able to judge Schwenckfeld's doctrine by scripture insofar as she understands

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[33] *Corpus Schwenckfeldianorum* 9, #441, p. 97: "Ich bitt aber auch abermals wöllet mir doch klerlich anzeigen warinnen oder womit S[chwenckfeld] unserm HERREN Christo irgendt ein ungebüerliche Eere zuolege, die Ihm die heiligen Schrifft nicht zuoleget, auff daß ich mich wisse darnach zuohalten ..."

[34] Schütz Zell, *The Writings*, p. 287: [credal statement] "wie das die schrifft bezeüget/ welches doch Schwenckfeld nie geleugnet hat/ sonder allzeit bekennt und noch /..."

[35] *Corpus Schwenckfeldianorum* 9, #441, pp. 97–8: "Was nu weiter S[chwenckfeld] frombkeit belanget/ gibt mir nicht viel zuoschaffen/ oder daß ich dran gebunden wär/ wie ihr meinet/ wiewol ich jederman was ihm Gott gibet/ von hertzen gönne/ und gleichwol auch weiß/ daß ware frombkeit/ ja die gnade des HERRER und der H. Geist bey der Leere sein muoß/ soll sie anders mit segen und frucht zur besserung der menschen abgehn/ Es ist mir aber beim S[chwenckfeld] umb die Leer vom erkantnus Christi/ und von seiner Glorien und herrlicheit zuothuon/ ..." Elsewhere she speaks of God's gifts to Schwenckfeld, see Schütz Zell, *The Writings*, pp. 123, 208, 269–72.

[36] See McKee, *Life and Thought*, 3 Feb. 1534, quoted p. 457 n. 102.

[37] *Corpus Schwenckfeldianorum* 9, #441, p. 98: "Darumb so halt ich ja S[chwenckfeld] noch füer keinen Engel/ so wenig ich ersehen kan/ womit oder warinn er ein ander Evangelium/ denn Paulus von Christo leeret oder einfüeret [Gal. 1:8]/ wie ihrs dafüer achtet/ ..."

both in order to compare them. However, she politely goes on to say that she will be happy to hear Brenz demonstrate any errors in Schwenckfeld's teaching ... according to scripture![38]

Another favorite lay argument in polemic is to point out contradictions in the opponent's own stance. This is the most intriguing of Schütz Zell's responses to Brenz because it clearly links this "B" letter to Brenz with Schwenckfeld's earlier "A" letter to Schütz Zell herself. In his critique Brenz had accused Schwenckfeld of contradicting himself, so in his "A" letter to her Schwenckfeld tells Schütz Zell that it is actually the other way around: Brenz now contradicts what he had written in his 1527 commentary on John. To demonstrate this Schwenckfeld translates some quotations for Schütz Zell.[39] The next year in the "B" letter to Brenz, Schütz Zell borrows these translations from his own 1527 commentary to send back to him, asking him to explain how he could repudiate them. Brenz claims that Schwenckfeld maligns him by accusing him of changing his position. "That you write that Schwenckfeld accuses you of having previously held the teaching about Christ's glory which he writes and confesses: that I can show you from what you have written about the gospel of John."[40] Schütz

[38] *Corpus Schwenckfeldianorum* 9, #441, p. 98. "Wil mir aber bein euch/ als bey dem mehr verstendigen/ tröstlich versehen/ werdet mir solchs alles nach der lenge nu weiter deutlich anzeigen/ auff daß es aber besser beschehen möge/ schick ich euch hiebey etliche seiner Büechlen/ bitt wöllet nachmals also mit mir gemüehet sein/ und auch umb ander guothertzigen willen/ dieselbigen mit fleisse lesen/ die Irrthumb außziehen/ und mit H. Schrifft zeugnus mir darneben einen guoten underricht geben/ ..."

[39] *Corpus Schwenckfeldianorum* 8, #408, p. 573 (Brenz's charge; see also Appendix I). Schwenckfeld's response, p. 579: "Nu wird gleichwol durch gedacht judicium/ wann es mit deme/ was der Autor zuovor üebern Johannem hat geschrieben/ conferirt/ liechtlich offenbar/ daß er unbestendig ist in seiner leer/ un nit auß gewissenschafft des glaubens/ nicht auß des h. Geists einsprechen noch von grund seines hertzens/ sonder allein auß menschlichem guotbeduncken/ nach dem blossen Buochstaben/ den er nach der zeit schicklicheit hin und wider drehet/ vom HERRN Christo schreibt oder leeret. Denn vor etlicher jaren/ als er mit den Schwermern des Sacraments halben sein parthey hett/ hat er die gottheit des fleischs und leibs Christi (wiewol auff seine weise) fest verthediget/ da er auch bey der gottwerdung des menschens Christi eben unser meinung gewest ist/ Nu aber/ nach dem ihm der neid sein gemüet/ wie leider zuobesorgen verfinstert/ ... kompt er dahin/ daß er auch dasjenige/ was er vormals füer die gloria Christi wol und recht geschieben/ nit sihet/ sonder im selbs widerwertig zuoschreiben/ ..." Then pp. 579–80 give translations from Brenz's 1527 commentary.

[40] *Corpus Schwenckfeldianorum* 9, #441, p. 96: "Daß ir schreibet/ S[chwenckfeld] beschuldige euch/ ihr habt es etwo auch also gehalten/ wie er von der herrlicheit Christi schreibet oder bekennet/ achte ich kome auß deme so ir üebern Johannem geschrieben/ ..." The accusation is not explicit in the "A" letter but the *Corpus Schwenckfeldianorum* editors (p. 96 n. 2) identify it as referring to quotations in Schwenckfeld's *Confession*. He does make this accusation in the 1543 letter to KSZ, p. 580: "Auß welchem nu offenbar wird/ was dieser Lehrer von der menscheit Christi etwan hat gehalten/ so ers anders von hertzen hat gemeinet/ wie er alhie vom menschen Christo schreibet/ daß er nemlich müesse Gott sein/ Mit was gemüet kan er denn heut von erkanter Warheit abfallen? und den andern Adam unsern HERRn und Gott füer ein creature halten?" This also suggests that there might have been

Zell firmly rejects the accusation; Brenz has in fact changed, in proof of which she quotes two passages of his 1527 commentary.

Is what Schütz Zell says here true? Examination of Brenz's 1527 commentary and his later *Homilies on John*[41] indicates both that the Schwenckfeld-Schütz Zell quotations are accurate and that Brenz had altered his language. Latin extracts from Brenz's 1527 text (published 1528) were found among Schwenckfeld's papers and printed with these letters by his editors. These have been compared with Brenz's original and with the German translations in the "A" letter to Schütz Zell. [See Appendix II] In the quotations from Jn. 5:27 Schwenckfeld omits a section (though he appears to try to summarize it in his next paragraph). Schütz Zell copies Schwenckfeld's German translation, but adds an abbreviated phrase from his translation of Brenz on Jn. 5:22 which Schwenckfeld placed after the one on 5:27. The longer direct quotation which Schütz Zell cites comes from Brenz on Jn. 16:17, where Schwenckfeld's Latin transcription is again accurate, this time without omissions. However, when Schütz Zell quotes the German translation she twice inserts a couple of words ("And further" and "you write"), apparently for the sake of emphasis, though without changing the sense.

Examination of Brenz's considerably longer *Homilies*, published in two parts in 1545 and 1548, indicates that by the 1540s he had not only expanded his exposition but also altered some of his language.[42] On Jn. 5:22 there is an extensive discussion of how Jesus Christ has the authority to judge, with a detailed discussion of different kinds of law (natural, Mosaic, Roman, papal, monastic, Jewish and Muslim) to define by what law Christ would judge. The answer is: "by the gospel" (effectively, justification by faith). On Jn. 5:27 Brenz deals with the phrase *filius hominis* and how that can be applied to Jesus Christ. The reasoning is rather ingenius as he works to distinguish what he means from any idea of deification, which his unguarded 1527 language expressed. First Brenz cites Augustine that Jesus the *homo* can be seen, whereas God cannot be seen, and a visible judge is appropriate. Then he deals with the vision in Dan. 7:9–14, which

another exchange of letters between Brenz and KSZ after "A" and before "B" in the *Corpus Schwenckfeldianorum* , or it may simply be that Brenz made explicit what was implicit in the "A" letter to him. In 1544 KSZ may be echoing Schwenckfeld's own critique: "Solchs alles hat gedachter Brentz etwan/ da er noch eines gesunden gemüets und *Imperturbatae conscientiae* gewest ist/ ..." (p. 580).

41 Brenz, *D. Johannis Evangelion, Johannis Brentii Exegesis, per autorem diligenter revisa, ac multis in locis locupletata*, (Haganoe: Johan Sece, 1528). Also see Brenz's *In Evangelion quod insribitur, secundum Johannem Exegesis* [*Homilia*] published as vol. 6 of Brenz's *Opera Omnia*, 8 vols. (Tübingen: Georgius Gruppenhachius, 1576–90).

42 Brenz (1545–48), *Tomus Sextus*. The relevant sections of John 5 are found in Homilia 45, f228–34; Homilia 46, f234–9.

he considers a description of Christ's majesty (even though Daniel calls Him "*filius hominis*").

> This is Daniel's speech about the majesty of Christ, whom he calls "Son of Man." When therefore Christ says this: He gave Him power of judging also, because He is the Son of Man, it appears to have this meaning. He, who restored to health the man who had been ill for thirty eight years [Jn. 5:2–9], received from God not only the power of justifying but also of judging men, because He is that Son of Man whom Daniel saw presented to the Ancient of Days, and given all power, honor, and reign.[43]

On Jn. 16:17 Brenz discusses how Christ justifies sinners through His death ("going to the Father"). "... so that everyone who believes in Him, even if he is still a sinner, nevertheless is accounted just before God's tribunal on account of Christ, and made heir of all heavenly goods. This is our righteousness: there is no other by which we can be saved."[44] Clearly, justification is being distinguished from deification, and Brenz in 1540s is different from Brenz in 1527!

Some Conclusions about Schütz Zell's Letter to Brenz

While it may not ever be possible to prove absolutely that the second letter to Brenz found in the *Corpus Schwenfeldianorum* was actually composed by Schütz Zell, the internal evidence makes that the most likely conclusion. Comparison of the various "A" and "B" letters indicates that this second "B" letter logically fits more with the "A" set than with the other "B" one. More significant is the character of the language and argumentation. These show many of the marks of Katharina Schütz Zell, lay reformer of the "common people": 1) the courtesy of a less educated person (woman) to a learned pastor; 2) an argument on the grounds of inconsistency to an authority figure who contradicts himself; 3) the role of piety in evaluating a Christian's doctrine; 4) the constant appeal to scripture as *the* (only) unquestionable authority.[45]

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[43] Brenz (1545–48), *Tomus Sextus*, f239 [misprinted 229]: "Haec est concio Danielis de majestate Christi, quem vocat filium hominis. Cum ergo Christus hic dicit, potestatem dedit ei judicandi quoque, quia filius hominis est, hanc videtur habere sententiam. Is qui aegrotum triginta octo annorum restituit sanitati, accepit a Deo non solum potestatem justificandi, sed etiam judicandi homines, quia est filius ille hominis, quem Daniel vidit oblatum antiquo dierum, & datam esse omnem potestatem, honorem & regnum."

[44] Brenz (1545–48), *Tomus Sextus*, f643: "... ut omnis qui credit in eum, etsi adhuc peccatum habet, tamen reputetur propter Christum coram tribunali Dei justus, & fiat haeres omnium coelestium bonorum. Haec est notra justitia: nec est alia, qua possimus servari."

[45] The use of proverbs as part of an argument is also especially typical of vernacular writers; both Schwenckfeld "A" and Schütz Zell "B" do so, but the latter seems a more natural speech form (see quotation at n. 27).

C: Schwenckfeld and Pellican Before summing up the way that Schütz Zell's role in this correspondence between Schwenckfeld and Brenz illustrates her "ecumenical" role, it is helpful to look more briefly at the somewhat analogous effort she made to encourage the Zwinglian Pellican to treat Schwenckfeld with more respect.

Again the source of information is a letter from Schwenckfeld to Schütz Zell, dated May 2, 1545, discussing the situation with the Zwinglians on the basis of a letter from Pellican to Schütz Zell. The would-be mediator had apparently written to two reformers, Pellican and someone else who is not named, and Pellican wrote back to her. This reply Schütz Zell loaned to Schwenckfeld. In his next letter to Schütz Zell, Schwenckfeld clearly distinguishes between his affinity with the Zwinglians and his great differences from the Lutheran position of the 1540s (a line of theological reasoning which Schütz Zell herself in fact shared).[46] Schwenckfeld expresses his respect for Pellican and the Zürichers, and his sense that they share the same faith as he, though they rely too much on their human gifts and have not reached full understanding.[47] Before going on to explain the differences between the Zwinglians' teaching and his own, Schwenckfeld appears to cite or refer to something in Pellican's letter to Schütz Zell, from which it may be inferred that she had rebuked the Zwinglians for treating Schwenckfeld the way that they angrily accused Luther of behaving to them.[48] It would be in character for the frank lay woman to rebuke a friend or acquaintance for behaving in an unloving manner.

Thus, although no doubt some differences of doctrine were also considered, an important part of Schütz Zell's argument to Pellican in defense of Schwenckfeld was probably based on the command to love one's neighbor as oneself. The Zwinglians' objection to some of Schwenckfeld's teaching was no excuse for (mis)treating him in the way they had been (mis)treated. Their own experience should have led them to be more generous, and their Strasbourg friend believes she is right to remind them of this!

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[46] *Corpus Schwenckfeldianorum* 9, #491, p. 332: "wiewol ich beim Luther nicht sein noch üeberall stehen wil/ wider bey seiner Kirch/ Sacrament oder lehre/ wie es zwar heut damit gethan ist/ ..." For KSZ's similar views, see McKee, *Life and Thought*, pp. 289–91; it is notable that she does not cite any of Luther's later works but can use his early ones against Rabus!

[47] *Corpus Schwenckfeldianorum* 9, #491, p. 332: "[Referring to Pellican] habe ihm allwegs güets hören nachsagen/ Sie bleiben bey dem iren/ unser HERRE JESUS/ der einige Lehrmeister aller geheimnis Gottes/ wölle inen ein bessers zuo erkennen geben/ und daß sie sich nach seinem Reiche der gnaden mehr und fleissiger mögen umbsehen/ auch auff ihre kunst unnd natüerliche gaben nicht vergeblich verlassen/ Daas wüensche ich Pellicano und den Züerichern von hertzen."

[48] *Corpus Schwenckfeldianorum* 9, #491, p. 332: "Daß sie aber mein nicht wöllen und mich widerumb dem Luther/ wie Luther vormahls inen/ zuo werffen/ ist mir nichts entgegen/."

IV: Conclusion: Katharina Schütz Zell's Lay Ecumenical Voice

Neither of Schütz Zell's efforts to bring better understanding between Lutherans and Schwenckfeld, or Zwinglians and Schwenckfeld, succeeded in their goal, and after 1545 she was apparently preoccupied with other matters (the Schmaldkald War and her husband's ill health and death). The correspondence which she had initiated and by which she hoped to foster a dialogue between Brenz and Schwenckfeld, then Pellican and Schwenckfeld, does, however, give some insights into Schütz Zell's "ecumenical" efforts.

It is evident that the lay woman believed that knowledge contributes to understanding, and the way to help people come to agreement or mutual acceptance is by persuading them to read what their opponents – those they regarded as theologically wrong – actually wrote. Along with this was the idea that if they were forced to explain what was wrong on the basis of scripture, these clergy might find their differences were not so serious. At least, she was determined to ask those who accused each other of wrong teaching to listen to an explanation, on the principle that perhaps some of the problem was misunderstanding.

Furthermore, Schütz Zell saw it as her job to help the clergy, including by challenging them when they did not live up to their calling. Theological arguments are not just for the university educated or ordained; educated laity also have an obligation and right to be involved. In fact, Schütz Zell seems to have thought that their scholastic terminology hindered rather than helped the clergy communicate, and the Biblical knowledge of a ("lay") Christian who knew scripture well could assist the official theologians. She was certainly not afraid to try to apply "tough love" when she felt it was her calling, and was always ready to insist that everyone should stick to scripture for proof. It is probable that Schütz Zell did not understand the whole argument about the creaturehood of Jesus Christ, based as it was on Aristotelian definitions. She consistently replies to these arguments by referring to the scriptural character of Schwenckfeld's teaching, indicating that she may well not have grasped what was troubling the academic theologians. Despite missing the fine points of the debate, however, it is virtually certain that Schütz Zell would have considered the Aristotelian categories irrelevant; in comparison with the Bible all the scholastic distinctions in the world are worthless.

This argument makes visible one of the most important ways that a lay theologian's grasp of *adiaphora* could differ from that of Protestant clergy. Even though the latter rejected the claims of traditional scholastic doctrines, their patterns of thought were influenced by the categories and logic of the school theology even when they affirmed *sola scriptura*. For Protestant clergy like Brenz to say that Jesus was a man was to say that He was a creature; Protestant laity like Schütz Zell did not feel compelled to draw this conclusion. Both would agree that Jesus must be true God and

true Man; but while clergy usually understood "man is a creature" to be a necessary doctrine, a lay person would consider this unnecessary (if not actually wrong because it is not explicitly Biblical).

Closely related to this argument was the puzzlement or disgust of laity when clerical reformers apparently changed their minds without good (Biblical) reason. Much of the earliest – more "ecumenical" or pre-division – Protestant theological writing had been shaped by the appeal to scripture over against Roman doctrine, and that usually meant appeal to the literal words of the Bible. This was ground that educated laity, even among the "common people," could share. As it became increasingly apparent that the simple text of scripture was not so simple or clear, clerical reformers began to refine their definitions and language to prevent misunderstanding – as Brenz did when he published his *Homilies on John* in 1545–48, implicitly if not explicitly repudiating his 1527 commentary. To laity, this return to scholastic terminology was inappropriate, if not in fact wrong; for them, Biblical language was the standard. This stance did not require a simple-minded literalism, as Schütz Zell's own insightful scriptural arguments demonstrate. Although a member of the "common people," she was a rather sophisticated student of the Bible; a few years after this correspondence she would insist that knowing scripture means more than being able to recite it without real comprehension.[49] But she was also content with what the Bible said; and anything that was not stated in the Bible could not be necessary for salvation.

A further aspect of Schütz Zell's "ecumenical" practice which was at least more characteristic of lay theologians than clergy was her great concern for love of the neighbor. This constituted a factor almost as important as essential doctrine, and much more significant than secondary disagreements. Schütz Zell's correspondence with Brenz and Pellican about Schwenckfeld's teaching aimed more at a mutual acceptance or good will among the reformers than explicit doctrinal agreement. This is obvious in her praise for Matthew Zell's attitude toward Schwenckfeld, and in the appeal to Pellican to treat Schwenckfeld differently because he knew how Luther's unloving behavior had affected himself and other Zwinglians. The same theme, however, is also implicit in the way Schütz Zell cites Brenz's own 1527 commentary to him.

> [Having quoted his own text] However, what is different [from your words] in what Schwenckfeld writes in the article about the glory and deification of the man Christ? except that he clarifies it further. Therefore, dear sir, I want truly to warn you about attributing this charge to him falsely, so that you may

[49] See Schütz Zell, *The Writings*, p. 141. For examples of her scriptural arguments, see McKee, *Life and Thought*, pp. 398–403.

> not – out of human fear and partiality – condemn as error or abandon under pressure what you previously affirmed and confessed as truth.[50]

Schütz Zell essentially believes that Brenz has been pressed to change and she wants to encourage him to stand firm and not condemn the truth (held by Schwenckfeld and found in his own writings) out of fear or personal pique. Brenz's own commentary is evidence to her that he cannot condemn this teaching by conviction, so there must be other less admirable reasons. Though there may be some differences of wording, he should not condemn Schwenckfeld for agreeing with his (Brenz's) own 1527 text. The obligation of mutual acceptance (if not agreement) overrides secondary theological differences.

The "ecumenism" of Katharina Schütz Zell was not the result of blindness to doctrinal diversity, nor did it imply the idea that any teaching is acceptable so long as it is sincere. There are some false doctrines which must be consistently rejected and verbally combatted, though coercion is never justified or effective. However, there are also many other issues on which Christians may differ as long as they do so with courtesy and love for the neighbor. In this stance of distinguishing between necessary teaching and *adiaphora* for the sake of Christian fellowship, Schütz Zell is clearly a Protestant. It is a mark of her lay perspective, however, that the matters which she considers secondary are essentially ones which had not been defined by Protestants in the 1520s and/or which did not rest on explicit Biblical bases.

Appendix I: Letters to Brenz

I: 1543 Outline of major features of the "A" by Schwenckfeld, copied by KSZ. Key points: Answers charges of heresy (Eutychianism) and unfitness to teach. *Corpus Schwenckfeldianorum* 8, #409, pp. 584–9.

1) Schwenckfeld always confesses Christ as one Person with two natures, and the human is like the divine only after His glorification. Also he should be judged in Christian fashion, not by authorities (Aristotle) but by the teaching of scripture.

2) Academic/scholastic theology is not necessary for teaching; the apostles did not have it. Writing in German is done by others [e.g., Luther in mind] and Schwenckfeld would speak in public if he were allowed.

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[50] *Corpus Schwenckfeldianorum* 9, #441, p. 96: "Aber was schreibet S[wenckfeld] anders im Artickel von der herrlicheit und Gottwerdung deß menschens Christi? alleine daß er solchs weiter erkläret/ Drumb geliebter Herr/ will ich euch trewlich ermanet haben/ daß ir wol auffluoget/ damit ihr nicht auß menschlicher anfechtung/ und der Person halber/ vormals erkante und bekante warheit nu widerumb als Irrthumb verdammet oder darvon abweichet/ ..."

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"daß man nicht allein *Cum autoritate* etwas muoß abeleinen/ Sonder auch die irrige *Opinion* oder Ketzerey...mit guoter probation widerlegen/... deßgleichen des Autors argument mit stärckerm grunde der heiligen Schrifft confutiert werden/... [book is not obscure] wenn mans recht wil bedencken/ und mit der heiligen Schrifft *juxta Analogiam fidei*, alle ding fleissig wil conferieren/." (pp. 584–5)

"*Nominatim & perspicue* bezeuget/ er sey nit des Eutychetis meinung/ So kan ich *nulla conscientia* sagen/ daß er die Menscheit Christi verleugne/ oder in Christo nur ein natur wöl statuiren/..." [should not judge him] "mit einem *Praejudicio gravire*/ als ob er das halte/... [but] absque *praejudicio* darvon judiciert werden." (p. 585)

"Es sollen je *Christiana Judicia in rebus divinis ut libera & vera, ita candida & syncera* sein (wie ihr denn vor mir selbs wisset) daß nicht jemandes der *praejudiciis* beklagen düerffe/ und als ob er mehr mit einer Autoritet/ weder mit zeugnus der h. Schrifft opprimert und üeberwunden wüerde/ welchs beim Worte Gottes unnd Göttlicher Warheit meines achtens keinen bestand möcht haben." (p. 585)

[Brenz has drawn wrong inferences from Schwenckfeld's writings and accuses him of self-contradiction] "daß ihr seinen sententz und entschuldigung *Contra errorem Eutychetis* in ewerm schreiben selbs mit habt inferiret/ ... *Ubi sibiipsi contraria scribat*, Wa er ihm selbs widerwertig schreibe/..." [But he should please show her] "... *copiosius & clarius* ... mit etlichen Sprüechen der heiligen Schrifft entdecken/ [if she does not understand]..." (pp. 585–6)

[Schwenckfeld via KSZ answers, using Brenz's Latin question but giving scriptural answer, and asks for explanation of Latin] "Denn so bald ich *Creatorem und Officium Creationis*, das ist Gott mit seinem Schöpfferarmpt bedencke/ so folgt selbs was *Creatura* sey/ Nemlich *quod habet orginem ex opere Creationis sex dierum*, das seinen ursprung auß dem sechtägigen wercke der schöpffung hat/ Nun wil er [Schwenckfeld] Christum auch nach seiner menscheit nicht/ dahin verschieben in die erste Adamische ordnung der menschen/ sonder ihnen als den *extremum et novissimum Adam*, den andern newen Adam höher richten/ als einem menschen, ... *Juxta hoc Evangelii: Quod natum est in ea de Spiritu sancto est, Mat. 1, et Lu. 1. Quod ex te nascetur, &c. Filius Dei vocabitur*, Darbey er sich auch auff Paulum 1. Cor. 15 referiret, da er *duplicem hominem* definiert und spricht: *Primus homo de terra terrenus, Secundus homo Dominus de coelo*. ... [cites credo] Drüeber ich abermals von euch bericht begere/ *An creare et Generare in Deo idem sit* ..."(p. 586)

[explains Schwenckfeld's distinction between earthly and glorified Christ] Schwenckfeld "von Christo redet/ nit da er im ampt unser erlösung war/ *non secundum dies carnis suae*, sonder allein wie er nu in der gloria

seines Vatters ist/ *Postquam mortalitatem et quicquid in ipso humanae, non naturae, sed infirmtatis erat, per crucem et passionem deposuit atque in aeternum est a Deo sacerdos consumatus, Primogenitus ex mortuis factus, Declaratus filius Dei, Qui quamvis crucifixus fuit ex infirmitate, vivit tamen ex virtute Dei* 2. Cor. 13." (p. 586)

Schwenckfeld "durch den namen Creatur nicht verstande die verruckliche zuofelligkeit menschlicher natur/ hunger/ durst und dergleichen *accidentia, corruptibilia humanae naturae creaturae, quo habeat adhuc corruptionem et patiatur sitim, famem, &*c. ist offenbar/ daß solchs sein meinung nit ist/ noch sein kan/ weil niemands je an deme hat gezweiffelt/ daß Christus heut unsterblich/ und weder hunger noch durst leide/ *incorruptibilis ut neque famem, neque sitim patiatur ullam*, Daß er auch durch die *Creaturam* nicht die Substantz/ des menschens/ *substantiam hominis* meinen kan/ noch mit den *Eutychianis humanitatem in Deo abolitam seu absorptam esse*, das ist/ daß die menscheit nu in Gott außgelescht sey nit kan halten..." (pp. 586–7)

[Ergo, since prove that Christ is to be adored according to humanity as well as divinity, Christ is not a creature] "*Sicut scriptum est: Et adorent eum omnes Angeli Dei, Item: data est mihi omnis potestas, &c., Quem constituit Pater heredem universorum*." (p. 587)

[Then discussion of definition of creature and distinction from substance of humanity] "... wenn wir von der Creatur reden/ daß wir nicht entlich von der Substantz/ sonder von dem ursprung/ stand und eigenschafft der Substantz reden/ *Cum de Creatura loquimur quod non proprie de rei substantia loquimur, Multiplices enim variariumque substantiarum habemus Creaturas. Nam etiam coelestes sunt Creaturae, Angeli nempe, quae neque famem, neque sitim patiunter ullam. Sed quod origo, cursus, status & conditio substantiae statum per vocem Creaturae exprimitur*, Drumb so ist ein Creatur sein/ nicht der substantz des menschens/ sonder leib und seel haben/ *esse rationalem, &c.* Daas ist *hominis substantia*, Deßhalben wol ein Mensch sein kan/ der doch nicht ein creatur sey/ das ist der nicht seinen ursprung *ex ordine creationis sex dierum*, noch aussem alten creaturischen menschen Adam und Eva her hat/ ..." (p. 587).

[appeal to church father] "Wie auch Tertullianus schreibt: *Nove nasci debuit, Novae nativitatis dedicator* ...."

Citations from Brenz's letter, quoted in nn. 14 and 18.

[Finally defense of Schwenckfeld's training by comparison with the apostles] "... Als *De Vocatione ferme omnium primitive Ecclesiae doctorum, Pauli, Apostolorum, Prophetarum, Martyrum*, ja Christi selbs/ Und wa die Apostell *Artes illas* gelernt/ dadurch sie die gantze Wellt bekert haben/ Daß es nit allweg *in publica vocatione*, noch *in Dialecticis artibus* muoß gelegen gewest sein/ Johannes spricht: *Probate spiritus num ex Deo sint*, und Paulus *Spiritus nolite extinguere, Item: Omnia probate, &c.* da

kein solch Vocation war/ Zuodem/ daß die Aposteln *In humanis artibus* lauter Idioten gewest sein/ und sich bey allem des glaubens des offenbarung/ gnaden/ krafft unnd weißheit Gottes mit zeugnus der H. Schrifft haben beholffen, etc." (p. 588)

"*Quod latet in angulis & scribat libellos Germanicos*, is von andern mehr geschehen/ U*t omnis lingua confiteatur quod Jesus est Christus*, ... villeicht wär er auch lieber *in publico, si prae adversariis illi liceret* ..." (p. 589)

II: 1544 Here KSZ proceeds very simply to cite Brenz to himself and then ask for explanation.

First a reference to Sebastian Coccius's book of polemic against Schwenckfeld. (pp. 95–6)

Brenz says what Schwenckfeld writes is wrong and a new teaching. (p. 96)

Brenz says Schwenckfeld (falsely) accuses him of self-contradiction. [Here KSZ cites Brenz's own 1527 John Commentary and asks how this differs from what Schwenckfeld writes.] (p. 96)

KSZ explains the point in her previous letter to which Brenz took exception, above at n. 27.

Coccius says that Schwenckfeld denies Christ's humanity, to which KSZ answers by saying that the references to the glory of Christ's humanity refer to "heute ... im himmel." (p. 97)

There follows the accusation about Schwenckfeld's morality ("frombkeit" p. 97), above at n. 35. Then the conclusion with its good wishes.

Appendix II Comparing Brenz 1527 with Schwenckfeld and Schütz Zell

Portions of the text underlined are both Brenz and Schwenckfeld; those in bold are Schwenckfeld's, those plain are Brenz.

Schwenckfeld's Latin from Brenz's 1527 Commentary on John, found in the Appendix to *Corpus Schwenckfeldianorum* 8, #409, pp. 592–7. Brenz's Commentary on John (1528 re-issue of 1527)

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Schwenckfeld (p. 593), Brenz (pp. 86v–87r, 82r) on JOHN 5:27, 22

Pater <u>dedit ei potestatem judicandi, quia filius hominis est, nam qua Christus Deus est, natura sua potestatem habet judicandi, sed qua est homo factus, accepit potestatem judicandi</u>, **&c.** <u>sed qua est Homo factus, accepit potestatem judicandi</u>: hoc est, revelata est in eo judicandi potestas, & mundo ob oculus posita, ut jam manifeste cognoscamus, quis justificet aut salvet, & quis condemnet. <u>Accepit</u> autem hanc <u>potestatem</u>, quia filius

hominis est: hoc est, quia homo factus est, vilis, contemptus, & obediens usque ad mortem crucis. Eandem enim sententiam, reor esse cum Psal. 8. ubi dicitur: Minuisti eum paulo minus ab angelis, gloria & honore coronasti eum, & constituisti eum super opera manuum tuarum. Philip. 2. Humilem praebuit semetipsum, factus obediens usque ad morem, mortem autem crucis. Quapropter, & Deus illum, in summam extulit sublimitatem, ac donavit illi nomen, quod est super onme nomen. Omnis enim qui se humiliat, exaltabitur. Porro judicare nulli alii quam soli Deo convenit, sicut & vindicare: Mihi ait, vindictam, & ego retribuam. Item: Exurge Deus & judica terram, jam cum homini Christo datum sit a Deo judicium, oportet igitur hunc hominem Deum esse: Gloriam enim meam, inquit Deus, alteri non dabo.

Ex hoc manifeste apparet, quid Brentius senserit olim do humanitate Christi, Si modo ex animo senserit quod scripsit. Dicit enim, Quod potestatem judicandi Christus acceperit, qua est homo factus, **Oportet igitur hunc hominem esse Deum, quam sententiam mox cum loco ad Hebr. 2. & Phil. 2. de exinanitione & clarificatione Christi confirmat.**

Item pater dedit filio potestatem judicandi omnem creaturam, jam si pater tantam potestatem, quae solius Dei est, homini illi tribuit, oportet plane eum hominem Deum esse. Proinde non injuria Dei auctoritatem sibi arrogat, & de Deo patre gloriatur.

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Schwenckfeld (p. 595), Brenz (pp. 283r–v) JOHN 16:17

Pusillum et non videtis me. Nam crucifigar & moriar: Et iterum pusillum & videbitis me, quia a morte tertia die resurgam. Hoc illus est quod addit, Quia vado ad patrem: Per crucem enim & resurrectionem intravit Christus in patris regnum, Quid hoc? Nonne semper Christus eum patre fuit, propterea quod filius ejus naturalis sit? Verum est Christum semper eum patre fuisse, sed interim tempore carnis suae exinanivit seipsum, formam servi accipiens, nec est fortuna quadam servus factus, sed ingenti misericordia & charitate, qua voluit solus esse cum patre, Deus hominem servum induit, ut ex homine Deum faceret. Itaque ad patre ire, est hominem ad dextram Dei traducere, adeoque per crucem & mortem ex homine Deum facere. An non mira est crux? an non mira est mors? per quam homo fit Deus, traducitque ad dextram Dei (hoc est) fit omnipotens?

Comparing Translations of Brenz in Schwenckfeld and Schütz Zell

Portions underlined are in both texts; Schütz Zell's own are in bold; Schwenckfeld's own in plain script. One minor change marked *: Schwenckfeld writes: *hat* and Schütz Zell writes *hab*.

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Schwenckfeld's translation of Brenz for Schütz Zell, 1543 *Corpus Schwenckfeldianorum* **8, #408, pp. 579–80.**

Denn also schreibt Brentius üeber Johann. 5[27]. Der Vatter hat Christo gewalt zuorichten geben/ drumb daß er ein Son des menschen ist/ denn CHRIstus als Gott hat* von Natur den gewalt zuorichten/ Nach dem er aber mensch worden/ hat er solchen gewalt empfangen/ Richten aber wil keinem andern denn allein Gott gebüeren/ [Deut. 1:17] so wol als rechen/ wie er spricht [Deut 32:35, Rom.12:19]: Die Rach ist mein/ und ich wil vergelten. Item in Psal. [82:8] ...

Item abermals [John 5:22]: Der Vatter hat dem Son gewalt gegeben/ alle Creatur zuorichten. So nu der Vatter solchen gewalt/ der des einigen Gottes ist/ diesem menschen hat gegeben/ So volget von nots wegen/ daß dieser mensch Gott sey/ drumb er ihm denn nicht unbillich Gottes Namen zuoeignet/ und daß Gott sein Vatter sey, rhüemet. Auß welchem nu offenbar.... (n. 40)

Und cap. 16[17]. Johannis noch klärer üeber den spruch/ Denn ich gehe zum Vater/ schreibt er also: Christus hat* auß grosser barmhertzigkeit und liebe/ durch welche er nit allein Gott mit dem Vatter sein wolt/ einen menschen/ einen knechte angezogen/ Auff daß er auß dem menschen Gott machte/ Drumb so ist zum Vatter geen/ den menschen zuo der rechten Gottes füeren/ ja durch creutz und tod aussem menschen Gott machen/ Ists aber nicht ein wundersam creutz? und ein wundersamer todt? durch welche der mensch Gott wird/ und gefüert wird zur rechten Gotes (das ist) Er wird allmechtig. Und abermals im 17. Cap... Item in cap. 20. ....

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Schütz Zell's quotation of Brenz to Brenz in 1544 *Corpus Schwenckfeldianorum* **9, #441, p. 96**

Daß ir schreibet/ S[chwenckfeld] beschuldige euch/ ihr habt es etwo auch also gehalten/ wie er von der herrlicheit Christi schreibet oder bekennet/ achte ich kome auß dem/ so ir üebern Johannem geschrieben/ erstlich im 5. Capitel also: **Daß** Christus als Gott von natur den gewalt hab* zuorichten/ nach dem er aber mensch worden/ hab Er solchen gewalt empfangen/ Richten aber wölle keinem andern den allein Gott gebüeren/ **darauß ihr denn weiter bewerer/** daß dieser mensch GOtt sey/ und daß Gott sein Vatter sey.

Und Cap. 16. noch klärer/ Christus hab* einen menschen/ einen knecht an sich zogen/ auff daß Er auß dem menschen GOTT machte/ **Unnd weiter:** Darumb ist zum Vatter gehen/ den menschen zur Gerechten Gottes füeren/ ja durch Creutz und todt aussem menschen Gott machen/ Ists aber nicht

ein wundersam Creutz (**schreibt ihr**) und ein wundersamer Tod? durch welchen der mensch Gott wirt/ und gefüert wirt zur Rechten Gottes/ das ist/ er wirt allmechtig, **&c.**

CHAPTER SIX

Vera Ecclesiae Concordia: Martin Bucer's Blueprint for the Reformation in France

Willem van 't Spijker

Introduction. Historical background

The year 1534 was a turning point in the history of the European Reformation.[1] It was the year when the English Parliament confirmed Henry VIII's royal supremacy over the English Church, thus bringing the conflict with Rome to a head. The crisis which followed the Anabaptist apocalyptic "Kingdom of God" in Münster reverberated throughout Western Europe. Within France tensions were rife. The king, Francis I, was suspicious of the Protestant movement, but he was open to reform. However, his reformism was frustrated by the orthodox theologians who dominated the Faculty of Divinity of the Sorbonne.[2]

At the same time, the succession of Pope Paulus III marked another era, holding the promise of a General Council. A restoration of unity did not seem implausible at this time. Francis I was convinced that his European policy was bound to fail unless the fundamental religious issues were resolved. In spite of the opposition to reform by the Sorbonne theologians, the French court appealed to Melanchthon, the "praeceptor" from Wittenberg, who at this period enjoyed an enormous prestige, and who was to play an important role in attempts to bring about a reconciliation. Jean du Bellay, bishop of Paris since 1532, and cardinal in1535, and his brother Guillaume, were entrusted with the task of exploring the possibilities for reaching an agreement between Protestants and French reform-theologians.[3] Representatives of the Swiss reformation, and the

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[1] See e.g. Stephan Skalweit, "Die 'affaire des placards' und ihr reformationsgeschichtlicher Hintergrund", in Erwin Iserloh and Konrad Repgen (eds.), *Reformata reformanda. Festgabe für Hubert Jedin zum 17 Juni 1965*, vol. 1 (Münster, 1965), RGST Supplement 1, part 1, 445–65, 445.

[2] James K. Farge, *Orthodoxy and Reform in Early Reformation France. The Faculty of Theology of Paris, 1500–1543* (Leiden, 1985), SMRT 32.

[3] On Francis I see R.J. Knecht, *Renaissance, Warrior and Patron. The Reign of Francis I* (Cambridge, 1994), 306–28; see also Denis Crouzet, *La genèse de la réforme française 1520–1560* (Paris, 1996), 216–39; William Monter, *Judging the French Reformation. Heresy*

Strasbourg evangelical movement were approached in turn.[4] Melanchthon produced a working paper in case a meeting would materialize.[5] This document was sent to the Strasbourg theologians Martin Bucer and Caspar Hedio.[6] These two reformers then wrote down their thoughts about the necessity of a Reformation of the Church, and about how this might be achieved. The whole collection was sent to Paris, in the expectation that it would contribute to the possibilty of restoring union within the Church, and thus also to a more tolerable situation for the Protestants in France. Whereas for Francis I it was all a political matter, Melanchthon and the Strasbourg reformers cherished the hope that a meeting would help the French Protestants. Their proposals aimed at identifying the prospects for a real reformation of the Church in France. One could almost say that, while Francis I used religion to realize his European policy, Melanchthon, Bucer and Hedio, via this political route, tried to support the French Protestants.[7]

The recommendations of Melanchthon, Bucer, and Hedio

The tone as well as the content of the recommendations which, via Guillaume du Bellay, were addressed at the French king, were remarkably mild. Both Melanchthon and Bucer may have known the king's reformist view of the Eucharist, and thus may have been strengthened in their hope of the possibilities of a reconciliation. As Melanchthon, for his part, explained, in a letter to Bucer on the 1 August 1534, he had written in a conciliatory way about justification, and there were many issues which he had only briefly touched upon, leaving them open for further discussion.[8] Bucer and Hedio followed Melanchthon's example. Both were as eager as Melanchthon to keep open all avenues by which an agreement might be

Trials by Sixteenth-Century Parlements (Cambridge, 1999), 64–84; Nancy Lyman Roelker, *One King, One Faith. The Parlement of Paris and the Religious Reformations of the Sixteenth Century* (Berkeley and London, 1996), 189–206.

[4] Gottlob von Polenz, *Geschichte des französischen Calvinismus in seiner Blüthe bis zum Aufstande von Amboise i. J. 1560*, vol. 1 (Gotha, 1857), 245–305; Karl Josef Seidel, *Frankreich und die deutschen Protestanten. Die Bemühungen um eine religiöse Konkordie und die französische Bündnispolitik in den Jahren 1534/35* (Münster, 1970, RGST 102); Wilhelm Gottlieb Soldan, *Geschichte des Protestantismus in Frankreich bis zum Tode Karls IX*, vol. 1 (Leipzig, 1855), 135–60.

[5] *Corpus Reformatorum*, vol. 2, 741–75.

[6] Seidel, (see note 4), 16–46.

[7] The documents have been published by Melchior Goldast, *Politica imperialia sive discursus politici* (Frankfurt, 1614), 1276–87; for Bucer's *Sententia*, see Martin Bucer, *Études sur la correspondance avec nombreux textes inédits*, ed. J.V. Pollet, O.P., vol. 2 (Paris, 1962), 509–18.

[8] Heinz Scheible, ed., Melanchthons *Briefwechsel, Band 2, Regesten 1110–2335 (1531–1539)* (Stuttgart, 1978), 146, No. 1468; CR II, 775f.

reached. As Melanchthon wrote to Guillaume du Bellay, he did not doubt that the parties would meet each other's objections on all issues if "good and learned men could talk with each other in friendship and freedom".[9] Melanchthon was prepared to acknowledge in advance that the authority of the Church was not at stake.[10] Essential issues, for him, were the doctrine of justification, the Eucharist, the cult of the saints, monastic vows, and celibacy.

Bucer partially agreed with this. In what he said about the Eucharist he was very cautious, as, just at this time, the Wittenberg reformers on the one hand and the Swiss on the other hand were discussing the issue. Just as Melanchthon, Bucer thought there were no issues which would form an obstacle to restoring Church unity.[11] He indicated that the controversy had originated in the differences about the doctrine of justification. He gave his opinion on this, but hinted that on this as on other issues it would be possible to reach a compromise.

Compared with Bucer's point of view on the doctrine of justification, Melanchthon tended towards a much more conciliatory stance. The reformer from Wittenberg was by now renowned throughout Europe. In his opinion the controversy about justification was of less importance now than had been attributed to it originally.[12] Learned and wise men had agreed that the positions of scholastic theology were superseded once and for all. No one would be prepared to defend those absurd theses.[13] According to Melanchthon, the *docti* agreed on free will, original sin, and on related issues. In his optimism he reduced the doctrine of justification to two important *capita*, that of the forgiveness of sins, and that of the

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[9] *Melanchthons Briefwechsel*, 147, No. 1469. Goldast (see note 7), 1276: "Nec dubito, quin de omnibus articulis facile convenire posset, si Monarchae aliqui efficerent, ut aliquot boni et docti viri amanter et libere inter se colloquerentur, sunt enim controversiae non ita multae, sed ineruditi non vident, quibus de rebus agatur, et interdum praeter rem tumultuantur, nam in utraque parte discordia publica, ut fit, locum praebet multis indoctis".

[10] Goldast (see note 7): "Quare principio opus est ostendere eis, non haec agi, ut dissolvatur authoritas Ecclesiastica, sed alias magnas res disputari et explicari, quae ad conscientiam et ad Dei cultum pertinent".

[11] Goldast (see note 7), 1283: "A nobis itaque nihil prorsus fuerit, quod plane ecclesiarum concordiae restituendae ullo pacto obstet. Per nos licet Pontifex Romanus et ceteri Episcopi omnem suam potestatem, imo et ditiones retineant, tantum potestate sua utantur in aedificationem Ecclesiae, non certam destructionem".

[12] "Controversiam de Iustificatione ipsa tempora mollierunt: nam de multis iam convenit inter doctos, de quibus initio fuerunt magna certamina", Goldast (see note 7), 1277. D. Gerdes, *Historia Reformationis*, vol. 4 (Groningen and Bremen), 1923: "Id saltem certum est, *Philippum*, ... mitiorem se, quam plures aequum esse judicabant, se praestitisse …". Gottlob von Polenz, *Geschichte des französischen Protestantismus in seiner Blüthe*, vol. 1 (Gotha, 1857), 278, states even more strongly that Melanchthon "auf eine die evangelische Wahrheit bedrohende Weise", had been too accommodating to the King.

[13] "Nemo iam defendit ista absurda, quae leguntur apud Scholasticos", Goldast, 1277.

value and significance of good works. *Boni ac prudentes viri*, good and prudent men, Melanchthon thought, would easily reach an agreement. Ten, fifteen years after the controversy had started the time was ripe for a rapprochement.[14] Once they would find the right formulation for the two issues which he had identified, it would be easy to judge all the other questions.[15]

Hedio's approach of the controversial questions betrays his erudition and his knowledge of Church history.[16] However, he had little to add to the papers of Melanchthon and Bucer.[17] He advocated the organization of a preparatory synod, where representatives of both clerical scholars and magistrates would meet. He quotes examples for such a meeting from the history of the early Church. Hedio has little to say about the significance of the doctrine of justification. For him justification by faith consists in this, "that the hearts of the faithful are cleansed; that by God's grace we are justified, through the salvation in Jesus Christ, through faith in his blood". This faith results in a sincere life, followed by eternal life. Hedio quotes Chrysostomus' complaints about people who pride themselves on their faith, but whose faith is not followed by virtue. Hedio thought this applied to many of his contemporaries. He emphasizes the connection between forgiveness of sins and a regeneration of one's whole life.[18]

If we now compare Bucer's expositions with those of Melanchthon and Hedio, there are three things that strike us. In the first place, Bucer's starting point is the necessity of true piety in those who wish to promote the unity of the Church.[19] True unity can only be expected from those who belong to the Church. Secondly, Bucer pays full attention to the significance of "justification by faith alone".[20] For him, that is the doctrine about which the controversy between Rome and Reformers first originated,[21] and it was

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14 "etiam nunc tempore factus est mollior", Goldast, 1278.

15 "Correctis autem his duobus articulis iudicari caetera facile possunt", Goldast, 1278.

16 Hartwig Keute, *Reformation und Geschichte. Kaspar Hedio als Historiograph* (Göttingen, 1980), 61f.

17 "Cum Philippus et Bucerus rationem ineundae concordiae fuse tractarint, ego videri possim post Homerum Iliada scribere velle", Goldast, 1284.

18 Goldast, 1286: "De iustificatione facile concedi potest, fide iustificari hominem, hoc est, purificari corda credentium, et quod iustificamur gratis per illius gratiam per redemptionem, quae est in Iesu Christo, per fidem interveniente ipsius sanguine, et quod ex fide sit recta vita, et sequatur vita aeterna, sicut ex incredulitate mala vita et damnatio aeterna".

19 "Concordia vera Ecclesiae non potest nisi inter eo constare, qui sunt de Ecclesia, qui Christo vere credunt, et cupiunt facere voluntatem patris nostri, qu[i] est in coelis. Nihil enim commune Christo et Belial: Animalis homo quae sunt Spiritus Dei percipere nequit", Goldast, 1280.

20 Goldast, 1281.

21 "Dogmatum, de quibus controverti coepit, primum est de Iustificatione …". Goldast, 1281.

still the central focus of the Gospel. In the third place, Bucer states that as to the issue of the Eucharist there are possibly further difficulties to be expected.[22] This has evidently to do with the discussions which were taking place among the Reformers themselves, revealing important differences between them.[23]

Melanchthon thought that agreement could easily be reached on all these matters. In his view the debates among the Reformers about the Lord's Supper were difficult to explain to others, but if under the aegis of Francis I and Henry VIII good and learned men got together they could then attempt to solve the issues. Indeed, people's consciences were plagued by doubts concerning the Eucharist. In any attempt at mediation, one should be aware that both parties were guilty. In Wittenberg, Melanchthon explained, the usual format of the Eucharist had been kept.[24] Private masses had been abolished, because of the false belief that one could achieve forgiveness of sins for others. This issue needed to be discussed, therefore, as well as the Communion "in both kinds". This was a matter which was in the hands of the Pope: Melanchthon thought that he might make some concessions to the people.

In Bucer's opinion there were quite a few more issues to be discussed.[25] Daily, he wrote, people were confirmed in their mistaken beliefs that they could "proclaim the Lord's death" without penance and piety. It would be better to concur with Thomas Aquinas, who emphasized the communion with Christ and with the true members of Christ. Bucer regretted the disagreement about the presence of the true body and blood in the Lord's Supper, but in his judgement, which he would maintain all his life, it was just an argument about words.[26]

Bucer's opinion on "justification by faith"

As we just mentioned, however, in Bucer's opinion it was the doctrine of justification which had always been and still was the main issue around which the difficulties had started. In the following I shall focus on Bucer's views on this doctrine, first within his contribution to the memorandum

[22] "De Missa plusculum fortasse negotii erit: quia vulgo de hac opiniones obtrusae sunt, et ipso opere Missarum quotidie confirmantur, quae tam ineptae sunt, ut ipsis quoque Scholasticis damnentur". Goldast, 1281.

[23] Ernst Bizer, *Studien zur Geschichte des Abendmahlsstreits im 16. Jahrhundert* (Gütersloh, 1940), 46; and Nicholas Thompson, *Eucharistic Sacrifice and Patristic Tradition in the Theology of Martin Bucer* (Leiden, 2004).

[24] "quorsum enim attinet ceremonias mutare, cur non opus est? Semper enim non necessaria novitas fugienda". Goldast, 1278.

[25] "De Missa plusculum fortasse negotii erit …". Goldast, 1281.

[26] "Nobis igitur persuasissimum est, in re ipsa nullam esse controversiam: de verbis est". Goldast, 1282.

for a meeting with the French theologians. I shall then compare his views on this matter in the memorandum with those in earlier and later writings. However pivotal this doctrine was for Bucer, he maintained that a solution was obtainable. Sadly, as develoments continued to unravel, other issues, such as the concept of the Church, appeared to be fatally divisive: unity turned out to be unreachable. However, the historical impact of these other issues does not diminish the intrinsic importance of Bucer's view on what had been, in his view, the main problem. What, then, was Bucer's view of this "central doctrine", and why was it so important to him?

What was at stake, for Bucer, was the certainty of justification.[27] What still resonates here, is Luther's existential anxiety about human inadequacy – and the liberation he found in the s*ola fide*. Bucer's considerations on this point receive their urgency from his thought on pastoral ministry. If he emphasizes that in no way justification is a sort of trade in which human merit plays a role, it is because of a consistently pastoral perspective. Bucer observed that he differed from what many theologians thought.[28] However, he was certain that they would all agree "if they would confess, with Augustine, that the first grace (*prima gratia*) cannot be earned by any person, and that before that first grace nothing can be found in us that is of any good".[29] Free will, he held, is not naturally inclined towards the good. Human will must first be liberated by Christ and redirected towards the good. Therefore, nothing remains but that we are saved by grace alone, and not by any merit on our part, only by faith, that is by trust in God's mercy, who forgives our sins because of the blood of his Son and not through any work of ourselves.[30]

Bucer's doctrine of justification is closely connected with his concept of faith. He emphasizes that he is talking about true faith, which is active through love. Good works are not to be rejected if they originate from the

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[27] "… de Iustificatione, hoc est, quidnam illud sit quo certo nobis esse detur Deum nobis peccata condonasse et vitam aeternam adiudicasse. Haec prima omnium cura est, ut hunc habeamus propitium, quo ille nobis et hic et in futuro seculo sua bona largiatur: nam ut diffluant praesentia, experimur", Goldast, 1281.

[28] "Quantum etiam fiduciae in propriis cuiusque satisfactionibus et meritis collocatum? quantum obscurata gratia? quam maligne praedicatum meritum Christi? At vero quod nos in hac quaestione a vulgo Theologorum necessario variamus, id sic aperte in divinis literis exponitur, adeo decantatum est omnibus Orthodoxis patribus, sic vi veritatis ipsis quoque Scholasticis expressum est, ut si modo viri boni et graves, Christique vere studiosi hanc quaestionem excutiant, minimo sane negotio pulchre per omnia conventuri omnes simus." Goldast, 1281.

[29] "Omnibus in confesso est, primam gratiam mereri neminem posse, et ante hanc nihil boni meriti penes nos existere", Goldast, 1281.

[30] "Confectum et hoc est, nos fide iustificari, fiducia scilicet misericordiae Dei ultro nobis peccata remittentis propter sanguinem filii sui et nullis nostris operibus.", Goldast, 1281.

root of faith.[31] Nevertheless, there is no other foundation for the trusting certainty of faith than God's mercy and Christ's merit. Our works do not count in that equation. To the extent that they are really good they are gifts of God, whose honour is thus glorified, while we help our neighbour. If only these simple guidelines are respected, Bucer suggests, consensus will be easily established.[32] Bucer indeed emphasizes the *sola fide*, as he found it in Augustine; only the will which has been regenerated through Christ is raised towards the good: *De fide vera loquimur*.[33]

Presenting justification as he did Bucer maintained the gratuity of grace as much as its effectivity, as he did in his other writings. By grace alone we are saved, he emphasizes, without any merit on our part, and this grace is what we embrace through faith before doing any good work ourselves. More than Melanchthon, Bucer employs the ethical character of justification – based on the work of the Spirit. In 1536, in his Commentary on Paul's Letter to the Romans Bucer quoted Melanchthon's opinion, adding that it was the same as his own.[34] However, Melanchthon's emphasis was really on imputation as the essence of justification. Bucer accentuates the regeneration through grace, which takes its beginnings from justification. Typical for Bucer at this time is a certain process-character of justification by faith alone.

Bucer's ideas of justification in his early exegesis

A brief investigation of Bucer's first exegetical works confirms these findings. His concept of faith, as was implied before, is underpinned by an emphasis on trust – betraying his pastoral concerns. This had already been obvious when in 1527 Bucer, arguing against Anabaptists who held that nobody can believe if he does not love first, had posited that nobody can love if he does not know what trust is. As he explained in his Commentary

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[31] "Cum autem de fide vera loquimur, quae per dilectionem efficax est, satis liquet nos bona opera non reiicere, sed rite plantare, posita viva eorum radice, fide.", Goldast, 1281.

[32] "Perfacile igitur fuerit, ut in hac prima quaestione doctrinae sanctae, ex qua omnia ea fluxerunt quae novasse criminamur, consentiant boni viri.", Goldast, 1281.

[33] See n. 32.

[34] *Metaphrasis et enarratio in epist. D. Pauli apostoli ad Romanos* (Strasbourg, 1536; and Basel, 1562), in Robert Stupperich, ed., *Bibliographia Bucerana* (Gütersloh, 1952), 55a., p. 14: "Haec eo adscripsimus ut ostenderemus convenire nobis, nec veteres dissentire, et cum Philip. Melanchthone, et cum omnibus aliis, qui summam istam salutis nostrae rite praedicant, nempe nostri iustificationem esse nostri apud Deum gratuitam acceptationem, qua ille nobis remittit peccata, imputat iustitiam donat vitam aeternam, quam spiritu, iustitiae et bonorum operum plantatore et educatore hic in nobis inchoat, et in dies provehit". The same on p. 186: "Philippus Melanchthon iustitiam Dei hic pro acceptatione accipit, qua nos deus acceptat. Id vero cum eo convenit, quod nos per eam intelligimus incomparabilem illam Dei bonitatem in Christo exhibitam, qua et peccata condonat, et iustitiam imputat, et vitam aeternam largitur, eamque hic adspirando mentem novam, ac pietatis studium, auspicatur".

on the Letter to the Ephesians, God's promise to Abraham awakened his faith, as he was convinced by God's Spirit.[35] The right order, for Bucer, is preaching the divine promise, which, however, will not be effective until the Holy Spirit preaches the gospel in the heart of the believer, and thus convinces him.[36] Faith follows from hearing, *ex auditu*, not just, it is true, from the external Word, but from what does not differ a hairbreadth from this external Word.[37] Thus the Promise of the Word is essential as the foundation of justifying faith. Bucer employs his concept of grace in a relational interpretation. He translates the well-known text from the Letter to the Ephesians: "by grace you have been saved" (Ephesians 2, 5) as "*Benevolentia gratuita servatis estis*": gratuitous benevolence. This benevolence is behind the *ordo iustificationis*, which, Bucer says, is expounded in this Letter: "The order of our justification and our salvation is written down here, as briefly as possible, at the same time as clearly as possible. There is nothing from ourselves in it, and our works do not effect anything".[38] That we are saved by faith, should not be taken as if we by our faith would deserve salvation, and as it were prepare it for ourselves. Predestined to it by free election, by faith we accept salvation which God's grace has offered us.[39] In this order of justification, taken in a historical sense, election, preaching, promise, faith, and trust each play a role. They are connected to our own lives. "For through faith there is a beginning of salvation, through this faith we are carried over from the multitude of the reprobate into the flock of the elect".[40]

Again in his Commentary on Matthew, which also dates from 1527, Bucer places justification within a historical order of events. Essential is true faith, becoming visible in its fruits.[41] The strength of this faith, Bucer says, consists in a firm and strong persuasion (*persuasio*) of God's goodness, effected by the Holy Spirit. It is a persuasion which manifests itself to the heart, about that which we cannot see. This persuasion is stronger than whatever reasoning and more certain than any experience, and as a result we do not doubt God's goodness towards us.[42] This is the meaning of faith almost everywhere in Scripture. To the world's

[35] *Epistola D. Pauli ad Ephesios*, *1527*, in Stupperich, ed., *Bibliographia Bucerana*, no. 17, 19 verso: "Deus siquidem illi promiserat filium, et posteritatem innumeram, hoc credidit et inde iustus habitus est … quod, quid fuit aliud, quam promittent sobolem Deo, habuit fidem, persuasus utique a spiritu dei?".

[36] Ibid., 20 verso.

[37] Ibid., 39 recto: "Fides ex auditu verbi Dei provenit, non quidem externo solo, at eo, qui cum externo scripturae verbo ne pilum latum discrepet".

[38] Ibid., 52 verso.

[39] Ibid., 53 recto.

[40] Ibid., 53 recto.

[41] *Enarrationum in Evangelion Matthaei, Argentorati 1527*, in Stupperich, ed., *Bibliographia Bucerana*, no. 14, vol. 2, 20 recto/verso.

[42] Ibid., 19 verso.

indignation the Bible teaches us that we are justified *sola fide*, without our works: only he can be counted as just and blessed, to whom God has not imputed his sin, to whom He, gratuitously, has given justification. Bucer uses two concepts here: *donum* and *opus*.[43] We can only accept the gift of God's goodness, and thus we are freed from sin and justified and glorified, made children and heirs of God.[44] Bucer here again presents the *ordo iustificationis*: election, preaching of the Gospel, and persuasion through God's Spirit in the hearts of the elect, by which they are firmly convinced of the forgiveness of sins.[45] To the extent that this persuasion is stronger, their zeal will increase, strengthening, in its turn, their persuasion: these things are interconnected, in a process directed by the Holy Spirit.[46] "Thus it is a gift (*donum*) of God's favour and benevolence, it is a work (*opus*) of the Holy Spirit, by which man cannot doubt at all God's eternal goodness through Christ, and by which he becomes very zealous, not only as to the glory of God, but for the salvation of all, and as a child of God he does his best to involve God in everything".[47]

Bucer's Commentary on the Psalms (1529) deserves a special place in this context.[48] He wrote this Commentary under a pseudonym, "Aretius Felinus", wishing to give the impression that it was by a Frenchman. He dedicated the work to the Dauphin, François de Valois, who, together with his brother, was held hostage in Spain. In fact, Bucer meant to address the king, and appeal to his responsibilities to reform the French Church.[49] In an elaborate *Disputatio de fide* Bucer paid attention to the questions surrounding the *sola fide*. He quoted classical authors and referred to French scholars, to support his view of faith as *persuasio*.[50] Bucer also discusses faith in terms of a *virtus infusa*: "By divine providence this virtue is infused; it cannot be acquired by human capacities, as every orthodox believer will confess". It is necessary, Bucer explains, that God infuses faith, as an unfailing persuasion that He is our Creator, that He maintains us, and is our eternal Saviour, and that Christ is our Redeemer.

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[43] *Commentary on the Gospels, 1536* in Stupperich, ed., *Bibliographia Bucerana*, no. 28c), 364.

[44] *Enarrationum in Evangelion Matthaei*, vol. 2, 20.

[45] Ibid., 24 verso.

[46] Ibid., 24 verso: "Haec omnia agit et praestat, unus idemque spiritus, qui persuasa Dei bonitate, ita filios Dei, affectu et opere reddit".

[47] Ibid., 24 verso.

[48] *Psalmorum libri quinque ad Hebraicam veritatem traducti, et summa fide, parique diligentia a Martino Bucero enarrati* (Geneva, 1554) in Stupperich, ed., *Bibliographia Bucerana*, no. 25d).

[49] Ian Hazlett, "A Pilot-Study of Martin Bucer's relations with France 1524–1548", in Christian Krieger and Marc Lienhard, eds., *Martin Bucer and Sixteenth-Century Europe* (Leiden, New York, and Cologne, 1993), 513–21; and Jacques Courvoisier, *Une traduction française du commentaire de Bucer sur l'évangile selon Matthieu* (Paris, 1933).

[50] "… incomparabile Galliarum decus G. Budaeus", *Psalmorum libri quinque*, 29.

It is understandable, Bucer thinks, that the righteous live by faith, and are saved by faith, which is nothing else than that we are justified by faith; nothing else than that we are made righteous, and thus saved.[51] This only happens to us, when it is given to us to think about God that which is really important (*id quod est sentire*), and thus be certain of his goodness towards us. And this only happens when through the Spirit we really love God. Bucer here connects the persuasion of God's goodness towards us with our love of God "with all our heart", a love which transforms our will, so we begin to cherish heavenly desires.[52] Nobody should assume that this conception of justification excludes good works. Church Fathers such as Hilarius, Ambrosius, and Cyrillus already had established the *sola fide*. They also pointed out, however, that this does not eliminate good works, as if these would not be relevant for our righteousness and salvation. In this context Bucer refers to "modern theologians" and their ideas about a *fides formata* as a living, true faith, active through love. He also draws attention to the opinions of other Church Fathers, who, like Chrysostomus, denied, in a good and devout way, that we are justified by faith alone. Finally he suggests that one should not argue about the *sola*.[53] We may conclude that Bucer's Commentary on the Psalms betrays his wish to accommodate the scholastic theologians at the Sorbonne.

Tetrapolitana, 16 Articles and the *Defensio adversus Axioma Catholicum*

The Tetrapolitana contains a thorough analysis, written by Bucer, of justification, in the main text as well as in the apology.[54] Bucer discusses the doctrine of justification and the doctrine of faith in the context of the question how man is made to partake in the redemption finished by Christ. He emphasizes divine benevolence, which we can receive only through the merit of Christ and by faith alone. The biblical arguments are mainly taken from the Gospel of John, allowing Bucer to highlight the work of God the Father drawing man (cf John 6, 44) – just as Zwingli did. Our righteousness, as our eternal life, consists in this, that we know God and

[51] "Hinc iam facile intelligere est ut iustus fide vivat, ut iusti fide et salvi reddamur …"; "Ex his aeque iam liquet fide nos iustificari atque salvari. Etenim nos iustificari, nihil aliud est quam nos iustos, eoque et salvos reddi, tum enim salvi sumus quum recte valemus, et ita ut conditi sumus, habemus, Divina imagine, hoc est omnimoda bonitate ornati"; "iustos et salvos evadere", ibid., 29.

[52] "Id enim ubi per Spiritum Dei contigit, Deum ex toto corde, ut quo nihil melius nobis credimus, amemus. Hic tum amor totos Divinae voluntati conformat …", ibid., 29.

[53] Bucer refers to Paul, who does not actually use *sola*. However, he does not want to judge the Fathers, who based their use of the *sola* on Scripture. Ibid., 31.

[54] For the text see: *Martin Bucers Deutsche Schriften*, vol. 3 (Gütersloh and Paris, 1969), 9–63.

our Saviour, Jesus Christ. We can only come to Christ through the Father. On the other hand, we cannot know the Father unless the Son reveals Him to us. Given these texts, Bucer concludes that our salvation is not the fruit of our works, but the gift of merciful God.[55] In accordance with his ideas about the *ordo salutis* or *iustificationis* the gratuitous character of justification is taken from the proclamation of the Promise, which then through the work of the Spirit works faith in the believers' hearts. What Bucer says about good works, corresponds to the ideas of Augustine, who connects faith and effective love: in this way we are born again and the image of God is restored in us.[56] All in all, Bucer's ideas in the Confessio Tetrapolitana are no different from what he had written in his Commentary on the Psalms.

At a synod held in Strasbourg in 1533, 16 articles of faith were accepted, which also betray Bucer's ideas.[57] Again, his point of departure is the situation in which the poor sinners find themselves through the Fall in Adam. In this distress, Christ, truly God and truly man, has taken upon Him the suffering of redemption. On his own account, nobody is able to come to Christ. The Father has to draw us. Therefore the work of salvation is totally a matter of grace. To draw us, God uses the external preaching of his Word, which, however, does not work *ex opere operato*. The Spirit joins the Word, and thus the Gospel is made powerful to cleanse us from our sins. Redemption again takes place within the scheme of the *ordo salutis*.[58]

In the *Defensio adversus Axioma Catholicum* (1534) Bucer also discusses the issue of justification in detail.[59] In chapter two he writes that, among the disputed doctrines, the doctrine of justification is the most important. He defines this doctrine as about the way in which man can be certain about divine benevolence and mercy, and know that God reckons him among

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[55] *Confessio Tetrapolitana*, 53: "… nihil posse opera nostra conferre (quippe qui ut Natura filii irae eoque iniusti sumus, ita nihil iustum aut Deo gratum designare valeamus), sed initium omnis nostrae et iustitiae et salutis viri oportere a miserente Deo, qui ex sola dignatione et mortis filii sui contemplatione primum doctrinam veritatis et Evangelium suum misso, qui illud annunciet offert … facit oriri in tenebris cordis suae lucis radium ut habere annunciatio Evangelio fidem possimus, superno iam spiritu de eius veritate persuasi … moxque Deum salutem inde solidam consequturi."

[56] "De bonis operibus ex fide pro venientibus per dilectionem". Ibid., 55.

[57] *Martin Bucers Deutsche Schriften*, vol. 5 (Gütersloh, 1978), 388–92. See also: François Wendel, *L'église de Strasbourg. Sa constitution et son organisation 1532–1535* (Paris, 1942), 243–52.

[58] "Zu diesem Zug brauchet Got die eüsserliche Predig seins Worts unnd dann auch die Sacramente. *Der Glaub komet auss dem gehör*, jedoch ist *weder der Pflantzer noch der Begeüsser etwas, sonder Got der das Gedyen gibt*, alles". Ibid., 389.

[59] *Martini Buceri Opera Latina*, vol. 5, *Defensio adversus Axioma Catholicum, id est criminationem R.P. Roberti episcopi Abricensis*, ed. William Ian P. Hazlett (Leiden, Boston, and Cologne, 2000).

the righteous and partakes of eternal life because He has forgiven him his sins.[60] Bucer discusses the controversy between evangelical and scholastic theologians mainly in the context of the question how justification is brought about. It is, he says, the most important question about which man must worry. He is indeed seized by fear of God and can never be quiet in his conscience if he is not sure about God's favour upon him. That is why the Holy Spirit teaches us, throughout Scripture, that man first of all should seek the persuasion about God's mercy, which forgives our sins, because of which we must flee to Him.[61] Bucer is cautious when at the end of the article he declares that maybe he does not agree with the Sorbonne theologians in every respect about justification, but that his teaching is in accordance with that of all Church Fathers and with that of orthodox scholastic theologians.[62]

In his confessional and theological writings Bucer presents a doctrine of justification in which the work of the Spirit is inextricably bound up with the gift of free redemption. In his Commentary on the Gospels in 1536 Bucer very succinctly joined the concepts of *donum* and *opus* with the fully gratuitous character of God's benevolence.[63] Again, in this Commentary, he situates justification within the order of the work of God. Its first cause is God's benevolence, as God's will is the cause of everything. The next cause is the merit of Christ, which really is a gift of the same benevolence. The third cause is faith, by which we embrace and receive this benevolence and Christ's merit. But this faith itself is a work and a gift in us coming from a God reconciled with us. The last cause consists of good works, but, again, these are gifts of God's benevolence and effects of Christ's merit and fruits of faith. Here again, what becomes clear is that forgiveness of sins is related to a regeneration of one's whole life, a process resulting, beginning to end, from undeserved grace.[64]

A clear line appears, from Bucer's recommendations to Francis I in 1534 to the religious colloquies in 1539–1541, in which Bucer emphasized the free and unmerited character of God's grace, while at the same time highlighting the ethical content of faith, in which persuasion, trust and

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[60] Ibid., 21.

[61] Ibid., 22.

[62] Ibid., 23: "De ratione itaque, qua istuc adipisci licet, ut Deum abolitis peccatis, propitium et vitae beatae largitorem experiamur, hoc est, de nostri iustificatione, nobis cum Sorbona forsan non per omnia convenit. Convenit autem cum ipsis arcanis literis. Convenit cum orthodoxis patribus ad unum omnibus. Convenit denique et cum sanioribus scholasticis."

[63] *In sacra quattuor evangelia, Enarrationes perpetuae (1536)* in Stupperich, ed., *Bibliographia Bucerana*, no. 28a.

[64] Ibid., 364.

certainty joined hands with regeneration and true devotion.[65] From what we have seen so far, Bucer hardly seems to have changed his views. He is prepared, on the way towards unity and reconciliation, to make far-reaching concessions. However, he refuses to abandon the basic tenet of the Reformation, the first and pivotal doctrine, even if he is willing to make some adjustments. He is motivated by his conviction that man must live from grace rather than argue about it. He is convinced that a preaching of justification which does justice to both two elements mentioned before (*donum* and *opus*) will carry enough power to get on its way a much more far-reaching reform.[66] His appeal to the free power of grace enabled him, where Word and Spirit both work, to leave the outcome to the Lord.

Reactions of Bucer's friends

It is obvious that Bucer's efforts to introduce a reformed sense of the Gospel in France was in conformity with the pursuits of a number of evangelical theologians. They also concurred with the ideas of some Catholic theologians who propagated reform. Their attempts were based on the conviction that unity of the Church was still possible.[67] In these circles the *concilia* presented by Melanchthon, Bucer, and Hedio were not immediately rejected.

However, as Bucer sadly discovered, his efforts were strongly resisted by his own friends, and as a result his relation with them cooled.[68] First, there was the circle in Konstanz, around Thomas and Margaretha Blarer.[69] In Konstanz Bucer was considered a "Fanatiker der Einheit", a fanatic of unity, not exactly meant as a compliment. Karl Josef Seidel has analysed in detail the criticism of the Swiss theologians on Bucer's ideas and conduct.[70] From the beginning, in Konstanz, the Blarers and Johannes Zwick were distrustful of the project of Melanchthon, Bucer, and Hedio. Especially their ideas leaving open the possibility of acknowledging the Church hierarchy

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[65] Compare Volkmar Ortmann, *Reformation und Einheit der Kirche. Martin Bucers Einigungsbemühungen bei den Religionsgesprächen in Leipzig, Hagenau, Worms und Regensburg 1539–1541* (Mainz, 2001).

[66] W. van 't Spijker, "De kerk in Bucers oecumenisch streven", in F. van der Pol, ed., *Bucer en de kerk* (Kampen, 1991), 38; *Calvini Opera*, vol. 13, col. 356.

[67] Compare Erasmus's treatise *De amabili ecclesiae concordia liber* (Freiburg, 1533). This treatise was dedicated to Julius Pflug; see R. Stupperich, *Der Humanismus und die Wiedervereinigung der Konfessionen* (Leipzig, 1936).

[68] W. van 't Spijker, "De kerk in Bucers oecumenisch streven", 10–54; and on the criticism of the Swiss and Bucer's reaction, 37–45.

[69] Seidel, *Protestanten*, 94.

[70] Ibid., 88–122. Also see Reinhold Friedrich, *Martin Bucer – "Fanatiker der Einheit"? Seine Stellungnahme zu theologischen Fragen seiner Zeit (Abendmahls- und Kirchenverständnis) ins besondere nach seinem Briefwechsel der Jahre 1524–1541* (Bonn, 2002), 148–58.

met with fierce resistance. Zwick wrote that, if God would use the Pope for the benefit of the Church, this meant that God had changed.[71] In January 1535 Thomas Blarer in a letter to his brother seriously reproached Bucer. He saw, he wrote, the horror of destruction, which in the end of time would want to undo the work of God, and he attributed to the Strasbourg reformer a zeal for concord as if he wished to mix water and fire. He doubted that in this way the Gospel would find a way. The draft written by Bucer and Melanchthon also circulated among the other party, and they were claiming that they would maintain the hierarchy. What would people say if the most learned among the evangelical theologians were prepared to say that the Pope could remain the head of the Church?[72]

Bucer was taken by surprise by the criticism of his friends. He defended his position in a letter to Margaretha Blarer, on 4 February 1535, stating that he had not written anything which he should not have written, even if he would have to justify it before the whole world. He asked Margaretha to try to mediate and mollify her brother. Bucer remained true to the pastoral concerns which motivated his doctrine of justification: his point of departure, as he explained, was that one should not abandon those who, in the Catholic churches, called upon Christ; that one should consider how to come to an agreement with them; what concessions one could make to them; what we should change in ourselves for their sake.[73] In the same month, in another letter to Margaretha, Bucer argued that with their response to the French, Melanchthon, Hedio and he had tried to support those who confessed the reformed faith, enabling them to defend the cause of Christ against accusations that they were revolutionaries, advocating ungodly modernizations. It was Bucer's broad conception of Christ's kingdom that made him stick to his position, even against his friends in Konstanz.

Bullinger also was distrustful of Bucer's projects.[74] He agreed with Bucer, that true unity could only exist among those who were "of the Church" (*de ecclesia*), and who truly believed in Christ. At the same time he indicated that between those inclined towards reform and the Catholic bishops of the Roman Pope no consensus was possible. Exactly on the issue of the *politia ecclesiastica* Bucer had, in Bullinger's view, been too accommodating.[75] In the criticism of Bucer's friends remarkably few

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[71] Seidel, *Protestanten*, 94v.

[72] Ibid., 95.

[73] Ibid., 97; and W. van 't Spijker , "De kerk in bucers oecumenisch streven", 40f.

[74] André Bouvier, *Henri Bullinger, le successeur de Zwingli d'aprés sa correspondance avec les réformés et les humanistes de langue française* (Neuchatel and Paris, 1940), 197–202.

[75] J.V. Pollet, ed., *Martin Bucer*, vol. 2, 525ff. Heinrich Bullinger to Johannes Zwick, March 1535. In his answer Bucer referred to the catholicity of the Church: "ecclesia Christi non intra Helvetiorum fines concludenda est".

objections were made against his views on the doctrine of justification. Presumably, on this issue they agreed with each other. This is even more striking as during the religious colloquies held in the years 1539–1541 the parties reached a consensus on the doctrine of justification. It was again the issue of the Church, and the sacraments which made these colloquies fail.[76] Bucer's friends also blamed him for his general approach of being too accomodating and obliging in his nuanced wordings. There is no doubt, however, about his sincerity, and Bucer's conduct in his attempts to restore relations must be attributed to his deep conviction that all who are Christ's belong together. In addition to this Bucer – just as many others – saw the need to protect the evangelical believers against the repression to which they were subjected, especially in France. Furthermore, he was convinced that Europe would not be spared a ruinous future unless in religious matters concord was found. Developments soon proved him right.

Aftermath

The meeting for which Melanchthon, Bucer, and Hedio had drafted their memorandum never took place. The Divinity Faculty in Paris rejected the reform proposals outright. In their response to Francis I the Faculty defended the hierarchy of the Church under the authority of the Pope, and dismissed the reformers' ideas as, "in a way never heard before, against Scripture and against the Church".[77]

The "affaire des placards" in October put an end to any expectations of a reconciliation, let alone of an immediate improvement in the situation of the French Protestants. As Seidel's study of the Protestants in France has shown, the "affaire des placards" had disastrous consequences for the development of Protestantism in France. The immediate result was a bloody repression, crushing any freedom of the French evangelicals, and instigated by King Francis I, who, for all his reformism, was strengthened by the events in his opposition to the Protestant movement. Calvin's Letter to Francis I, with which he presented his Institution, shows how the reformer from Geneva was still involved in the events in his country. He strongly denied that the reformers were revolutionaries, or Anabaptists rebelling against the government. In his view, the French Protestants had tasted the Gospel and they longed for freedom. Their wish was cruelly

[76] "An welchen Gegensätzen sind die vortridentinischen Religionsgespräche zwischen Katholiken und Protestanten gescheitert?", in Hubert Jedin, *Kirche des Glaubens, Kirche der Geschichte. Ausgewählte Aufsätze und Vorträge, Band I, Kirchengeschichtsschreibung, Italien und das Papsttum, Deutschland, Abendland und Weltkirche*, (Freiburg, Basel, and Vienna, 1966), 361–6.

[77] See Daniel Gerdes, *Historia Reformationis*, vol. 4 (Groningen, 1752), 78–86.

disrupted through the atrocities with which the repression went hand in hand.

The "affaire des placards" and the persecution which followed also meant an end to the French foreign policy of pursuing an alliance with Protestant princes in Germany aimed at breaking the power of the Emperor.[78] Once the first wave of violence was over, Francis I tried to continue his earlier foreign policy. He sent envoys to the German princes, trying to isolate the Emperor. Francis I defended his repressive policy against the Protestants by referring to what had happened in Münster, presenting the events in Paris as if they were comparable to the German catastrophe. Apparently he did not succeed in vindicating himself. The German princes did not trust him. The rivalry between the French king and the Emperor had long dominated European politics. From now on, the religious element was an additional factor. An indication of this are the religious colloquies (1539–1541) organized by the Emperor, Charles V.[79] Again, during these colloquies it appears that agreement on the most important doctrine of the Reformation, the doctrine of justification, did not imply any overtures concerning the issues of Church and Confession. In France itself the events of October 1534 had become a catalyst separating the reformist party within the Catholic Church from the Reformation-movement.[80] The faultlines were now clear. The parties had taken their positions. The age of the Reformation resulted in a breach which did not change for over four centuries.

In the context of present discussions between Reformation and Rome, even if they have resulted in some agreement over the doctrine of justification, nevertheless the rifts over other issues seem as profound, and a serious rapprochement as elusive as ever.[81]

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[78] Bernard Chevalier, "France from Charles V to Henry IV", in Thomas A. Brady, Jr., Heiko A. Oberman, and James D. Tracy, eds., *Handbook of European History 1400–1600. Late Middle Ages, Renaissance and Reformation*, vol. 1 (Leiden, New York and Cologne, 1994), 369–401; Émile G. Léonard, *Histoire générale du protestantisme*, vol. 1 (Paris, 1961), 200–14; and F.C. Spooner, "France 1519–59", in *The New Cambridge Modern History*, vol. 2, *The Reformation 1520–1559*, ed. G.R. Elton, (Cambridge, 1958), 210–25.

[79] Athina Lexutt, *Rechtfertigung im Gespräch. Das Rechtfertigungsverständnis in den Religionsgesprächen von Hagenau, Worms und Regensburg 1540/41* (Göttingen, 1996); and C. Augustijn, *De godsdienstgesprekken tussen Rooms-Katholieken en Protestanten van 1538–1541* (Haarlem, 1967).

[80] See Daniel Gerdes, *Historia Reformationis*, vol. 4 (Groningen, 1752), 75 and 78–86.

[81] Karl Lehmann, (ed.), *Justification by Faith. Do the Sixteenth-Century Condemnations Still Apply?* (New York, 1997); and Jörg Baur, *Einig in Sachen Rechtfertigung? Zur Prüfung des Rechtfertigungskapitels der Studie des Ökumenischen Arbeitskreises evangelischer und katholischer Theologen: "Lehrverurteilungen – kirchentrennend?"* (Tübingen, 1989).

CHAPTER SEVEN

Politique and Spiritualist Tolerance: Bodin's *Heptaplomeres* and Coornhert's *Synodus*

Gerrit Voogt

In Europe, the early modern age of religious discord and strife spawned several tolerationist works. Among them two dialogues especially, one French and one Dutch, stand out and have often been seen as significant milestones in the sixteenth-century discussion of the existing plurality of faiths. In the context of the period of struggle between Henry IV and the League in France, Jean Bodin wrote the *Colloquium Heptaplomeres* (c. 1593), a work not published until the nineteenth century. Dirck Volckertsz Coornhert's *Synodus vander conscientien vryheydt* (1582) [*Synod on the Freedom of Conscience*] fanned the discussion about religious constraint in a fledgling Dutch Republic still locked in its struggle with Spain. These two works, although they seem to proceed from the same small camp of defenders of toleration and show some striking points of convergence, also bear the unmistakable imprint, in the format and nature of the discussions, of their different intellectual origins. This article examines the arguments and nature of these works within their respective contexts and link them to the different motivations and foundations upon which the authors base their thoughts.

Jean Bodin (1529/30–1596) led a *vita activa* of involvement in public life. He was a judge, held office under Charles IX, was deputy to the Estates General of Blois, and served as the personal councilor of the duke of Anjou.[1] At the same time, Bodin's erudition as a polyglot humanist was famed, his *Six livres de la république* (1576) standing out as his magnum opus.

Bodin's life and career are indissolubly linked with the vicissitudes of the French wars of religion. When, at the Estates-General held at Blois (1576), the third estate adopted an irreconcilably hostile stance toward the Huguenots, it was Jean Bodin, as deputy for Vermandois, who took exception and put forward a counter-proposal directed at maintaining

[1] For these and other details about Jean Bodin's biography, see Marie-Dominique Couzinet, "Note biographique sur Jean Bodin", in Yves Charles Zarka, *Jean Bodin: Nature, histoire, droit et politique* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1996), 233–44.

peace until a future council would be convened by the king.[2] He is grouped with the politiques, the middle "party" that gave the welfare and stability of the state priority over the internecine religious divisions.[3]

Further north, in the Low Countries, Bodin's contemporary, Dirck Volckertsz Coornhert (1522–1590), today increasingly recognized as a major contributor to the debate on toleration in the Dutch Republic, was actively involved in the initial phase of the Dutch Revolt.[4] He was a mostly self-taught artist, thinker, and writer, who regarded the Dutch fight against anti-heretical placards and against persecution of religious dissidents as the heart of the anti-Habsburg cause. When, in the early 1570s, the northern Netherlands began to score successes in their struggle against Spain, Coornhert was keenly aware of the price paid for this success. Calvinists formed the backbone of the anti-Spanish struggle, and independence of the north brought along anti-Catholic measures and the elevation of the Calvinist church to semi-public status, an anomalous position of the Reformed as on the one hand a "public church," but on the other hand as a body that was based on voluntary membership and clearly not universal.[5] Coornhert consistently denounced and attacked the trend toward a Reformed monopoly in the fledgling Dutch Republic, and in his writings and his disputations branded it a "new popery."[6]

The public careers of the two men show several interesting parallels. Both were regarded with suspicion by the Roman Catholic as well as by the mainstream Protestant side of the religious spectrum. In

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[2] Robert J. Knecht, *The French Civil Wars, 1562–1598*, Modern Wars in Perspective (Harlow, England: Longman, 2000), 202; this opposition to a resumption of the anti-Huguenot war cost him the favor of Henri III.

[3] See Mario Turchetti, "Middle Parties in France during the Wars of Religion," in Philip Benedict, Guido Marnef, Henk van Nierop and Marc Venard (eds.), *Reformation, Revolt and Civil War in France and the Netherlands 1555–1585* Proceedings of the Colloquium in Amsterdam, 29–31 October 1997 (Amsterdam: Koninklijke Nederlandse Akademie van Wetenschappen, 1999), 183.

[4] Still, Coornhert's radical defense of religious freedom is often overlooked or ignored, e.g. in Theodore K. Rabb, "Religious Toleration during the Age of Reformation", chapter 19 in Malcolm R. Thorp and Arthur J. Slavin, *Politics, Religion, and Diplomacy in Early Modern Europe: Essays in Honor of De Lamar Jensen*. Sixteenth Century Essays and Studies, vol. XXVII (Kirksville, MO: Sixteenth Century Journal Publishers, 1994), pp. 305–19. Joris van Eijnatten, in *Liberty and Concord in the United Provinces: Religious Toleration and the Public in the Eighteenth-Century Netherlands* (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2003), mentions Bodin as one of very few in his century who defended religious pluralism as a good thing per se, but he fails to mention Coornhert!

[5] The church "was simply the privileged confession in a multiconfessional society," writes Christine Kooi, *Liberty and Religion: Church and State in Leiden's Reformation, 1572–1620* (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 7.

[6] See e.g. D.V. Coornhert, *Theriakel*, in Coornhert's, *Wercken*, 3 vols. (Amsterdam: Colom, 1630), vol. 2, fol. 250C. Most works of Coornhert are digitally accessible: http://saraswati.ic.uva.nl:8510/c/coo/.

1567, Coornhert was jailed in The Hague on orders of the duke of Alva, under suspicion of having actively supported the anti-Habsburg Revolt. Bodin was imprisoned a year later in the Paris Conciergerie, suspected of being on the "wrong side" of the religious divide.[7] Both more or less retired from public life around the same time in 1584, the year which saw the death of the duke d'Alençon, the assassination of William of Orange, and the death of Neeltje, Coornhert's wife. Orange's hope for finding an outside sovereign for the embattled United Provinces had, until 1583, been pinned on Anjou, whom Bodin served as councilor, and Coornhert had supported Orange's position.[8] In 1581, Coornhert was reviled by his Reformed opponents (with whom he was locked in a perpetual debate) for his defense of the Roman Catholics of Haarlem when the latter requested through Coornhert the continued freedom to practice their religion in that town.[9] During the height of the war of the three Henrys in France, Bodin had perplexed some of his friends by apparently siding with the Catholic League against the Huguenots. Coornhert's support for the Catholic freedom to worship, under the circumstances of the struggle against Catholic Spain, was controversial but consistent with his defense of freedom of conscience for everyone. The support for the League by Bodin, *procureur du roi* in Laon, however, did run counter to Bodin's stated principles of tolerance and represents a response to pressure, despite the rationalizations Bodin himself gave for his actions.[10] In this regard, this episode may be more appropriately compared with a questionable action undertaken by Coornhert during a long exile in Germany, caused by his involvement with William of Orange and the Revolt. From there, in 1576, he sent a request to Philip II of Spain, intended to sway the king to lift his banishment from the Netherlands, after he had been excluded from the general pardon given by Requesens in June, 1574. In the request, he disavowed the Dutch Revolt and defended his own actions during and

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[7] For Coornhert see Henk Bonger, *The Life and Work of Dirck Volckertszoon Coornhert*, trans. Gerrit Voogt (Amsterdam/New York: Editions Rodopi, 2004), 40–50; for Bodin: see Couzinet, "Note biographique", 239.

[8] Jonathan I. Israel, *The Dutch Republic: Its Rise, Greatness, and Fall 1477–1806* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), 213; Coornhert, *Overweghinghe van de teghenwoordighe gelegentheyt der Nederlantsche saken* [Reflections on the Current State of Affairs in the Netherlands], in *Wercken*, vol. I, fol. 552C–553C.

[9] See Gerrit Voogt, *Constraint on Trial: Dirck Volckertsz Coornhert and Religious Freedom* (Kirksville, Missouri: Truman State University Press, 2000), 92–3.

[10] For Bodin's motivations, see Jean Bodin, *Lettre de monsieur Bodin* (Paris: Guillaume Chaudiere, 1590). Thus I disagree with the "justifications" provided in Paul Lawrence Rose, "The *Politique* and the Prophet: Bodin and the Catholic League 1589–1594", *The Historical Journal*, vol. 21/4 (1978), 783–808, since they may be interpreted more justifiably as rationalizations by Bodin; after all, Rose himself admits, p. 805, that "… had he lived in a royalist town there is little doubt that Bodin would have been an open supporter of Henri IV from at least May 1590 when the cardinal died if not before."

before 1567 in a skewed version of events that portrayed him as a pious Catholic who was not connected to the uprising.[11]

Overall, we can see some intriguing parallels between the men, but upon closer examination even the parallels may reveal more fundamental differences, as the following comparison of the two men's positions aims to show.

The history of *Heptaplomeres* (c. 1593) as a document, unpublished for some 300 years but widely disseminated in manuscript form, is well-known.[12] Georg Roellenbleck compares this late work with a "mighty Babylonian tower" that comprises a summary of Bodin's entire oeuvre.[13] The fictitious dialogue, written in Laon at the time it fell under League control, takes place in tolerant and "diverse" Venice, and the home of Coronaeus is perhaps modeled after a Venetian academy.[14] It brings together seven imaginary friends of diverse religious plumage for six wide ranging, erudite, at times intense but mostly courteous, discussions on theological and speculative matters. It is widely cited as one of the major tolerationist works of the century, yet tolerance is not the only or even the dominant theme of the friends' discussions. The gracious host, Coronaeus, is a devout Roman Catholic. The other six participants represent a religious cross section of Bodin's world, for they include two Protestants, a natural philosopher, a skeptic, a Jew, and even a Christian convert to Islam. Salomon, the Jew, who is clearly respected by the others and together with Toralba, the natural philosopher, often seems to get the best lines, is appropriately the Nestor of this ensemble. After their six discussions the dialogue ends famously with the friends' unanimous decision to continue their encounters, but from now on to avoid the topic of religion. This is mostly interpreted as a result of the realization,

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[11] The letter is printed in Bonger, *Life and Work*, 64–5; Bonger, ibid., 67, sees himself forced to admit that this letter is "a black page in his book of life which is otherwise so untainted …" Coornhert, in the Netherlands and while in Germany, actively supported the Revolt and was close to William of Orange.

[12] See Kuntz's introduction to Jean Bodin, *Colloquium of the Seven about Secrets of the Sublime*, trans. Marion Leathers Kuntz (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975), chapter IV, lxvii–lxxii. *Heptaplomeres* was first published in 1857 as *Joannis Bodini Colloquium Heptaplomeres de Rerum Sublimium Arcanis Abditis*, Ludovicus Novack (ed.), (Schwerin: Baerensprung, 1857; facsimile ed. Stuttgart: Friedrich Frommann Verlag, 1966).

[13] Georg Roellenbleck, *Offenbarung, Natur und jüdische Überlieferung bei Jean Bodin: Eine Interpretation des Heptaplomeres* (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus Gerd Mohn, 1964), 11: "Was sein gesamtes Werk trägt und durchzieht, faßt das Heptaplomeres als ein mächtiger babylonischer Turm zusammen."

[14] Marion Leathers Kuntz, "The Home of Coronaeus in Jean Bodin's *Colloquium Heptaplomeres*: An Example of a Venetian Academy", in R.J. Schoeck, (ed.), *Proceedings of the Fourth International Congress of Neo-Latin Studies, Bologna, 26 August–1 September 1979* (Binghamton, New York, 1985), 277–83.

on the part of the participants, that consensus on religion was impossible to reach, and that therefore they agree to disagree.

Upon his return from his third German exile, in 1576, Coornhert engaged in public debates with Reformed theologians and published numerous writings, most importantly the *Synod on the Freedom of Conscience* (1582).[15] The title of this work refers directly to the Reformed National Synod of Middelburg, held the previous year (1581), which Coornhert rejected and whose pretense to speak for the new nation he refutes.[16] The imaginary dialogue of the *Synod* takes place in a town called *Vrijburgh* (Freetown), and is anything but detached. It should rather be seen as the writer putting his finger on the pulse of religious conflict and controversy current in the Netherlands and indeed in Europe at large. The participants include real Reformers and Catholics, ranging from moderate to intransigent, who in fact personify and defend their own writings that are faithfully listed at the beginning of the dialogue. Coornhert is present as Gamaliel, and a Chair *pro tempore* leads the meetings in the absence of the real Chair, Master Daniel (Jesus), who will give his verdict on the discussion upon his return.

A precondition for understanding the nature of the toleration of either thinker is that we try to delineate their religious Weltanschauung. In the case of Bodin, this is not easy, for his religious identity has long been a matter of conjecture, even during his own lifetime. Although he would swear his oaths of loyalty to the victorious faith *du jour* when required, he was always under suspicion of heterodoxy. He has been named many things, from a Judaizing Christian to "a Catholic on the order of Coronaeus."[17] There may not be a fundamental difference between the tolerance Bodin advocates in the *République* and that found in *Heptaplomeres*, but we do need to make a sharp distinction with regard to the purpose of these two works, the first being meant for public consumption, the second clearly not. *Heptaplomeres* offers us a rare glimpse into Bodin's private thoughts, and it synthesizes elements found throughout his other works. In its winding and esoteric discussions, Christianity appears to have been least attractive to Bodin's mind. Indeed, after the long discussion of Christian doctrine in Books V and VI, one is left with the impression that only the

[15] Coornhert, *Synodus vander Conscientien Vryheydt* [Synod on the Freedom of Conscience], in *Wercken*, vol. 2, fols. 1–42. A nearly complete French translated edition exists: Thierry Coornhert, *A l'Aurore des Libertés Modernes: Synode sur la Liberté de Conscience (1582)*, ed., trans., and introd. Joseph Lecler and Marius-François Valkhoff (Paris: Editions du Cerf, 1979).

[16] Coornhert, *Remonstrance of vertoogh by die van Leyden*, in *Wercken*, vol. 2, fols. 184–8. Coornhert tellingly dedicated the *Remonstrance* to the States of Holland, who were inclined to agree with the critique of the Reformed church's independent actions.

[17] Marion Leathers Kuntz, "The Concept of Toleration in the *Colloquium Heptaplomeres* of Jean Bodin", in J.C. Laursen and C.J. Nederman (eds), *Beyond the Persecuting Society* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1997), 139.

"rationally challenged" can fall for the Christian delusions. The genealogy of Christ (ending with Joseph), the contradictions between Gospels, the questionable accuracy and authenticity of the Gospels, the divinity of Christ, are all persuasively shown to be difficult to bring into harmony with God's unity and with reason. The discomfiture of Curtius (the Calvinist) under this unrelenting barrage can be seen in the fact that he has to resort to the fideistic "argument," to which Toralba predictably answers that this argument may be acceptable among Christians, but that it does not suffice in exchanges with philosophers or pagans.[18] Salomon critiques the turn the other cheek motif of Christianity, stating that societies cannot be run like that, and Octavius, the Muslim (who does not believe in the Crucifixion) states that "… [I]t is rather absurd that God, angered with mankind, exacts vengeance from Himself …"[19] The critics at times ridicule Christian doctrine, as when the topic is transubstantiation, by which, says Octavius, the priest can transmute 600,000 pieces of bread into 600,000 gods, and, adds Toralba, "[t]hose sacrificing priests think that they are creating the Creator …"[20]

It is rather Toralba, the natural philosopher, and especially Salomon, the Jew, who seem to vie for primacy on Bodin's stage. Judaism is not only the oldest positive religion, it is also – with the Decalogue – closest to the pre-existing Law of Nature which can be discovered and followed through reason, and it resulted from human sinfulness.[21] In Judaism, Bodin claimed (via Toralba) to discern most clearly the unadulterated and original natural religion.[22] Much of Bodin's dialogue consists of long in-depth discussions of sometimes highly speculative questions (flying magicians, the powers of mummies and so on), but these discussions are suffused with the abiding need to safeguard the unity and goodness of the Creator. Thus Toralba argues that the First Cause is free and eternal, but that the earth has a beginning and thus will also have an end, for "… [i]f anything is changeable of its own nature, it cannot be eternal."[23] This argument also fuels the devastating critique in *Heptaplomeres* of the Christian dogmas of the Incarnation and the Trinity. Demons and angels were the subject of Bodin's *Démonomanie* (1580), an influential manual by a judge who himself, at one point, had condemned someone to death on charges of

18 Bodin, *Colloquium of the Seven*, 355.

19 Ibid., 388.

20 Ibid., 443–4.

21 Thus, I mostly agree with Maryanne Cline Horowitz, "La religion de Bodin reconsidérée: Le Marrane comme modèle de la tolerance", in *Jean Bodin: Actes du Colloque Interdisciplinaire d'Angers, 24 au 27 Mai 1984*, vol. I (Angers: Presses de l'Université d'Angers, 1985), 208–9.

22 Roellenbleck, *Offenbarung, Natur und jüdische Überlieferung*, 145.

23 Bodin, *Colloquium of the Seven*, 36.

witchcraft.[24] Bodin needed these demonic and angelic forces *rationally* in order to avoid the impossible notion of a mixing of the finite with the infinite, and to safeguard the unity and goodness of the Creator as well as the non-existence of original sin in man.[25] Overall, Bodin's outlook thus can be described as an eclectic blend of Jewish, Neo-Platonic and Stoic thought.[26]

Coornhert's religious identity has also given rise to much speculation over the centuries, but today there is wide agreement that he can be somewhat loosely defined as a Spiritualist Christian.[27] His outlook and its theological foundation cannot easily be culled from the *Synodus*, which is rather tightly constructed around one overriding theme, namely constraint in religion, but they were well-established by the time of the *Synod*'s appearance. In *Jacob's Ladder*[28] and other works, we find as the firm theological bedrock of Coornhert's outlook, leading directly to his adamant advocacy of religious freedom, his belief in human perfectibility in Christ. This system is sometimes labeled "perfectism." In *Heptaplomeres* it is, interestingly, Salomon who presents a rather stripped down version of God's commandments and next asserts that "[t]he divine law commands nothing which you cannot easily do if you wish." For, he adds, "… what is the total justice of the law? It is for man to love God more than himself, but his neighbor as himself; a thing which each one can do."[29] Bodin's enlightened Jew stands in marked contrast to the negative picture we see in Coornhert's work of the time of the Old Testament, for he regularly impugns the legalistic view of the "old dispensation" of Judaism. For Coornhert, the "Old Testament" stands for bondage, and the New for freedom. Drawing heavily on Sebastian Franck and Castellio, Coornhert's optimistic theology, which is non-speculative and shows a strong ethical focus, firmly rejects the dogmas of original sin and predestination as blasphemies, since they imply that God is the creator of evil. By and of himself, man is unable to do or be good, but thanks to Christ he can be reborn and progress (synergistically) in various stages toward perfect wisdom in this life. Man has been given the opportunity to "cooperate" toward his own salvation, and can overcome his evil habits on the strength

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[24] This occurred in 1578: see Kuntz's Introduction to Bodin, *Colloquium of the Seven*, xxxiv.

[25] Horowitz, "La religion de Bodin", 205; Bodin, *Colloquium of the Seven*, 49; 110ff.

[26] See Alfred Schmitz, *Staat und Kirche bei Jean Bodin* Abhandlungen der Rechts- und Staatswissen-schaftlichen Fakultät der Universität Göttingen, vol. 27 (Leipzig: A. Deichertsche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1939), who calls Bodin a neo-Platonist universalist, influenced by the Florentine Academy: p. 47.

[27] See Voogt, *Constraint on Trial*, 230–33.

[28] Coornhert, *Ladder Jacobs of trappe der deughden* [*Jacob's Ladder or the Stairway of Virtues*], in *Wercken*, vol. 1, fol. 165R–176D.

[29] Bodin, *Colloquium of the Seven*, 430, 433.

of his own free will, aided by reason and Christ's mercy. In this journey, reason is essential as a guide toward the good if well-applied, since, if reason and understanding are absent, there can be no obedience to God. Man's actions should be based on reason and knowledge. But reason has its limits, and we should not try to probe the depths of divine mysteries. It is furthermore useless to direct the mind's energies to purely speculative matters that will not guide or improve our conduct.

An intriguing difference between Bodin and Coornhert is their view of the "atheist."[30] For Bodin, atheism is anathema.[31] His interlocutors unanimously agree that atheists should never be tolerated, and the reason most often voiced is civic, for atheists cannot honestly swear oaths and cannot be trusted to keep the laws. In *République*, the pernicious nature of atheism forms an argument for (temporary) toleration of dissident believers, since religious quarrels tend to foster atheism.[32] It is the same rationale John Locke would echo nearly a century later in *Epistola de tolerantia*,[33] and it reflects Bodin's preoccupation with the state, to be discussed later. But another reason for this non-tolerance of the atheist is, that the existence of a Creator is seen as a reality obvious to anyone endowed with reason, making those denying or ignoring it wilful and punishable. This latter argument led even Castellio to exclude the atheist from his proposed liberal policy of toleration.[34]

Coornhert, however, stands virtually alone in his century in his refusal to demand persecution of the atheist or unbeliever. He makes the point in e.g. *Roots of the Dutch Revolt*, where he refers to the parable of the workers in the vineyard (Matt. 20:1–16), stating that to kill others because of their lack (or absence) of faith is as if those who had been called to the vineyard first came back and killed the prospective workers still waiting

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[30] Naturally, the term "atheist" needs to be used with circumspection for this period: an examination of the groups that Senamus, e.g., labels "atheists," Bodin, *Colloquium*, 235–7, makes clear that the term was not used in our modern sense; usually "atheist" refers to the person who lives as though there were no God: cf. Alan Kors, "Atheism," in Alan Charles Kors (Editor in Chief), *Encyclopedia of the Enlightenment* 4 vols. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), vol. 1, pp. XXX.

[31] Roellenbleck, *Offenbarung, Natur und jüdische Überlieferung*, states emphatically, p. 142 n. 346: "Es kann nicht oft genug gesagt werden, daß der Atheismus für ihn keine legitime Denkmöglichkeit darstellt."

[32] Jean Bodin, *The Six Bookes of a Commonweale: A Facsimile of the English translation of 1606 corrected and supplemented in the light of a new comparison with the French and Latin texts* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1962), 539.

[33] John Locke, *A Letter Concerning Toleration*, James H. Tully (ed.) (Indianapolis, Indiana: Hackett Publishing Company, 1983), 50–51.

[34] Sebastian Castellio, *Concerning Heretics: Whether they are to be persecuted and how they are to be treated. A collection of the opinions of learned men both ancient and modern*. Trans. and ed. Roland H. Bainton (Columbia University Press, 1935; reprint, New York: Octagon Books, Inc., 1965), 137–140; cf. Voogt, *Constraint on Trial*, 75.

in the marketplace until they too would be called. Volition is paramount in Coornhert's view of the atheist. A blind man, he claims, should not be punished for his blindness, but guided until he sees and grasps the light. Faith is God's gift and depends on man's receptiveness. As such it cannot be forced, and the one deprived of it should rather be pitied:

> Whoever leads a blind person from the right path incurs the people's deserved wrath. So what punishment is due him who will kill a blind person, [just] because he has strayed and fallen? Has the seer endowed himself with vision? or can the blind man provide himself with sight? would it not be of greater help to the blind person if we kindly offer him our hand and lead him (should he be willing) on the right path? And if he does not want us to help, then we can let him wander, fall, and undergo the punishment of his obstinacy.[35]

Coornhert's universe, unlike Bodin's, is a Christian one, that of a Christianity shorn of dogmatism or speculation. In his writings, Coornhert does not criticize or even pay much attention to such basic Christian tenets as the Trinity, the Incarnation or the Virgin Birth. With professed affinity for Erasmus, who also chose to home in on the issue of *liberum arbitrium*, Coornhert's tenacious and biting critique targets especially the doctrines of predestination and original sin that he believed thwarted or contradicted human free will.

At first glance, Bodin's *Heptaplomeres* and Coornhert's *Synod* appear to be radically different in scope and direction: one brings together friends for a freewheeling, deep-digging, no-holds-barred discussion of theological, spiritual, and philosophical matters; the other assembles Christian theologians from both sides of the Christian fence to discuss one topic only, broken down into subtopics: that of the admissibility or inadmissibility of constraint in religion. It seems paradoxical that on the one hand Coornhert, the spiritualist, who draws much of his inspiration from Christian mysticism and from Sebastian Franck, who remained aloof from the mundane doctrinal squabbling of his age, with alacrity enters the fray on a highly contentious issue in the emerging Dutch republic, whereas on the other hand Bodin, the pragmatic "politique," shuts Coronaeus's door to the bustle of intra-Christian conflict that marked the reality of France in his day. But upon closer scrutiny, the difference can be understood as one that results from these men's divergent views of the polity as well as, secondarily, from a difference in contexts.

Since in the rhetorical tradition medium and message blend, the format of these works is of significance and shows certain similarities.[36] First, they are both dialogues, a literary form that lends itself to the discussion of controversial matters and to the obfuscation of the author's own true

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[35] Coornhert, *Wortel der Nederlantsche oorloghen*, in *Wercken*, vol. 2, fol. 178b.

[36] See Gary Remer, "Dialogues of Toleration: Erasmus and Bodin", in *The Review of Politics*, vol. 56/2 (1994), 317–18.

stance. Coornhert's best-known writings and many of his shorter polemics were cast as dialogues, a medium that was ideally suited to his polemical intent.[37] Several parts of *Heptaplomeres* call to mind, in style and content, the medieval disputations between Jews and Christians (and sometimes Muslims), with which Bodin was familiar.[38]

The structure of both dialogues displays similarities and symmetry. In *Heptaplomeres* each session begins with a collective reading and ends with musical entertainment in which all present rejoice. Bodin's preoccupation with numerology is apparent in the choice of seven interlocutors and six sessions, respectively symbolizing fullness and perfection.[39] Coornhert introduces the *Synod* as the "scales on which will be weighed the sins of either side of divided Christendom." These sins will be found to be essentially the same and of equal weight. The original edition of *Synod* shows a rebus on the title page, whose solution reads: "Synod or Balance between the Old and the Reformed Church on the Freedom of Conscience," and the dialogue concludes with a summary in the form of a verbal "balance" juxtaposing sixteen Catholic errors with an equal number of Protestant ones.[40] The *Synod* progresses dialectically, following the same sequence in each of the nineteen sessions: first the Catholic side manifests an extreme advocacy of religious constraint, subsequently denounced by the Protestant side. The latter is then shown to have practiced the same constraint wherever it found itself in positions of power. Gamaliel then wraps things up by showing the reasons against and the possible avoidance of constraint.[41]

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[37] Bonger, *Life and Work*, 210.

[38] E.g. Hasdai Crescas's *The Refutation of the Christian Principles*, trans. Daniel J. Lasker (Albany: State University of New York, 1992); Joseph Kimhi, *The Book of the Covenant*, trans. Frank Talmage (Toronto: The Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1972), or Ramon Llull, *The Book of the Gentile and the Three Wise Men*, in *Doctor Illuminatus: A Ramon Llull Reader* Anthony Bonner (ed., trans.) (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993). With regard to the possible link between Llull and Bodin, see Dominique de Courcelles, "Pensée lullienne et *Colloquium heptaplomeres*", in Ralph Häfner (ed.), *Bodinus Polymeres: Neue Studien zu Jean Bodins Spätwerk*. Wolfenbütteler Forschungen, vol. 87 (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 1999), 99–117, and Pierre Magnard, "Le *Colloquium heptaplomeres* et la religion de la raison", in Yves Charles Zarka, *Jean Bodin: Nature, histoire, droit et politique* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1996), 85. Coornhert, the controversialist par excellence, not only wrote many dialogues, he himself engaged in many public disputations.

[39] See Georg Roellenbleck, "Der Schluß des 'Heptaplomeres' und die Begründung der Toleranz bei Bodin", in Horst Denzer, (ed.), *Jean Bodin: Verhandlungen der internationalen Bodin Tagung in München* (München: Verlag C.H. Beck, 1973). Münchener Studien zur Politik, vol. 18, note 11, pp. 57–8.

[40] D.V. Coornhert, *Synodus van der conscientien vryheyt* (Haarlem: A. Ketel, 1582–1583), p. 1 (the rebus) and pp. 263–4.

[41] Voogt, *Constraint*, 95. See the excellent discussion of the structure of the *Synod* in Joseph Lecler and Marius-François Valkhoff's introduction to Thierry Coornhert, *A l'Aurore*

There is, however, a significant difference in the group dynamics conveyed in the form of these two dialogues. *Heptaplomeres* is horizontally, not hierarchically structured, and Bodin leaves out the referee or *deus ex machina*, even though the discerning reader will not miss the author's affinity with Toralba, Salomo, and to a lesser degree Senamus.[42] In the *Synod*, on the other hand, the points the author intends to make are clear from the onset, and Gamaliel predictably provides, towards the end of each session, the "moral of the story," which at times takes the form of an impassioned plea for mutual tolerance:

> I therefore recommend that, in these obscure times, all of us in unison defer our judgment on others for a while, that we do not damn each other or call each other heretics, but that we tolerate (*ghedoochden*) and suffer each other in love … Until that time when the Lord in his mercy will send us an Ezra who will free us from all these strange opinions we espoused and who will clear up this Babylonian confusion.[43]

Thus, the "lateral" approach of *Heptaplomeres* means that none of the interlocutors function as straw men. For example, Bodin's belief in the existence of demons is well-documented, yet in the dialogue Senamus is allowed to deliver his piercing critique and to ridicule such belief. He asks why these demons and angels are even needed, since God's will alone can accomplish their feats, and he adds a dose of common sense, saying that "[m]any things are entangled in popular mistakes which we have finally seen explained." Then, in a *reductio ad absurdum*, he adds that we would need an enormous number of demons for all these unexplained phenomena, asking where they would be kept, since Toralba had earlier "proven" that demons are finite and therefore bound by space and time …[44]

This difference in format bespeaks, as we shall see, an essential difference in the works' respective range and in the limitations of the kind of toleration that is at stake in them. At first, however, again some parallels

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des Libertés Modernes, chapter III, 29–40.

[42] Roellenbleck, "Der Schluß des 'Heptaplomeres', 56–7. In *Offenbarung, Natur und jüdische Überlieferung*, 47, 148–9, Roellenbleck suggests that Bodin most likely had planned a synthesizing final chapter, but omitted it out of despair over the impossibility of an interreligious rapprochement. The non-hierarchical relation between interlocutors typifies the humanist rhetorical tradition of the *sermo* or conversation: see Gary Remer, *Humanism and the Rhetoric of Toleration* (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania University Press, 1996), 26ff.

[43] Coornhert, *Synodus*, fol. 9B: "Daeromme soude ick raden dat wy al tsamen in soodanighen duysteren tijt ons oordeel over anderen wat op hielden, malcanderen soo haetelijck niet en verdoemden noch ketterden, maer malcanderen vrundelijck inder liefden ghedoochden ende droeghen, die verstandighe den onverstandighen ende die stercke die swacken. Totter tijt toe dat de Heere door zijnder bermherticheyt ons eenen Esdras toeschicke die dese vreemde wijven van alreleye opinien ende dese verwerde Babylonische sprake eens van ons dede vervreemden."

[44] Bodin, *Colloquium*, 87–8.

in argumentation seem apparent between the two dialogues, one being the theme of the absent judge. In the *Synod* this absence is a literal fact, for the true Chairman, Master Daniel (who stands for Christ) is, for the time being, absent. The ninth session of the *Synod* addresses the question of "who is to judge on doctrine." The Catholic interlocutor claims that doctrinal matters should be left to priests and councils, not to the flock, for if everyone is allowed to put forth his own interpretation, sects will abound and chaos ensue. Gamaliel, however, in his definitive rejoinder, asserts that there can be no earthly judge. Normal judicial procedure involves four distinct persons: the judge, the prosecutor, the defendant, and the witnesses. "What other conclusion can we reach than that, just as once Israel was without a king, Christians now lack a judge, and that everyone does what they see as right?"[45] It is therefore best to postpone judgment until one can attain certainty, for then you avoid error. It would be unjust to grant (Reformed) ministers the right to sit in judgment over doctrine, for then they unfairly would be judge and prosecutor at the same time.[46]

Coronaeus's guests appear to be confronted with a practical example of the same problem of judgment when their host presents them with apples, some of which look exactly like the others but are in reality clever fakes.[47] It is significant that Fridericus, who throughout the dialogue tends to take the most naively uncompromising and doctrinaire Christian stance, is the one who bites trustingly in the fake apple.[48] This event heralds the guests' long discussion on truth in religion, a truth which does exist but is not easy to discern. In fact, the discussion leads author and reader to the conclusion that it is unrealistic to believe that anybody's beliefs or doctrinal positions will shift because of the exchange.[49]

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[45] "Wat machmen hier anders wt besluyten dan dat nu (als voormaels in Israel gheen Coning) gheen rechter is onder den Christenen, maer dat yeghelijck doet 'tghene hem recht dunckt?" Coornhert, *Synodus*, fol. 15C.

[46] Ibid., fol. 16A: "… over wat syden of ghemeynten datmen wil, gheensins het oordeel vande leere ghestelt en mach worden aenden predicanten, wantmen also doende henluyden selve soude maken rechters ende partijen in heur eyghen saecke …" See, for the motif of the judge, also Voogt, *Constraint*, 141–6.

[47] Bodin, *Colloquium*, 233. For the motif of the judge in *Heptaplomeres*, see also Karl Friedrich Faltenbacher, *Das Colloquium Heptaplomeres, ein Religionsgespräch zwischen Scholastik und Aufklärung: Untersuchungen zur Thematik und zur Frage der Autorschaft* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1988).

[48] Cf. Roellenbleck, *Offenbarung, Natur und jüdische Überlieferung*, 138, who asserts that in Fredericus we see a symbol of all of Christianity which suffers defeat.

[49] Dominique de Courcelles, "Pensée lullienne et *Colloquium heptaplomeres*, in Ralph Häfner, (ed.), *Bodinus Polymeres: Neue Studien zu Jean Bodins Spätwerk*. Wolfenbütteler Forschungen, vol. 87 (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 1999), 115, suggests a parallel with Eden, intended by Bodin, "reproduisant ainsi, mais sans qu'il y ait consommation, le geste d'Adam au paradis."

At this point we need to reconsider the analogy, for, although the impossibility of definitive judgment runs through both works, the conclusions drawn are radically different. Bodin posits the uselessness and even danger of religious debates, one of the rare issues on which all his interlocutors agree. Thus, paradoxically, this long debate ends up being one on the uselessness or undesirability of religious debates. Senamus asserts that debate can prompt one to change religion, and change of religion always leads to upheaval and turmoil in a state.[50] Later, it is again Senamus who states straightforwardly: "I think those discussions about religion will come to nothing. For who will be the arbiter of such a controversy?"[51] When, at this juncture, Fridericus (the most anti-Judaic of the group) tries to provoke the wise Salomon into a discussion, the latter remains quiet, and Toralba explains: "It is quite reasonable that Salomon shies away from discussion about religions … lest he seem to abandon the religion of his ancestors if he does not defend it [i.e. his faith], or to cause offense to anyone if he defends it too strongly."[52] But the message conveyed in the *Synod* is quite different, as anyone who knows Coornhert's life and proclivities would expect, for debate and freedom of expression were for him the lifeblood of a healthy Republic (as well as, for himself, a personal necessity). The fourteenth Session of the *Synod* deals specifically with the question of "Whether to enter into dispute with those who teach differently from us." The Catholic's response is negative, and he uses the argument that as soon as you engage in a discussion you give the impression of doubting your own religion.[53] The Reformed begs to differ and defends religious disputation. But, counters the Catholic, wherever you are in control you do the same as we. Gamaliel concludes that Catholic and Protestant alike indeed do not allow true religious dialogue, and that in this they are fundamentally wrong, for if discussion of errors in religion had been impossible, he asserts, then a Luther or Zwingli would in their time not have been able to draw deserved attention to errors and abuses in the Catholic Church. This right to expose error, he adds, should not be restricted to an elite, for it belongs to "learned or unlearned, minister or burgher."[54]

This last passage highlights another difference between the two men. Coornhert believed that everyone, learned and unlearned, should be able to judge for themselves in religious matters. Coornhert consciously chose to write exclusively in the Dutch vernacular, a fact that added fuel to the

50 Bodin, *Colloquium*, 165.
51 Ibid., 170.
52 Ibid.
53 Coornhert, *Synod*, fol. 29A.
54 Ibid., fol. 32d (should be 31d) "… gheleert of ongheleerdt, predikant of burgher …"

fire of Justus Lipsius's displeasure during his famed clash with Coornhert over the use of religious constraint in a state.[55] He was thus intent on making his work accessible to the laity, and throughout the work of this self-made, self-taught man we even find a regular anti-intellectualist streak, expressed for example in his slogan *hoe geleerder hoe verkeerder* ("the more learning, the more wrong").[56] The humanist Bodin, on the contrary, makes a sharp distinction between the educated and thoughtful elite, and the ignorant and impressionable rabble.[57] The common people gullibly cling to a host of ceremonies and superstitions, whereas the well-educated individual follows a purified religion of fundamentals.[58] The interlocutors regularly present the prevalence of ceremonies in religion as a necessary nod to the common man who cannot do without them.[59] Bodin therefore can give free rein to the friends as they meet behind closed doors, in esoteric discussions that move far beyond the pale of where Coornhert was willing to go or even interested in going. Thus, with regard to established dogma, Bodin's discussions are more radical and wide in scope than Coornhert's. Yet, Bodin did not publish the dialogue. In Coornhert's works, Islam and Judaism are simply not seriously considered, they are beyond his purview, he moves only within his tragically divided Christian world. But *in practice, in society*, Coornhert's idea of freedom of conscience when applied would be wider in scope and effect, for he envisaged a state where different religions and sects would compete freely and try to outdo the competition by living ethical lives. Coornhert published all his tolerationist works.

Another case of a seeming analogy hiding a more fundamental difference regards the acceptance, by both men, of dissimulation of one's beliefs where the occasion warrants this. In both cases, this has contributed to confusion about their true religious identity, leading to both Protestant and Catholic

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[55] See Voogt, "Primacy of Individual Consciousness or Primacy of the State? The Clash between Dirck Volckertsz. Coornhert and Justus Lipsius", *Sixteenth Century Journal*, vol. XXVIII/4 (1997), p. 1244.

[56] E.g Coornhert, *Hemel-werck*, in *Wercken*, vol. 2, fol. 345a; this motif is also known from Sebastian Franck's paradox 65: *Quo doctior, eo perversior*: Sebastian Franck, *280 Paradoxes or Wondrous Sayings*. Trans. and introd. E.J. Furcha. Texts and Studies in Religion, vol. 26 (Lewiston/Queenston: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1986), 112.

[57] The exclusion of the common people from such debates is typical of much humanist toleration. See Remer, *Humanism and the Rhetoric of Toleration*, 8.

[58] Schmitz, *Staat und Kirche*, 49. Bodin may have been influenced by Averroës, who asserted that the common people had to believe in the literal meaning of the Qur'an, but who on the other hand allowed philosophers all freedom to speculate: see Frank Griffel, "Toleranzkonzepte im Islam und ihr Einfluss auf Jean Bodins *Colloquium Heptaplomeres*", in Ralph Häfner, (ed.), *Bodinus Polymeres: Neue Studien zu Jean Bodins Spätwerk*. Wolfenbütteler Forschungen, vol. 87 (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 1999), 137–8.

[59] Faltenbacher, *Das Colloquium Heptaplomeres*, 98: "Sie empfinden alle die Anhäufungen von kultischen Handlungen in ihren Konfessionen lästig, meinen aber, der 'kleine Mann von der Straße' könne darauf nicht verzichten, da er zu einfältig sei, um eine reine, natürliche und ursprüngliche Religion zu verstehen."

at times suspecting them of belonging to the other side.[60] Coornhert defended Nicodemism, most famously in a tract labeled "Apology for Roman Idolatry" which John Calvin found himself compelled to refute.[61] Coornhert's spiritualism sees ceremonies and church rituals as unimportant and immaterial, and he asserts that the believer should not be faulted for refusing to risk his life for external ceremonies, and must rather try to reach *spiritual* understanding.[62] Bodin's justification of Nicodemism, on the other hand, rests on his understanding of religion as the bond of a commonwealth. The citizen cannot arrogate the right openly to sever or deny that bond.[63]

An essential difference between the men is thus closely linked to the fundamentally different view that they take of the state. By 1582, Coornhert's stance toward the magistrate had moved away from the more or less Erastian position he had still defended in 1579, when he wrote a tract in support of the Leiden magistrate in the so-called Coolhaes-affair.[64] Perhaps as a result of what befell him in that same year, as the States of Holland in an injunction forbade him to publish anything on religion without their prior approval, his eyes were opened to the risks of such a position at a time that the authorities were increasingly on the side of the self-same Church that sought to muzzle him. By the time he wrote the *Synod*, Coornhert's focus had definitively shifted from concerns of state to those of the individual conscience and its freedom.[65]

In war-torn France, however, Bodin could be found in the politique camp, as one who was intent on placing the interest of the state above all other concerns.[66] *Heptaplomeres* makes clear that his ideal envisaged a

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[60] Roellenbleck, *Offenbarung, Natur und jüdische Überlieferung*, 141; Coornhert never formally left the Catholic faith, but was buried in a Protestant church: Bonger, *Life and Work*, 218–19.

[61] Coornhert, *Verschooninghe van de Roomsche afgoderije*, in Wercken 3, fol. 18AB–24AB. See Mirjam van Veen's monograph on this tract: '*Verschooninghe van de roomsche afgoderye': De polemiek van Calvijn met nicodemieten, in het bijzonder met Coornhert* ('t Goy-Houten: Hes and De Graaf Publishers BV, 2001).

[62] Van Veen, '*Verschooninghe van de roomsche afgoderye*', 165.

[63] Roellenbleck, *Offenbarung, Natur und jüdische Überlieferung*, 141–2. Toralba, e.g. (alias Bodin, adds Roellenbleck) claims the right "im Blick auf den Nutzen des Staates das Maß seines öffentlichen Bekennens selbst zu bestimmen." (142).

[64] Coornhert, *Justificatie des Magistraets tot Leyden in Holland*, in *Wercken*, vol. 2, fol. 189–209. On the Coolhaes-affair, see e.g. Jean Lecler, *Toleration and the Reformation*, 2 vols. trans. T.L. Westow (New York: Association Press; London: Longmans, 1960), vol. 2, 263–9.

[65] See Voogt, *Constraint*, 88–91.

[66] I am aware of the pitfalls of using the term "politique", as discussed in Edmond M. Beame, "The Politiques and the Historians", in *Journal of the History of Ideas* 54 (July, 1993), 355–79. But in his conclusion, Beame still finds a common denominator in that "politiques" showed "a readiness to sacrifice religious unity for peace." (379), and this bespeaks their preoccupation with the wellbeing of the state.

state that would accept the friendly coexistence of all positive religions, which the miniature society assembled in Coronaeus's house showed could live together in harmony, albeit in a state of salutary neglect regarding doctrinal differences. A contemporary real-life model of such a tolerant state was provided by the Ottoman Empire, whose ruler was a devout Muslim yet suffered two non-Muslim religions to exist, even near his palace, and who sent money to the monks on Mount Athos to pray for him: thus "the people of auntient time were persuaded, as were the Turks, All sorts of religions which proceed from a pure mind, to be acceptable unto the gods."[67] The tolerance of the Ottoman rulers is a topos that we also find in Coornhert.[68]

Contemporary France stood in stark contrast to this desired ideal of peaceful coexistence. For Bodin, especially under current war-torn circumstances, the safeguarding of the integrity and stability of the state always trumped concerns regarding the individual conscience. Bodin's individual, sovereign state is a unified body which is not just secular in nature but also, as guarantor of justice and educator of citizens, a religious entity that incorporates the church as a government institution.[69] As was seen in the case of the atheist, Bodin shows much concern for the public use of religion, and a recurring theme in the dialogue is that *any* religion is better than none. In the *République* we find the same notion, as where Bodin writes that "… superstition how great soever it be, doth yet hold men in fear and awe, both of the laws and of the magistrats, as also in mutuall duties and offices one of them towards another: whereas meere Atheisme doth utterly root out of mens minds all the feare of doing evill."[70] Bodin furthermore asserts that the fear of religion can be a good way to appease a seditious people.[71]

Coornhert's whole purpose in the *Synod* is to denounce the claims by the Reformed to official national status. His campaign was aimed at preventing or combating the growing congruence between the newly established Dutch state and one of the competing forms of Christianity in the Netherlands.

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[67] Jean Bodin, *Six Bookes of a Commonweale*, 537–8.

[68] E.g. in Coornhert, *Proces van 't Ketterdoden ende dwang der conscientien*, *Wercken*, vol. 2, fol. 101d. See on this Islamic exemplum François Berriot, "Islam et liberté de conscience à la Renaissance" in Hans R. Guggisberg et al. (eds.), *La liberté de conscience (XVIe–XVIIe siècles): Actes du Colloque de Mulhouse et Bâle (1989)* (Geneva: Librairie Droz, 1991), 173–90.

[69] This passage is based heavily on the analysis in Schmitz, *Staat und Kirche*, 21: "Auf Grund seiner religiösen Anschauungen als Universalist, dem bestimmten Kultformen gleichgültig sind, und auf Grund seiner Staatstheorie, die im souveränen Einzelstaat den nicht nur weltlichen sondern durch seine Aufgabe als Wahrer des Rechts und Erzieher der menschen auch religiösen Einheitskörper sieht, begreift Bodin die Kirche als reine Staatsanstalt und stellt sie ganz in den Dienst des Staates."

[70] Bodin, *Six Bookes*, 539.

[71] Ibid., 534.

This state, after all, had proclaimed freedom of conscience as its *raison d'être*.[72] Bodin, however, was concerned with the stability and unity of the state: in *République* he claims, in words that are often very similar to those Lipsius would use in his *Politica*,[73] that the authorities should not tarry in rooting out from the republic divisive dissidence "by the punishing of some few of the ring-leaders and chiefe men in the faction," instead of letting the disease spread.[74] It is risky, Bodin admonishes, to attack seditions head on, unless you are sure that you will prevail. The sovereign, as physician of the nation, should try everything else before using force against the people: "For what Physitian is there so inconsiderat, as to use sections, and cauterisings, or burnings, if the disease might otherwise be cured?"[75] Yet, in religion we should avoid force: the sovereign may decide on a national religion, but then he should seek to attract the populace to it by means of persuasion, not by coercion.[76]

In conclusion, we see in these two works on the one hand a practical example of the possibility of religious coexistence in harmony, but only within the closed confines of a home away from the concerns and tragic divisions of the actual society around. The opinions and critique so freely expressed by these men in Venice are withheld from the masses, for Bodin the politique certainly did not want to risk undermining, with a work that possibly showed his ideal and mutually tolerant republic, the stability of the actual state within which he found himself. On the other hand, Coornhert saw great urgency in his efforts to influence the course of events in his newly liberated country and steer it away from the looming theocracy that he feared was developing. He energetically dispensed with the quietism that is generally more typical of spiritualists, in favor of a steady campaign, through writings and public debates, against what he regarded as the new popery of Calvinist constraints.

Thus, in the end, *Heptaplomeres* breathes resignation, whereas the *Synod* evinces a more optimistic outlook, based on the men's different priorities and the contemporary state of affairs in their respective countries.

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[72] See Coornhert, *Wortel der Nederlandsche Oorloghen* [*Root of the Dutch Wars*], *Wercken*, vol. 2, fols. 173–83; cf. H.A. Enno van Gelder, *Getemperde vrijheid: Een verhandeling over de verhouding van Kerk en Staat in de Republiek der Verenigde Nederlanden en de vrijheid van meningsuiting in zake godsdienst, drukpers en onderwijs, gedurende de 17e eeuw* (Groningen: Wolters-Noordhoff, 1972). Historische Studies, uitgegeven vanwege het Instituut voor Geschiedenis der Rijksuniversiteit te Utrecht, vol. XXVI, 4.

[73] Justus Lipsius, *Iusti Lipsi Politicorum sive Civilis Doctrinae libri sex* (Antwerp: Moretus, 1589).

[74] Bodin, *Six Bookes*, 520; cf. Lipsius, *Politicorum*, 80.

[75] Ibid., 532. Justus Lipsius, *Politicorum*, 80, uses Seneca's simile of "Burn, cut, so that rather some parts perish than the entire body".

[76] Bodin, *Six Bookes*, 537.

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PART III

The Reformation in France

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CHAPTER EIGHT

The Genevan Model and Gallican Originality in the French Reformed Tradition

Raymond A. Mentzer

The Reformation that engulfed early modern Europe was plainly more than a series of individual and unconnected events, which took place in isolated national context. Broad supra-national and cross-cultural attachments ran through sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Protestantism, and nowhere is the evidence for these international connections stronger than in the movement fostered by John Calvin. He had initially undertaken to reform the francophone city of Geneva. Thereafter, Calvin's views on Christian theology, worship and polity found favor in his native France, the Netherlands and British Isles, Germany, Hungary, and beyond. Understandably, the various national churches enjoyed and sustained vital, powerful bonds. The multiple contacts and numerous interactions afforded considerable benefit. At the same time, each of the national strains within the Reformed tradition acquired and elaborated its own special character and distinguishing features. The churches flourished within discrete cultural, linguistic and political surroundings. They established theologically sophisticated individual confessions and composed separate statements on church order and discipline. Their ecclesiastical leaders gathered regularly in national synods, instituted liturgical practices that met the needs and tastes of their particular congregations, and organized consistories with differing composition, procedures and duties. The various churches settled, in ways suited to their specific institutions and customs, the relationship between ecclesiastical and political authorities. Upon occasion, they even created unique architectural forms.

This essay seeks to illuminate some of the questions surrounding the similarities and differences among the national churches and to clarify their significance through a close examination of the Reformed Churches of France during the first century or so of their existence. To what extent were the French churches faithful to the Genevan model upon which they were founded? Did they also display original and uniquely Gallican traits, which might suggest fresh approaches and inventive elucidations? Finally, how might the historian account for the reworking of preexisting ideas

and structures as well as the emergence of new ones? In short, what was distinctively French in character and custom, what was part of a wider international Reformed movement, and why?

The local church and its consistory were the foundation of the early modern Reformed ecclesiastical structure throughout Western Europe.[1] The consistory was an administrative and semi-judicial body, which in France was composed of the ordained pastors of the particular church and elected laymen serving annual terms as elders and deacons. They assembled on a regular schedule, typically once a week, to attend to the details of church management, oversee social assistance programs, and implement strict morals control. The roots of the consistory as a Reformation institution are directly traceable to Geneva, where Calvin had personally seen to the establishment of the first Reformed consistory and took an immediate and abiding interest in its operation. He had insisted on the formation of the Genevan consistory in 1541 upon his return from three years of exile at Strasbourg. It occupied, in his view, a crucial place in the constitution of the true Christian church.

The enforcement of discipline was the primary function of the consistory at Geneva and ecclesiastical discipline was, in important ways, a third mark of the true church for Calvin, perhaps even more so for many of his followers. Discipline stood directly alongside the pure preaching of the Gospel and the proper administration of the sacraments. Addressing the Apostolic model of the church in his 1539 debate with Cardinal Sadoleto, Calvin argued that "there are three things upon which the safety of the Church is founded, viz., doctrine, discipline, and the sacraments."[2] Theodore Beza, Calvin's lieutenant at Geneva, and the Scottish reformer John Knox were, if anything, more emphatic in deeming discipline – the promotion of virtue and punishment of sin – as a third mark of the true church.[3] Still, when Reformed communities in the larger European landscape outside Geneva established consistories, their focus characteristically widened beyond

[1] The great exception is Hungary, which established a semi-consistorial, episcopal polity. See, Graeme Murdock, *Calvinism on the Frontier, 1600–1660: International Calvinism and the Reformed Church in Hungary and Transylvania* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2000).

[2] John Calvin and Jacopo Sadoleto, *A Reformation Debate*, ed. J.C. Olin (New York: Harper and Row, 1966), p. 63. In his *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, 4.1.9–10 Calvin observed: "Symbola ecclesia dignoscendae, verbi praedicationem sacramentorumque observationem posuimus." John Calvin, *Ioannis Calvini Opera quae supersunt omnia*, ed. G. Baum, E. Cunitz and E. Reuss, 59 vols (Brunswick: C.A. Schwetschke, 1863–1900), 2: 754.

[3] Théodore de Bèze, *Confession de la foy chrestienne, contenant la confirmation d'icelle, et la refutation des superstitions contraires* (Geneva: Conrad Badius, 1559), pp. 156–7; John Knox, *The forme of prayers and ministration of Sacraments, etc. used in the English Congregation of Geneva* (Geneva: Jean Crespin, 1556), p. 39. Glenn Sunshine, "Discipline as the Third Mark of the Church: Three Views," Calvin Theological Journal, 33(1998), pp. 469–80.

ecclesiastical discipline and morals control. Consistorial responsibilities came to include other matters, notably ecclesiastical administration, management of financial affairs, and provision of poor relief. In France, consistories became the elementary administrative and governing bodies for the highly autonomous churches.

Geneva's well-known *Ecclesiastical Ordinances* of 1541, whose preparation Calvin personally supervised, elaborated the institutions of the Christian church with care and precision. This lucid articulation of the four ecclesiastical ministries – pastor, doctor, elder and deacon – along with the consistory served not only as the foundation for the church of Geneva, but in time became a blueprint for Reformed churches elsewhere.[4] Not surprisingly, when Reformed Protestantism emerged in France during the late 1550s and early 1560s, its leaders followed Calvin's Genevan example. Pastors regularly preached from the pulpit God's revealed Word as found in Holy Scripture. Doctors taught the truths of Christianity within newly established academies at Die, Montauban, Montpellier, Nîmes, Orange, Orthez, Saumur and Sedan; the shape of these French schools very much followed along the lines of the Genevan Academy.[5] Elders, seated in the consistory along with the pastors, watched over the religious and ethical behavior of the faithful. Finally, deacons, much as at Geneva, attended to the needs of the poor within the congregation. Still, a number of noteworthy modifications occurred as French Protestants established churches based on Calvin's vision and Geneva's practice.

The organization, operational practices, and jurisdiction of the consistory diverged appreciably between Geneva and France. The differences reflect, in part, the size, cultural context, social complexion, and political constitutions of the two entities. Geneva was a relatively small and homogenous self-governing city, ruled by a series of interlocking councils whose members largely belonged to a dense and unified bourgeoisie. With the advent of the Reformation, Protestantism became the exclusive religion of Geneva. France, in the other hand, was a geographically vast and culturally diverse country. It was the largest as well as the most populous and bureaucratically integrated among the monarchial states of Western Europe. The kingdom enjoyed enormous financial resources and wielded considerable diplomatic and military power. It also remained predominantly Catholic; Protestants were never more than a minority, amounting to some six to seven percent of the population at the end of the sixteenth century. These particularities

[4] The text of the *Ordonnances Ecclésiastiques* can be found in the *Registres de la Compagnie des Pasteurs de Genève du temps de Calvin, 1546–1553*, ed. J.-F. Bergier, vol. 1 (Geneva: Librairie Droz, 1964), pp. 1–3, 6–8.

[5] Karin Maag, "The Huguenot Academies: Preparing for an Uncertain Future," in R.A. Mentzer and A. Spicer, (eds.), *Society and Culture in the Huguenot World, 1559–1685* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 139–56.

and contrasts inevitably colored the nature of the Reformed church in each case.

The close cooperation between ecclesiastical and political authorities toward the religious reform of Geneva deeply marked the character of its consistory. In the words of Robert Kingdon, constitutional arrangements at Geneva made the consistory a "standing committee" of municipal government.[6] Among other things, it reported to the Small Council, which ran the city on a daily basis. In addition, the twelve elders, who served on the Genevan consistory, were drawn exclusively from the membership of the city's ruling councils: two from the Small Council, four from the Council of Sixty, and six from the Council of Two Hundred.[7] They were fundamentally political figures, who engaged in the delicate task of reforming the community religiously. In the main, the pastors, led by Calvin, had primary responsibility for the crucial reexamination of Christian belief and the edification of the faithful through regular sermon services and catechism lessons. The elders supervised a transformation of ordinary people's ways of life and faced the colossal challenge of translating Reformed religious ideology into a set of everyday religious habits and devotional practices. Although the pastors and elders who sat on the consistory cooperated closely in the task of reforming society, the elders exercised a powerful voice in the conduct of consistorial affairs. One of Geneva's four syndics, the city's principal executive officers, presided over the weekly meetings. The reform of behavior, which was so critical to the establishment of the New Jerusalem, had distinct political repercussions and required the extensive, practical knowledge and well-honed skills of elected council members for its success. At the same time, these municipal governing officers wished to retain control over the Reformation. It was, after all, their community, and its stability and well-being were paramount concerns.

In France, the absence of a cooperative association between the Reformed churches and the monarchical state lent consistorial organization a somewhat different tone. Given the antagonistic, often violent relationship between the Protestant churches and the Catholic monarchy, Reformed ecclesiastical officials had, in ironic fashion, relatively free rein to make the changes they deemed necessary for religious reform. The crown was, on the whole, more interested in eradicating the Reformed churches than in managing their affairs. The Huguenot nobility, moreover, focused its efforts on advancing the cause militarily and politically. This tended also

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[6] Robert M. Kingdon, "Nostalgia for Catholic Rituals in Calvin's Geneva," in Otmar Meuffels (ed.), *Grenzgänge der Theologie Professor Alexandre Ganoczy zum 75. Geburtstag* (Münster: LIT Verlag, 2004), p. 209.

[7] *Ordonnances Ecclésiastiques*, in *Registres de la Compagnie des Pasteurs*, vol. 1, p. 7.

to be the case for members of the municipal consulates in those cities and towns which the Huguenots controlled. Town authorities, for example, lent valuable financial support for the cause. Although there were exceptions such as a local seigneur, who served as elder at Dieulefit in the mid-seventeenth century,[8] the political elite, whether feudal nobles or the urban political patriciate, were not generally inclined to service on the consistory as elders. The elders were, to be sure, part of the emerging bourgeoisie; many were professionals drawn from the ranks of merchants, lawyers, physicians and the like. In any event, the close association of elders and municipal authorities as found in Geneva was not replicated. In addition, unlike Geneva, a pastor rather than an elder presided over the consistorial meetings. The French elders certainly watched over the moral well-being of the faithful and they shared with the deacons enormous responsibility for the financial security of the church. Still, the pastors had a substantial latitude in the vigorous campaign to reform people's conduct and inculcate Reformed identity by insisting upon regular attendance at sermons and catechism lessons, full participation in the quarterly celebration of the Lord's Supper, and the remodeling of everyday behavior to comport better with the prescriptions contained in the Decalogue and other Biblically inspired religious directives.

The effect of these differences in constitutional status is noticeable in a number of ways and on several levels. The Genevan Small Council managed church finances to include both the collection of revenues and payment of pastors' salaries.[9] Indeed, it hired and fired the pastors. The municipal government enacted legislation vital to religious reform and even controlled some details of consistorial procedure. Only in 1556, for instance, did the Small Council allow the Genevan consistory to depose witnesses under oath.[10] The French Reformed churches received virtually no financial support from the state, but had autonomy in the appointment of pastors. By the same token, they were responsible for paying the pastors' salaries. The French consistories were similarly independent in the reform of the community. They summoned suspected sinners and witnesses to various misdeeds, but had no legal power to swear them to an oath. In a related vein, the pastors and elders of Geneva had at their disposal a wide range of punishments for those who had transgressed on the moral order by committing such sins as domestic and public quarreling, adultery and fornication, dancing, excesses of drink and food, gambling, resort to

[8] Bibliothèque de la Société de l'Histoire du Protestantisme Français, Ms 654, fols. 279 and 283 ff.

[9] Robert M. Kingdon, "Catechesis in Calvin's Geneva," in John Van Engen, (ed.), *Educating People of Faith* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004), p. 298.

[10] Thomas A. Lambert, *Preaching, Praying and Policing the Reformation in Sixteenth-Century Geneva* (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation: University of Wisconsin, 1998), pp. 17–18.

magic and "popish superstition," failure to attend worship or catechism, blasphemy, and any number of lesser ecclesiastical and moral failings. The consistory and civic authorities of Geneva cooperated to impose a range of corrective punishments. Offenders could be verbally censured, made to perform public reparation, excommunicated, or referred to the municipal authorities for civil sanctions to include fines and imprisonment, banishment and corporal punishment. While the French consistories chastised wrongdoers for many of the same reasons, the penalties fell within a far narrower range. Lacking support from the state, the French churches could neither directly nor indirectly impose fines, request imprisonment, nor recommend banishment.

Cooperation between Reformed religious officials and secular authorities in France was restricted to Protestant towns such as Montauban and Nîmes, and even then seems to have involved no more than the consistory and municipal council informing one another regarding adulterers and fornicators so that each could punish the offenders in its own fashion.[11] Already in 1560, the French Reformed Churches expressed a reluctance to report to a potentially hostile magistrate any fellow believer who had committed a crime, unless the individual was a habitual offender. They later cautioned pastors and elders against conveying to the courts evidence gathered by the consistory. The National Synod, meeting at Vitré in 1593, forbade members of the faithful from appealing to local judges in an effort to halt consistorial proceedings against them.[12] The French churches had little hope for a mutually reinforcing relationship between church as state, such as existed at Geneva.

The dissimilarities between the French Reformed Churches and those in other parts of Europe are perhaps nowhere more marked than in the practices surrounding excommunication. Excommunication, which barred an individual from participation in the sacraments of the church, notably the Lord's Supper, and excluded normal social and commercial relationships with other members of the congregation, was the gravest of all ecclesiastical punishments. It was a last resort, invoked when pastoral counsel and consistorial admonition failed to bring about reconciliation and penitence. The absence of a close rapport between church and state meant that the French consistories had considerable independence in imposing this stern ecclesiastical penalty. In many imperial German and Swiss city-states, by way of contrast, the secular magistrate exercised strict control over excommunication. It was a complicated matter that had significant political, civic and social ramifications, whose nuances church

[11] Raymond A. Mentzer, "Morals and Moral Regulation in Protestant France," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 31:1 (Summer, 2000): 1–20.

[12] Jean Aymon, *Tous les synodes nationaux des Eglises réformées de France* (2 vols., The Hague, 1710), 1: 20, 141, 160–61, 181.

officials might not fully appreciate. In a notable exception, the consistory of Geneva, largely at Calvin's insistence, had the right to excommunicate. Yet the elders were political officers and, thus, retained a strong measure of control over the process. Even so, the debate over which institution ultimately exercised the right to excommunicate was intense during the 1550s. Later, in the early seventeenth century, the Small Council challenged the consistory on the issue.[13] On the other hand, while the French consistories were less constrained in their exercise of excommunication, the situation had drawbacks. The Reformed Churches of France may not have needed permission from political authorities to exclude men and women from receiving the sacrament, but without the support of the state, the effect was diminished. Ecclesiastical authorities could not restrict the legal rights of excommunicates. The consistory could not, for instance, prevent excommunicates from pursuing civil or criminal legal actions as had been the case under earlier medieval arrangements.[14] Thus, Protestant church leaders in France had extensive discretion regarding excommunication, but the consequences were attenuated.

The very composition of the consistory varied between Geneva and France. Only pastors and elders sat on the Genevan consistory. In France, the deacons were also included, though their status and authority rarely matched that of the pastors and elders. Many French churches had six, eight, or more elders, but only one or two deacons. Even a large and important Protestant town such as Nîmes had only one deacon for every two of its elders; six deacons and twelve elders typically served the Nîmes church. While the meaning of the term deacon evolved during the initial years of the French Reformation, the function and duties were ultimately much the same as at Geneva: the deacons attended to the needs of the poor whose suffering the Christian had a divinely ordained charge to help alleviate. Nonetheless, the manner whereby they discharged their responsibilities differed manifestly.

Reformed churches throughout Europe allocated enormous energy and financial resources to assisting the needy. The pastors, elders and, above all, deacons saw themselves as obedient to scriptural injunctions to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, and visit the sick. Poor people, furthermore, could not be allowed to live as vagrants on the margins of the community. They needed to be integrated into the assembly of the faithful, properly supervised by church authorities, and taught correct Christian virtue. Again, the differences between Genevan and Gallic responses to the challenge

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[13] Lambert, *Preaching, Praying and Policing*, pp. 222–3 and 250–55.

[14] Raymond A. Mentzer, "Marking the Taboo: Excommunication in French Reformed Churches," in R.A. Mentzer, (ed.), *Sin and the Calvinists: Morals Control and the Consistory in the Reformed Tradition* (Kirksville, MO: Truman State University Press, 1994), pp. 97–128.

of assisting the impoverished were substantial. While in both cases, the deacons were lay ecclesiastical officials whose primary duty was to attend the needs of the poor, they operated within very different institutional frameworks. Even before the drafting of the Genevan *Ecclesiastical Ordinances*, the city had established a *Hôpital Général*, which reorganized and reformed its medieval social welfare programs. Poor relief was and remained very much under the control of the municipal authorities. Calvin gave the system ecclesiastical approbation and, in some ways, sanctified the system. He designated as deacons the persons who attended to the operation of the *Hôpital Général*, but neither the Genevan pastors nor the consistory exercised direct control over them.[15]

In France, the consistory explicitly managed the details of social assistance. Rather than establishing a central and separate institution such as the Genevan *Hôpital Général*, where the impoverished and others in distress could turn for aid, the French consistories administered a cash fund. Most French churches maintained two separate funds: one for the poor, another for the pastor's salary and related expenses – the *bourse des pauvres* and the *bourse de l'église*. The consistories constantly received and reviewed petitions from persons in distress. Owing to scant funds, they then made difficult decisions regarding those that it could honor and directed the deacons to undertake the specific courses of action upon which they had settled.[16] In addition, the deacons sat on the French consistory alongside the pastors and elders. Finally, depending upon the locality, their duties overlapped with the responsibilities of the elders, and vice versa. Deacons sometimes assisted in supervising the behavior of members of the community, and elders might well help to identify and aid persons who were in financial distress. The division of labor between deacon and elder was not hard and fast as in the Genevan world.

While expenditures for poor relief were among the heaviest financial burdens shouldered by Reformed congregations, the programs reminded donors of their fundamental religious and social responsibility. The churches were wholly dependent upon contributions from the faithful to support their efforts to help less fortunate Christian brothers and sisters. Almsgiving became a critical element in the life of the faithful. Elders collected money following the celebration of the Lord's Supper, collection boxes were sometimes placed in shops around town, Reformed notaries reminded testators of the need to remember the poor in their last wills and testaments, and the churches levied monetary assessments against those

[15] Robert M. Kingdon, "Social Welfare in Calvin's Geneva," *American Historical Review*, 76 (1971), pp. 50–69.

[16] Raymond A. Mentzer, "Organizational Endeavour and Charitable Impulse in Sixteenth-Century France: The Case of Protestant Nîmes," *French History*, 5 (1991), pp. 1–29.

in the congregation who were financially secure. In this sense, the fiscal structure of social welfare that the French churches established may have offered individual believers a stronger and more immediate awareness of their Christian responsibility to assist the poor than did the municipally administered, publicly supported, and therefore slightly more removed institution of the Genevan *Hôpital Général*.

Another area that provides especially strong evidence for Gallican originality within French Protestantism is the development of ecclesiastical polity. From their very beginnings in the mid-sixteenth century, Reformed churches in France established a highly structured presybterian-synodal system. They rejected episcopal governance on historical grounds and congregationalist polity for theological and disciplinary reasons. John Calvin, however, had not articulated an intricate or systematic design for ecclesiastical government beyond arrangements for the individual church. He certainly did not offer a detailed explanation of synodal polity and its importance. His comments on church governance in the *Institutes of the Christian Religion*[17] are virtually silent on the subject, and aside from limited, intermittent remarks in letters to the French churches,[18] he never energetically promoted synodal organization and operation. In addition, Geneva, whose reform occupied the greater part of Calvin's adult life, did not hold synods. The system would have been redundant for the small city-state.

Synods in the Calvinist world developed earliest in France, which in turn affected developments elsewhere, particularly in the Netherlands. Ecclesiastical authorities certainly had a strong sense of the importance and place of synods in the early Christian church. At the same time, the synod drew upon a long tradition of representative institutions in local and regional secular government. The towns and provinces of southern France, where Protestantism ultimately had its deepest roots, possessed institutions such as the general assembly of heads of household, which contributed to municipal governance, and representative assemblies such as the provincial estates for the exercise of regional authority. In Reformed ecclesiastical circles, a highly structured synodal arrangement built upon the local French churches and their consistories. Representatives – pastors, lay elders, and in the earliest years lay deacons – from a handful of individual churches met regularly in the colloquy as it was called in France.[19] These same churches also sent delegations to provincial synods.

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[17] *Inst*. 4.4, 4.7.8 and 4.9. John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, ed. John T. McNeill, trans. Ford Lewis Battles, 2 vols. (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1960), vol. 2, pp. 1068–84, 1126–7, and 1166–79.

[18] See, for instance, "Calvin aux fidèles de France," *Calvini Opera*, 17: 710–16.

[19] Glenn Sunshine, *Reforming French Protestantism: The Development of Huguenot Ecclesiastical Institutions, 1557–1572* (Kirksville, MO: Truman State University Press, 2003)

Deputies from the provinces gathered, in turn, at the national synod. These various bodies served as administrative and religious liaison among the congregations. The national synods, in particular, possessed considerable legislative and judicial powers. They composed national confessions and adopted detailed ecclesiastical regulations. They also acted, along with the colloquies and provincial synods, as boards of appeal for the resolution of thorny questions and heated disagreements that local churches had failed to settle. Altogether, the arrangement – a hierarchy of ecclesiastical assemblies extending from the local consistory through colloquies to the provincial and ultimately national synods – vested considerable authority and independence of action in the separate churches, while maintaining a sophisticated synodal system. The Reformed Churches of France, the official nomenclature of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, had very much the flavor of a federation and, from the beginning, religious leaders made clear that no church would have precedence over another.[20] At the same time, a hierarchy of ecclesiastical assemblies was well-suited to the organizational requirements associated with the territorially vast French realm.

A pastor and elder from each of a dozen or so local churches gathered in the colloquy two or four times each year. The frequency varied over time. Both pastors and elders were voting delegates. Similar delegations from the churches within each of the sixteen French ecclesiastical provinces met once or twice a year in the provincial synod. The provinces, in turn, appointed two pastors and two elders to attend the national synod, which initially convened annually, but as time wore on and pressure from the French Catholic monarchy increased, met irregularly. Twenty-nine national synods convened in France between May 1559 when delegates from a dozen churches assembled in Paris and November 1659–January 1660, the occasion for thirty pastors and twenty elders to gather at Loudun.[21] The colloquies and synods settled both theological and administrative matters. They clarified belief, fixed policy, developed comprehensive ecclesiastical regulations, regulated financial affairs, and resolved a variety of disputes. Individual consistories were subject to the authority of the colloquy, which, in turn, was subject to the jurisdiction of the provincial synod. The French national synod, which stood atop this progressive

is particularly helpful in laying out the non-Genevan aspects of Reformed ecclesiastical institutions and polity in the development of the French churches.

[20] "Articles polytiques pour l'église réformée selon le S. Evangile, fait à Poictiers 1557," in Eugène Arnaud, (ed.), *Documents protestants inédits du XVIe siècle* (Paris: Grassart, 1972), p. 11.

[21] Bernard Roussel and Solange Deyon, "Pour un nouvel 'Aymon.' Les premiers Synodes nationaux des Églises réformées en France (1559–1567)," *Bulletin de la Société de l'Histoire du Protestantisme Français* (hereafter *BSHPF*), 139 (1993), pp. 545–6.

sequence of assemblies, had the power to "definitively decide and resolve" all ecclesiastical questions.[22]

On the critical issue of a common statement of faith, delegates to the first French National Synod at Paris in May 1559 adopted the text of the Gallican Confession. It is the earliest comprehensive formulation of belief for the Reformed Churches of France and, not surprisingly, was profoundly influenced by the Genevan Confession of the Schoolboys. A dozen years later in 1571, the seventh National Synod held at La Rochelle meticulously reexamined and confirmed the various articles. Accordingly, the declaration is sometimes known as the Confession of Faith of La Rochelle. Subsequent gatherings of the national synod reviewed and made minor modifications into the seventeenth century. It is a simple and elegant statement that follows a classic pattern. The confession first outlines the Reformed understanding of God and enumerates the canonical books of Scripture from which this knowledge flows. Subsequent articles discuss human nature and original sin. They treat salvation through Christ and take up the divine gift of faith and the promise of regeneration. A series of articles then summarize the doctrine of the church, ecclesiastical organization, the sacraments, and finally the temporal magistrates, civil laws, and their relationship to divine authority.[23]

The national synods also composed and continually updated a series of regulations governing the churches. Known literally as the *Discipline*, it constituted instructions to the membership and, by extension, guidelines for proper Christian conduct. The French *Discipline* laid out the various regulations and customs governing the organization of the church. It prescribed the manner for administering baptism and celebrating the Lord's Supper, described institutional structures such as the consistory, colloquy and synod, defined the duties of pastors, elders and deacons, and explained the financial administration of the church. The *Discipline* also enumerated a variety of moral shortcomings and related difficulties. It offered advice to ecclesiastical officials for dealing with these problems and punishing offenders. The *Discipline* contained, for instance, a long section on marriage. The national synods elaborated marriage regulations in response to disagreements involving matters such as clandestine marriage, the nature and effect of betrothal promises, prohibited degrees of consanguinity, or the youth of one or another of the contracting parties. The synods developed detailed policies and rules over time and provided clear

[22] François Méjan, *Discipline de l'Eglise Réformée de France annotée et précédée d'une introduction historique* (Paris: Editions 'Je Sers', 1947), pp. 244–56. Paul de Félice, *Les protestants d'autrefois. Vie intérieure des églises. Moeurs et usages. Les conseils ecclésiastiques. Consistoires, colloques, synodes* (Paris: Fischbacher, 1899), pp. 264–360.

[23] Jacques Pannier, *Les origines de la Confession de foi et de la Discipline des Églises réformées de France* (Paris: F. Alcan, 1936). Richard Stauffer, "Brève histoire de la Confession de La Rochelle," *BSHPF*, 117 (1971), pp. 355–66.

directives regarding these and other complexities surrounding marriage. The difficulties originated with the local congregations, rose slowly through the colloquies and provincial synods, and eventually reached the national level, where they were incorporated into the *Discipline*.[24]

The Genevan church had, as its founding constitution, the *Ecclesiastical Ordinances*, which a special commission of political notables, working in concert with the pastors and above all John Calvin, drafted beginning in September 1541. By November, the city government adopted and promulgated with minor amendments and corrections the committee's recommendations. Later supplementary legislation expanded and revised the *Ordinances*. Additional legislation on marriage and excommunication appeared in 1561. A more thorough reconsideration and revision of the *Ordinances* took place in 1576. The Company of Pastors deliberated in early May and passed their proposal to a commission composed of members of the Small Council and Theodore Beza, Calvin's successor as chief pastor of Geneva. The Small Council adopted the changes, which were mostly minor, by the end of May.[25] The 1576 version of the *Ordinances* was then published and distributed within and without Geneva. Still, the *Ordinances* were not the precise equivalent of the French Ecclesiastical *Discipline*. To begin, the Genevan *Ordinances* derived from a close collaboration between the church and the municipal authorities. They were also, even with the later modifications and adjustments, a relatively spare articulation of the rules and regulations governing the church at Geneva. The French *Discipline*, on the other hand, had a far more politically independent character, though, as a result, it lacked force of law. And while it too was in the early years a compact statement of ecclesiastical polity, it expanded over the decades into a long and detailed statement of ecclesiastical organization, procedures and regulations.

In France, national synod's duties in formulating belief, establishing church order, and adjudicating disputes were fundamental and critical in the promotion of stability and unity. For their part, local French Reformed churches and consistories were keenly aware of the need to maintain and observe a standard set of national guidelines as they set about the task of reforming the faithful. The consistory of Nîmes, likely inspired by Calvin's words in the *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, informally adopted the motto "*Disciplina nervus ecclesiae*."[26] The phrase succinctly expressed

[24] Among the better available editions are Isaac d'Huisseau, *La Discipline des Eglises réformées de France ou l'ordre par lequel elles sont conduites et gouvernées* (Geneva, 1666); and Méjan, *Discipline de l'Eglise Réformée de France*.

[25] Henri Heyer, *L'Église de Genève, 1555–1909: esquisse historique de son organization suive de ses constitutions, de la liste de ses pasteurs et professeurs et d'une table biographique* (Geneva: A. Jullien, 1909), pp. 7–24.

[26] Calvin, *Institutes*, ed. McNeill, vol. 2, pp. 1229–30. Archives Départementales (hereafter AD), Gard, 42 J 30, fol 1.

the goal of fashioning a Christian community through an encompassing effort to promote proper devotion, while simultaneously rooting out sinful conduct. Some local churches, particularly during the earliest years of reform, even formulated and adopted their own *Disciplines*. The *Disciplines* of Bayeux and Saint-Lô, both composed in 1563, and that Nîmes, written at a later date (perhaps in the mid- to late 1580s), had much in common with the national *Discipline*. At the same time, they satisfied local needs for more specific guidance in the conduct of ecclesiastical affairs.[27] The "Police de l'Église réformée de Bayeux" is a detailed statement with long descriptions of the offices of pastor, elder and deacon, along with the role of the schoolmaster. Other sections explain the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, consistorial censure, marriage, visiting the sick, and burial. The "Discipline de l'Église de Saint-Lô" is an equally thorough text and, at the same time, possesses several unique features. Among other matters, it confides disciplinary responsibility exclusively to the pastors and elders,[28] thereby excluding deacons who had involvement with these matters in most French churches. In addition, the Saint-Lô church order is the only French Reformed *Discipline* to delineate closely the role of the magistrate in the church. The "Memoyre de l'ordre qu'on tient au consistoire de Nymes" covers much of the same ground, but is a far sparer document. All three statements clarify local practices with regard to a number of issues that the national *Discipline* discusses only in broad fashion. Thus, the Nîmes "Memoyre de l'ordre" makes clear that the pastors preside according to a structured rotation. It also fixes the order of business, establishes procedures for the collection and disbursement of funds for the poor, and specifies visitations of the municipal *collège*.

The implementation of discipline was intimately related to the life of worship and, in particular, participation in the celebration of the Lord's Supper. Already at Strasbourg during the late 1530s, Calvin had experimented with the screening of the faithful to be certain that persons who shared in the Eucharistic meal were eligible by virtue of correct belief and proper conduct. Indeed, the principal purpose of the consistory was to ensure that only the worthy participated in the Lord's Supper, which occurred four times each year: on Easter and Pentecost, in early September, and at Christmastide. French pastors usually announced the service two

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[27] R.M. Kingdon, R.A. Mentzer, and M. Reulos, "'Disciplines' réformées du XVIe siècle français: une découverte faite aux Etats-Unis," *BSHPF*, 130 (1984), pp. 69–86. M. Reulos, "Police et discipline de l'Église de Saint-Lô (1563)," in "Les débuts des communautés réformées dans l'actuel Département de la Manche (Cotentin et Avranches," in *Réforme et Contre-réforme en Normandie*, special issue of *Revue du Département de la Manche* 24 (1982, fascicules 93–94–95): 31–61. AD, Gard, 42 J 28, fols 372–5.

[28] "Singulièrement les Ministres et Anciens veilleront et s'enquerront des scandales de l'Église pour les reprendre et censurer ...." Reulos, "Police et discipline de l'Église de Saint-Lô," *Revue du Département de la Manche* 24 (1982, fascicules 93–94–95): 50.

or three weeks in advance, allowing members of the congregation ample time to undertake the necessary spiritual preparation. Some churches went even further. The elders of Coutras in the French southwest reported to the consistory on the "manner of living, morals and other things" for each member of the congregation on the Sunday preceding the celebration of the Lord's Supper.[29]

Everywhere within the French Reformed community, the consistory invited egregious sinners and excommunicates to seek forgiveness during the period leading up to the Eucharist. This sacred communal meal was the appropriate moment for repentance and the restoration of communal harmony. Churches also offered mandatory adult catechism lessons during this preparatory period. In most French churches, the elders distributed entry counters – sometimes paper chits, on other occasion lead tokens called *méreaux* – at the conclusion of catechism.[30] The tokens were subsequently collected at the communion service. At Le Mans in the early 1560s, for example, "each of the faithful placed his *méreau* on the [communion] table." In other churches, an elder collected the tokens at the temple door. No one could participate without one.[31] Ultimately, the use of tokens as part of an elaborate system to control access to the Eucharist proved sufficiently effective that some churches adapted the system for other related purposes. Thus, the Church of Mougon in the region of Poitou extended the practice to baptism and marriage. No one could present an infant for baptism or obtain permission to marry at Mougon without producing a *méreau* obtained from her or his elder and thereby attesting to good standing in the church.[32]

The metal *méreaux* were often ornately decorated.[33] Marked with various figural and non-figural devices, they offered powerful religious

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[29] Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, Ms 6559, fol 13.

[30] Some English parishes also introduced a token system by the late sixteenth century, but issuance of the token for admission to communion seems to have been conditional upon payment of "tithes and Easter offerings." Arnold Hunt, "The Lord's Supper in Early Modern England," *Past and Present*, no. 161 (November 1998), p. 43.

[31] MM. Anjubault and H. Chardon, *Papier et registre du Consistoire de l'Eglise du Mans, réformée selon l'Evangile, 1560–1561 (1561–1562 nouveau style)* (Le Mans: Ed. Monnoyer, 1867), pp. 35–6. Raymond A. Mentzer, "The Printed Catechism and Religious Instruction in the French Reformed Churches," in *Habent sua fata libelli. Books Have Their Own Destiny. Essays in Honor of Robert V. Schnucker*, ed. Robin B. Barnes, Robert A. Kolb and Paula L. Presley (Kirksville, Mo.: Truman State University Press, 1998), pp. 93–101.

[32] Raymond A. Mentzer, "The Reformed Churches of France and the Visual Arts," in Paul Corby Finney, (ed.), *Seeing Beyond the Word: Visual Arts and the Calvinist Tradition* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), p. 221.

[33] Adrien Blanchet and A. Dieudonné, *Manuel de numismatique française*, 4 vols (Paris: Auguste Picard, 1912–1936), vol. 3, pp. 511–23. E. Delorme, "Le méreau dans les Eglises réformées de France," *BSHPF*, 37 (1888), pp. 204–7. Charles Delormeau, *Les méreaux de communion des Églises protestantes de France et du Refuge* (Le Mas Soubeyran: Musée du

and sacramental images. There were depictions of Christ as the shepherd with his flock or, more commonly, of graceful communion cups. Artisans also adorned the tokens with scriptural verses and abbreviated versions of the name of the local church. In each instance, the *méreau* reinforced the notion of the Lord's Supper as the centerpiece of a collective religious experience to which the token bearer was now granted admittance. Given the crucial position that the Lord's Supper had in the spiritual life of the congregation, the entry token became, by association, a symbol of membership in the body of believers. At the same time, the tokens were yet another feature that distinguished the efforts of the French Reformed Churches from developments at Geneva.

Calvin had, in fact, proposed this very system for Geneva. In late January 1560, he and Pierre Viret urged adoption of a token system to regulate admission to the Genevan Communion service. Addressing the city's Small Council, they proposed that

> ... in order to avoid the danger of those who profane the Lord's Supper ... it would be good to make some tokens and when the day for the Lord's Supper occurs, each will take the tokens for those of his household and the foreigners, having given testimony to their faith, may also take tokens and those who do not have them will not be admitted.[34]

A few days later, the ruling council rejected the idea of "making leaden tokens to give to those who wish to receive the Lord's Supper."[35] The Venerable Company of Pastors raised the issue several times in the early seventeenth century, again without positive response from the Genevan magistrates. Still, with Calvin's encouragement,[36] probably in 1561, the Reformed Churches of France developed a flourishing token system.

Even the creation of space for worship tended to differ between France and Geneva. Reformed Protestants throughout Europe tended to retain and adapt pre-Reformation civic forms, ecclesiastical buildings and parish arrangements, including parish boundaries. Continuity for these matters was certainly the case at Geneva[37] and many other Reformed cities in western Europe. The Church of Saint-Pierre at Geneva, for example, continued

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Désert, 1983), pp. 5–10. Henri Gelin, *Le méreau dans les Eglises Réformées de France et plus particulièrement dans celles du Poitou* (Saint-Maixent: Reversé, 1891), pp. 1–22.

[34] Archives d'État de Genève, Registres des Conseils, vol. 55 (1559–60), fol. 185 (30 January 1560).

[35] Archives d'État de Genève, Registres des Conseils, vol. 55 (1559–60), fol. 186v (1 February 1560).

[36] *Calvini Opera*, 17: 711.

[37] For Geneva, see William G. Naphy, "The Renovation of the Ministry in Calvin's Geneva," in *The Reformation of the Parishes: the Ministry and the Reformation in Town and Country*, ed. Andrew Pettegree (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1993), p. 116; for Zurich, Bruce Gordon, "Preaching and the Reform of the Clergy in the Swiss Reformation," in *The Reformation of the Parishes*, p. 68.

to be used for worship, although the medieval interior furnishings were significantly altered. The same appropriation of medieval structures with relatively minimal interior modifications occurred in the Netherlands and Scotland.[38] Architects adapted these medieval structures to the Reformed liturgical needs by removing the altar, erecting a pulpit midway along the side of the nave, and installing benches for the faithful. Still, these solutions for older pre-existing structures were not always ideal. Geneva appears to have experimented with various arrangements for the pulpit and benches in Saint-Pierre at Geneva. Although the structure had not been designed as an auditory space, it was important that the people easily see and hear the preacher.

By contrast, French Protestants were generally barred from utilizing existing churches for worship. During the earliest years, they frequently met in private dwellings or buildings converted from other public uses. Religious warfare and iconoclastic riots, moreover, had led to the severe damage of many ecclesiastical structures. Even when reformers seized pre-Reformation churches and used them for worship, their efforts did not typically outlast the Wars of Religion. When the fighting subsided by the late sixteenth century, the monarchy forced Huguenots to return medieval churches and related buildings to Catholic claimants. Finally, many French Protestants regarded medieval churches as irreparably corrupted and defiled. They had long housed superstitious papal rituals and idolatrous material objects such as statues, paintings and stained glass windows. As such, the medieval edifices could be deeply offensive to Reformed religious sensibilities.[39]

Reformed church officials in France were obliged for a variety of reasons to construct wholly new structures. These temples – for the church was the community of believers, while the temple was the physical structure for worship – were remarkable in their simple yet refined elegance. Reconsideration of religious ritual and, in particular, the two focal points of the Reformed liturgy – the sermon service and the Lord's Supper – pushed French Protestants to undertake an architectural redefinition of the sacred space for worship. They abandoned the cruciform medieval church. The altar and celebration of the Mass disappeared. The pulpit and communion table, representations of the Word and the sacrament,

[38] Andrew Spicer, "Iconoclasm and Adaptation: The Reformation of the Churches in Scotland and the Netherlands," in David Gaimster and Roberta Gilchrist, (eds.), The Archeology of the Reformation, 1480–1580 (Leeds: Maney, 2003), pp. 29–43.

[39] Reformed churches in Gascony, for example, occasionally dubbed a Catholic church or chapel as a "temple of the idols." AD, Gers, 23067, 2 April 1603, 16 February 1606, 3 and 28 July 1606, 27 August 1606, 2 March 1607, 4, 13 and 20 April 1607, 26 December 1607.

now occupied the central position.[40] Here, the devout gathered to listen to the pastor's sermons and partake in the Lord's Supper. Around the pulpit, the reformers arranged benches in either semi-circles or grids. The introduction of pewing was crucial as the Mass gave way to the sermon in the new liturgy. Several times each week, the faithful gathered to hear God's truth as contained in Scripture. Everyone was obliged to sit and listen attentively.

The spatial arrangements for worship conceived by Reformed architects sought to create an open auditorium – an amphitheatric space where the faithful could assemble and listen to the pastor announce the word of God. The goal was to allow the congregants to see, hear and share in a communal liturgy. While the new temples conformed to no grand model and varied considerably from one locale to another, their essential plans were either longitudinal (basilican) or centralized (typically polygonal). Reformed architects looked to antiquity, both Roman and Christian, for inspiration. Some communities favored a longitudinal plan derived from the Roman basilica and adopted by early Christians. Others preferred a centralized temple plan, which many reformers believed was an ancient Christian type. Both models conformed to the objective of returning to the purity of the primitive church. These designs also focused attention on the pulpit and communion table, thereby reinforcing the centrality of the sermon and the Lord's Supper.

While these observations by no means exhaust the repertoire of adaptations of Calvinism in France, they nonetheless suggest the rich and varied texture of the Reformed tradition as it developed there and elsewhere in Europe over the course of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The nature of the relationship between church and state was everywhere fundamental in determining the course of the Reformation. This is obvious yet bears repeating. The situation of the Reformed Churches of France and their followers – a religious minority existing in a strained relationship with the civil authorities – certainly accounts for many of the adjustments and modifications undertaken by French Calvinists. During the Wars of Religion in France, the Reformed community was hard-pressed and often actively persecuted. Later, under the terms of the Edict of Nantes, from its proclamation in 1598 until the Revocation of 1685, Protestants were legally tolerated and accorded basic civil status. Their church was officially recognized as were the essential rites – baptism, marriage, and burial – that it provided to the faithful. Still, the situation left French Protestants under severe constraint. They never benefited from the state support that was so critical to the success of any early modern church. On the other hand,

[40] André Biéler, *Liturgie et architecture. Le temple des chrétiens* (Geneva: Labor et Fides, 1961), pp. 79–81.

the French congregations often enjoyed substantial independence of action concerning their internal operation. The consistories were less restricted in the exercise of excommunication or employ of communion tokens. In addition, the French Reformed churches enjoyed largely unfettered responsibility in the appointment of ecclesiastical officers such as pastors and elders, provision of poor relief, development of ecclesiastical polity, drafting of confessional statements and church orders, and the exercise of discipline. They even designed and constructed, admittedly at considerable expense, wholly new edifices for worship. In the end, while the bonds between Geneva and the French Reformed Churches were vigorous and unambiguous, there were also differences, though not over matters of belief or ritual. Rather, it was a question of implementing religious reform in ways best suited to the particular circumstances of the churches and the communities of faith that they represented.

CHAPTER NINE

Divisions within French Calvinism: Philippe Duplessis-Mornay and the Eucharist[1]

Mack P. Holt

According to the memoirs of Charlotte de Mornay, when her husband Philippe converted to Calvinism along with his recently widowed mother in 1560, it was his study of the New Testament that ultimately led him to abandon the Catholic religion. He was surprised to discover, for example, that there was no mention in the gospels of either Purgatory or of intercessory prayers of the saints. But the real turning point for him, she claimed, and what finally led to his public commitment to the Reformed church was when he came to understand the differences between the Catholic Mass and the Protestant Lord's Supper.[2] This was also true of other Huguenots, such as Gaspard de Coligny, who also claimed it was the Calvinist doctrine of the Lord's Supper that finally persuaded him to convert.[3] Because the Eucharist had always been the central rite of the Roman Catholic faith, encapsulating all other doctrines including that of salvation, it should not be too surprising that many of those who converted to Calvinism viewed their new faith through the lens of the Lord's Supper and how significantly it differed from the Catholic Mass.

Philippe Duplessis-Mornay ultimately spelled out his own views on the Lord's Supper systematically in a large book that he began in 1595, but which did not ultimately get published until 1598. When his *De l'Institution, usage et doctrine du saint Sacrement de l'Eucharistie* did appear just a few months after the publication of the Edict of Nantes in July1598, the work set off a firestorm of protest. Most French Catholics saw it as a polemic intended to undermine the central rite of Roman Catholicism, and there

[1] An earlier version of this paper was presented in French at a conference in Saumur in May 2004 organized by Hugues Daussy and Véronique Ferrer: "Servir Dieu, le Roi et l'Etat: Philippe Duplessis-Mornay, 1549–1623."

[2] Charlotte Arbaleste, Madame de Mornay, *Mémoires de Madame de Mornay*, ed. Madame de Witt (Paris: Société de l'Histoire de France, 1868–9), I, 18. See also Hugues Daussy, *Les Huguenots et le roi: Le combat politique de Philippe Duplessis-Mornay, 1572–1600* (Genève: Librairie Droz, 2003), 44.

[3] Thierry Wanegffelen, *Ni Rome ni Genève: Des fideles entre deux chaires en France au XVIe siècle* (Paris: Honoré Champion, 1997), 293–4.

is no doubt that Mornay certainly intended it as such. In more than 1000 pages of text and using more than 5,000 references to the Bible and the writings of the Church fathers and other sources on the early Christian Church, Mornay set out to prove that the Catholic Mass was a recent invention that had no basis in Scripture, and which was founded upon errors of interpretation as well as on the willful ignorance of several Popes. He spelled this out explicitly in the preface to this large work.

> But we see very well that there has been a bastardization and universal corruption of Christ's institution and of the first and oldest manner of service [to God], which has been transformed little by little from an abuse of words into an abuse of substance, from a sacrament into a sacrifice .... So, that this Mass that we see today is just a jumbling together over many centuries and a composition of many different Popes, in which, in order to enrich it, have been added from time to time all the abuses that Satan, human beings, and the passing of time have been able to introduce into the Church, either through malice, negligence, or ignorance.[4]

French Catholic reaction was immediate and unequivocal. The Sorbonne censured the book, while preachers throughout the capital of Paris attacked the work from the pulpit. Jesuits in Bordeaux urged the Parlement to burn all copies of the work. Even moderate Catholic intellectuals complained that Mornay's polemic had gone too far. "You have stirred up all Catholics, who are everywhere campaigning against you," wrote Florimond de Raimond.[5] Other Catholic writers claimed that Mornay had falsified or even invented his citations to support his own point of view. As Mornay lamented to his wife nearly a year after the book first appeared, "I have spent four months with His Majesty [Henry IV], during which every pulpit in Paris thundered against me."[6] Huguenot opinion was just the opposite, praising Mornay for his service to God and

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[4] Philippe Duplessis-Mornay, *De l'Institution, usage et doctrine du Sainct Sacrement de l'Eucharistie, en l'Eglise Ancienne, Ensemble, Comment, Quand, & par quells Degrez la Messe s'est introduite en sa place* ([Genève]: Gabriel Cartier, 1599), g iii verso: "Mais bien verrons nous que ç'a esté un Abastardissement, une Corruption Universelle de l'instituion du Christ, du Service premier et ancien; qu'on a transformé peu à peu, d'un abus de mots, en un abus de substance; de Sacrament, en Sacrifice.... Que cette Messe, que nous voions auiourd'hui, est un Ramas de plussieurs siècles; une Composition des plusieurs Papes; en laquelle, pour l'enrichir, sont entrez pour Ingrediens, de temps en temps, tous les Abus que Sathan, les hommes et les temps ont sceu introduire, ou par malice, ou par nonchalance, ou par Ignorance, en l'Eglise."

[5] *Mémoires et correspondance de Philippe Duplessis-Mornay pour servir à l'histoire de la Réformation et des guerres de religion en France* (Paris: A.-D. de la Fontenelle de Vaudoré, 1824–25), IX, 200–201, letter of Raimond to Mornay, 5 January 1599; also cited by Daussy, *Les Huguenots et le roi*, 586: "Vous avés esmeu toute la catholicité, qui se remeue partout contre vous."

[6] *Mémoires et correspondance*, vol. 9, 270, letter of Mornay to his wife, 30 May 1599; also cited by Daussy, *Les Huguenots et le roi*, 585: "J'ai esté quattre mois près de Sa Majesté [Henri IV], pendant lesquels toutes les chaires de Paris ont tonné contre moi."

to the Reformed church. Louise de Coligny, Rosny, Arnaud, Montigny, Marnix de Sainte-Aldegonde, De Bèze, and Scaliger all heaped praised on Mornay's treatise, which they found to be "so painstaking, so judicious, so useful, and so necessary."[7] Thus, Hugues Daussy is certainly right to stress that Morany's treatise on the Eucharist resulted in "unanimity from both sides: Catholics who condemned him and Huguenots who praised him."[8]

But Mornay's treatise on the Eucharist was also problematic for the Huguenots. Although there was unanimous adulation for his scholarship and erudition in attacking the doctrine of the Catholic Mass, the timing of the book's appearance immediately after the publication of the Edict of Nantes, and especially the language Mornay chose to use in which to couch his arguments, made many Huguenots uneasy, especially those who chose to continue their political careers working for Henri IV at court. Although virtually all Huguenots fully accepted Mornay's theological opinions about the Catholic Mass, his language of exclusivity and complete condemnation of all Catholics was difficult to square with the reality of religious co-existence in which they were forced to live under the provisions of the Edict of Nantes. In short, while Huguenots agreed with Mornay's attacks on the Eucharist, he tied the Protestant Lord's Supper to a social model of communal cohesion that excluded any possibility of the co-existence of two religions. Thus, the remainder of this essay will argue that it was the socio-political ramifications of Mornay's treatise on the Eucharist, as well as the more obvious theological and doctrinal implications, that made this book so controversial. For Mornay himself, his book was political suicide. For many other Huguenots as well, however, it forced them to choose between a traditional understanding of the Lord's Supper as a significant tie that bound the entire community together under the Reformed faith, or a newer and more novel conception of the sacrament that allowed them room to enter the risky and completely unknown future of religious co-existence.

That Mornay should couch his views on the doctrine of the Lord's Supper in social terms – that is, to see the sacrament as a means of uniting a community together under one faith – is hardly surprising. After all, Catholics had long viewed the Eucharist in the same way, as a ritual that accentuated the communal and collective identity of all who received the consecrated Host as members of "one bread, one body."[9] Like Mornay,

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[7] Cited by Daussy, *Les Huguenots et le roi*, 586–7: "si laborieux, si judicieux, si utile, si nécessaire."

[8] Ibid., 587.

[9] See John Bossy, "Essai de sociographie de la Messe, 1200–1700," *Annales: ESC*, vol. 36 (1981): 44–70, and the English translation of this article, "The Mass as a Social Institution, 1200–1700," *Past & Present*, no. 100 (1983): 29–61. For the phrase "un pain, un corps," see Barbara B. Diefendorf, *Beneath the Cross: Catholics and Huguenots in Sixteenth-Century Paris* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 32.

most French Catholics had traditionally viewed the Eucharist as a symbol of uniting the community – and indeed the nation – under the religion of the Roman Catholic church. And Mornay was also being true to Calvin's own legacy regarding the Lord's Supper. In his "Petit Traité de la Cêne" written in Strasbourg in 1540, Calvin himself had stressed the communal aspect of the sacrament: "For seeing we have been made members of Jesus Christ, being incorporated into him, and united with him as our head, it is most reasonable that we should become conformable to him in purity and innocence, and especially that we should cultivate charity and concord together as becomes members of the same body."[10] Calvin assumed, as would be the case in Geneva, that every member of the community should be a member of the Reformed church and that the Lord's Supper would help maintain charity and concord in the body social as well as in the body of Christ. And this is the very same perception that Mornay continued in his treatise on the Eucharist half a century later.

The structure and organization of Mornay's treatise on the Catholic Mass was very straightforward, as he divided the work into four parts. Book I detailed the view that the Catholic Mass could not be found in scripture or in practice in the early Church, as "Communion in both kinds had been practiced throughout the early Church."[11] Mornay argued that "mutations" in the Mass began in the reign of Pope Gregory the Great in the sixth century and increased even more after the reign of Charlemagne in the ninth century. Ultimately, the Communion cup was taken away from the laity altogether in the High Middle Ages, as only the presiding priest consumed the consecrated blood of Christ. "We cannot comprehend how much Christian blood was shed in Bohemia, Moravia, and elsewhere simply in order to deny the blood of Christ to the faithful. The Pope simply wants to be obeyed at whatever the cost."[12]

In Books II and III Mornay stressed other Protestant doctrines, declaring for example, that in the primitive Church, and for a long time since, "the Holy Scriptures were read by the people in all languages." Moreover, he claimed "that the bishops and ministers of the ancient Christian Church were married."[13] Again, only the personal whim of individual Popes, he

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[10] John Calvin, "Short Treatise on the Holy Supper of Our Lord Jesus Christ," in *John Calvin: Selections from his Writings*, ed. John Dillenberger (Missoula, Montana: Scholars Press, 1975), 517.

[11] Mornay, *De l'Institution*, 169: "Que la Communion sous les deux Especes a esté prattiqué en toute l'Eglise Ancienne."

[12] Ibid., 204: "Or n'est-il a croire, pour oster le Sang de Christ aux Fideles, combine il se respand de Sang Chrestien en Boëme, Moravie et autres provinces: le Pape vouloit estre obeï, a quelque prix que se fust."

[13] Ibid., 345 and 373: "Qu'en la primitive Eglise, et long temps depuis, les sainctes Escritures se lisoient entre le peuple en toutes langues ... Que les Evesques et ministres de l'Ancienne Eglise Chrestienne estoient mariez."

claimed, without any scriptural basis, introduced these mutations and innovations. And finally in Book III Mornay claimed that the doctrines of Purgatory and the invocation of the saints were nowhere to be found in either the Old or the New Testament, nor were they practiced or believed by the early Christians.[14]

It was in Book IV that the most stinging of his attacks on the Catholic Mass were introduced. At the heart of Mornay's rejection of the doctrine of transubstantiation was his insistence that "transubstantiation destroys the nature of every sacrament, since every sacrament consists of a sign and a thing signified, both of which exist completely and separately, such that it is impossible for one to become the other, or be any part of the other. Nor can one be confused with or converted into the other."[15] The bread and wine were the signs, while the body and blood of Christ were the things signified. To be sure, the bread and the wine, "the one and the other [are the] signs of our union [in Christ]." But it was "the thing signified, that is the body and blood of Christ, Christ himself" that actually guaranteed and provided for that union in Christ.[16] Mornay went on to say that this community of Christ consisted only of those who believed in Christ and only of those for whom Christ died. The Catholic Mass, he claimed, was a threat to this union in Christ.

> What kind of injury, then, does [the doctrine of] transubstantiation do to Our Lord, the precious pearl of the Gospel, inasmuch as it is offered to hypocrites and unbelievers, just as it is thrown out to dogs and swine, as if it were only a question of having a mouth into which to pour or a stomach into which to swallow? Can this practice be supported either by Scripture or by the early Church?

For Mornay, then, Catholic "dogs and swine" had mouths and stomachs in order to ingest the signs of the sacrament, but the thing signified, Christ's body and blood was reserved for the faithful, "who are his members and no others."[17] Certainly, Mornay was invoking the Biblical allusion of casting pearls before swine in his choice of words to allude to Catholic "dogs and swine." Nor did he choose these particular animals at random. In contrasting Christ's body as a pearl with the Catholic "dogs and swine"

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[14] Ibid., 535, 568, 600, 657, 678, and 692.

[15] Ibid., 939: "La Transsubstantiation destruit la nature de tout Sacrament: Car tout Sacremen consiste en signe, et en chose signifiée; qui demeurent entiers sans que l'un puisse estre l'autre; ni parti de l'autre; ni confus, ni converti en l'autre."

[16] Ibid., "... l'un et l'autre [sont les] signes de nostre union [en Christ] ... la chose signifié, c'est le corps et le sang du Christ; c'est Christ lui-mesmes."

[17] Ibid., 939–40: "Quel tort fait donc ici la Transsubstantiation à nostre Seigneur, à cette perle precieuse de l'Evangile; qui la donne aux hypocrites et infideles; qui la jette aux chiens et aux pourceaux, tellement qu'il n'est question que d'avoir une bouche pour le prendre, un estomach pour l'y avaller? Cela se peut-il maintenir,ni par Escriture, ni par l'Eglise Ancienne?"

who devoured the Eucharist at Mass, Mornay was also suggesting that the consecrated host in the Catholic Mass was something only worth being thrown away like garbage in the streets, to be gobbled up by dogs and swine, an allusion sixteenth-century town-dwellers would have been very familiar with. Moreover, as Edward Muir has shown for sixteenth-century Italy, dogs and swine had almost universal appeal across most of Christian western Europe as pejorative symbols; Mornay hardly chose these particular animals at random with which to describe French Catholics.[18] Mornay underscored once again "that the ancient Church neither believed in nor taught the doctrine of transubstantiation, seeing that it neither practiced nor observed the forms of the sacraments that are practiced today." Indeed, he pointed out that the doctrine of transubstantiation was not officially ratified until the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215 under Pope Innocent III.[19]

Mornay further underlined the communal bond of the Lord's Supper, and how the Catholic Mass served to destroy that bond, in his summary at the end of the book, which he called a "Comparison of the Holy Supper and the Mass." After more than a thousand pages on the history of the doctrine of transubstantiation in the Roman Catholic church, he asked how far was it removed from the simplicity of the early Christian church, and how far it was from the institution inaugurated by Jesus Christ at the Last Supper:

> It all comes back to this: That in the Lord's Supper we are seriously admonished to remember our bonds of obligation to Our Lord, as well as our duty towards our neighbor. We are likewise nourished and strengthened by our bond and ties with Christ our head, on which true life depends, and which is legitimated and made public, as is the soul by the same impulses, by our zeal toward God and by our behavior toward our neighbors."[20]

For Mornay, then, like Calvin before him, the Lord's Supper was a ritual of recognition of every Christian's obligation to God as well as an equal obligation to his fellow human beings. The community of Christ was thus a union forged in Christian charity, and the bond of communion provided by the Lord's Supper linked every member of that community both to God spiritually and to each other socially.

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[18] Edward Muir, *Mad Blood Stirring: Vendetta and Factions in Friuli during the Renaissance* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993), 220–38.

[19] Mornay, *De l'Institution*, 1031 and 1054: "Que l'Eglise Ancienne n'a point creu, ni enseigé la transubstantiation; veu qu'elle n'a point fait, ni observé envers les Especes, ou Sacramens, ce qui se fait auiourd'hui."

[20] Ibid., 1107: "La somme en revient-là: Qu'en la S[aint] Cene, nous sommes serieusement admonistrez de nostre obligation envers nostre Seigneur, et de nostre debvoir envers nostre prochain: Pareillement entretenus et fortifiez en la conjonction de nous avec Christ, nostre Chef; dont depend nostre vraie vie, laquelle se verifié et fait conoistre, comme l'ame par ses mouvemens, par nostre zele envers Dieu, par nos deportemens enver nos prochains."

Mornay then contrasted this notion of the Lord's Supper with the Catholic Mass, and he specified three major points in which the two rituals explicitly differed. First, the Calvinist sacrament "is called both a commemoration and a Eucharist, or act of thanksgiving. For out of the memory of that sacrifice, from this gift of salvation (and by this unspeakable means [of crucifixion]), there follows a significant Eucharist or thanksgiving in every Christian heart." The Papist Mass, however, was not a commemoration at all. "This result is completely lacking in the Papist Mass; since commemoration is not part of it at all, nor is the death of the Lord explained to the people. To them it is just a heap of words and a variety of gestures, with neither one nor the other well understood."[21] Second, Mornay argued that the Catholic Mass also did not create the same social bonds of obligation to each other through Christian charity as the Lord's Supper did.

> We are likewise reminded in the Lord's Supper of our duty towards our neighbors .... And this is why the Church fathers have called it a communion. And this second aspect of the Lord's Supper is also missing in the Mass, in which there is no communion between members, no sign at all of Christ's joining together with us, or of us collectively making from so many grains one loaf and one cup, together drawing all life from the same death, taking food from the same meat of the flesh and blood of the Lord.[22]

Third, Mornay argued, the Catholic Mass not only failed to unite its members together one with another in Christian charity; it did not even unite its members with Christ. The Lord's Supper united all those who partook of the bread and wine to Christ: "Moreover, by the predominant virtue that they [the bread and wine] have, they convert our souls to Christ, uniting them to Christ and making them one with him."[23] But this was completely lacking in the Mass of the Roman Catholic church, Mornay argued, where there was nothing at all in the Mass that represented this

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[21] Ibid., 1108: "Et c'est pourquoi ce Sacrement est appelé [une] commemoration et Eucharistie, ou Action des graces: Car de la commemoration de ce Benfice, de ce don de salut,(et par cet ineffable moien) s'enfuit en tout coeur Chrestien, une serieuse Eucharistie. Et ce fruict defaut nommement en la Messe Papistique; Car cette commemoration ne s'y fait point; la mort du Seigneur n'y est point annoncee au Peuple: C'est pour tout, un amas de paroles, une diversité de gestes, ausii peu entendus, l'un que l'autre."

[22] Ibid., 1108–9: "Nous sommes pareillement admonestrez en la S[ainte] Cene de nostre devoir envers nos prochains ... Et c'est pourquoi les Anciens l'ont appellee collecte, Communion. Et ce second fruit de la [Sainte] Cene manque derechef en la Messe, Ou il n'y a aucune communion entre les membres, aucune signification de cette conjonction de Christ avec nous; de nous ensemble, faisans tous de tant de grains un pain et une coupe; tirans toute la vie, d'une mesme mort; la nourriture d'une mesme viande, de la chair et du sang du Seigneur."

[23] Ibid., 1110: "Mais, qui plus est, par la predominante vertu quilz [le pain et le vin] ont,convertisseent nos ames, et à Christ, et en Christ; les unissent à lui, les font un avec lui."

conjunction with Christ. In the Catholic Mass, in fact, "those who are present neither eat nor drink, either corporally or spiritually. They simply stare and gaze at the priest, who eats and drinks, and they remain all the while both deaf and dumb as they ponder this so-called mystery."[24]

Thus, Mornay attacked the Catholic Mass in terms designed to tear at the social fabric of France after the publication of the Edict of Nantes. Just as Henry IV and many moderate Huguenots at Catholics were attempting to forge a new social cohesion wherein Catholics and Protestants could live together peacefully, and where former Leaguers and Huguenots could work side by side at court and in the institutions of the nation, Mornay's treatise on the Catholic Mass argued forcefully and extensively that such social cohesion and religious co-existence was neither desirable nor, in fact, even possible. The unmistakable message of Mornay's book was that French Catholics – "dogs and swine" – were not just outside the community of Christ, but that they were enemies that threatened this community. The publication of Mornay's book was thus far more consequential than simply an erudite attempt to use Biblical scholarship to support a particular theological point of view. It was much more than that. Catholics viewed it as an unsheathed sword drawn to continue the very confessional battle that the Edict of Nantes was designed to bring to a close. By attacking the Catholic Mass, Mornay was also attacking the heart of Catholic society and public life in France. For those Huguenots who were attempting to become part of this public life, Mornay's treatise put them in an extremely difficult position.

So why did Mornay write this book? Why did he publish it when he did? Was it simply an act of defiance against the abjuration of Henry IV? Why did Mornay work so hard to achieve the many concessions the Huguenots gained in the Edict of Nantes, then immediately threaten those very concessions by upsetting the delicate balance of peace with the publication of his treatise on the Catholic Mass? It is true, as Hugues Daussy has demonstrated so clearly, that Mornay's dream had always been the complete triumph of the Reformed faith, not the limited religious co-existence of the Edict of Nantes. But that dream surely collapsed with the "perilous leap" of Henry IV in July 1593. Why, then, did Mornay write his book when he did?

Hugues Daussy sees Mornay's "political suicide" and the publication of his treatise on the Mass in the context of a personal choice "between power and faith." Refusing all honors bestowed upon him by the king, rejecting the king's best efforts to keep him involved in public life, the governor of Saumur ultimately chose to remain true to his faith rather

[24] Ibid., "... où les assistans ne mangent ni boivent; ni corporellement, ni spirituellement; Où pour tout, ils sont spectateurs ocieux [oiseux] d'un Prestre, qui mange et boit; d'un pretendu mystere sourd et muet."

than retain the power and authority of one of the king's closest advisers, as he had been up until 1593. Recognizing that the king's new religion now required him to persecute heresy as an obligation of his coronation oath, Mornay abandoned public life altogether after representing the Huguenot interests in the negotiations leading up to the Edict of Nantes. Viewed in this context, the writing and publication of his treatise on the Mass seems more understandable, as a return to the theological foundations of his faith.[25]

One other possible motive for writing the book, however, lies in the context of the king's abjuration. Once he took instruction in the Catholic faith and formally abjured Protestantism, Henry IV made no secret of the fact that he hoped to persuade most of his former co-religionnaires to follow his example and abjure their Calvinist faith in order to reunite all French men and women under one religion. Although he promised the Huguenots that he would never use force or pressure them into conversion, he remained committed to a future of reuniting all his subjects under the Gallican church. When in 1594 the Calvinist theologian Jean de Serres called for theologians of the two faiths to meet to see if there was a way for the Huguenots to be brought back into the Gallican church, Henry publicly lent his support to the effort.[26] The king even tried to persuade his own sister, Catherine de Bourbon, princesse de Bar, to abjure, and even assigned his own confessor, the Jesuit Father Coton, to assist her. Thus, another reason Mornay may have written his treatise on the Catholic Mass when he did was to prevent any further abjurations. Maximilien de Béthune, baron de Rosny, for just one example, sent a copy of Mornay's treatise to Jacques Davy Du Perron, bishop of Evreux, who had abjured Protestantism himself and converted to Catholicism in the 1570s, when Du Perron suggested that Rosny might emulate him and abjure his Protestant religion.[27] Another example was the Protestant Henri aux Epaules, sieur de Sainte-Marie-du-Mont, whom Mornay attempted to dissuade from abjuring in March 1599. Sainte-Marie-du-Mont had actually read Mornay's treatise, but he told him it contained some errors. Even though Mornay's efforts proved to be in vain – the Norman nobleman abjured just a few weeks later – the point is that Mornay attempted to use his treatise as a bulwark against the possibility of further abjurations.[28] Thus, if the governor of Saumur chose his faith over power as Hugues Daussy has

[25] Daussy, *Les Huguenots et le roi*, 573–82.

[26] Pierre de l'Estoile, *Journal pour le règne de Henri IV*, ed. L.-R. Lefebvre, 3 vols. (Paris: Gallimard, 1948–60), I, 521. See also W.B. Patterson, "Jean de Serres and the Politics of Religious Pacification, 1594–1598," in Derek Baker, ed., *Church, Society and Politics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975), 223–44.

[27] Raoul Patry, *Philippe du Plessis-Mornay: Un Huguenot homme d'état, 1549–1623* (Paris: Librairie Fischbacher, 1933), 392.

[28] Ibid., 388. Also see Daussy, *Les Huguenots et le roi*, 589.

argued, it was not just his own faith he was choosing, but also the faith of his fellow Huguenots.

The rest of the story is well known and need not be retold here in detail. Mornay's treatise on the Catholic Mass attracted immediate responses in print from a variety of Catholic voices. The riposte of the Jesuit and Doctor of Theology Jules-César Boulenger in early 1599 was just the first of many such attacks on Mornay, all of them accusing him of falsifying citations in his treatise.[29] One of the loudest of these voices was the aforementioned Du Perron, bishop of Evreux. In an effort to defend himself, Mornay reluctantly agreed to respond publicly to Du Perron's charge that there were more than five hundred errors of fact or in the citation of his sources in the treatise. Henry IV himself condoned the exercise and even appointed several scholarly figures to adjudicate the debate, which took place at Fontainebleau on 4 May 1600. On the Catholic side, in addition to Bishop Du Perron, were Henry's chancellor, Pomponne de Bellièvre, the historian Jacques-Auguste de Thou, both moderate Catholics, and the more militant Nicolas Pitou and one of the king's doctor's, Jean Martin, who was known to be a passionate Catholic. On the Protestant side, the king appointed Philippe de Fresne-Canaye, a Huguenot who would convert to Catholicism himself just one year later, and the Huguenot scholar Isaac Casaubon, who had served as Professor of Greek in both Geneva and Montpellier. Mornay pleaded with Du Perron to provide him with written evidence of his faulty scholarship, pointing out exactly which specific five hundred errors he had committed. The bishop refused, however, claiming that this would take him a month and a half just to write them all out.[30] He offered instead to share nine passages with Mornay, which he claimed were representative of the "five hundred enormous falsities of citation and fact" in the treatise on the Eucharist.[31]

Thus, of the five hundred errors previously claimed by Du Perron, only nine were actually presented for Mornay to defend at Fontainebleau. All nine passages were what Du Perron claimed were either misquoted or completely misunderstood references to ancient sources, as follows: (1)

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[29] Daussy, *Les Huguenots et le roi*, 586, and Patry, *Philippe du Plessis-Mornay*, 386–8.

[30] *A Discourse of the Conference Holden Before the French King at Fontaine-belleau, betweene the L[ord] Bishop of Evreux, and Monsieur du Plessis L[ord] of Mornay, the 4th of May 1600. Concerning certaine pretended corruptions of Authors, cited by Monsieur du Plessis in his booke against the Mass* (London: Richard Field, 1601), 10–11. This work was written by an anonymous author sympathetic to Duplessis-Mornay.

[31] Jacques Davy Du Perron, *Actes de la conference tenue entre le sieur Evesque d'Evreux et le sieur du Plessis, en presence du Roy à Fontainebleau le 4 May 1600* (Evreux: Anthoine Le Marié, 1601), 12v. This work was not an account of what took place at the meeting, but an apology for the event and the humiliation of Duplessis-Mornay. Indeed, it was published to refute the account of the meeting cited in n. 28 above, as the major part of the work (pp. 108–291) consists of "La Refutatoin du faux discours de la mesme Conference."

a citation from John Duns Scotus, (2) a citation from Durandus, (3) and (4) citations from St. John Chrysotom, (5) a citation from St. Jerome, (6) a citation from St. Cyril, (7) a citation from the laws of Emperors Theodosius and Valentenian, (8) a citation from St. Bernard, and (9) a citation from the commentary of Theodoret on Psalm 13.[32] Mornay fully and completely defended himself on all nine counts, bringing the sources themselves with him as proof that he had not fabricated or misquoted anything. But in the end, this august group managed to find fault in only two of the nine citations defended by Mornay: the citations by Scotus and Durandus. Thus, of the more than 5,000 citations in the text, two were found not to be fully accurate. The king nevertheless decided that Du Perron had proved his case against Mornay, and the verdict sent Mornay into a bout of "great vomiting and trembling of his members."[33] The governor of Saumur's fall from grace was now complete.[34] He was disgraced and publicly humiliated, as Du Perron claimed a complete victory and ordered that "a *Te Deum* to be sung in all places."[35] The king, who had been close to Duplessis-Mornay for more than twenty-five years, now abandoned his Protestant friend and ultimately removed him from public life. With no further chance of serving the king or his Huguenot compatriots at court, the governor of Saumur was forced to retire to his estates to live out the reminder of his life out of public service.

It is so easy to sympathize with Mornay. He was defending what he believed to be the true religion, and he did not waiver or shrink from his faith when so many around him, including his king, appeared to be doing so. In short, he sacrificed his political career in order to stand up publicly for his deeply held religious convictions. This comes across very explicitly in his *De l'Institution, usage et doctrine du saint Sacrement de l'Eucharistie*. But it is equally true that Mornay's dream of reuniting all of France under the one true Protestant religion was as impractical as Henry IV's goal of convincing all his former co-religionnaires to abjure their religion in order to reunite in the Catholic church. But it was Mornay's vision of an exclusively Protestant community purified of all Catholic "dogs and swine" that ultimately brought about his downfall, for it clearly showed that Mornay was firmly tied to the past. While Henry IV and many moderate Catholics and Protestants attempted to make the Edict of Nantes and its policy of religious co-existence work, Mornay's treatise harked back to the polemic of the religious wars. Many moderate Huguenot notables such as the baron de Rosny continued to work for the king and

[32] Ibid., 33v–107r.

[33] Ibid., 267r.

[34] Daussy, *Les Huguenots et le roi*, 589–94, and Patry, *Philippe du Plessis-Mornay*, 389–93.

[35] *A Discourse of the Conference*, 3.

serve the French crown while retaining their Protestant faith, just as most Huguenots throughout the kingdom expressed loyalty to King Henry IV, even though he had abandoned their religion. They did so by recognizing that the very precarious religious co-existence established by the Edict of Nantes depended on everyone, Protestant and Catholic alike, being willing to forego religious uniformity, at least temporarily, in order to maintain the fragile peace. Duplessis-Mornay was unwilling to do this, as he saw it as a compromise of his faith. Instead, the author of the *Vindiciae contra tyrannos*, which Mornay had written in the 1570s to justify and legitimate political resistance against the French crown, chose to continue the same polemical tone of the Wars of Religion just as Henry IV was trying to get all his subjects to forget those divisions and to try to live together in harmony. Indeed, *oubliance* – forgetting – was exactly what the Edict of Nantes, like all the other edicts of pacification in the previous thirty-five years, had demanded of all French men and women. The very first article of the edict required everyone to eradicate the memory of all things past, to obliterate the national memory as if the religious and political divisions had never happened. It was a strategy popular in the sixteenth century, as it pretended that if no one ever dwelled on the divisions of the past, then no one could be blamed for them, and reconciliation would thus be much easier to achieve.[36] Part of forgetting past divisions and learning to live peacefully with the French Catholics who made up the overwhelming majority of the kingdom was the necessity to stop dwelling on the significant doctrinal differences that still divided them. This, perhaps, was the bitterest pill for Mornay to swallow in the entire edict, and ultimately his refusal to accept the king's command to forget the past meant that he and other Huguenots like him were forced into private exile, excluded from public life which was still officially Catholic, but also meant that they were to be treated as pariahs even within the Huguenot movement.

So, in the end Mornay may have taken a courageous public stand for his religion, but at the same time he forced all Huguenots who had been active political supporters of the king to make a momentous decision: to follow the path of political expediency taken by Rosny and others, or to follow his path of faith and conscience. Creating a shockwave that divided French Huguenots into two opposing camps was certainly not what Mornay had hoped to achieve, though he might well have argued that this was surely preferable to seeing all his fellow co-religionnaires slowly but surely assimilated into a Gallican church that might be pluralist in name but was strictly Catholic in substance. In the end most Huguenots

[36] For just one of many articles on this theme, see Mack P. Holt, "The Memory of All Things Past: The Provisions of the Edict of Nantes," in Richard L. Goodbar, ed., *The Edict of Nantes: Five Essays and a New Translation* (Bloomington, MN: National Huguenot Society, 1998), 28–32.

chose to follow the path taken by Rosny, while Philippe Duplessis-Mornay lived out the remainder of his life in retirement in Saumur, mostly ignored by both the king and his fellow Huguenots. The stinging polemic of his treatise on the Eucharist had embodied the fiery rhetoric of the 1560s and 1570s when religious tensions were at their height. Most French men and women in 1598, however, were ready for more accommodating language that stressed what united French Protestants and Catholics rather than what still divided them. Philippe Duplessis-Mornay, however, was unable or at least unwilling to forget.

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CHAPTER TEN

The Jacques Royer Affair, 1604–1624: An Argument over Liturgy in Geneva and France

Robert M. Kingdon

Brian Armstrong has made us all more aware than ever before of the ways in which French Calvinism developed in the seventeenth century, in particular of the ways in which it split between a group he labeled as Protestant scholastics and another he labeled as Renaissance humanists.[1] His labels are controversial and I will not defend them. Still he was surely right in calling our attention to this split and making us aware of its depth. The very fact that Moise Amyraut, the subject of Brian's first book, was accused of heresy by his fellow Calvinists shows how deep the split was. Complicating this split were yet other ones which did not entirely overlap, for example between the Calvinist leaders of the church in Geneva, the mother church of the entire movement, and the equally Calvinist leaders of the French Reformed churches. Armstrong's primary purpose was to distinguish the theological dimensions of those splits. Yet there were other dimensions of these divisions that deserve attention and have been explored in more recent research. There was an ecclesiological dimension, which Glenn Sunshine examined in an important recent book, explaining how a church polity developed for the small city-state of Geneva under a sympathetic government had to be adapted to fit into a large kingdom run by a royal government that was often hostile.[2] And there was a liturgical dimension on which Christian Grosse of the University of Geneva is making himself an authority and which I want to explore in this study.[3] Scholars in our field are discovering more and more the importance of liturgy, especially in appreciating the understanding of the laity who made

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1 Brian G. Armstrong, *Calvinism and the Amyraut Heresy* (Madison, Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 1969), p. xvi.

2 Glenn S. Sunshine, *Reforming French Protestantism: The Development of Huguenot Ecclesiastical Institutions, 1557–1572* (Kirksville, Missouri: Truman State University Press, 2003). Hereafter cited as Sunshine, *Ecclesiastical Institutions*.

3 See his "Les rituels de la cène: une anthropologie historique du culte eucharistique réformée à Genève (XVIe–XVIIe siècles)," an unpublished Geneva doctoral dissertation of 2001 which soon should become a book, and a number of spin-off studies already in print as articles. Hereafter cited as Grosse, *Cène*.

up the vast majority of Christian communities.[4] Liturgical details were something concrete that anyone could comprehend, from the most highly educated intellectual to the most ignorant peasant. Someone receiving communion in a church could see that it was Catholic if he or she was offered only bread in the form of a consecrated host and could see that it was Protestant if he or she was offered both bread and wine.

The particular problem I want to explore is this: who should serve the elements to the faithful in a Reformed communion service? Should it be only the ordained minister in charge of the service? Or should he be assisted by others from the leadership of the church? The practice in Geneva from the beginning of the Reformation was that the minister would be assisted by lay elders. The minister would serve the consecrated bread and elders would tender the cup of consecrated wine. The minister would speak the words of institution as he consecrated the bread. It is possible that the elder also spoke words of institution as the cup was blessed, for example reciting the formula supplied in I Corinthians 11:23–6. That at least seems to have been the practice decades later, according to one surviving description, among those who gave elders a role in the ceremony.[5] The alternative pressed by opponents to this arrangement among seventeenth-century French Calvinists is that the minister alone should serve both the bread and the wine, and that no one else should be involved in the administration of the sacrament. The argument between the two points of view became really "hot" early in the seventeenth century to a degree that seems surprising to most of us. It would probably have seemed surprising to Calvin as well. He had explicitly said in one celebrated passage (*Institutes*, IV:xvii:43) that a number of details of the communion service, including whether one receives the cup from the hand of a minister or from others in the congregation is a thing "indifferent and left to the liberty of the church." He applied the same rule to such other "indifferent" matters as whether the bread offered to communicants was leavened or unleavened or whether the wine they received was red or white. These to Calvin were *adiaphora*, details about which there is no divine command, that can be handled in whatever way a local church prefers.

Nevertheless in the early seventeenth century, the Registers of the Geneva Company of Pastors spent enormous quantities of space containing arguments over the issue of whether or not elders could join with a minister

[4] See in particular Susan C. Karant-Nunn, *The Reformation of Ritual: An Interpretation of Early Modern Germany* (London and New York: Routledge, 1997). There is an important and comprehensive new study of communion liturgies: Lee Palmer Wandel, *The Eucharist in the Reformation: Incarnation and Liturgy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

[5] See Jean Aymon, *Tous les synodes nationaux des Eglises Réformées de France* (The Hague: Delo, 1710), I, 387, article 35. Hereafter cited as Aymon, *Synodes*.

in offering the communion elements.[6] The arguments spread, indeed, to many other churches and were even discussed at length in meetings of the national synods governing the entire French Reformed Church.

The original practice in Geneva seems to have been introduced by the city government in 1538, in the period shortly after the expulsion of Farel and Calvin from this city, when there was an acute shortage of ministers and laymen had to be used if there was to be orderly administration of the sacrament.[7] But it was confirmed in the ecclesiastical ordinances drafted by Calvin as a constitution for the Geneva church in 1541. Those ordinances modified received practice only by stipulating that the laymen involved had to be elders or deacons, thus holding a semi-ministerial position within the church. The relevant clause reads: "that the ministers distribute the bread in good order and with reverence, and no one else gives the chalice except 'commis' (=elders) and deacons with the ministers."[8] This provision was promptly implemented by the Consistory in consultation with the city government. The Consistory was a new tribunal that had been established at Calvin's insistence in these same ordinances to control the behavior of everyone in Geneva. We find, beginning in the first volume of the Consistory's registers, an entry before each of the quarterly communion services that names a panel of laymen expected to be involved in each communion service and assigns them to one or another of the three parish churches. One of these laymen in each parish was expected to be one of the four syndics who were the city's governing magistrates for the year. One of those syndics was the officer who presided over the Consistory that year, but the others were not, so two of the syndics involved in each celebration of the sacrament were not members of the Consistory. Most but not all of the other names on the panel were elders who were members of the Consistory itself. Occasionally a deacon was inserted into the list. Presumably the syndic simply presided over the service as a whole and the elders and deacons actually tendered wine to the communicants. The list established for the first communion service of the year was often used again in later services.[9]

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[6] In addition to the Registers themselves, I have found particularly useful in preparing this study an article on the Royer affair by Christian Grosse, "La coupe et le pain de la discorde: Émergence d'une orthodoxie rituelle au début de la XVIIe siècle," in *Edifier ou instruire? Les avatars de la liturgie réformée du XVIe au XVIIIe siècle*, ed. Maria-Critina Pitassi (Paris: Champion, 2000), pp. 34–55. Hereafter cited as Grosse, *Coupe*.

[7] Grosse, *Cène*, p. 241.

[8] See the text in *Registres de la Compagnie des Pasteurs de Genève*, (Geneva: Droz, 1962–, ed. Jean-François Bergier, et al.), I, 9. Hereafter cited as *R.C.P.* The city records often refer to the lay members of the Consistory as "commis" elected to that body. Calvin in most of his writings preferred to call them "anciens," or elders, and that becomes common usage in churches of the Calvinist tradition.

[9] See the records for the first year (1542) in *Registres du Consistoire de Genève au temps de Calvin*, vol. 1, ed. Thomas A. Lambert and Isabella M. Watt (Geneva: Droz, 1996),

There were a variety of reasons for including these laymen in the administration of communion. One was a purely practical consideration. In a service in which several hundred people might be receiving communion, it would be difficult for a single minister, or even a group of ministers, to serve them all in a reasonable period of time. It was useful to have the assistance that a Catholic priest, celebrating communion within the Mass has in the smaller job of serving hosts alone, from con-celebrants or acolytes. Another was a political consideration. Almost all the ministers, including most obviously Calvin himself, were foreigners, refugees from France. They were regarded with some suspicion by a number of native Genevans. Laymen could represent in this key ritual the leaders of the indigenous population, at a time when there was growing tension between the refugees and the locals. Another was a social consideration. Most of the elders and deacons were older business and professional men of property, natural leaders of the community, already widely respected within the city. Another could have been a theological consideration. This arrangement symbolized the growing importance of laymen in Reformed church polity, the turning away from a church structure completely dominated by ordained clergy. It emphasized that the offices of elder and deacon could be regarded as ministerial offices, even if held by laymen without the education and special status of ministers, and for shorter periods of time, not as a lifelong vocation. It may be also significant that it was the new part of the sacrament, the offering of wine to the people, that was entrusted to these laymen.

An early complication developed when arrangements were made for services in the villages dependent on Geneva. Each of these villages was ruled by a *chatelain* chosen by and reporting to the governing councils of Geneva. The *chatelain* was normally a prominent and well-to-do member of the high bourgeoisie in Geneva, often a member himself of one of the governing councils. Each village was assigned its own pastor, although occasionally a couple of villages would be yoked, if there were not enough pastors to go around. Usually these village pastors were young men, often ones who had just completed their education, who were gaining experience before they could move up to a more prestigious position in the city of Geneva itself or in some other community, often in France. To assist these village pastors, *chatelains* were supposed to arrange for the election from among the more respected parishioners of *gardes*, who would then be presented to the city Consistory and take a special oath before the city's governing council.[10] Each pastor would be assisted by a *garde* in the ways city pastors would be assisted by elders. Among other things, this *garde*

pp. 34–5; 71; 113; 156.

[10] *R.C.P.*, I, 19, legislation creating the office, in ordinances adopted in 1547, providing for ways in which ecclesiastical arrangements would be introduced into the villages.

would be expected to serve wine at communion services, alongside the pastor serving bread.

We find a precious description of how the ceremony actually worked in an unpublished memorandum prepared by Charles Perrot, when ending a term as minister to the village churches of Moens and Genthod about 1564, for the benefit of his successor. He said that he was accustomed to serve the bread first and then his *garde* handed him the wine. After all the parishioners had received communion, he returned what was left of the bread and the wine to the *garde*. It would seem from this description that the *garde*, although being closely involved, did not actually tender the wine to the faithful in these particular churches.[11]

There were again practical reasons for this involvement of a layman. It must have made it easier for lay parishioners to accept a sacrament involving one of their own at the side of a minister foreign to them. But the political and social reasons that made it attractive in the city were less compelling. We know little about these *gardes*. All that appears in the records about them is occasionally their names and even more occasionally troubles into which an individual *garde* fell, especially if those troubles raised questions about whether he should participate in service of communion.[12] Since these villages were all peasant communities, we can assume that the *gardes* were peasants themselves, no doubt ones who were particularly upstanding and respected, but without the resources and the education possessed by city elders. It is very likely that most of them were illiterate. We do, in fact, find condescending remarks about some of them, of the type often proffered about peasants in the period.[13]

Over the course of the sixteenth century, we find complaints every now and then about *gardes* who did not handle their duties properly. In 1600, the Company of Pastors itself twice issued instructions to all the village pastors on the issue. A first gave the pastors permission to serve both bread and wine themselves, if they could not find a *garde* who was appropriate.[14] A second suggested that this should become the normal arrangement, given the fact that so few *gardes* were capable of assuming this responsibility.[15]

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[11] Most of this memorandum has been made available as an appendix to Thomas A. Lambert, "Preaching, Praying, and Policing the Reform in Sixteenth-Century Geneva," (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1998; available from UMI Dissertation Services, no. 9819828). See p. 546 for this passage.

[12] E.g. the case of Claude Baux, *garde* of Satigny, deposed for fornication. His defense was that he was not married. *Registres du Consistoire*, vol. 5, fol. 83v., 4 December 1550; *Registres du Conseil*, vol. 45, fol. 142, 8 December 1550. Example supplied by Thomas A. Lambert.

[13] See the example cited in Grosse, *Coupe*, p. 53, n. 90.

[14] *R.C.P.*, VIII, 6.

[15] Ibid., VIII, 51.

Now we come to Jacques Royer. He was a young man who came to Geneva from Lorraine to train for the pastorate. We find no record that he registered formally in the Geneva Academy, but he does seem to have been living in the home of one of the Academy's professors of theology, a M. Perrot (very likely Charles), a not uncommon arrangement at the time for a student at the academy level, enabling the student to supplement formal with informal instruction within a household. Early in 1600, he was suggested as a possible pastor for the village church of Céligny, on the lake a few miles from Geneva.[16] Perrot reported back that in his view Royer was still too young and inexperienced for the job.[17] A year later Royer was suggested again, for the same position. This time he was judged ready, and went through the usual procedure of examination for a new pastor, giving sample lectures on assigned Bible verses for both the Company of Pastors and the Council, in other words presenting trial sermons. That process went smoothly and he was duly installed as the new pastor of Céligny late in the year.[18] Three years later he was made a *bourgeois* of the city of Geneva, a special honor with certain legal privileges made available to immigrants of proper social standing for a price, awarded without charge to many servants of the Genevan state like ministers. His name was duly inscribed in the book of the bourgeoisie of Geneva on 7 December 1604.[19]

Only a few weeks later, however, Royer was in deep trouble. He had apparently been presenting communion to his parishioners in Céligny in the new way, handing out to each of them the bread and the wine all by himself, and he had been told that he must return to the earlier practice of having a *garde* accompany him. It is not clear who had directed this order to him. A possibility that occurs to me is that the local *garde*, upset at being excluded from the position of honor at communion services to which he had been entitled, appealed over the head of the relatively new local pastor to senior pastors in Geneva, and the senior pastors told Royer to bring the *garde* back into the ceremony. In any event, a crisis had apparently been reached at the time of the Christmas communion of 1604. Only a few days later, on 28 December, Royer was summoned before the Company of Pastors to explain what had happened, and appeared in an angry mood, full of righteous indignation. He clearly felt that he had been victimized by three of the most senior pastors in Geneva, particularly by Simon Goulart. Perhaps they were the ones who told him to use a *garde*.[20]

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16 Ibid., VIII, 21.

17 Ibid., VIII, 22.

18 Ibid., VIII, 60, 64, 66, 70, 72, 74, 75.

19 *Le livre des bourgeois*, ed. Alfred L. Covelle (Geneva: Jullien, 1897), p. 332, 7 December 1604, here spelled "Rouyer," but clearly identified as the minister of Céligny.

20 *R.C.P.*, IX, 57.

Royer flatly refused to accept this directive, and furthermore began actively attacking the practice of having laymen involved in the administration of communion at any place and at any time. He preached against the practice from his pulpit. At the next communion services, he insisted on his right to administer both bread and wine. He prepared an elaborate memorandum for the Company of Pastors defending his point of view. He argued that both Scripture itself and the views of the most authoritative theologians of the Christian tradition, made lay participation in the administration of the sacrament impossible. When we look at Scripture, he said, we discover that Jesus in instituting the sacrament by celebrating the Last Supper, passed out the bread and wine himself, not with the help of anyone else (Matthew 26:26–9). When we look at the most authoritative commentators we discover them also instructing Christians to have the minister alone offer the elements in a communion service. Three that he quoted were Lambert Daneau, a prominent Reformed theologian, Martin Chemnitz a great systematizer of Lutheran theology, and John Calvin. He dwelt at particular length on Calvin. He pointed out that in the catechism Calvin had drafted to introduce all Christians to the true faith, there is explicit provision for administration by a minister and no mention of laymen. And he added a catena of quotations from Calvin's writings. Most of them came from his *Institutes*, but one came from one of his most important Biblical commentaries, the *Commentarius in Harmoniam Evangelicam*, and others came from polemical tracts, specifically his *Antidote* against the early decrees of the Council of Trent and his *Antidote* against a set of propositions issued by the theological faculty of the University of Paris. Royer also included a phrase from the *Confession* compiled by Theodore Beza, Calvin's successor and then still living, although in his dotage. And he even cited the ecclesiastical ordinances Calvin had drafted for Geneva. In every one of the passages cited by Royer, Calvin had said a minister should offer the elements in communion and had not mentioned elders as participating in the ceremony.[21]

This appeal to Calvin seems to have infuriated Royer's colleagues in the Company. Several of them were old enough to have known Calvin personally, to have seen him serve communion in Genevan churches, to know that he always had an elder at his side when he served communion. Beza no doubt actually participated with Calvin in a number of these communion services and others conceivably could have. They were not about to let a man much too young to have known Calvin personally and who was relatively new to Geneva tell them what Calvin wanted.

The quarrel between Royer and his colleagues in the Company of Pastors, therefore, reached a climax with joint appeals to the authority of Calvin. Among other things, this reveals the enormous authority of

[21] See ibid., IX, 244–9, for the full text of this memorandum, drafted on 1 June 1604.

Calvin within the Reformed tradition, now forty years after he had died. Royer kept saying that we must follow what Calvin advised in his writings. His colleagues kept saying that we should do what Calvin himself did. Both sides, furthermore, had arguments that were defensible. Royer was accurate and correct in pointing out that Calvin again and again had said in the *Institutes* and in other writings, that the elements in communion should be offered by a minister, that the sacrament was an extension of the teaching provided by a sermon that was a regular part of all services and that preceded the sacrament on days communion was offered. The only quotation supplied by Royer that can be called into question is the one from the ecclesiastical ordinances, for it was partial; it ignored the additional clause in those ordinances that provided for administration of the wine by elders. This is the clause we have quoted above. There is a possibility, however, that this particular passage in the ecclesiastical ordinances was not drafted by Calvin himself. We know that much of the constitutional legislation that was drafted for both the church and government of Geneva early in the Reformation was written primarily by Calvin, and that he again supervised a revision of the ecclesiastical ordinances in 1561. But we also know that others of prominence in the local government checked over the texts and suggested changes before they were finally adopted by the government. The provision that elders should help serve communion could have been inserted by someone else in the course of drafting the ecclesiastical ordinances. That might explain why we find it here but not in Calvin's other writings.

The other pastors, on their part, were quite accurate and correct in pointing out that Calvin had never insisted on offering both the elements to communicants all by himself in Genevan services, but that there had always been an elder at his side assisting him. This is a classic example of how different conclusions can be gleaned from what Calvin said and what Calvin did. It is a message that I think deserves the attention even now of those who claim to follow in Calvin's footsteps.

In the circumstances in seventeenth-century Geneva, however, Royer did not have a chance. Senior colleagues in the Company of Pastors were furious with him, and insisted on disciplining him. He refused to budge an inch and was not interested in any kind of compromise. The city government became irritated by all the uproar over this issue. After several months of angry exchanges, the Consistory excommunicated Royer and the Council dismissed him as pastor of Céligny. A successor was chosen and promptly rushed to Céligny, appointed as that village's new minister on 21 June 1605.[22] Royer left the territories of Geneva for good by September of that year. He went to the Reformed cities of Bern, Zurich, and Basel, to report to authorities there what had happened to him. Then he went home to his

[22] Henri Heyer, *L'Eglise de Genève* (Geneva: Jullien, 1909), p. 205.

native province of Lorraine, settling in Metz, the largest city within that province, in December.

Royer remained in Metz for the next several years. He became a member of the Reformed Church of the city, and actively sought their support for his position. He launched a campaign to vindicate himself and gain support for his argument that in communion services only an ordained minister can offer the elements, that there is no room for mere laymen. The pastors of Geneva tried to neutralize this campaign, showering the authorities in Metz with complaints about Royer, but could not stop him.[23] He wrote a book defending his point of view, which was published in 1608. He persuaded a local minister to write another book defending his position, which was published in 1613. And he persuaded the local Reformed to take his case to the national synods governing the entire French Reformed church. A synod meeting in Saint Maixent considered a petition on the matter in 1609, presented on behalf of Royer himself and the Consistory of Metz. They asked the synod to condemn the practice of churches that gave to elders responsibility for presenting the cup to the faithful and pronouncing several words, normally a quotation from I Corinthians 11, describing the sacrament. A copy of Royer's book was submitted in support of this petition. The synod, fully informed of the row in Geneva and turned off by the bitter tone of Royer's writings, refused to act on the petition, and even condemned the way Royer had proceeded.[24] But Royer had many things going for him. For one thing, most of the Reformed churches in France already followed the practice Royer had recommended of giving ministers the sole right to administer both elements in the sacrament. There were fewer practical reasons to involved elders in the sacrament in France given the fact that Reformed churches were generally much smaller than in Geneva. Furthermore the eldership in France did not have the prestige that it had in Geneva, as deacons had taken over many of the functions most important to these churches. French churches could not depend on funds administered by the government as could the church of Geneva, so they often looked to deacons to raise the money necessary to continue operations, and this gave deacons powers considerably more extensive than the deacons in Geneva who were simply social workers.[25] There were a few French churches, however, that followed Genevan practice in allowing elders to serve the wine, and in some of them it became controversial.[26]

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[23] See references and documents in *R.C.P.*, X, *passim*.

[24] See Aymon, *Synodes*, I, 387.

[25] See Sunshine, *Ecclesiastical Institutions*, ch. 5, on the French Reformed diaconate of the sixteenth century.

[26] See Raymond A. Mentzer, "Laity and Liturgy in the French Reformed Tradition," in *History Has Many Voices*, ed. Lee Palmer Wandel (Truman State University Press: Kirksville, Missouri, 2003), p. 82.

In addition, most Calvinist churches in other countries did not ask elders to help in serving communion in the Genevan way. In Scotland, for example, all the communicants sat around a long table in the nave of a church, with the minister at a short cross-table at its head. The minister blessed plates of bread and cups of wine, then passed them around the table with each communicant serving his neighbor. Elders were involved but only in preparing the tables, in carrying in the elements, and in cleaning up after the ceremony.[27]

Another factor that weighed upon the French was an argument in the constant polemic they faced from Roman Catholics now riding high as the full tide of the Catholic Reformation spread through France. Many Catholic polemicists accused Protestants of being unable to agree among themselves, of shooting off in different directions in theology, ecclesiology, and liturgy. And they pointed to these differences as evidence of this Protestant tendency to lose unity, to break apart.

This led the synods of the French Reformed church finally to decide that they must unify on the issue of who should serve the elements in communion. And they felt that unity must not only prevail throughout France but also in neighboring sister churches in areas like Geneva. A synod held in Alès in 1620 finally decided not only to require that the ministers alone from now on should serve both elements. They begged the Company of Pastors in Geneva to join them. They argued that inviting the elders to have a role in the ritual diminished the dignity of the sacrament, for elders, after all, only served the churches for short periods of time and then returned to other vocations in the world.[28] The Genevans at first resisted. By this time, however, many things had changed. Most of the ministers who had fought Royer with such ferocity were gone, and a newer generation found his arguments less disturbing. The magistrates of the city, furthermore, fearing that on this point Geneva would become isolated, pushed the ministers to change. The Company of Pastors remained reticent, but the government insisted. In August of 1623, the governing councils voted that from now on Genevans would follow French practice. This decision was announced to the public on the last Sunday in August, from the pulpit of the cathedral church of St. Pierre by Théodore Tronchin, a professor in the Academy and leading member of the clergy. At the next quarterly communion service in September, communion was served in both species by the ministers of Geneva. Later that fall a synod of the French churches

[27] See the admirably precise and thoughtful description supplied by Margo Todd, *The Culture of Protestantism in Early Modern Scotland* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2002), pp. 102–7.

[28] The decision to require all French pastors to administer the cup as well as the bread, can be found in article XIV of the decisions of this synod, in Aymon, *Synodes*, II, 249. The request to Geneva to conform with this practice, can be found in an unpublished memorandum in Geneva, described and quoted in Grosse, *Coupe*, p. 49.

in Charenton formally thanked the Genevans for joining them not only in the essentials of theology but also in the details of "external ceremonies."[29] This enabled Jean Daillé, the pastor of Charenton, a figure in whom Brian Armstrong has expressed much interest, to crow that in all the Christian world there now reigns perfect unity in sacramental details, excepting only in the Latin church which alone insists in serving unleavened bread.[30]

In the end, then, Jacques Royer won. The synodical records of this triumph do not mention him by name, and thus do not tell us whether he lived to see vindication. The whole episode reminds us of how enormously important and bitterly controversial details of liturgical practice can become. It makes clear to us the towering influence of John Calvin as an authority within the branch of Protestant churches then labeled "Reformed," particularly in France. That influence, however, was exercised most widely and most deeply through Calvin's writings. His actual practices had been largely forgotten, except in Geneva. Even there people were no longer so attached to them that they remained unwilling to accept changes. Protestants throughout the French-speaking world agreed that for the sake of denominational unity they should follow the sacramental ceremonies Calvin recommended in his writings, not the ones he actually practiced.

[29] Aymon, *Synodes*, II, 244.
[30] Cited in Grosse, *Coupe*, p. 54.

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PART IV

The Reformations in England and Scotland

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CHAPTER ELEVEN

A Calvinist Bishop at the Court of King Charles I

Daniel J. Steere

"Happy is he, that can stand upright when the world declines ..."[1]

Joseph Hall was a moderate Calvinist who came of age in the late Elizabethan Church, and was ordained in 1601. Educated at Emmanuel College, Cambridge, Hall was theologically a puritan but his unshakeable loyalty to the established Church made him a conforming churchman. And while this intersection of loyalties presented no problem during Hall's early years, it would certainly create great conflict later on. His prominent career in the Church of England spanned the reigns of James I and Charles I, and extended into the early years of Cromwell's Protectorate. It was Hall's remarkable literary and rhetorical gifts that brought him to the attention of the court, but his strong political abilities kept him within the circle of royal attention from his first introduction in 1607.

He shrewdly cultivated and was patronized by Prince Henry to the point that Hall was placed in the rotation of his regular court chaplains. Henry's untimely death in 1612 did not eclipse Hall's star, for he continued to rise within the ranks of the Church. Much of his rise was due to the fact that, as a moderate conforming Calvinist, Hall fit the profile of men James liked to place in prominent positions within the Church.[2] By the middle of King James' reign, Hall – now a Doctor of Divinity – was already a widely-read and well-respected author and advocate for Jacobean moderate Calvinism. It was not surprising then that Hall was tapped by James in his delicate negotiations with the Scots regarding the Perth Articles (1617), and also served as a member of the English delegation to the Synod of Dort until illness forced him to return to England.

As an author, Hall was quite popular and was widely published during his lifetime and afterwards. Early in his career the reading public eagerly sought after his writings, a tribute to his clarity of style and timeliness of

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[1] Taken from Hall's *Meditatiunculae Subitaneae* (Occasional Meditations), published in 1630. *Works*, 11:58. The full quotation is: "Happy is he, that can stand upright when the world declines; and can endeavour to repair the common ruin, with a constancy in goodness."

[2] This tendency is documented in Kenneth Fincham and Peter Lake, "The Ecclesiastical Policy of King James I," *Journal of British Studies*, 24 (1985): 172–4.

content. His *Meditations and Vows* (1605) went through eight printings by 1609 while *The Arte of Divine Mediation* (1606) had four printings during the same time.[3] Hall's *Epistles*, in which he was one of the first English writers to use "open letters" as a means of creating and promoting his public persona,[4] were published in three installments between 1607 and 1610 and were subsequently included in various editions of his collected *Works*. His *Contemplations* were published separately between 1612 and 1634 and reprinted posthumously as an eight-volume set in 1661.

Since his natural reticence and the political climate combined to make him cautious about openly expressing his views, Hall's *Contemplations* are particularly helpful to the historian as a source for Hall's opinions on the political and religious events that took place during the years spanned by their publication. Much of the analysis of his views and motives included in this essay depends upon the views Hall artfully included within the *Contemplations*. Hall also wrote a number of volumes that discussed practical Christian living, and these were quite popular. *Heaven Upon Earth* (1606) was printed four times. It was later combined with several other works and issued, beginning in 1616, four more times. *Characters of Virtues and Vices* (1608) was printed three times that year and reissued after the Restoration in 1691. It is a gauge of Hall's contemporary popularity and of his enduring relevance that seven collections of his *Works* were published during his lifetime and three more editions were issued between 1660 and 1714.[5] However, *Contemplations* has proven to be the perennial favorite of Hall's works, having been republished frequently, even as recently as 1997.[6]

Hall's career, as well as his writings, serves as a barometer of official policy toward moderate Calvinism and episcopacy. As the epitome of the Jacobean churchman and located near the center of power, Hall's career

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[3] Except where noted, publication data are from A.W. Pollard and G.R. Redgrave, *A Short Title Catalogue* (London: 1976–) and from Donald Wing, *Short-Title Catalogue of Books ... 1641–1700* (New York, 1988).

[4] On self-fashioning among English writers, see Stephen Greenblatt, *Renaissance Self-Fashioning, from More to Shakepeare* (University of Chicago, 1980). See also Margo Todd, "Puritan self-fashioning: The Diary of Samuel Ward," *Journal of British Studies*, 31 (July, 1992): 236–64.

[5] The three most recent editions of his *Complete Works* were published in the nineteenth century: The ten-volume Pratt edition was published in London in 1808. The more complete Oxford edition of 1837 (edited by Peter Hall, a descendant of the bishop) is a twelve-volume set and, except where noted, is the one used in this study. The Wynter edition of Hall's *Works* (1863) is the most recent and is the set most commonly available, but it omits many of the historical notes and translations of Latin works available in the 1837 edition. The ten-volume Wynter edition was reprinted by AMS Press in 1969 and again in 1988. Both the Oxford and Wynter editions of Hall's *Works* are currently out of print. See Stephen, Leslie and Sidney Lee, eds., *The Dictionary of National Biography* (London, 1921–22), s.v. "Hall, Joseph."

[6] The latest reprint is offered by Soli Deo Gloria Publications.

track accurately reflects the shifts and, with the accession of Charles I, the radical alterations in attitudes toward Calvinism. His elevation to the office of bishop in 1627 also placed him near the epicenter of the upheavals that resulted in the English Civil War. Yet he remained far enough from the court to maintain an awareness of what was taking place in the country. Hall was the consummate man of the middle: a man who deliberately took his stand between court and country, Calvinist and Arminian, Puritan and conformist, in an attempt to preserve a middle ground upon which a life-giving compromise could be forged for the preservation of the Jacobean Church. An examination of Hall's career and writings provides a deeper understanding of the importance of those two foci – Calvinism and episcopacy – around which so many of the events of these troubled years revolve.

In addition, Hall's career during the reign of Charles I provides a case study of the demise of moderate Calvinism within the Church of England. While he was quite comfortable within the Jacobean Church, the accession of Charles soon placed Hall in an increasingly difficult position of balancing his views on doctrine and his views on church polity. This challenge reflects the reality that his perspectives were increasingly being defined as being in conflict with one another. Charles' support of Arminian theology and Laud's increasing emphasis on conformity to a sacramental form of worship created stresses within Hall's own Calvinist worldview. His response was to attempt repeatedly to re-establish the middle ground of the Jacobean church which allowed for both Calvinism and episcopacy.[7] Billing himself as a moderate and a peacemaker, Hall sought to keep a foot in two increasingly diverse camps. As the country moved ever closer to Civil War, Hall was forced by the rhetoric and political maneuverings of both extremes to choose sides. He thereby verifies that even moderates were polarized by the conflict. His choice to support conformity at the expense of his Calvinism was made with the hope of retaining some influence as a voice of moderation within the establishment. However, events would not allow that, and he became instead a voice for episcopacy with his reputation being used by the conformist camp to buttress their attacks against his co-religionists, the Puritans. With each succeeding controversy, Hall was driven further from the Jacobean middle as he advocated Calvinism less and less but stridently maintained that unity and conformity were essential as the solution to England's troubles. Seemingly unaware of the subtle shifts in his own thinking, Hall publicly aired his preference for conformity in his publications. Widely known as a paragon of Calvinist orthodoxy, Hall's failure to defend that doctrinal position,

[7] See my article, "'For the Peace of Both, for the Humour of Neither' Bishop Joseph Hall: Defending the *Via Media* in an Age of Extremes, 1601–1656," *Sixteenth Century Journal*, 27 (1996): 749–65.

combined with his strong defense of episcopacy, actually contributed to the ideological polarization that formed a basis for the Civil War. It is a deep irony that a man so committed to moderation and unity ultimately contributed to the demise of the very unity he sought to protect.

I

Little in his previous experience had prepared Joseph Hall for the seismic shift in the theological and political climate that occurred with the accession of Charles I. Due to his great attachment to King James, it is entirely understandable that Hall required some time to recover his balance. Consequently, he was uncharacteristically silent during the critical transition time between the reigns of James and Charles. As far as the reading public was concerned, Hall published nothing for well over a year.[8] Considering the radically re-oriented theological preferences of Charles' administration, Hall's public silence, combined with his open choice for conformity, had about it the odor of capitulation. There was no way for the vast majority of the reading public to know that Hall had in fact entered the lists of theological combat on the side of moderate Calvinism with the writing of *Via Media* in 1624.

This attempt to mediate the Calvinist/Arminian conflict had seemed a wise course of action with James securely on the throne, but powerful opposition and the death of the king delayed its publication and the Proclamation of 1626 finally buried it.[9] The well-intentioned pamphlet would not see the light of day until well after his death and so his initial attempt to mediate the theological conflict remained unknown. In point of fact, he appeared by his silence in the press to have vacated his position in the forefront of the defenders of Calvinism. This perception would have grave consequences for Hall when he published *The Old Religion* in 1627 synchronous with accepting a bishopric from the hand of Charles. However, his *Contemplations* and his one surviving sermon from this early period of Charles' reign make it clear that Hall was valiantly seeking to come to terms with the new politico-religious landscape.

Almost immediately upon his accession, King Charles had begun to alienate significant segments of the British populace and to upset the careful balance James had nourished.[10] He insisted on his royal prerogatives and

[8] His sermon, "The True Peacemaker," [STC #12715] was published in September 1624 and the silence continued until the publication of another sermon, "Thanksgiving After Great Mortality," [STC #12716] in February 1626. Pollard and Redgrave, *Short Title Catalog*.

[9] In retrospect, Hall commented that he was "scorched a little with this flame, which I desired to quench." Hall, *Works*, 1:xxxiii.

[10] For historians who deal specifically with this early period, see Richard Cust, *The Forced Loan and English Politics 1626–1628*, Oxford, 1987; Derek Hirst, *England in*

interpreted opposition to his policies as a personal affront to his majesty. The king openly supported Arminianism and thereby offended many in Commons who correctly believed Arminianism represented a threat to the Calvinist consensus within the Church of England. Additionally, in May 1625, Charles married the French princess, Henrietta Maria, who was both a Catholic and a d'Medici. He also retained the despised duke of Buckingham in his administration and gave him a virtual free hand in the setting of policy and the disbursement of patronage. It quickly became obvious that loyalty to Buckingham was the only road to the king's favor, and the diversity of opinion within the Privy Council which had been one of its strong points under James virtually disappeared.[11] Despite this major paradigm shift, Hall soon found his footing and openly again began to advocate the Calvinist position. He continued to preach at court during the early years of Charles' reign and resumed the task of applying the Scriptures to current events.

It is the *Contemplations*, with their frequent inclusion of political double entendres, which document Hall's assumption of the role of prophet to a new king.[12] As he applied the story of Zerubbabel and Ezra to his new monarch, he encouraged Charles to choose his advisers wisely and to restore the fortunes of the Church: "It is a sign of God's great favor to any nation, when the hearts of sovereign governors are raised up, both to the choice of worthy agents, and to the commanding of pious and restorative actions." Hall also reminded the king that the Church was experiencing some serious difficulty: "Those, who find themselves in the ship of God's Church, cannot but be much troubled with every dangerous leak that it takes." He exhorted the young monarch like a father writing, "It cannot be spoken, what power there is in a great example, whether to evil or good."[13] Commenting later on Nehemiah, Hall reminded King Charles that all believers have the Spirit of God, whether or not they agreed with

Conflict, 1603–1660, (London, 1999), 141–54; Kevin Sharpe, *The Personal Rule of Charles I*, (Yale University Press, 1992), 3–62; Peter White, *Predestination, Policy and Polemic*, Cambridge, 1992, 238–55; Fincham and Lake, "The Ecclesiastical Policies of James I and Charles I," In *The Early Stuart Church*, ed. K. Fincham, Stanford, 1993, 23–50; Linda Levy Peck, *Court Patronage and Corruption in Early Stuart England*, Boston, 1990, 58–67; and Leo Solt, *Church and State in Early Modern England 1509–1640,* Oxford, 1990, 169–77.

[11] Derek Hirst states, "Mistaking the functions of his councillors, he [Charles] turned his councils ... into bodies of yes-men." *England in Conflict*, 142.

[12] The *Contemplations* were extracts from Hall's on-going preaching and teaching, published in regular installments. It was his practice to draw "practical" applications from Biblical texts that frequently reflected his views on contemporary social and political events. While these applications can be difficult for modern readers to discern, they were abundantly clear to contemporary readers and were one of the main reasons for the wide popularity of the work. This installment was published in 1626 and dedicated to King Charles. See Hall, *Works*, 2:128.

[13] Hall, *Works*, 2:212, 213, 214.

the king's position. "How should that one Spirit cause us so far to forget all natural and civil differences, as not to contemn, not to oppress any, whom it informeth!" He mildly rebuked the king on the unrestrained exertion of royal prerogative: "He shall never rule well, that doth all that he may. It is not safe for either part, that a prince should live at the height of his power."[14] In addition, Hall seemed a bit peeved with Charles' tendency to make policy based on his personal views and to ignore the consequences for the realm: "Faithful statesmen, overlooking private respects, must bend their eyes upon public dangers; labouring to prevent a common mischief, though with the adventure of their own." Instead, Hall encouraged the king to learn from his mistakes and to gain wisdom from James' pattern: "Nothing is more requisite for princes, than to look back upon their own actions and events, and those of their predecessors. The examination of fore-passed actions makes them wise; of events, thankful and cautelous [cautious]."[15] It appears that, by 1625/26 Hall already had a good grasp of Charles' weak points and was boldly giving him Scriptural advice in those areas. His advice seemed clearly to point the king in the direction of a more balanced, Jacobean approach to his rule – counsel that, if followed, might not only have preserved the Calvinist voice in the theological dialog of the new administration but also, in retrospect, have forestalled the subsequent events that led to civil war.

II

However, the political and religious climate had already begun to change and the shift inevitably affected Hall's relationship with his king. Religious affiliation, specifically adherence to orthodox Calvinism or to anti-Calvinism (Arminianism), was increasingly influencing political events and policy decisions. Charles' first Parliament convened only two months after James' death and the king tapped William Laud, bishop of St. David's and a key member of the Arminian Durham House group, to preach to the opening session. It must have seemed a deliberate affront to many, since this Parliament was set to take up again the divisive question of Richard Montagu.[16] Although Parliament committed Montagu to the custody

[14] Ibid., 224, 225.

[15] Ibid., 232, 250.

[16] Montagu had published *A Gagg for the New Gospell? No: A New Gagg for an Old Goose* (London, 1624), which was interpreted by Parliament as a rather thinly-veiled criticism of the Calvinist consensus within the Church of England. Hall's *Via Media* had been written in direct response to this work, seeking to blunt the effect of Montagu's views by interpreting them through the matrix of an infralapsarian, hypothetically universalist Calvinism. See Peter Lake, "The Moderate and Irenic Case for Religious War: Joseph Hall's *Via Media* in Context", in Susan D. Ammuissen and Mark A. Kishlansky, *Political Culture and Cultural Politics in Early Modern England*, Manchester University Press, 1995, 69–78.

of the sergeant-at-arms for his intransigence, Charles soon thereafter appointed him as one of the royal chaplains. As the adherents to these conflicting theological views continued to coalesce into opposing camps, each developed "conspiracy theories" about the other.

The Arminians (like Laud) were regaling the king with tales of a Puritan plot that equated orthodox Calvinism with an egalitarian populism and rebellion. In fact, Montagu's *New Gagg* had already equated orthodox Calvinism with puritanism.[17] Equally paranoid, the Calvinists, especially those in Parliament, began to suspect the king's Arminian advisers of deliberately opening the door to papism.[18] Meanwhile, Hall continued in his rotation as a court preacher. The surviving sermon from 1625, "Wickedness Making a Fruitful Land Barren," was preached immediately after the end of this contentious parliamentary session. In it, Hall came out strongly against the Arminian teaching that true saving faith can be lost. "Think not now, that I am falling in with our late Excutifidans, to teach, that true, solid, radicated saving faith may be totally, finally lost: no; I hate the motion: it is presumption, that I tax; not well-grounded assurance." He then turned to the state of religion in the land:

> England was once, yea lately was, perhaps is still, the most flourishing Church under heaven ... what it may be, what it will be, if we fall still into distractions and various sects, God knows, and it is not hard for men to forsee. ... I take no pleasure, God knows, to ominate ill to my dear nation, and dear mother the Church of England; for whose welfare and happiness I could contemn my own life: but I speak it in a true sorrow of heart to perceive our danger, and in a zealous precaution to prevent it. O God, ... put it into the heart of our King and Parliament, to take speedy order for the suppression of this wild variety of sects and lawless Independencies, ere it be too late.[19]

Hall deemed it necessary, in this contentious atmosphere and in the face of this increasingly pro-Arminian court, to differentiate himself as both a Calvinist and a conformist: excoriating Arminian doctrine while urging the king and Parliament to united action against the evil of nonconformity. Once again, this particular sermon was not published, and Hall's public silence continued.

Charles' second Parliament convened in February 1626, greatly concerned about Buckingham's influence within the new administration. Once again, Bishop Laud preached the opening sermon and warned, "take heed of breaking the peace of the Church. The peace of the State depends much upon it."[20] Nevertheless, Commons spent a good deal of its time

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[17] Richard Montagu, *A New Gagg*, 110, 157–72. See also Fincham and Lake, "Ecclesiastical Policies," 35.

[18] These competing theories are thoroughly discussed in Cust, *Forced Loan*, 26–9.

[19] Hall, *Works*, 5:204.

[20] Cited in Solt, *Church and State*, p. 172. Portions of the sermon are included in *CSPV 1626–28*, p. 342. See also Cust, *Forced Loan*, 27.

discussing the impeachment of Buckingham and considering a bill that would have added the strongly Calvinistic 1615 Irish Articles to the official doctrine of the Church of England. Both moves came to nothing, however, since Charles prorogued Parliament in June to forestall the impeachment of his favorite. The next day, the king issued a controversial proclamation which was a broadly worded prohibition of theological controversy clearly designed and implemented to silence opposition to Montagu (and, by implication, Arminianism).[21] Meanwhile, the Arminian ascendancy within the new administration continued unabated. Laud, who in 1621 had been raised to the bishopric of St. David's by James, was transferred after the close of Charles' second Parliament to the much more influential see of Bath and Wells.[22] As the friend and chaplain of Buckingham, Laud quickly gained ready access to the new king, a station he had never achieved under James. With the death of Lancelot Andrewes in September 1626, Charles made Laud the Dean of the Chapel Royal and the next month promised him the reversion of Canterbury.[23] In April 1627 both Laud and his fellow Arminian Bishop Richard Neile were named as Privy Councillors.[24]

Obviously, none of this was done in a corner, and the Calvinists were understandably concerned about the theological direction the king seemed to be taking. As early as February 1626, just a few days after Charles' second Parliament convened, Viscount Saye and Sele and the earl of Warwick, both prominent Calvinist peers, sought a conference with the duke of Buckingham. Held at the duke's London residence, York House, the theological discussion brought together representatives for both the Calvinist and Arminian positions. The spokesmen for the Calvinists were, in addition to the two peers, Bishop Thomas Morton and the Puritan pastor John Preston. The Arminians were represented by Bishop John Buckeridge; Richard Montagu; Dean Francis White, who had licensed Montagu's *Appello Caesarem*; John Cosin, Montagu's editor; and Buckingham. Also present were several moderate Calvinist observers, of whom two were privy councillors and Hall's patrons: William Herbert, the earl of Pembroke and John Hay, the earl of Carlisle. For two days the men discussed the nature of perseverance and the conditionality (or unconditionality) of God's election. Neither side carried the day and neither was willing to offer concessions to the other for the purpose of effecting a compromise. While the York House conference did not bring about theological agreement, it rendered the theological tendencies of

[21] The text of the proclamation can be found in *Stuart Royal Proclamations*, II, 92.

[22] Nicholas Tyacke asserts that Laud's consecration as bishop came to pass as part of an attempt by James to counteract the "Calvinist war party" in the early years of the Thirty Years' War. "Archbishop Laud," *Early Stuart Church*, ed. Kenneth Fincham (Stanford, 1993), 64.

[23] Solt, *Church and State*, 173.

[24] *CSPD, 1627–28*, p. 154.

the new administration abundantly clear to the Calvinists: Buckingham, who had the ear of the king, was supportive of Arminianism and had little regard for Calvinism or for the seminal conclusions of the Synod of Dort.[25] The remainder of 1626 gave them even less comfort as the king continued to support Montagu and Buckingham, prorogued Parliament to forestall action against them, muzzled public discussion of theological controversies, and repeatedly rewarded William Laud.

Joseph Hall was well aware of all these goings-on. His court sermons, while not published until much later, reveal that he was greatly distressed by the continuing controversy and especially by the divisions it created within the Church of England. In a most revealing sermon entitled, "The Beauty and Unity of the Church," Hall spoke frankly of his concern:

> [S]ince we are one, why are we sundered? One says, "I am Luther's for Consubstantiation:" another, "I am Calvin's for Discipline:" another, "I am Arminius's for Predestination:" another, "I am Barrow's or Brown's for Separation." What frenzy possesses the brains of Christians, thus to squander themselves into factions?. … Brethren, since our religion is one, why are not our tongues one? Why do we not bite in our singular conceits, and bind our tongues to the common peace?[26]

Although this list of factions was ostensibly intended to describe the divided condition of the international Reformed Church, Hall was also subtly making his point about domestic division because the issues of discipline, predestination, and separatism were all glaring points of contention within the English Church as well as within the Parliament. Since the Arminian hierarchy was increasingly concerned about discipline in the Church and the Calvinists were identified by their doctrine of predestination, Hall's deliberate switching of these two issues and assigning the unexpected to Calvin and Arminius was a nice touch. It no doubt startled his auditors and caused them to consider that each side was concerned about the same issues, precisely Hall's intended point. He made his case even more obvious a few paragraphs later when, combining his concern over religious division with his observation that "the Church and the Commonwealth are twins," he stated:

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[25] N. Tyacke, *Anti-Calvinists: the Rise of English Arminianism, c. 1590–1640*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987, 172–80; Solt, *Church and State*, 171–2. See also Patrick Collinson, "The Jacobean Religious Settlement, the Hampton Court Conference," In *Before the English Civil War*, ed. H. Tomlinson, (New York, 1983), 35–6. Peter White downplays the importance of the conference, seeing it as the extreme Calvinists crying "Arminians!" when the duke and his men were simply presenting the English middle way. *Predestination*, 224–30. Fincham and Lake describe the meeting as inconclusive and as providing ambiguous indications of Charles' religious preferences. "Ecclesiastical Policies," 38.

[26] Hall, *Works*, 5:244. This sermon, like several Hall preached during this period, is undated. It was most likely preached in 1625/26. See Lake, "Moderate and Irenic Case," 80, note 15.

> [S]o should this [the Commonwealth] be no less one with itself and with her temporal head. ... Oh, how is every good heart divided in sunder, with the grief for the late divisions of our Reuben! We do not mourn, we bleed inwardly, for this distraction. But I do willingly smother these thoughts; yea, my just sorrow chokes them in my bosom, that they cannot come forth but in sighs and groans. O thou, that art the God of Peace, unite all hearts in love to each other, in loyal subjection to their Sovereign Head![27]

Here Hall, the conformist, reacted to the political battles between the king and Commons. This conflict caused him great grief. It was the political manifestation of the theological division within the Church he was hoping to heal. However, having already made his choice to support the king, Hall would continue to do so while respectfully, and boldly, asserting the viability of the Calvinist position. These comments reveal his on-going promotion of ecclesiastical unity, and also demonstrate his "prophetic" boldness before the king.

He continued to show that boldness in two sermons on "St. Paul's Combat," preached before Charles in 1626/27. Developing the theme of fighting the beasts of sin and error, Hall spoke about the beastliness of mankind and in so doing, affirmed the Calvinist precept of total depravity: "God never made man such as he is: it is our sin, that made our soul to grovel; and, if the mercy of our Maker have not condemned our hands to fore-legs, how can that excuse us from bestiality?" A strong statement of irresistible grace immediately followed. "When it pleaseth God to breathe upon us again in our renovation, we cease to be what we made ourselves: then do we uncase the beast, and put on an angel."[28] Again it appears that Hall was concerned to display his Calvinism before the court in an inoffensive but open fashion. He quickly returned to his regular theme of peace and unity. In commenting on the governing passage of these sermons, Hall commended the Apostle Paul for not opposing every errant opinion that occurred within the Church, rather reserving himself for "these lions and tigers of error." And Hall lamented the fact that the Church had not learned the apostle's lesson in this regard.

> The working brains of subtle man have been apt to mince divinity into infinite atoms of speculation; and every one of those speculations breeds many questions, and every question breeds troubles in the Church: like as every corn of powder flies off, and fires his fellow. ... The main fort of religion is worth, not our sweat, but our blood ... But, if it be only matter of rite or of unimporting consequence, Oh, what madness is it in us, to draw the world into sides, and to pour out the souls of God's people like water! ... Oh! for *the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace!*[29]

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27 Hall, *Works*, 5:244–5.
28 Ibid., 5:292.
29 Ibid., 308.

This quotation paralleled the method of the *Via Media* by reiterating Hall's regular distinction between central matters of faith – "the main fort" – and peripheral issues. Here also Hall demonstrated the spirit of the mediator, seeking to bring unity to the Church by silencing discussion of all but these crucial doctrines. Unlike the more zealous Calvinists, Hall had no quarrel with the Prohibition of 1626, or what he termed "the royal edict of a general inhibition." This was the case despite the fact that the Proclamation was the reason his *Via Media* was "buried." In silencing debate, Charles was actually following the very course Hall had advised in the pamphlet.[30]

Yet Hall's boldness opens a further consideration. Here he was, a known Calvinist divine, serving as a court preacher for a pro-Arminian king. Diversity of opinion among court preachers was common under James, who could equally support Lancelot Andrewes or George Abbot, but was much less the case under Charles.[31] It was well known and observed that the new king was tending to take the advice of and to offer ecclesiastical preferments exclusively to Arminians.[32] While the Proclamation had restricted Hall's ability to express his theological convictions openly, failure to express them would lead others to draw the conclusion that he had forsaken his Calvinism altogether for the sake of pursuing preferment. And so Hall sought to walk a fine line, asserting his Calvinism while still stressing conformity, peace and unity. However, his silence in the press – at least partially caused by the king's Proclamation – lent credence to a suspicion on the part of some that Hall had defected from the Calvinist camp. This suspicion accounts for some of the unexpectedly hostile response to *The Old Religion*. It was a difficult time to be a moderate, conforming Calvinist.

III

When Joseph Hall finally did break his silence and publish again, these suspicions came home to roost. According to his own testimony, the issuance of *The Old Religion* in late 1627 embroiled Hall in an even hotter controversy than he had sought to mediate with his *Via Media*.[33] By this date, Charles found himself in difficult financial straits since neither of his first two Parliaments had been willing to grant him the supply he needed to prosecute the war with Spain. Parliament's denial of the king's traditional

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30 Ibid., 1:xxxiii; 9 [Wynter]:519.

31 The views of court preachers under James I is considered by Kenneth Fincham in *Prelate as Pastor: The Episcopate of James I*, Oxford, 1990, 9–34, 295–306.

32 Cust, *Forced Loan*, 13–90. See also Fincham and Lake, "Ecclesiastical Policies," 37.

33 See his comments in Hall, *Works*, 1:xxxiii–xxxiv.

receipt of tonnage and poundage was a clear indication that things were not well between the king and Commons. Charles, however, considered their refusal an affront to his majesty and grew increasingly distrustful of the institution of Parliament altogether. This view was encouraged by councilors like Laud and the Earl of Dorset who considered Parliament to be the seedbed of "popularity" and a threat to the authority of the crown.[34] Charles had executed an end run around Parliamentary supply with the Forced Loan of 1626/27 and, as long as the money was flowing, was willing to continue on in that direction. However, the beginnings of the war with France had quickly sapped all available finances, and Charles was desperately in need of Parliament's help.

On the Parliamentary side, many were strongly suspicious of the new administration. This suspicion actually pre-dated Charles' accession, going back to the issue of the Spanish Match which had aroused concerns of a papal plot to undermine the English Church through the marriage of the prince. If the court was to be infiltrated by Catholic influence, it was all the more critical to keep Parliament pure of that influence so it could serve as a counter-balancing force within the country. Although the Spanish Match had not materialized, the concern remained and resurfaced when Charles seemed to ignore Parliamentary input and began to pack the council and the episcopal bench with Arminians. To committed Calvinists, especially those who were MPs, "the rise of Arminianism raised the spectre of a crypto-popish fifth column taking over the Church from within."[35] Arminian doctrine seemed to many to be merely a repetition of Romanist reliance on human effort for salvation, while the Arminian deprecation of preaching and emphasis on ritual and ceremony also smacked of popery. The reluctance of the Arminians to openly identify the pope as Antichrist and their dominance in the king's counsels further added to the suspicions of the godly that the popish plot was already afoot at court.[36]

Joseph Hall was thrust into the middle of this controversy when Charles offered him the see of Exeter in November 1627.[37] Since the king was seeking the support of Commons for the war effort, perhaps he saw the preferment of a known Calvinist as a means of mollifying the godly who were leading the charge against Buckingham and Arminianism. At this point, Buckingham himself, away in France, had just failed miserably in his attempt to relieve the Huguenots of La Rochelle through an attack on the Isle of Rhé. Hall mentions specifically in his autobiography that

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[34] Cust, *Forced Loan*, 27–9. See also Peter Lake, "Anti-popery: The Structure of a Prejudice," In *Conflict in Early Stuart England*, ed. R. Cust and A. Hughes, London, 1989. 85–7.

[35] Lake, "Anti-popery," 91.

[36] Ibid., 90–91. This excellent essay convincingly delineates the nature of hostility to Rome within England, linking it with Calvinist opposition to Charles within Commons.

[37] The royal assent was recorded on 30 November 1627. *CSPD, 1627–28*. p. 451.

his appointment was opposed by the duke and had Buckingham's letters from France arrived sooner, Charles may have retracted the offer.[38] The convergence of the king's need of parliamentary support and the absence of the duke opened a window of opportunity for several of Charles' more moderate councilors, led by Pembroke and Carlisle, who pushed for Hall's appointment.[39] The effectiveness of Hall's patronage network clearly had continued into Charles' reign. While the earl of Exeter, Thomas Cecil, had died in 1623, Hall still enjoyed the support of his old friends and patrons the earl of Norwich (who had married Cecil's daughter) and James Hay, the earl of Carlisle (Norwich's son-in-law) who had been the chief negotiator in Charles' marriage to Henrietta Maria. When these connections were combined with the re-emerging strength of the earl of Pembroke, Hall's personal interests were certainly well-represented at court.

For his part, Hall was characteristically silent about his thoughts, but using key events and Hall's extant statements, it is possible to reconstruct his reasoning at this point. It is most significant that he chose to accept the rochet from the pro-Arminian Charles when he had so recently refused it from the hand of "his excellent Majesty," the pro-Calvinist James.[40] Much had changed in those three years – a significant paradigm shift in religious policy had taken place. Any understanding of Hall's decision must arise from a consideration of the impact this shift had on his expressed religious agenda. Hence, the failure of his attempt to preserve the Calvinist middle in the *Via Media* was one of the most important determinants of Hall's decision. His expressed regret at this catastrophe was almost palpable.[41] By mediating between the two factions in such a way that English Arminianism would have been confined within the essentially Calvinist terminology of Dort, Hall had hoped to forestall the division and politico-religious chaos that had resulted from the same controversy in the Netherlands. Instead, under the new administration, he had witnessed first-hand the growing predominance of Arminianism within both the Church and the Privy

[38] Hall, *Works*, 1:xxxiv–xxxv.

[39] Cust, *Forced Loan*, 72–5. Cust confirms that since York House, the Arminian faction, led by Laud and Neile and supported by Buckingham and the king, had largely controlled religious policy for the crown. Hall's appointment was one of several indications of a temporary weakening of their hold in Buckingham's absence.

[40] In his autobiography, Hall's cautiously distinguished between his two kings by regularly referring to James with the honorific "his *excellent* majesty." Charles on the other hand, despite Hall's clear loyalty to him, was merely "his majesty."

[41] After asserting that the principals of both sides – both within and outside of England – had agreed to support his compromise, Hall concluded with this emotionally-laden statement: "So as much peace promised to result out that weak and poor enterprise, had not the confused noise of the misconstructions of those, who never saw the work, crying it down for the very name's sake, meeting with the royal edict of a general inhibition, buried it in a secure silence. I was scorched a little with this flame, which I desired to quench..." Hall, *Works*, 1:xxxii.

Council, illustrated most obviously by Laud's meteoric rise to prominence. The influence of these Arminians had become so pervasive that even the Archbishop of Canterbury (the Calvinist George Abbot) had been sequestered from office in July 1627 for his opposition to their policies.

Abbot had refused to license a series of sermons by Robert Sibthorpe which propounded the absolutist doctrine of submission to the king's authority in all things. Among other statements, Sibthorpe asserted, "he that resisteth the Prince, resisteth the power and ordinance of God, and consequently shall receive damnation."[42] Abbot's duties were assumed by a commission of Arminian bishops: Montaigne, Neile, Buckeridge, Howson and Laud.[43] With the Arminians controlling access to the king and holding the reins of power and patronage, Hall likely perceived that his neutral position – taken initially for the sake of mediation – had the potential to compromise his leadership within the Calvinist wing of the Church. With mediation now effectively impossible, his court sermons began once again to sound a more clearly Calvinist tone. He did not abandon his distinction between central and peripheral truths, but now maintained it more for the sake of preserving a voice for Calvinism than as a basis for mediation. The offer of the see of Exeter came as a surprise to Hall, who stated that it was "beyond all expectation."[44] But taking it as a providential opportunity, Hall must have concluded that under the existing circumstances his own contributions toward the preservation of that voice would be enhanced by his entry into the hierarchy. From that high position he would be able to both defend and personally exemplify the Calvinist presence in the Church. Consequently, Hall accepted the king's offer and became the first avowed Calvinist to be appointed bishop since before York House.[45]

IV

On the heels of his momentous appointment, Hall published the anti-papal apologetic, *The Old Religion*. The work touched off a firestorm among his fellow Calvinists that caught Hall completely off guard. The heated reaction from the Calvinist camp highlighted the seismic upheavals that had taken place in the English religious landscape since the Synod of Dort. It had seemed to Hall a simple project: a denial of the charge of ecclesiastical novelty that the Roman Catholics frequently cast up against

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42 Solt, *Church and State*, 173.

43 *CSPD 1627–28*, 419. Specific guidelines for the commission are mentioned in Ibid., 429, and are in Laud's handwriting.

44 Hall, *Works*, 1:xxxiv.

45 Ibid., 1:xxxiv–xxxv. Hall wrote in typical fashion of the "extraordinary hand of God in the disposing of those events" but on the human level it was his impressive patronage network that brought about the offer.

the Reformed churches and by which he considered many had been led astray. Such anti-papal diatribes were standard fare within the Calvinist ranks and this pamphlet was a strategic move for Hall that provided him with an opportunity to once again affirm his solidarity with the Calvinist mainstream after so long a silence. However, his attempt to tap the ambient hostility toward Rome backfired both because of its close conjunction with his preferment and because of his line of reasoning. Rather than attempt to establish an independent pedigree for Protestantism, Hall traced its descent directly from the truth taught by the early Church – truth that had been maintained in the midst of much error within the Roman Church itself.[46] He argued that the Protestants had departed the Roman Church only after its error had become so great as to obscure the light of the gospel. They had, in fact, been driven out by a Roman Church that refused to correct its teachings. Because their efforts to purify the Church from its errors and heresies had been rejected, the Protestants had been forced to reconstitute a Church of their own, in direct lineage from the Apostles through the Roman Church, but without Rome's glaring and spiritually fatal errors. "Be it, therefore, known to all the world, that our Church is only Reformed or Repaired; not made new."[47] Incidentally, this line of argument required Hall to maintain that the Roman Church, despite all her corruptions and heresies, remained a "True Visible Church" in terms of her outward profession.[48] This assertion, the foundation of his entire argument, was what provoked such a vehement reaction from Hall's reading constituency.

> The drift whereof being not well conceived, by some spirits that were not so wise as fervent, I was suddenly exposed to the rash censures of many well affected and zealous Protestants; as if I had, in a remission to my wonted zeal to the truth, attributed too much to the Roman Church, and strengthened the adversaries' hands and weakened our own.[49]

Against all his expectation Joseph Hall, whose writings and sermons were replete with anti-papal rhetoric and whose orthodoxy (so he thought) was unimpeachable, was being accused of compromising the truth about the nature of the Roman Church. The fact that this accusation originated with those individuals he had expected to agree with him made it all the more painful.

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[46] Anthony Milton calls this position, "the Jacobean compromise" that combined elements of both a Foxeian view of the descent of the Church through a pure, often underground, succession of true believers and the conformist defense of *jure divino* episcopacy that saw the Church wherever there were bishops. "The Church of England, Rome, and the True Church: The Demise of a Jacobean Consensus," *The Early Stuart Church, 1603–1642*, ed. Kenneth Fincham (Stanford, 1993), 187–210.

[47] Hall, *Works*, 9:315.

[48] Ibid., 312. See also Milton, "Church of England," 207–8.

[49] Hall, *Works*, 1:xxxiv.

The Puritan pamphleteer, Henry Burton, led the charge against Hall with a work entitled, *The Seven Vials* (1628). Burton agreed with Hall that Rome had once been a true church but insisted, in contrast to Hall's position, that idolatry had destroyed that status and made the papal see nothing more than "Antichrists Spowse and Strumpet."[50]

> For how can wee call that a true Church, which is not truely visible? And if a Church be truely visible, what letts, that it should not be a true Church of God, at least in mans iudgment? For that which demonstrates it a true or truely visible Church, must also evince it to be a true Church.[51]

Burton called upon Hall to retract his statement to "purge away the staine, and put a more glorious luster to his most sweet, pious, and, for their kind, unparalleld workes."[52] His disagreement with and admonition of Hall illustrated the Puritan ambivalence toward this Calvinist bishop: hostile against his perceived leniency toward Rome, yet strongly appreciative of Hall's devotional works. While Burton may have been somewhat more zealous than his fellow Puritans in certain areas, his diatribe indicated that in the context of a perceived papal plot, the position of the godly toward the Roman Church had hardened considerably.[53]

This dramatic shift in perceptions within the English Church caught Hall completely unprepared. Since Dort, he had been focused on mediating the differences between Calvinism and Arminianism in the hopes of circumventing a repetition of Netherland's troubles. But in his concentration on the court and the Church, Hall seemed to have lost track of what was going on in the nation at large. The suspicions of those Hall termed "zealous Protestants" (i.e. Calvinists and Puritans) that the papal plot at court had begun to subvert both the English Church and the traditional liberties of Englishmen had been heightened by Charles' obvious support for the Arminian faction and by his truculent refusal to work with Parliament.[54] Hall's noticeable reduction in his formerly strident anti-papal, anti-Spanish rhetoric (obvious in his *Contemplations* beginning in 1622) combined with his relative silence on issues of church policy and his regular preaching at court had perhaps raised some questions in the minds of fellow Calvinists about his loyalties. By accepting a bishop's rochet from Charles, Hall had unwittingly confirmed his support for the

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[50] Burton, *Seven Vials*, 39.

[51] Ibid., 34.

[52] Ibid., 52.

[53] Hall's position in this controversy was defended by both Robert Butterfield, *Maschil*, (STC# 4205) and Hugh Cholmley, *The State of Roman Catholicism*, (STC# 5144). Not to be outdone, Burton followed up with *Babel no Bethel* (1629, STC # 4136). See also Milton, "Church of England," 207.

[54] Lake, "Anti-popery," 88–90. The reaction to *The Old Religion* further validates Lake's analysis, showing that a large measure of alienation and radicalization had already occurred among Calvinists by 1627/28 – before the Personal Rule and Laudianism.

king's pro-Arminian policies. His apparent defense of the legitimacy of the Roman Church, so closely following the Arminian line of reasoning and printed immediately after his promotion, no doubt seemed to give further evidence of a papal plot at court.[55]

Hall's response demonstrated both the importance which he attached to his Calvinist credentials and his misunderstanding of the larger ideological context. After the initial negative reaction to his first edition, Hall republished *The Old Religion* within the year and appended *An Apologetical Advertisement to the Reader* in which he sought to address some of the issues his critics had raised. He was incensed at the charge that he had modified his position on the Roman Church since writing *No Peace With Rome* in 1611.

> "Lo," say they, "the man, that once wrote, 'No Peace with Rome,' now cries nothing, but, Peace with Rome, while he proclaims it a True Visible Church, and allows some communion with it." Alas, brethren, why will ye suffer a rash and ignorant zeal thus to lie palpably in your way to truth?[56]

Hall went on to insist that his position against the Roman Church had not changed in the last twenty years and that he had advocated the same position in his Latin sermon to Convocation in 1624.[57] To his mind the outcry was due to the fact that in the interim he had become a bishop. In the first paragraph of the *Advertisement*, Hall mentions the "unjust censures" that had been leveled at him, "as if preferment had changed my note." He returned to the issue soon thereafter:

> This I freely both taught and published, with the allowance, with the applause of that most Reverend Synod; and now, doth the addition of a Dignity bring envy upon the same truth? Might that pass commendably from the pen or tongue of a Doctor, which will not be endured from the hand of a Bishop? My brethren, I am where I was: the change is yours.[58]

Hall was right; he had not changed. However, the ideological context had been altered significantly. The shared frame of reference that had bound together all Calvinists – whether conformists or non-conformists – was beginning to disintegrate.[59] Many of the more zealous Calvinists increasingly viewed the Church hierarchy as a tool of state for the

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[55] Hall conceded that his promotion, in conjunction with the publication of *The Old Religion*, "did not a little aggravate the envy and suspicion" of his critics. *Works*, 1:xxxiv.

[56] Ibid., 9:390.

[57] The fact that Hall's *Columba Noae* (the translation of which appeared in the 1625 edition of Hall's *Works*) did not produce the same outcry provides a significant piece of information on the development of Calvinist estrangement. The same sentiments published during the reign of James had provoked no reaction at all from the godly.

[58] Ibid., 389, 391.

[59] This concept is found in N. Tyacke, "Archbishop Laud," *Early Stuart Church*, ed. Kenneth Fincham, Stanford, 1993. 67. However, Tyacke places this dissolution in 1629/30 and here is evidence that it took place at least two years earlier.

introduction of Arminian/papist theology and practice. For them, conformity was increasingly identified with the papal plot; hence their strong reaction to Hall's conformist line of reasoning toward Rome. In that highly charged theological context, *The Old Religion* appeared to these "zealous Protestants" to document the defection of a prominent Calvinist. Hall felt and correctly identified their antipathy toward the office of bishop, but failed to perceive the connection in their minds between conformity and Arminianism. He remained inextricably bound to a Jacobean view of the episcopacy in which conformity and Calvinism were complementary, not conflicting, courses and he either could not or would not accept the ideological changes that had rendered them antithetical to one another. Even under an Arminian administration, he was still able to hold his Calvinism and his conformity in tension but, if forced to choose, for Hall, Erastus would trump Calvin. Hall's prioritization of conformity was the bottom line of his constant theme of central vs. peripheral doctrines. While he honestly believed that the Thirty-Nine Articles were Calvinistic and he remained personally loyal to that theological position articulated at Dort, Hall would never prioritize his own opinions over conformity. He valued the peace of the Church too highly.[60] But the ideological paradigm was changing and Hall's moderate position was increasingly unacceptable to many Calvinists who increasingly identified the true Church by its purity of doctrine.

Hall's acceptance of the bishopric actually contributed to the demise of a Calvinist middle ground by perceptibly moving the moderate Calvinist position on church polity (which he personally represented) away from the growing contentiousness of the "zealous Protestants," and toward the Arminian position. His failure to understand the growing hostility of many Calvinists toward episcopacy (a hostility due also to the control exercised over the hierarchy by the Arminians) meant that he alienated many of his co-religionists. While their theology was essentially the same as his, their polity and their politics were diverging at a rapid pace. Peter Lake recognizes this essential variance over polity within the Calvinist ranks but indicates that "in the 1620s ... definitive choices were a long way off."[61] The intense rejection of Hall's bishopric indicates that division within the Calvinist camp, and the consequent dissolution of the Calvinist middle ground, was well under way by the late 1620s. Anthony Milton carries this concept further, demonstrating that episcopacy was an integral part of the Laudian view of the Church. By the time of *The Old Religion*, both

[60] This can be seen quite clearly in Hall's extended dedication to the diocese of Exeter that opened *The Old Religion*. There he recommended a two-fold focus to his constituent pastors: wholesome doctrine and "an immunity from all faction and disturbance of the public peace." *Works*, 9:307–8.

[61] Lake, "Anti-popery," 90.

sides had abandoned the Jacobean compromise, with the godly reasserting Foxe's view that the Church of Rome was no true Church at all.[62] Small wonder Hall got such a strong reaction. In his letter to John Davenant, included in *The Reconciler*, Hall indicated that his Calvinist accusers had openly labeled him a Pelagian – one of the synonyms being used for Arminians.[63] By joining the hierarchy, Hall did not preserve a voice for Calvinism as much as further radicalize many Calvinists by his perceived defection to the Arminian camp. Many godly no longer considered it feasible to combine Calvinism and episcopacy.

The *Advertisement* did not calm the storm. Hall's appeal that he had not changed his position carried little, if any, weight with his detractors. Even his roll call of eminent divines, both English and foreign, who supported his position on the Roman Church did not curb the criticism. Determined to regain his Calvinist credentials and to vindicate himself, Hall turned to several prominent Calvinist moderates for support. In a series of letters, he asked Bishop Thomas Morton, Bishop John Davenant, Dr. John Prideaux, and Dr. Gilbert Primrose to each respond to the position he had taken in *The Old Religion*. The sympathetic responses penned by these men clearly indicated that Hall was not alone in attempting to maintain his moderate Calvinism. There is, however, a certain historical irony in seeing Joseph Hall, who had desired to mediate between the Calvinists and Arminians, now four years later calling on others to mediate between himself and his fellow Calvinists. His letters and their responses were published in 1629 as *The Reconciler.*[64] In the lengthy introduction to the earl of Norwich which opened the tract, Hall stated his purpose was "by a more full explication ... to stop the floodgates of contention." Hall went on to state, "The Searcher of all Hearts knows how far it was from my thoughts, to speak ought in favour of the Roman Synagogue. If I have not sufficiently branded that strumpet, I justly suffer."[65]

In the body of the dedication, Hall repeated many of the same arguments he had given in his *Advertisement*. However, toward the end, he again broached the issue of episcopacy and the division it had caused between him and his Calvinist brethren: "Alas, my Lord, I see and grieve to see it; it is my Rochet that hath offended, and not I." Hall then proceeded to describe a Latin pamphlet he had recently seen, "homely for style, tedious for length, zealously uncharitable for stuff" that attacked the English episcopacy for "the honour, the pomp, the wealth, the pleasure ... that is guilty of the depravation of our calling." Hall was shocked to see the polity of his beloved Church as well as the incumbents of this high office so

62 Milton, "Church of England," 208.
63 Hall, *Works*, 9:409.
64 Ibid., 9:397–425.
65 Ibid., 398, 399.

assaulted: "I bless myself to see the case so altered."[66] Here Hall confronted the reality of his current situation again. The case truly had been altered and he had been entirely unaware of it. Nevertheless, having perceived this line of division within the Calvinist ranks, he remained unwilling to compromise on the issue of episcopacy.

> [I]f none but earthly respects should sway me, I should heartily wish to change this palace, which the Providence of God and the bounty of my gracious Sovereign hath put me into, for my quiet cell at Waltham ... . But I have followed the calling of my God, to whose service I am willingly sacrificed; and must now, in a holy obedience to his Divine Majesty, with what cheerfulness I may, ride out all the storms of envy, which unavoidably will alight upon the least appearance of a conceived greatness.[67]

Hall considered himself a bishop by the calling of God. Having defended *jure divino* episcopacy as early as 1610, he was not about to abandon that position now. The line was drawn and Hall was unwilling to conform his thinking to the newly emerging categories. He would rather remain within the ranks of the conformists. Once again, as when he accepted the rochet, Hall's conformist convictions caused him to break with his fellow Calvinists, thereby contributing to the further disintegration of a Calvinistic middle ground. Nevertheless, *The Reconciler* did mute the criticism of Hall among most of the Calvinists (drawing as it did on the reputations of pre-Caroline bishops and leaders in the broader Reformed community) and for a time he was able to enjoy qualified support from that side of the field.

However, what the future held for Hall in terms of opposition from the Arminian direction was also revealed in the controversy over *The Old Religion*. In his letter in *The Reconciler* to Bishop Davenant, Hall had appealed to their joint labors at the Synod of Dort in order to clear himself of the charge of being a Pelagian (Arminian). This accusation was apparently one of the slurs directed at him by his Puritan opponents. Davenant responded with a resounding endorsement of Hall:

> As for the aspersion of Arminianism, I can testify that in our joint employment at the Synod of Dort you were as far from it as myself, and I know that no man can embrace it in the doctrine of predestination and grace, but he must first desert the Articles agreed upon by the Church of England.[68]

Laud's chaplain, Thomas Turner, objected to this passage and Hall agreed to remove it before publication.[69] But Hall's note to strike the offending passage was ignored by the printer, who included the passage in the first

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[66] Ibid., 405.

[67] Ibid., 406.

[68] Hall, *Works*, 8 [Wynter]:742–3. This comment is not found in the 1837 Oxford edition of Hall's *Works*.

[69] William Laud had become Bishop of London in 1628 and, as such, had a strong control over which books were licensed for publication.

edition and, as a result, ended up in trouble with the authorities.[70] Some in Commons suspected Laud was using the Declaration of 1628 as a means of forbidding works on popery and Arminianism,[71] and this censorship of Hall's writings would seem to lend credence to that charge. Hall was being assaulted from both directions and the attacks from within the hierarchy would only increase in the years to come.[72]

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Joseph Hall took up his duties in the Diocese of Exeter amidst a cloud of controversy. Zealots on both ends of the spectrum found his position as a conforming Calvinist unacceptable. Just as Henry Burton and the Puritans had castigated him for his acceptance of a bishopric and his apparently conformist position on the Roman Church, so now he was set upon from the other direction by the Arminian leadership of the Church who objected to his Calvinism.

> I am now inured to the lashe of tongues; both my cheekes must needs glowe for I am buffeted on both sides. Too many pulpits and presses (you knowe) witnesse how iniuriously I have bin wronged by those whome I am now censured to cherish. On the other side the papist and the prophane rabble, *ambubayarum collegia*, fly upon mee, as a loving frind to those by whome I am thus wounded.[73]

In his letter Hall carefully avoided criticism of the Church leadership, instead ascribing the attack upon his supposed Puritanism to the "papist and prophane rabble." Nonetheless, he was acutely aware of the true source of these accusations and stated it openly in his autobiography: "I entered upon that place," Hall wrote in his memoirs, " not without much prejudice and suspicion on some hands: for some, that sat at the stern of the church, had me in great jealousy for too much favour of Puritanism."[74]

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[70] This fascinating by-play is noted in passing by Kenneth Fincham and Peter Lake in their article, "Popularity, Prelacy, and Puritanism in the 1630s: Joseph Hall Explains Himself," *English Historical Review* (Sept. 1996) 864 and 868, note 2.

[71] Solt, *Church and State*, 175.

[72] Hall's works would have been placed under strict scrutiny because of his known Calvinism. But there may also been another reason: there is evidence of a long-standing dispute between Hall and Laud that dated back to Hall's *Epistles in Six Decades* (1608) in which a letter to "W.L." appeared, counseling him against "unsettledness in religion" and warning him away from the Roman Church. *Works*, 6:193–4.

[73] Taken from an open letter Hall wrote between 1631 and 1634 to defend himself against the charge of favoring the Puritans. The letter, which is not included in Hall's *Works*, is archived in the Somerset Record Office, DD/PH 221, no. 40 and is printed as an appendix to Fincham and Lake, "Hall Explains Himself," 878. [Hereafter, "Appendix."]

[74] Hall, *Works*, 1:xxxv. This obvious reference to the Arminian leadership of the Church, if not to Laud specifically, was written around 1641 but there is ample evidence that even at the time Hall was fully aware of who his opponents were.

Unfortunately for Hall, those who controlled the direction of the Church considered even his adherence to the older, broader, Jacobean brand of Calvinism to be evidence of Puritanism.[75] His middle ground was fast disappearing and, with it, his relevance to the preservation of a Calvinist voice within the ideological spectrum of the English Church. During his tenure at Exeter, Hall struggled mightily to sustain his conforming Calvinist paradigm: using his administration to protect and promote a Word-centered ministry while at the same time requiring his clergy to openly conform to the strictures of a nascent Anglicanism.

In many ways, Hall was the quintessential Jacobean bishop.[76] He took seriously the Biblical qualifications for a bishop laid out in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1 and strove to personally exemplify them, believing that the bishop's conduct and character must reflect his teaching. And he was, above all, a preacher and teacher. Unlike most of his fellow prelates, Hall continued to preach and write after being elevated to the bench.[77] In addition to *The Old Religion* (1627), *The Reconciler* (1629), and the completion of his *Contemplations* (1634), Hall published *An Answer to Pope Urban in his Inurbanity* (1629), *Occasional Meditations* (1630), a two-volume sermon aid entitled *Explication of Difficult Texts from the Old and New Testaments* (1633), *Propositiones Catholicae* (1633), and *The Remedy of Profaneness* (1637). He also preached regularly and actively promoted other preachers within his own diocese. In his vindicatory *Letter from the Tower* (1642), Hall vehemently asserted his devotion to the preaching of the Word:

> What free admission and encouragement have I always given to all the sons of peace, that came with God's message in their mouths! What missuggestions have I waved! What blows have I borne off, in the behalf of some of them, from some gainsayers! How have I often and publicly professed, that, as well might we complain of too many stars in the sky, as too many orthodox preachers in the Church.[78]

As to his administrative style, Hall projected the image of the bishop as a fellow pastor, leading more by example and less by force of position. In his autobiography, he indicated that, upon coming to Exeter, he "took

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[75] "Both the Laudian authorities and their puritan opponents were conspiring to reduce the identities available to English Protestants to a stark choice between Laudian orthodoxy and puritan subversion, or, viewed from the opposite ideological perspective, between arbitrary crypto-popery and the primitive purity of the godly." Fincham and Lake, "Hall Explains Himself," 876. See Patrick Collinson, *The Puritan Character* (University of California, 1989), 19–23, for a discussion of "labeling."

[76] See Kenneth Fincham, *Prelate as Pastor: the Episcopate of James I*, Oxford, 1990, 11ff. for a discussion of the Jacobean ideal of the bishop. Also see Patrick Collinson, *Religion of Protestants,* Oxford, 1982, 39–91 for his discussion on Jacobean bishops.

[77] Fincham and Lake, "Hall Explains Himself," 875.

[78] Hall, *Works*, 1:xxxix. While written under the duress of a temporary imprisonment at the command of Commons, the letter still verifies Hall's activities.

the resolution to follow those courses, which might most conduce to the peace and happiness of my new and weighty charge."[79] His intention was borne out through his use of terms toward his clergy like, "dear Fellow-Labourers" and "my Brethren."[80] While he did strongly emphasize conformity, Hall was obviously reluctant to engage in the kind of strong-arm tactics employed by other bishops through their consistory courts.

> Finding, therefore, some factious spirits very busy in that diocese, I used all fair and gentle means to win them to good order; and therein so happily prevailed, that, saving two of that numerous clergy ... they were all perfectly reclaimed; so as I had not one minister professedly opposite to the anciently received orders (for I was never guilty of urging any new impositions) of the church in that large diocese.[81]

His success in containing any waywardness among his clergy was due, in large part, to his definition of conformity. By his own profession, Hall considered "the anciently received orders of the church" to be the standard for conformity and not any "new impositions" that might come from Lambeth Palace. On that basis, he was able to claim a virtual unanimity among his clergy in support of the Church. This position was entirely in concert with the perspective of the Jacobean years and with Hall's earlier writings that separated between essential truths and peripheral issues. This method of producing peace within the Church was much on his mind as he entered upon his new charge. This fact can be seen by this section taken from the dedication to *The Old Religion.* Writing to his clergy, Hall opined:

> It is hard to be too vehement, in contending for main and evident truths: but litigious and immaterial verities may soon be overstriven for. In the prosecution whereof, I have oft lamented to see how heedless too many have been of the public welfare; while, in seeking for one scruple of truth, they have not cared to spend a whole pound weight of precious peace.[82]

Hall went on to reference the Thirty-Nine Articles as the standard for these main truths and encouraged his clergy to maintain silence on all other opinions. Yet while this kind of conformity may have satisfied Hall, it certainly did not meet the expectations of William Laud whose increasing insistence upon unanimity of belief and practice flew in the face of this facile attempt to reanimate the Jacobean ideal of a broad church.

On this same basis of merely outward conformity, Hall denied the existence of "puritanisme" among his pastors since he defined Puritanism as "a refractary opposition to the governement, rites, and customes of the

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79 Ibid., xxxv.
80 Ibid., 9:307, 308.
81 Ibid., 1:xxxv.
82 Ibid., 9:308.

church." In Hall's estimation, Puritanism was equivalent to nonconformity and, as such, he had solved that problem in Exeter.

> How many (perhaps hundreds) could I produce that had formerly wont to boggle at the name of a bishopp, out of a false preiudgement, which now professe honour to that sacred calling? In how many could I instance whome I have by gentle perswasions reclaymed from obstinate nonconformity in some laudable ceremonyes of our church?[83]

Yet he recognized there was a new definition of Puritanism that was gaining currency among the leaders of the Church: this "moderne puritanisme" was "more subtile then in former times" and "under the colour of a full outward conformity ... nourished some unquiet and pestilent humours, which may closely worke daunger to the churches peace."[84] Hall did not know how to ferret out this kind of Puritanism, but he claimed he did not support it in his diocese.

> Let that man teach mee where and how I shall take hold of that secret indisposition, if it vent not it selfe into words or actions. I have no dore nor window into mens hearts, these I must leave to theyr maker. But if any of these overbusy and irregular thoughts have dared but to peepe out of theyr mouthes, or hands, I have bin ready to seize upon them, and have brought them into publique question ...[85]

Ready as the new bishop was to prosecute any irregularities in the practices of his clergy, he had no method for searching into the hidden recesses of men's convictions. Hall was fully willing to suppress his own views and to aggressively encourage conformity among his own clergy in order to maintain unity within the Church. But despite the commendable performance of his duties, Hall remained under a cloud of suspicion, for the fact remained that the new definition of Puritanism could be applied to him personally.

This new definition for Puritanism combined with Hall's more broadminded perspective on conformity caused many difficulties during his tenure in Exeter. His passive resistance to any "new impositions" was interpreted by his Arminian opponents as aiding and abetting theological rebels by only requiring them to outwardly conform. Hall's lenient attitude toward the lectures that were so popular with the godly added weight to the suspicions. He had no problem at all with the lectures as long as they conformed to the standards of the Church of England. He stated clearly in his memoirs that he was "ever ready to encourage those whom [he] found conscionably forward and painful in their places" and supported the continuation of "orthodox and peaceable lectures in several parts of [his] diocese." This practice, however, only served to confirm

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83 Hall, "Appendix," 879–80.
84 Ibid., 880.
85 Ibid.

his Puritanism among "some persons of note in the clergy."[86] Suspicion of his loyalties reached to the highest levels of the Church and State. "I soon had intelligence who were set over me for espials. My ways were curiously observed, and scanned."[87] Perhaps due to these suspicions, Hall was suspended from the regular rotation of Lenten court preachers, even though moderate Calvinists like Bishop Davenant and John Hacket continued to preach regularly.[88] Accusations against him at court caused him to issue the open letter cited above in an attempt to appeal for support from a broader audience. He was also required on at least three separate occasions to answer these accusations on his knees before the king.[89] Hall's concern for his reputation in the face of these accusations was so great that he eventually confronted Laud about the issue.

> I plainly told the lord Archbishop of Canterbury, that rather than I would be obnoxious to those slanderous tongues of his misinformers, I would cast up my rochet. I knew I went right ways, and would not endure to live under undeserved suspicions.[90]

This threat to resign the bishopric apparently had some effect for, unlike his fellow Calvinist Bishop Williams, Hall was never actually prosecuted for his actions.[91] But the relative peace that prevailed in Exeter during his tenure was purchased by Hall at the high price of nerve-wracking conflict with Archbishop Laud and eventually with King Charles.

During the early years of his administration, Bishop Hall labored to insulate Exeter from the religious turmoil that was sweeping the realm. He fought against the imposition of these new categories and attempted to foster a fraternal preaching community among the clergy that would work for the spiritual instruction of his people.[92] Hall did not require the reading of the Book of Sports (distributed in his diocese in 1633–34) nor did he mandate a railed communion table set against the east end of the church. If certain parishes took that step, the bishop allowed it; but he did not make

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[86] Hall, *Works*, 1:xxxv. Julian Davies comments that this new definition of Puritan "implicated those who were tolerant of nonconformity within the Church with the stigma of disaffection and widened the climate of treason." *The Caroline Captivity of the Church*, Oxford, 1992, 103.

[87] Hall, *Works*, 1:xxxv.

[88] Fincham and Lake, "Hall Defends Himself," 876. Only one court sermon of Hall exists for the decade of the Personal Rule and it was preached in 1634 on the topic, "The Character of Man."

[89] Hall, *Works*, 1:xxxv.

[90] Hall, *Works*, 1:xxxv–xxxvi.

[91] See McCabe, *Joseph Hall*, 16–18. Fincham and Lake mention that Richard Kilvert, the informer that had accused Bishop Williams, had intentions of doing the same thing to Hall by the late 1630s. "Hall Explains Himself," 877.

[92] This is the clear implication of his comment, "What missuggestions have I waved! What blows have I borne off, in the behalf of some of them, from some gainsayers!" Hall, *Works*, 1:xxxix.

it the issue many of his fellow (Arminian) bishops did. Instead, he busied himself with what he considered to be the proper labors for a bishop: promoting preaching and lecturing, improving the condition of the church properties, mediating parochial disputes over finances, and admonishing the unruly within the diocese.[93] The result was a well-ordered diocese in which preaching flourished and relative harmony prevailed, and incidentally provided something of a haven for Calvinists.[94] Hall himself noted this circumstance in the conclusion of the first section of his memoirs: "Sure I am, I had peace and comfort at home, in the happy sense of that general unanimity and loving correspondence of my clergy, till, in the last year of my presiding there ..."[95] But this peace was personally costly for Hall as he was accused of lax administration and of harboring nonconformists. It is a measure of the strength of his convictions that he willingly withstood this opposition and, while the times and circumstances changed around him, refused either to be radicalized or silenced. Instead he remained committed to the public expression of a moderate conforming Calvinism.

Hall's bishopric in Exeter offers a glimpse of what the English Church might have been, had his vision and not Laud's prevailed. His success in bringing most of his errant clergy back into the conformist fold demonstrated that events had not yet deteriorated to the point where conflict was inevitable. A less high-handed administration combined with a return to a more Jacobean view of the Church might have avoided the conflagration to come. But it was not to be. Official policy continued to feed on the perception of a Puritan plot to subvert the Church and State while events and his own convictions inexorably pushed Hall toward a self-confrontation that would force him to choose between Calvinism and conformity.

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[93] See Fincham and Lake, "Hall Explains Himself," 873–4, and Davies, *Caroline Captivity*, 239–40.

[94] Priscilla Painter, wife of one of Hall's clergy, wrote in 1637, "we yet inioy the ordance of God, the meanes of grace, [i.e. preaching] in a most powerfull and plentyfull maner." Cited in Fincham and Lake, "Hall Explains Himself," 874.

[95] Hall, *Works*, 1:xxxvi.

CHAPTER TWELVE

Popular Polity?: The Imposition of Elizabethan Church Discipline in the Deanery of Stottesden

Brett G. Armstrong

On the surface, it might seem a bit odd to include a study of church discipline in the English border diocese of Hereford in a collection focused upon the adaptation of reformed theology and practice in early modern Europe. For though it is generally accepted that Calvinist doctrine gained a firm foothold in the Elizabethan church and that in certain regions of England, particularly in the south and east, significant numbers of often influential people were seeking to implement further reformation of the English church along the lines of Geneva or Scotland, it is also true that popular support for the further reformation of the English church was much more difficult to find in the more remote western and northern regions of the realm. Indeed, the case could be made that the parishioners of the conservative diocese of Hereford were among the least reformed in all of England.

An exasperated John Scorry, the Bishop of Hereford, reported to the Privy Council in 1561 that his cathedral was "a very nursery of blasphemy, whoredom, pride, superstition and ignorance". He complained that Catholic priests fleeing persecution in other parts of the realm found refuge in Hereford where they were not only welcomed but were "feasted" openly in the streets with torch lights and celebrations.[1] In the 1580s his successor Herbert Westfaling objected to the "insolent" recusants of the diocese, "wonderfully bold" men and women who were only too "quick to give evil speeches".[2] Even in the early seventeenth century, Bishop Robert Bennett complained that "papists" swarmed over the county, particularly "lawless ladies [with] proud spirits".[3] Hereford is an odd place to look for models of successful reformed church discipline.

Yet this essay springs from the idea that Hereford's resistance to reform is precisely what makes it such an interesting place to examine questions of ecclesiastical discipline. For in England the tightening of church discipline

1 *CSPD 1547–1580*, 177, 183; *HMC Salisbury*, vol. I, 307.
2 *CSPD 1581–1590*, 370.
3 *CSPD 1603–1610*, 500, 601.

has long been attributed to the growing influence of Calvinists, specifically as a late sixteenth-century "reformation of manners" initiated by local puritan authorities.[4] Yet, as we will see, the Elizabethan church courts in Hereford also became much more actively engaged in regulating a wide range of religious and social behavior. In that respect they mirror changes in church discipline occurring in more reformed areas of England at approximately the same time. This study then stands alongside the relatively recent work of other historians who call into question the usual correlation between active church courts and parish communities dominated by the presence of the godly.[5] That is not to discount the idea that in towns like Dorchester and Terling reformers were capable of utilizing the church courts to effect the moral changes they believed were essential to a healthy community, but it is to argue that the church courts were a powerful tool of the crown as well. Hereford provides one striking example of that, and, I would suggest, forces us to see the courts in a new and rather different light.

This essay will examine the archdeaconry court of Stottesden, located on the northern edge of the diocese of Hereford.[6] The archdeaconry courts were in many ways the most active and essential element in the structure of church discipline in England, and in those respects the most analogous to the Consistories employed on the Continent or the kirk sessions established in Scotland by the reformers. The cases examined here are all *ex officio* cases, brought by the bishop against a parishioner through a charge or presentment initiated, ideally, by the churchwardens of the

[4] The literature is extensive, but perhaps the most thorough and best known of these studies is Keith Wrightson and David Levine's study of the Essex village of Terling. David Underdown's portrait of Dorchester is also a fascinating description of this process at work in a small community. See Wrightson and Levine (1979; reprint 2001), *Poverty and Piety in an English Village: Terling, 1525–1700*, Oxford: Clarendon Press; Underdown (1992), *Fire from Heaven: Life in an English Town in the Seventeenth Century*, New Haven: Yale University Press. See also William Hunt (1983), *The Puritan Moment: the Coming of Revolution in an English County*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard, and Christopher Hill (1964), *Society and Puritanism in Pre-Revolutionary England*, New York: Schocken.

[5] One of the earliest forays in this direction was Margaret Spufford's 1974 essay "Puritanism and Social Control?" in A.J. Fletcher and J. Stevenson, (eds.), *Order and Disorder in Early Modern England*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 41–57. The most extensive support for this position is found in Marjorie McIntosh (1998), *Controlling Misbehavior in England, 1370–1600*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

[6] The deanery of Stottesden is actually located the county of Shropshire and composed of 24 parishes. Fortunately a good run of the courts' records from 1560 through the 1630s has survived in the Hereford Record Office (HRO) and Mr. Chris Potter has transcribed the Acts of Office for Stottesden deanery from the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century court books. The typed transcriptions are available in the HRO, making these courts' records readily accessible. Mr. Potter has copied all the details of the Stottesden court cases from the original act books, expanding the abbreviated Latin detailing the court proceedings and preserving the English testimony of the defendants and, where possible, the verdicts rendered.

parish of the accused. These cases made up the majority of the business of the archdeaconry courts in Stottesden and they provide a glimpse into the interaction between ordinary parishioners and the authorities of the church. My aim here is to examine the cases brought before the court during the reign of Elizabeth I in order to ascertain the policies and objectives driving the activities of the courts, the ways in which those policies and objectives changed over time and how people reacted to the activities of the court and the subsequent changes in their policies.[7]

Kristine Rabberman's study of earlier cases in the Hereford church courts demonstrates that the courts were very active in the years immediately preceding the Reformation.[8] The diocese was profiting from a flourishing cloth trade and the economy of the city of Hereford and the surrounding region was thriving in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. Parish registers show that new families were migrating to Hereford, many from across the border in Wales. Perhaps as a result, the church courts in the diocese were hearing more cases than ever before. Yet the border diocese of Hereford remained notoriously difficult to govern and the courts apparently responded to the challenge of governing the growing population by taking a very conservative position. The courts apparently relied upon local parishes to enforce standards of behavior and concentrated their efforts almost exclusively upon cases of sexual immorality and the probate of wills.[9] In a recent study of the city of Hereford, John Dwyer has noted that prior to the reign of Elizabeth, church and court officials rarely meddled in its affairs.[10] And the bishops seemed to have followed a similar pattern in the surrounding parishes, making concerted efforts to limit their administration of discipline to within accepted and traditional

[7] Although a good run of records for the archdeaconry courts of Hereford has survived, the records are not complete. While it appears as if the majority of case books are available, the records themselves contain occasional gaps, verdicts are often omitted and a few of the books appear to be missing. Second, we have not been so fortunate with regard to the correspondence of the Bishops of Hereford. Some is available in the HRO and the archives of the cathedral, but much has been lost.

[8] Kristine L. Rabberman (1998), "Marriage on the Boundaries: Cultural Contact and Marriage Formation on the Welsh/English Border, 1442–1526", unpublished PhD thesis, University of Pennsylvania. Rabberman shows that cases of sexual misconduct heard by the courts increased from 148 in 1442 to more than 850 in 1499, remaining at approximately that level until the Reformation (1525). Cases of sexual misconduct and testamentary cases composed the vast majority of cases before the court in these years.

[9] Rabberman, 280–83. Rabberman notes that due to Hereford's precarious position as a border county, the turmoil associated with the frequent Welsh raids in the area, and the destruction associated with the Wars of the Roses the bishops struggled to maintain order and often found their authority challenged.

[10] John Patrick Dwyer (2001), "'As Wee May Live in Peace and Quiettnes'. Regulation in the Age of Reformation: Hereford, 1470–1610", unpublished PhD thesis, University of Colorado, 143–4. Dwyer argues that the primary goal of Hereford elites was to keep the city out of the eye of the crown in order to preserve its conservative beliefs.

bounds. Yet, even so the church courts in Hereford struggled at times to enforce their judgments, and Rabberman notes that as early as the 1470s the severity of the punishments imposed by the court lessened as the courts began to increasingly rely upon penance and monetary fines instead of public beatings and humiliation.[11]

Less is known of the activities of the Stottesden church courts during the reigns of Edward VI and Mary I, but the cases from the first years of Elizabeth's reign suggest that the religious changes in England had very little effect upon the activities of the church courts in Hereford.[12] In the first years of Elizabeth's reign, the surviving Act Books from Stottesden detail the proceedings of an active archdeaconry court closely following the footsteps of its pre-Reformation ancestors. By this time, the destruction of many of the cloth mills of Hereford had created decades of serious economic hardship in the region, difficulties undoubtedly exacerbated by more than two decades of religious upheaval.[13] One might expect the courts to be prosecuting cases of social disorder resulting from these difficult circumstances. Yet the archdeaconry courts, seemingly confined to the periphery in both good times and bad, continued steadily on their traditional course, meeting approximately four times a year (generally in January, April, July, and October). Apparently continuing to leave issues of religious and social disorder to local authorities, the courts remained almost exclusively focused upon settling testamentary disputes and prosecuting cases of fornication and adultery. The court books for the 1560s contain 153 entries related to individuals from the parishes of Stottesden, or about fourteen cases from Stottesden per court session.[14]

This pattern continued through the following decade as well. More records survive, and the courts appear to have been meeting a bit more frequently, at least six times in 1571 and seven times the following year. The more frequent sessions likely reflect the increasing population as the

[11] Rabberman, 275. This follows a pattern seen across much of England, and it signals a significant transformation in both the practice and the perception of the church courts. See for example the evidence from the diocese of Norwich in Christopher Harper-Bill, ed. (2000), *The Register of John Morton, Archbishop of Canterbury 1486–1500*, Woodbridge, Suffolk: Canterbury and York Society. Hereford, in fact, seems to have been conservative in respect to punishment as well, making the transition from whippings to penance to fines more gradually than many of the other dioceses of the realm.

[12] In Hereford, patchy records do exist, and more research is needed to understand this very important stage in the development of the archidiaconal courts. There had been a concerted effort by many of the reformers to completely revise the discipline of the new English church, but it was thwarted first by the accession of Mary in 1553 and later by Elizabeth who preferred the moderate reforms contained in the canons of 1571. See James C. Spalding (1992), *The Reformation of the Ecclesiastical Laws of England, 1552*, Kirksville, MO: Sixteenth Century Essays and Studies vol. XIX.

[13] Dwyer, 275–7.

[14] Potter lists 156, but three of these are from parishes outside the deanery.

fortunes of the diocese began to rebound after several decades of decline.[15] Yet still the courts' business continued to revolve around issues of sexual misconduct or the testating of wills. In the 1560s and 1570s more than 75 percent of the cases before the church courts in Stottesden were concerned with wills or sexual immorality, again continuing the pattern of the pre-Reformation courts. (Table 12.1) The conservative pattern of local influence upon the courts may well have been reinforced by the effects of Archbishop Grindal's fall from power in 1576, as in Stottesden responsibility for the course of church discipline apparently continued to rest with local figures.[16]

Table 12.1 Acts of Office – Stottesden Deanery 1560–1579

Type of Case	% of Total Cases	
	1560s	1570s
Sexual Offenses	46%	35%
Wills & Estates	37%	47%
CW & Minister's Duties	13%	15%
No Church/Euch./Recusant	–	–
Unlawful Marriages	4%	3%
Disturbing Service	–	–
Discord in the Community	–	–
Sabbath	–	–
Anti-court Rhetoric	–	–

Almost immediately upon the appointment of John Whitgift as Archbishop of Canterbury in 1583, the activity of the ecclesiastical courts in Stottesden abruptly changed.[17] Thoroughly Calvinist in his soteriology, Whitgift nonetheless expected his clergy to heartily embrace the more modest reforms in polity and doctrine prescribed by the 39 Articles and

[15] Dwyer, 264–6.

[16] A brief look at cases from the church courts in Sussex reveals a similar pattern there. In Chichester archdeaconry between 1572 and 1575, 130 of 145 cases were for some variety of sexual offense (75 for fornication, 52 for bearing a bastard child and 3 for lewd living). This may well have been the pragmatic response of the courts in the wake of all the religious changes and uncertainty. Chichester Archdeaconry Detection Book, EP I/17/3 in the West Sussex Record Office (WSRO). The cases were transcribed by G. Hothershall in 1995 and are catalogued as document I/88/52 in the WSRO. I have taken the types of cases heard by the court from the transcriptions.

[17] Whitgift was the first of the Elizabethan bishops to hold a seat on the Privy Council and as we shall see, under his leadership the concerns of the Council and the Queen were quickly translated to the dioceses through the church courts.

Book of Common Prayer.[18] As a result, the parishes of Stottesden suddenly came under a new scrutiny. Church attendance, proper preaching and the maintenance of the fabric and structure of the church now accounted for almost half of the business before the courts.[19] (See Table 12.2.) In Stottesden, the archdeaconry courts quickly took on a much different identity than simply the stereotypical "bawdy courts", though Whitgift experienced some staunch opposition to his policies in the council and in the parishes.[20] Yet, despite resistance, the courts assumed a new and active role in transforming the religious and social landscape of the diocese.

The primary source of concern was the continuing strength of Roman Catholicism in the diocese. As we have seen from the earlier comments of Scorry and Westfaling, many of the people of the diocese, including a number of the most influential families, remained deeply attached to the old faith.[21] In fact, Bishop John Scorry earlier had alerted Grindal to the fact that the canons of the cathedral insisted that they did not answer to any bishop, but only to their Queen. Indeed, as a peculiar the cathedral fell under the jurisdiction of the Dean and Chapter, but the canons often defied that authority as well.[22] And as the first groups of Jesuit priests trained at the seminary at Douai were secretly returning to Hereford in 1580, the Council, led by Walsingham and Lord Burghley, grew alarmed. For while the canons of Hereford (and many leading families as well) proclaimed themselves as loyal subjects to the Queen, they remained defiantly conservative in their faith.

With the Catholic threat looming, Whitgift carefully selected Herbert Westfaling as Scorry's successor. A patron of William Cecil, the dour Westfaling was an Oxford professor renowned for his theological acumen and his rhetorical ability to counter the objections and arguments of Jesuits and other stubborn recusants. Whitgift believed in strict ecclesiastical

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[18] Specifically, Whitgift required that the clergy affirm the Queen's supreme authority in church matters and avow that the Thirty-Nine Articles of 1563 and the Book of Common Prayer contained nothing contrary to scripture. See John Strype (1718, new edition 1822), *The Life and Acts of … John Whitgift*, 3 vols., 3:104–7.

[19] Caroline Litzenberger identifies this shift in royal policy in Gloucestershire as early as 1570. In Shropshire it occurred some 15–20 years later. See Litzenberger (1997), *The English Reformation and the Laity*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 126.

[20] Strype notes that Whitgift found resistance in both Parliament and the Privy Council. In particular, Burghley complained that "the Inquisitors of Spain use not so many questions to comprehend and to trap their preyes", concluding that "this kind of proceeding is too much savouring of the Romish Inquisition". Strype, 3:104–7.

[21] *CSPD 1547–1580*, 183.

[22] In Hereford not only the canons but many of the leading Roman Catholics of the diocese drew a distinction between the policies and authority of the crown and the policies and authority of the English church. Indeed, the cathedral had a long history of refusing to submit to Episcopal visitations, instead demanding that they be considered royal visitations instead. See HRO *Dean and Chapter Act Book*, ffs 87v and 88v.

discipline and explained to the Council that "the staffe or rodde of discipline God hath undoubtedly given to all trewe bishops."[23] With a clear charge from his Archbishop, he surveyed the diocese upon his appointment in 1585, sending a letter to the Privy Council (directed to Walsingham) advising severe measures against the recusants of the diocese. Westfaling noted that the more gentle measures employed by Bishop Scorry seemed to have had very little effect.[24] By this time, Walsingham was exerting great influence in the Council as the Catholic threat became more imminent and he had a close ally in William Cecil, Lord Burghley. Westfaling's appointment to Hereford was undoubtedly part of a calculated campaign embraced by both the Privy Council and the Archbishop to address the continuing problem with recusants in the diocese.[25]

Elizabeth and her Council had repeatedly been frustrated in their attempts to effectively govern the diocese. The secular courts in Hereford were unreliable for it was well known that many of the secular authorities, including the JPs in the courts of Quarter Sessions, were notorious Catholics.[26] They continually ignored the directives of the Council in the Marches and in at least one instance even softened the oath of allegiance to make it acceptable to their Catholic neighbors.[27] In early 1570s and again in the mid-1580s the Privy Council had secured the placement of a majority of Protestants on the Hereford City Council; but even those efforts met with very limited success.[28]

Faced with the challenges posed by a conservative diocese, Elizabeth and her Council apparently turned their disciplinary emphasis to the more responsive church courts instead.[29] And at first glance the most striking

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[23] Hereford Cathedral archives, 7031/2 fols 123 ff.

[24] *CSPD 1581–1590*, 370.

[25] While the Council was sharply divided over issues of foreign policy – specifically the extent to which England should involve itself in the religious controversies on the Continent – by the early 1580s, both sides could agree that strong measures were needed to counter the Catholic threat within England itself.

[26] A little more than a decade earlier the crown had worked to reform the city of Hereford by reconstituting the City Council, appointing outsiders despite clear provisions against such actions in the city charter. See Dwyer, 252. Yet the effort apparently had little effect. Westfaling claimed that "the most parte of the headd constables throughout Herefordshire are thought to be somewhat popishly given" and when asked to identify the religious affections of the Justices of the Peace in his diocese, admitted to the Privy Council that "I have, according to my duty, inquired after, with such circumspection and diligence, as my small acquaintance yet in the country, the little knowledge of men's discretions and secrecy ... would suffer me".

[27] *CSPD 1603–1610*, 398, 559.

[28] Dwyer, 252. Dwyer argues that these local men, though committed to the reforming efforts in the English church, consistently placed local loyalties and concerns ahead of the policies of the Crown whenever possible.

[29] Recently, Alison Wall has shown that in many English counties the JPs were notoriously unreliable agents for the crown. They were local gentry, subject to an array of

feature of the Act Books from the first five years following Westfaling's appointment (1585–90) is that the volume of business before the courts increased dramatically. Though the surviving records are a bit patchy, the courts began to meet as often as every few weeks and as many as eleven times in 1589 alone.[30] The proliferation of court dates undoubtedly increased the efficiency and impact of the courts upon the parishes of Stottesden. Cases could be heard much more quickly, an obvious benefit for those willing to utilize the courts, and the local ministers and churchwardens may have turned to the courts more often for solutions to difficult parish dilemmas.[31]

Yet, the more frequent court sessions presented difficulties as well. In a rural region like Hereford attendance at the courts was wearisome and costly, and complaints received by the crown often cited the increase in court sessions as particularly burdensome to the people.[32] One broadsheet noted that court sessions were now in many places held every three weeks "where by ancient custom" they had traditionally met but twice a year.[33] The travel to and from these frequent sessions of the courts was often inconvenient for churchwardens who were required to offer the presentations to the courts and respond to concerns about the state of their parish and their local church. These parish representatives were fined 2s 4d if they failed to appear at a session of the courts. If they did appear, they were charged 6d each for their supper (about a day's wages) "besides the loss of their several days work and their travel and trouble in coming

competing pressures and political interests. Alison Wall (2004), "'The Greatest Disgrace': the Making and Unmaking of JPs in Elizabethan and Jacobean England" *English Historical Review* CXIX: 481, April, 312–32.

[30] Time constraints dictated that the volume of business before the courts at each particular session remained relatively constant, but the dramatic increase in the number of court sessions reflects the increasing number of cases coming before the courts.

[31] Studies of secular courts during these same years attest to the fact that the number of all types of legal cases was rising rapidly during the second half of Elizabeth's reign. J.S. Cockburn has argued that there was a marked increase of persons indicted before the assize courts of the Home Counties during each decade of Elizabeth's reign. J.S. Cockburn, ed. (1977), *Crime in England 1550–1800*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 53. Christopher Brooks finds a "massive increase" in litigation before the royal courts in London beginning around 1558 and continuing for the next century. Brooks (1998), *Lawyers, Litigation, and English Society since 1450*, London: Hambledon Press, 68. Also, despite what she describes as a general trend toward moving legal jurisdiction toward the central courts and away from the localities, Marjorie McIntosh finds a steady "gradual rise in concern" with misbehavior resulting in increasing activity even in local manorial courts over the course of the sixteenth century. McIntosh, *Controlling Misbehavior*, 10.

[32] See, for example, the 1603 letter from the High Commission for Ecclesiastical causes to Bishop Jegon in Thomas F. Barton, trans. (1963–64), *The Registrum Vagum of Anthony Harison*, Norfolk Record Society, 25.

[33] Cotton MS; quoted in Strype, *Life of Whitgift*, 220–22.

and going".[34] Additionally the presentments offered by the churchwardens cost 4d each, and, in the eyes of their critics, all "for the greedy lucre and gain of such inferior officers [of the courts]".[35]

Yet Elizabeth and the Council found the courts increasingly necessary as the Catholic threat became more pronounced.[36] The Hereford courts of the 1580s paid close attention to both parishioners and local church officers through two new areas of special emphasis: attendance at church services and the Eucharist, and the maintenance and repair of church property. With the Catholic threat more keenly felt than ever before, the courts were determined to ensure that local parish churches be vital parts of community life and that all members of the community participate in worship services there. The campaign against Catholics was emphasized in the visitation articles issued in 1586 by Bishop Westfaling. The 45th article instructed churchwardens to present individuals "that refuse to come to divine service in their parish church or do not frequent the same, or do not, being of convenient age, communicate thrice a year at the least, namely once about Easter".[37] Many of the recusants of Hereford, however, had proven themselves willing to conform to avoid punishment, especially when the Statutes of 1581 had increased the penalties for recusancy to a crippling £20 per month.[38] And so Westfaling's 47th item was more to the point; it focused upon those who might attend parish services, but who also "be suspected to resort to any Mass, or any other kind of service than

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[34] Cotton MS; quoted in ibid., 220–22.

[35] Cotton MS; quoted in ibid. In the early seventeenth century a day laborer in Shrewsbury was paid 3d a day with diet or 7d a day without in the summertime. In winter it was 1d lower. Mowing paid 6d with food and 1s without. VCH – Shropshire, iv, 128, from *Transactions of the Shropshire Archaeological Society* lv, 136–42.

[36] A letter from Queen Elizabeth to the Council of the Marches in 1586 warned that "divers persons naming themselves Jesuits and Seminaries, or rather to be called massing priests, have of late, under color of their feigned religion, become wicked traitors to our state and most hurtful poison to our true and loving subjects". The Council was instructed to take the necessary steps to search out all recusants. Hereford City MS, vol. III no. 64. Ronald Marchant has shown that recusancy and a lack of church attendance were major concerns at this time in Yorkshire and Suffolk as well. Marchant (1969), *The Church under the Law: Justice, Administration and Discipline in the Diocese of York, 1560–1640*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 219.

[37] [Herbert Westfaling], *Articles Ecclesiasticall to be Enquired of By the Churchwardens and the Swornmen within the Diocese of Hereford in the First Visitation of the Reverend Father in God, Harbert Bishop of the said Diocese: this present year MDLXXXVI and in the XXVIII Year of the Raigne of Our Most Gracious Sovereign Lady Queen Elizabeth* (Oxford, 1586), sig. B2. Jeremy Boulton has shown that during this period only about a third of Londoners communicated more than once a year, but that more than 80 percent received communion at Easter. Jeremy Boulton (1984), "The Limits of Formal Religion: the Administration of Holy Communion in Late Elizabethan and Early Stuart London," *London Journal*, 10, 135–54.

[38] Dwyer, 241.

is received by authority, or to be reconciled to the Church of Rome".[39] And as the Council and Westfaling exerted increasing pressure, the courts responded. Between 1585 and 1589, 76 individuals were presented for either negligent attendance at church, recusancy or a failure to receive the Eucharist at Easter.[40] (See Table 12.3.)

It is noteworthy that despite the standing provision in the visitation articles for the presentment of Catholics, all the charges for recusancy arise from one particular court session on 10 May 1588 – the month in which the Armada set sail. Although we have no surviving evidence of a specific directive, there is little doubt that as the Council received word of the impending Spanish and Catholic threat, the churchwardens were specially instructed to provide a list of all suspected recusants in their parish. Otherwise, despite the charge in the articles of visitation and the ongoing concern of Elizabeth and her Council, local authorities apparently placed greater emphasis upon loyalty to and participation in the community than to specific religious beliefs. While the failure to attend services or receive the Eucharist was often noted at court, few individuals were cited for recusancy. And although the articles of visitation insist that an individual commune three times a year, all the presentments for not receiving the Eucharist are for missing the Easter ceremony. Again in the absence of specific directives, the expectations of the bishop as conveyed in the visitation articles were only loosely enforced in the parishes.

This tendency to couple the strict directives contained in the articles of visitation with a much more flexible application of those demands in the parishes characterized much of the relationship of the courts to the Stottesden parishes through the 1580s.[41] For the years of Elizabeth's reign only two sets of Westfaling's visitation articles survive, the articles of 1586 and another from 1592. Both sets of articles contain many more potential concerns than are reflected in the proceedings of the courts. It is clear that some of the concerns expressed in the visitation articles were taken quite seriously while others were virtually ignored.[42] Apparently even as

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[39] [Herbert Westfaling], *Articles Ecclesiasticall to be Enquired of By the Churchwardens and the Swornmen within the Diocese of Hereford* (1586), sig. B2.

[40] Dwyer notes that in the city of Hereford, where (under pressure from the Crown) recusants suddenly were held accountable to pay the fine of £20, several prominent Catholic families were ruined and the political power of (at least openly) Catholic families in the city was permanently crippled. Dwyer, 254.

[41] See Kenneth Fincham, ed. (1994), *Articles and Injunctions of the Early Stuart Church*, Bury St. Edmunds, Suffolk: Church of England Record Society, I: xxii–xxiii.

[42] The articles from 1586 for example, contain 70 different items including whether the minister "diligently visits the sick and comforts them," and whether he "uses the days of Perambulation as accustomed." The churchwardens were instructed to procure for the church the Book of Common Prayer with the new calendar, the great English Bible, the two volumes of homilies, the paraphrases of Erasmus in English, the table of the Ten Commandments and a collection of furniture, coverings, locks, and chests to be used for worship, record-keeping,

the Council utilized the church courts as a vital part of their governance in the diocese, a significant degree of flexibility was permitted to rest in the hands of local churchwardens who could use the courts to buttress their authority but were often free to exercise their judgment in their efforts to maintain order. That understanding was largely in keeping with the traditional role of the church courts in these parish communities.

Table 12.2 Acts of Office – Stottesden Deanery 1560–1589

Type of Case	% of Total Cases			
	1560s	1570s	1580–1583	1584–1589
Sexual Offenses	46%	35%	8%	33%
Wills & Estates	37%	47%	82%	1%
CW & Minister's Duties	13%	15%	1%	25%
No Church/Euch./Recusant	–	–	9%	33%
Unlawful Marriages	4%	3%	–	2%
Disturbing Service	–	–	–	6%
Discord in the Community	–	–	–	–
Sabbath	–	–	–	–
Anti-court Rhetoric	–	–	–	–

Yet subtle changes in the cases before the courts suggest that by the later 1580s the traditional flexibility and ambiguity of the courts was waning as Whitgift and Westfaling exerted tighter control. First of all, more and more frequently, (as in the cases of recusancy noted above) the courts appear to have been pursuing specific concerns that are revealed in flurries of presentments for a particular offense or infraction. For example, at the court held 18 May 1586 the churchwardens from Highley, Stottesden, Whethill and Taseley were all presented for not having a Bible in their parish church.[43] And the court session of August 1589 was almost exclusively devoted to presentments regarding the safe and orderly maintenance of churchyards. This scrutiny of the parish churches came at a substantial cost. For not only were the churchwardens assessed court fees at their appearance before the judge, but the lack of a Bible cost the churchwardens a fine of 1s 2d. Lack of a parish register could cost the churchwardens 5s. and a decrepit church porch meant an additional fine

and to secure the church's goods. In addition, they were reminded to "truly levy 12d for every day of those who absent themselves from church."

[43] HRO vol. 65 f. 5; HRO, Acts of Office, Stottesden Deanery 1580–1589, transcription, 22–6. (Hereinafter, Acts 1580–1589) There are numerous examples of this type of sudden flurries of presentments.

of 4s. Excommunication (for failing to appear before the courts or failing to remedy the defects) was an additional 2s 6d.[44] These costs, of course, were in addition to the money required to buy the Bible, repair the church, or provide a register.

The sudden preponderance of presentments like these represents a sharp break with the longstanding activities of the courts. Rather than cooperating with parish ministers and churchwardens by responding to *their* concerns, most court sessions were monopolized by presentments initiated by officers of the courts, resulting in the prosecution of churchwardens and ministers. Many of the churchwardens at one time or another stood excommunicate – often through little fault of their own. For many of the responsibilities enjoined upon them (such as the purchase of various accoutrements for worship or arranging for the repair of the church) were costly and difficult to satisfy.

Indeed, it was not uncommon for some churchwardens to stand excommunicate for six months or more.[45] One wonders what effect this might have had upon the reputations of the churchwardens in their communities and their ability to enforce or maintain order from within. Did this undermine the authority of these men, or were people forced to reconsider the degree of shame associated with excommunication and reevaluate their perception of the courts? It would seem that the people in the communities would need to make some choice between the two options – either they could respect the courts or they could esteem the men reprimanded by the courts.

Likewise ministers also found themselves summoned before the courts for a number of offenses, such as not preaching quarterly sermons, catechizing the young people in the parish, wearing the surplice, expounding scriptures, or exhibiting the necessary license. The cases beg the question of how the courts were made aware of the offenses.[46] Certainly there were instances where the minister might report the churchwardens or the churchwardens the minister, but evidence of divisions of this sort in Stottesden in the

[44] As the costs are rarely recorded in the Stottesden books, these figures are drawn from Ronald Marchant's study of York. The costs are probably very similar, for beginning in the 1580s Archbishop Whitgift and his successors worked diligently to standardize fees. Marchant, *The Church under the Law*, 136.

[45] Acts 1580–1589, 22, 23, 29, 37, 42.

[46] This evidence of increasing presentments of churchwardens challenges the theory advanced by J.A. Sharpe and others that local churchwardens were a local ruling oligarchy who had command of access to the church courts and used that access to further their agenda. Sharpe argues that the apparitors have been unfairly criticized and actually made few presentments to the court. However, he ignores these presentments of ministers and churchwardens that were a growing part of the courts' caseload. Although the court books rarely reveal the source of the presentments, the evidence does suggest that others besides churchwardens and ministers were very active in the process of offering presentments as well. See Sharpe (1999), *Crime in Early Modern England*, London: Longman, 118.

1580s is difficult to find. A parishioner might present his churchwardens for failing to maintain the parish church adequately, but the "bundles" of similar presentments from different parishes all presented at the same court session suggests that most presentments did not arrive before the courts in this manner.

Instead, the discovery of faults with a parish churchwarden or minister often arose from the investigative activities of the apparitors or summoners. The apparitors were charged with traveling through the diocese to notify those who had been presented for an offense of the day and place of the next court session at which they were to appear. If the defendant were unable to appear, for a fee the apparitor would appear in their place, representing them by proxy.[47] As a result of their frequent visits to the parishes of the deanery, the apparitors were often aware of various unreported offenses in the local communities, offenses which they might then either report to the courts, or, more notoriously, conveniently ignore in return for some monetary or other favor. For example, when John Head of Chelmarsh was accused of hauling wood on the Sabbath in 1587, he informed the court that "the apparitor did offer to discharge [me] for the sum of 2 shillings".[48] Apparitors were notorious for accepting similar bribes in lieu of making presentments.[49]

At one particular session of the court on 2 October 1601 six different parishes were suddenly presented for allowing their churches to fall into "disrepair".[50] In these cases both churchwardens and curates were presented before the courts and accused of negligence. In these instances the fingerprints of the apparitors upon these presentments are obvious. The fact that curates and churchwardens were both presented eliminates them as potential informants, and the fact that several parishes were simultaneously presented for the same infraction suggests that the concern was initiated from above. As a result of these activities and others like

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[47] Manning (1969), *Religion and Society in Elizabethan Sussex*, Leicester: Leicester University Press, 25.

[48] Sharpe, 68.

[49] The correspondence of bishops like Richard Montague and John Jegon provide evidence that the numbers of apparitors were increasing rapidly in the sixteenth century, and that they had become a nuisance even for those men they were supposedly trying to serve. For example, Montague, after his translation to the see of Norwich complained that his authority was compromised there because the diocese was overrun with "a rabble of proctors and apparitors". In 1603 Jegon issued a warrant "for present suppressing of the multitude and iniquitie of Apparitors in my severall jurisdictions against whom I have received many fowle complaintes". Jegon's warrant was in response to a letter from the crown warning him of the abuses the apparitors were perpetuating within his diocese. Although the court records rarely reveal the source of presentments, indirect evidence suggests that a growing number of presentments may be attributed to the activities of the apparitors.

[50] These were the parishes of Neen Savage, Middleton Scriven, Upton Cressett, Billingsley, Chelmarsh and Burwarton. Acts 1600–1609, 114, 116, 117, 119, 121.

them, after 1584 concerns involving the churchwardens' faithful handling of their responsibilities suddenly accounted for more than 25 percent of the business before the courts.

Table 12.3 Acts of Office – Stottesden Deanery 1560–1599

Type of Case	% of Total Cases				
	1560s	1570s	1580–1583	1584–1589	1590s
Sexual Offenses	46%	35%	8%	33%	37%
Wills & Estates	37%	47%	82%	1%	4%
CW & Minister's Duties	13%	15%	1%	25%	30%
No Church/Euch./ Recusant	–	–	9%	33%	13%
Unlawful Marriages	4%	3%	–	2%	4%
Disturbing Service	–	–	–	6%	7%
Discord in the Community	–	–	–	–	4%
Sabbath	–	–	–	–	–
Anti-court Rhetoric	–	–	–	–	–

In the final years of Elizabeth's reign this pattern of increased activity continued. These years witnessed the worst consecutive harvests of the century, harvests that led to severe food shortages and high mortality rates.[51] We might then expect increasing concern on the part of local authorities toward offenses that would further threaten already precarious social conditions. In contrast to the lack of response by the courts in the 1560s, the number of new cases before the courts appears to have risen dramatically. The particular social conditions of the decade appear to have meshed with what was now a clear trend toward implementing royal control through the church courts with the result that there were now enough cases for an entire court session to be largely devoted to the concerns of one deanery.

[51] The 1590s were years of social crisis in much of England. The four years between 1594 and 1597 witnessed repeated harvest failures. Alongside repeated visitations of the plague in the 1580s and 1590s, there was a serious outbreak of smallpox in Hereford in 1595. The decade was characterized by massive inflation, heavy taxation (to pay for continuing wars), high unemployment, and escalating crime. Although the rural character of Stottesden may have helped to alleviate some of the distress, the decade was the most difficult of the era. See Dwyer, 270 and John Walter and Roger Schofield, eds. (1989), *Famine, Disease and the Social Order in Early Modern Society*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Sexual offenses were still the most frequently heard, with a full one-third of the cases dealing with fornication and illicit pregnancy. Twenty-nine individuals (13 percent of the cases) were presented for failing to attend church or neglecting to receive the Eucharist. But with the increasing controversies surrounding puritans, the focus of the court shifted from Roman Catholics to non-conformists. In nearby Gloucestershire, Bishop Cheney had identified for the Privy Council three types of people who chose to absent themselves from divine services there. The first, and most innocent, were those who avoided coming to church because they feared being prosecuted for debt. The second were the more traditional recusants, those who "savour of papistrie". And in Stottesden, the records carefully distinguish between non-attendance (which could be due to a number of external factors) and recusancy, which was apparently a synonym for Roman Catholic. The third type of person prone to miss church services, described by Cheney as perhaps more deserving of punishment than persistent Catholics, were those "commonlie called puritans, [who] willfully refuse to come to church, as not liking the surplice, ceremonies and other services now used in the church".[52] While puritans appear to have been few on the ground in Hereford, it is interesting that none of the twenty-nine individuals presented for non-attendance during the 1590s was identified as a Catholic recusant. Following the death of the influential Walsingham in 1590, it is likely that Archbishop Whitgift's campaign against nonconformists was being pursued through the church courts in Stottesden.

Further evidence of the almost instantaneous influence of the policies of the Crown and Council upon the activities of the local church courts is found in the sudden attention given to cases of illegal or clandestine marriage. Once attention was drawn to these marriages in the Parliament of 1597, the number of illegal marriages reported to the courts increased both suddenly and significantly, quickly becoming among the most divisive and controversial activities of the courts.[53] To cite only one example, in 1601, John Francis, the curate of Cleybury North, was presented before the courts for twice refusing to make a public pronouncement against Richard Taylor.[54] The courts had excommunicated Taylor for his clandestine marriage, and Francis was required by law to notify the parish of his excommunication by announcing the sentence during the service.[55] For reasons lost to us now, the curate apparently sided with his parishioner,

[52] From Litzenberger, 145–7.

[53] In Parliament it was argued that "these marriages [granted by license] are made in places peculiar ... by vagrant, unlearned, dissolute, drunken, and idle stipendiaries, vicars, and curates who are placed in the rooms of rich men ... and receiveth the profit". Quoted in Strype, *Life of Whitgift*, 509.

[54] Ibid., 108, 123.

[55] Ibid.

refusing to support the sanction of the courts. While we can't be sure of what those reasons were, we do know that Francis believed them important enough to risk incurring the ire of the courts and the certain penalties that accompanied it. In fact Francis had been cited six years earlier, in 1595, for a similar offense.[56] Francis' attitude not only reveals a disparity between the concerns of the courts and those of some local parish officials, but is also an example of why some parishioners might reasonably expect a measure of leniency from their pastors regarding the implementation of parish discipline, a leniency often eliminated by the activities of the apparitors and the courts.

While the courts kept pressure upon the rectors, ministers and churchwardens to provide proper services of worship and maintain the church and churchyard, the most striking change in the nature of the offenses pursued by the courts in the 1590s is that the previous attention to disorder within the church was now beginning to be extended to concern for discord within the larger community as well. For example, in 1590 Rowland Heylie of Aston Aier was presented for sowing discord by the "bringing of tales between neighbor and neighbor, putting them to variance and strife".[57] This new attention to cases of disorder in the larger community (both inside and outside the church) suddenly accounted for 11 percent of the business of the courts as the courts began to prosecute new categories of offenses. We must assume that these cases previously had been handled informally through the intervention of local men of authority; they too were now becoming a part of the regular proceedings of the courts.

Perhaps not surprisingly, there is growing evidence that as the activity of the courts increased, the struggle to enforce their sanctions and punishments became progressively more difficult. For the first time in Stottesden, two individuals were presented for having stood excommunicate for more than 40 days (and were now subject to imprisonment by the sheriff) and eleven people were cited for illicitly receiving excommunicate persons in their homes. These latter presentments are telling, for a refusal by the community to support the sanction of excommunication was a direct challenge to the authority of the courts and another sign that the courts were moving out of step with the values and expectations of the parish. In one particularly striking episode, Thomas Cook was charged because "he stayed in church after the vicar had published an excommunication against him and did not depart the church until service was done".[58] Although they would have been aware that canonists had long argued that excommunicates were a contagion in the social body, Cook's neighbors allowed him to

[56] Acts 1590–1599, 18.
[57] Acts 1590–1599, 19.
[58] Ibid., 10.

stay for the church service. Cook's penalty must somehow have seemed unfair or undeserved (or was simply not taken seriously), and no one in the community had the ability, or perhaps the desire, to force him to leave.

And for the first time, the records reveal frustration and resentment stemming from forced appearances before the courts directed at the courts themselves. George Bach of Cleybury Mortimer first appears in the records in July 1601 where he stands excommunicate for "slandering the judges".[59] While Bach's transgression is notable because it was rather rare, one suspects that the sentiments that lay behind his outburst were much more common indeed. For wisdom certainly dictated that people exercise discretion to avoid the certain reprimands and fines that would accompany a public verbal assault upon the practices of the courts or the activities of the apparitor. Yet resistance to the courts could take the more subversive and less obvious form of a refusal to appear before the courts or to perform the prescribed penance. In these cases, the courts were generally quite lenient. There were numerous complaints that the travel to appear before the courts was difficult or impossible at certain times of the year, and the courts generally allowed an individual several opportunities to appear before they began to impose punishment. But in some cases that leniency only masked the fact that a parishioner could simply ignore a summons to court or a penance imposed. Despite the patience of the courts, of the 312 individuals whose appearances in the 1590s have been preserved and examined here, more than 70 (or approximately 22 percent) eventually found themselves excommunicated for either failing to appear or for failing to certify the completion of their penance. Some of these individuals were repeatedly summoned before the courts and failed to appear again and again. Obviously this resistance to their directives was a serious problem for the courts, but their ability to exercise their authority was limited by the cooperation (or lack thereof) that they received from local authorities.

[59] Acts 1600–1609, 111.

Table 12.4 Acts of Office – Stottesden Deanery 1560–1603

Type of Case	% of Total Cases				
	1560s	1570s	1580s	1590s	1600–1603
Sexual Offenses	46%	35%	26%	37%	41%
Wills & Estates	37%	47%	18%	4%	3%
CW & Minister's Duties	13%	15%	21%	30%	16%
No Church/Euch./Recusant	–	–	28%	13%	17%
Unlawful Marriages	4%	3%	3%	4%	10%
Disturbing Service	–	–	5%	7%	3%
Discord in the Community	–	–	–	4%	3%
Sabbath	–	–	–	–	3%
Anti-court Rhetoric	–	–	–	–	3%

While allowing for the fact that the court books are regrettably incomplete, there remains a clear and unmistakable increase and shift in the concerns of the courts during Elizabeth's reign. While the 1588 hunt for recusants is a striking example of the ability of the courts to respond almost instantly to further the specific purposes of the crown, there is a broader pattern of prosecutions developing as well. By the end of Elizabeth's reign the courts had taken a more active role in the enforcement of not only sexual morality, but also notions of neighborliness and the establishment of religious uniformity. This trend fits with the conclusions of other historians examining the activities of the secular courts during these same years who have found that prosecutions for most offenses were increasing from the 1570s through the 1620s.[60] In a diocese where religious divisions within the gentry made the secular courts unreliable, the church courts became an indispensable and vital instrument utilized by the crown to govern the people, a pattern clearly seen in the explosion in the number of cases heard by the courts, (Table 12.5).

[60] See Penry Williams (1995), *The Later Tudors*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 211–28 for a helpful summary.

Table 12.5 Stottesden Acts of Office – Total Cases

Year	Number of Surviving Court Dates	Number of Surviving Cases
1567	5	31
1577	7	53
1587	6	185
1596	4	248
1601	4	225

So while historians have generally attributed the increase in the activity of the courts at the end of the sixteenth century to the peculiarly difficult social conditions of the time, the activity of the courts was also a logical extension of the expanding authority of both the crown and the church.[61] From the beginning of her reign, Elizabeth had asserted the authority of the crown over the affairs of the church, but due to the religious upheavals of the previous half-century, the activities and jurisdiction of the courts were greatly restricted prior to the 1580s, especially in a diocese on the far western reaches of the realm. It follows that the activities and authority of the courts would have become much more pronounced as the church became more established in the latter half of Elizabeth's reign under the capable and aggressive leadership of men like Whitgift and Westfaling. Yet even then the ability of the crown to exercise power rested upon not only its ability to reach into the parishes but also its capacity to secure the cooperation of brokers of power in the local communities. And while the records clearly demonstrate that the Elizabethan government could effectively communicate and accomplish its aims through the mechanisms of the church courts, the means by which they pursued the expansion of their reach undoubtedly alienated many of those local brokers of power. In 1605 an exasperated Thomas Smallman of the Stottesden parish of Neen Savage was charged with slander when he complained, "You shall shortly keep court and no man shall speak to you. You will take up all the money and we will have no money in the country. The worst that you can do you have done already."[62]

The courts may have been popular with ecclesiastical and political authorities precisely because they were efficient and responsive to directives from above, but for those same reasons they were undoubtedly distasteful to many who were frustrated by their unwieldy and expensive mechanisms. Given the inherent disadvantages of local discipline which was subject to local politics, factions and grudges, at least some people

[61] The latest and most comprehensive support for this position is found in McIntosh, *Controlling Misbehavior*.

[62] Ibid., 203.

continued to prefer that local control to the expensive, cumbersome and authoritarian activities of the courts. Smallman's ominous threat that soon "no man shall speak to you" displays his recognition that the courts could not long function without popular support. The church courts' reliance upon excommunication as the penultimate punishment had long been its Achilles' heel. Thomas' comments clearly reveal that he understood that without the testimony and participation of the laity, the courts would soon find themselves impotent. He implied that the entire system of ecclesiastical justice might soon break down if the courts failed to modify their expanding reach.[63]

The increasing intervention into the local affairs of the parish on the part of Whitgift and Westfaling's church courts follows a pattern common across much of England. Marjorie McIntosh concludes her path-breaking examination of the activities of small, local parish and manor courts in 1600, explaining that "the lesser local courts in many parts of the country no longer bore the brunt of responsibility for social regulation by 1600."[64] Instead as our evidence confirms, that initiative had shifted to the larger, more centralized extra-parochial courts like the archdeaconry courts at Stottesden. This was not simply a greater financial burden for the parishes. Local authorities – ministers and churchwardens especially – also must have believed that they were becoming increasingly marginalized in the process of regulating misbehavior, even as they faced increasing pressure from the courts themselves.

There were surely places in England where the system of church discipline was driven by more local concerns and more closely mirrored the Consistories found on the Continent and in other reformed territories like Scotland.[65] But I suspect that for many people their experience with church discipline was closer to the experience of the men and women of the parishes of Stottesden. Decidedly conservative in their religious beliefs and traditionally localist in their social views, these men and women faced an intrusive court utilized as a disciplinary arm of the state. The policies of the Crown blended with the policies of the church and threatened to undo the strides made in self-government and identity by the parishes in the previous century. Though reactions to the activities of the courts undoubtedly differed from parish to parish, it is clear that in Hereford the "Reformation of Manners" was as least as much a product of the creeping intrusion of the state into local affairs as it was the result of increasing

[63] Ibid., 168.

[64] McIntosh, *Controlling Misbehavior in England, 1370–1600*, n. 21, p. 6.

[65] As only one (fascinating) example, W.J. Sheils describes efforts in 1571 to institute reformed Consistory-type discipline in Northampton. See Sheils (1991), "Erecting the Discipline in Provincial England: the Order of Northampton, 1571", in James Kirk, (ed.), *Humanism and Reform: the Church in Europe, England and Scotland, 1400–1643*, London: Blackwell, pp. 331–45.

levels of concern and moral scrutiny on the part of local men and women in the parishes.

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CHAPTER THIRTEEN

Marginal at Best: John Knox's Contribution to the Geneva Bible, 1560

Dale Walden Johnson

In the twentieth century one new English translation of the Bible rolled off the presses each year. Thomas Nelson Publishing Company in Nashville recently issued their own version of the English Bible titled the *New Geneva Study Bible*. The marketing department at Thomas Nelson rather than the theologians, linguists and church historians must have designed the dust jacket. It states that the *New Geneva Study Bible* contains the insights of Protestant Reformers Martin Luther, John Calvin, John Knox and Theodore Beza. This marketing claim may sell some additional Bibles, but the claim is dubious and at best misleading. Those who search an index for entries by Luther, Calvin and Knox will of course find nothing. On what basis then, is such a claim made? This paper will examine the role and contributions if any, of the Scots reformer John Knox to the original *Geneva Bible* of 1560. First, some relevant background about the "old" *Geneva Bible* is in order.

Within a few months of the death of King Edward VI of England, the so-called boy "King Josiah" in 1553, an exodus began to flee the hostile environment of Queen Mary Tudor. Within a few short years the hostility turned into the killing fields of Mary Tudor's England. For several decades following the careful scholarship of Christina Garrett, historians numbered the Marian Exiles at around 800. Subsequent research in continental archives by Andrew Pettegree and others have found additional pilgrims who do not appear in Professor Garrett's census. It is now argued that the Marian exiles totaled about 1000.[1] One-quarter to one-fifth of the exiles eventually made their way to Geneva, and by 1555 established an English Church. From among the exiled community, a team of translators assembled and labored night and day for four years in order to produce *The Geneva Bible*. To use a modern analogy, the team produced a best seller. *The Geneva Bible* in fact became the Bible of William Shakespeare,

[1] Andrew Pettegree, *Marian Protestantism: Six Studies*, (Aldershot, England: Scholar Press, 1996): 3, 4.

John Bunyan, John Milton, the Pilgrims, and thousands of Christians in the English-speaking world.[2] Shakespeare is said to have cited it 5,000 times in his corpus of writing. If, in 1560, the Geneva translators turned the project over to their own marketing department they would have promoted the following features:

1. The division of the text not only in chapters, but also verses to aid the reader in locating passages,
2. New handy size, the quarto version, much smaller than the clumsy folio version,
3. Clear, plain Roman typeset for easy reading,
4. Marginal notes, to assist the reader to understand the text.

Though the reformers believed in the hermeneutical principle of perspicuity in contrast to the Roman Catholic four-fold quadriga, they still found it necessary to provide a proper set of "spectacles for weak eyes."[3] To continue the analogy, special 3-d glasses if you will, were included free of charge with each adult purchase of a leather bound edition of *The Geneva Bible*. The marketing department aiming at the right niche might also have emphasized that the marginal notes were "truly reformed" and not broadly evangelical as the comments in the William Tyndale translation. It was in short, a Bible befitting its name, *The Geneva Bible*, from the citadel of Reformed Scholarship.

Geneva in fact served as a center for printing and textual scholarship akin to a modern Bible society.[4] In addition to the English Bible, the French, Spanish, and Italian translations were underway in Geneva in the 1550s. The English scholars were merely part of a vast enterprise of Biblical scholarship.[5] The Marian exiles took full advantage of their plight and produced an extremely popular translation. Subsequent printings added to the marginal notes so that the 1599 edition is considered the most thoroughly Calvinistic edition. Each soldier under Oliver Cromwell's command carried a pocket size edition containing quotations from *The Geneva Bible*.[6] By the end of the seventeenth century, two hundred

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[2] *The Geneva Bible: A Facsimile of the 1599 edition*, originally printed in Geneva by Roland Hall, 1560, (Buena Park, California: The Geneva Publishing Company, 1991): ii.

[3] Ira Maurice Price, *The Ancestry of Our English Bible*, revised edn. William A. Irwin and Allen P. Wikgrew, (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1906, 1951): 263; H.W. Heare, *Our English Bible*, (London: John Murray, 1911): 223.

[4] E.H. Robertson, *Makers if the English Bible*, (Cambridge: The Lutterworth Press, 1990): 82; G. Lloyd Jones, *The Discovery of Hebrew in Tudor England*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1983): 127.

[5] Robertson, *Makers of the English Bible*, 82.

[6] George Milligan, *The English Bible: A Sketch of its History*, (London: A & C Black, 1907): 86.

editions of *The Geneva Bible* had rolled off various presses.[7] It was printed in London and after 1616 printed offshore in Amsterdam where many English Puritans fled from the persecution of Archbishop William Laud. King James' revulsion to certain marginal notes which scorned an episcopal form of church government, led to a new "government issue" translation, the King James Version, 1611.[8] King James called the Geneva translation the worst he had seen. Fully 20 percent of the King James Version, however, came straight from *The Geneva Bible*.[9] King James' and Laud's antipathy to *The Geneva Bible* of course stemmed not from the translation *per se*, but from the Reformed commentary which encircled the actual text.

John Knox, the Scots reformer, was perhaps the most notable of the exile community living in Geneva. It is generally assumed that because of Knox's notoriety among the exiles he was among the translators of *The Geneva Bible*. Knox biographers and scholars (not necessarily synonymous) take one of three positions regarding the relationship of John Knox and the translation of *The Geneva Bible*. My conclusion will offer a modest or perhaps cowardly fourth option. Some writers emphatically include Knox among the translators, others emphatically exclude him, while the third group are agnostic regarding Knox's role as a translator.[10]

John Strype, writing in the year 1821, is the earliest source claiming Knox among the translators.[11] We do not know the basis for Strype's claim. Professor Brian Armstrong's elegant assessment of Strype's frequent imprecision supports our suspicion about Strype's claim for Knox. Armstrong called Strype a "poor historian and worse stylist … a great

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[7] A.F. Mitchell, *The Scottish Reformation*, ed. D. Hay Fleming, (Edinburgh, 1900): 91.

[8] *The Geneva Bible*, introduction, ii.

[9] Thomas M'Crie, *The Life of John Knox*, 2 vols. (Edinburgh: William Blackwood, 1818), 1:216, see unnumbered footnote.

[10] Major biographers Reid and Ridley include Knox with the translators. See W. Stanford Reid, *Trumpeter of God*, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1974) and Jasper Ridley, *John Knox*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978). For a similar view see Francis Fray, "Standard Edition of the English New Testament of the Genevan Version," *Journal of Sacred Literature and Biblical Record 5* new series, (July 1895), 1:205. Richard Greaves acknowledges the possibility of Knox's involvement with the translation but does not press the point. He suggests that Knox may have influenced the translators by way of conversation and his sermons. See Richard L. Greaves, *Theology and Revolution in the Scottish Reformation*, (Grand Rapids: Christian University Press, 1980), and Greaves, "The Nature and Intellectual Milieu of the Political Principles in the Geneva Bible Marginalia," *Journal of Church and State* 22 (Spring 1980): 233–49. The notion of including Knox among the translators without hard evidence persists. Though not a biographer of Knox, Clare Kellar appears to include Knox as a translator, see: *Scotland, England, And The Reformation 1534–1561*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004): 170.

[11] John Strype, *The Life and Acts of Matthew Parker*, 3 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1821), 1:409.

and unscrupulous collector of documents."[12] Biographers ranging from Thomas M'Crie, W. Stanford Reid the late Canadian scholar and Professor Richard Kyle, the most prolific writer and Dean of contemporary Knox scholars in North America, include Knox among the Genevan translators.[13] Knox's leadership of the English congregations briefly in Frankfurt and later in Geneva, his close friendship with the known translators are usually cited as evidence for Knox's involvement. John Strype's work on the life and death of William Whittingham elsewhere lists the translators as Coverdale, Goodman, Gilby, Sampson, Cole, and Whittingham. He adds in parentheses, "and who else I cannot relate, did undertake the translation of *The Geneva Bible*."[14]

This parenthetical statement summarizes our problem. Charles Martin's book on the English exiles, *Les Protestants Anglais Refugies*, Geneva, 1915, credits Whittingham and Gilby as the leaders because of their expertise in Hebrew. Whittingham had already completed the New Testament translation in 1557, and Gilby had previously written commentaries on Micah and Malachi long before the Marian exile community arrived in Geneva. William Whittingham earned his BA and MA at Oxford where he excelled in languages. He presumably met Christopher Goodman at Oxford who would later become his fellow exile and pastor in Geneva.

The Preface of *The Geneva Bible* identifies three groups of people who worked on the enterprise: the editors/translators, the exhorters and the printers. It says "the translators who didn't consider themselves above the least of our brethren, labored for the space of two years and more, night and day."[15] Lewis Lupton, author of the rather odd multi-volume work titled *A History of the Geneva Bible*, makes the case for three editors, Whittingham, Gilby, and Cole.[16] The second class of assistants describes those whose "learning and godliness we reverence," who "earnestly desired and exhorted" the translators. Lupton includes Thomas Bentham, Thomas Sampson and Miles Coverdale in this group. Correspondence of some of the principal parties allows us to demonstrate that Sampson spent very

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[12] J.D. Douglas, General editor, *The New International Dictionary of the Christian Church*, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1981), S.v. "John Strype," by Brian Armstrong, 935.

[13] Richard G. Kyle, *The Mind of John Knox*, (Lawrence, Kansas: Coronado Press, 1984):106–7. A recent book by Clare Kellar also includes Knox among the translators, Clare Kellar, *Scotland England and the Reformation 1534–1561*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2003): 170.

[14] Peter Lorimer, *John Knox and the Church of England*, (London: Henry S. King & Co., 1875), appendix, 306.

[15] Lewis Lupton, *A History of the Geneva Bible*, vol. 5, (London: The Olive Tree, 1973), 5:41–2. See also Dan G. Danner, "Calvin and Puritanism: The Career of William Whittingham," *Calviniana: Ideas and Influence of Jean Calvin*, vol. 10, p. 151. Sixteenth Century Essays and Studies, Robert V. Schnucker, ed., 1988.

[16] Ibid.

little time in Geneva and could offer at most an adjunct consultant role.[17] Miles Coverdale spent at least ten months in Geneva between October 1558 and August 1559.[18] It would seem that the translators would have seized upon the talents of Coverdale himself who produced an English Bible in 1535. The third class of contributors included men of means whose financial help made the production and printing of the bible possible. The Preface of *The Geneva Bible* describes them as men "whose hearts God likewise touched not to spare any charges for the forterance (sic) of such a benefite," (sic).[19] This group is thought to include John Bodley, William Fuller, Francis Withers, Peter Willis and William Beauvoir.[20] John Bodley applied for and received a license to publish the Bible in London. Following the approval of the text and annotations by Bishops Parker and Grindal, Westminster granted the license on 8 January 1561.[21] Within two weeks Knox's old nemesis of the troubles at Frankfurt, Dr. Richard Cox, now Bishop of Durham, wrote to Sir William Cecil proposing that the English bishops produce their own translation of the English Bible.[22] If Cox and Knox could not agree on a liturgy in Frankfurt it is not surprising that they could not agree on a bible translation.

John Calvin perhaps lent his assistance to the translation though we lack detailed information of his precise role. One scholar has written that of all the influences on the exiles, Calvin influenced their thinking more than any other man.[23] In their correspondence Miles Coverdale and William Cole discussed the fact that the translators awaited Calvin's comments on the remaining chapters of Daniel which they submitted to him. Calvin, in fact, responded through a course of lectures delivered in 1559 and 1560. Calvin also wrote an introductory epistle to lend authority to the new translation.[24]

Lewis Lupton includes a fourth category of fellow travelers indirectly associated with the Genevan translation. This group includes William Kethe, William Williams, and Thomas Wood as revisers and three other gentlemen involved in the printing.[25] (It is not far from the truth to suggest

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17 Lloyd Jones, *The Discovery of Hebrew*, 128.

18 Lupton, *A History of the Geneva Bible*, 12:158.

19 Ibid., 5:59 and 12:159–60.

20 Ibid.

21 Lupton, *A History of the Geneva Bible*, 5:63–4.

22 Ibid., 5:64–5.

23 W.M. Southgate, "The Marian Exiles and the Influence of John Calvin," *History* 27 (September 1942): 148.

24 *The Bible Today, Historical Social and Literary Aspects of the Old and New Testaments*, n.a. (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1955): 135; Lloyd Jones, *The Discovery of Hebrew*, 131.

25 Lupton, *A History of the Geneva Bible*, 5:59.

that Lupton sought additional names to justify more biographical accounts and perhaps additional volumes in his idiosyncratic series.)

John Knox's name does not appear in the lists and categories of men involved in *The Geneva Bible*, yet his major biographers include him among the translators.[26] I believe there are four lines of evidence that cast doubt on the assertion that Knox participated in the inner circle of the translators.

The first difficulty we encounter with Knox is the chronology. The New Testament was completed before Knox's arrival. The bulk of the Old Testament translation was in fact completed after Knox left Geneva.[27] Queen Mary Tudor died on 17 November 1558 and Knox having "lost" his congregation left Geneva following the Spring of 1559. The Preface of *The Geneva Bible* is dated 10 April 1560, a full year after Knox's departure from Geneva.[28] For all of Knox's admiration for Geneva as a model of reform, it served less as a home base and more as a filling station for Knox. He moved in and out of Geneva with regularity during the years of the translation work, spending nearly a year in Scotland on a preaching tour 1555–56. It seems that the city of Dieppe, France was as much a home for Knox as Geneva during his years in exile. Knox did reside in Geneva in 1558, but his primary duties with the church make any translation labors unlikely.

Knox's pastorate in Geneva is the second argument against his significant role with the translation team. With John Calvin's assistance, the English congregation was granted use of the Temple de Notre Dame la Neuve, a church they shared with Italian refugees. According to Genevan law, the congregation elected two pastors, subject to annual elections.[29] The congregation elected Knox and English exile, Christopher Goodman as co-pastors. Knox preached three sermons a week, each lasting two to three hours and spent considerable time in correspondence.[30] In the famous letter to Mrs. Locke where Knox described Geneva as "the most perfect school of Christ," he goes on to bemoan his heavy work load which caused him to ignore some of his duties.[31] He complained of "daylie trubles occurring as weill in my domestical charge, whairwith before I haife not bene accustomit and thairfor are they the more feirfull, as in the administration of public thingis appertaining to the pure flock heir assemblit in Chrystis name, do

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[26] Reid, *Trumpeter of God*, 151.

[27] John Knox, *The Works of John Knox*, ed. David Laing, 6 vols., reprint. (New York: AMS Press, 1966), 1:205.

[28] *The Geneva Bible: A Facsimile of the 1560 edition*, (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1969), Preface.

[29] P. Hume Brown, *John Knox*, 1:193.

[30] Edwin Muir, *John Knox: Portrait of a Calvinist*, (London: Jonathan Cape, 1929), 119.

[31] Knox, *Works*, 4:240.

compel me oftentimes to forget, not once my maist especiall friends, but also my self in sum things necessarie to the … corporate health."[32]

In addition to his pastoral duties Knox wrote an exceedingly long and numbingly dull treatise on Predestination against the Anabaptist in 1558, and four political pamphlets including *The First Blast of the Trumpet*, *The Appellation*, *The Letter to the Commonality*, and *Address to Mary of Guise*.[33] In short, Knox lacked time to devote to the heady work of biblical translation. His extraordinary preaching and writing duties no doubt prevented such participation.

Thirdly, John Knox lacked the philological tools necessary to contribute materially to a major work of biblical translation. Knox arrived in Geneva with limited knowledge of Greek, and a complete ignorance of Hebrew.[34] In addition to his other tasks, Knox studied both languages in Geneva. M'Crie says it was in Geneva that Knox made himself master of the Hebrew language, an exorbitant claim which cannot be taken literally.[35] The Hebraists undertaking the Old Testament translation could only have found a complete novice like Knox an obstacle to their work. J.F. Mozley the author of *Coverdale and His Bible* argues that even someone as experienced as Coverdale contributed little to the translation. "His contribution indeed must have been a somewhat slender one: for although he had improved his equipment in Greek and Hebrew, his scholarship can hardly have been equal to that of his fellow-translators."[36] In Mozley's phrase "fellow translators" he certainly did not include John Knox. As the pastor to Oxford men like Whittingham, Goodman, and Anthony Gilby, a Cambridge graduate with a mastery of Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, Knox probably poured himself into sermon preparation rather than dabbling in biblical translation. The two tasks are parallel, but Knox was simply not proficient enough in Hebrew at this point to deserve the role of "translator."

Fourthly, Knox lacked the scholarly temperament necessary for sober, biblical translation. While we possess a considerable mass of Knox's writings, his theological treatises are rare and we possess no examples of his exegesis. Knox cited Scripture frequently in his writing, but his approach was topical without a precise, disciplined analysis of the text. As Professor Kyle has written, Knox's scholarly labors were usually in reaction

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[32] Quoted in P. Hume Brown, *John Knox*, 1:144.

[33] Kyle, *The Mind of John Knox*, 266.

[34] Knox, *Works*, 5:241.

[35] M'Crie, *The Life of John Knox*, 1:140.

[36] J.F. Mozley, *Coverdale and His Bibles, London:* (London: Lutterworth Press, 1953), 23. Coverdale was able to escape from England through the help of the King of Denmark as the translator's wife was Danish. See A.C. Partridge, *English Biblical Translation*, (London: Andre Deutsch, 1973), 75. Partridge unfortunately repeats the false claim on page 76 that William Whittingham married John Calvin's sister.

to some specific situation or crisis. His writings are rarely if ever systematic – more on the order of response letters.[37] Knox did confide to his mother-in-law, Mrs. Bowes, his appreciation of the academic environment which surrounded him in Geneva. Knox explained the extraordinary nature of his decision to accept her invitation to come to Scotland. "God maid (you) alone the instrument to draw me frome the den of my owin ease; you allane did draw me from the rest of my quiet studie."[38] Yet, one can only imagine that while Knox may have enjoyed the ease of his Genevan Zion temporarily, he lacked the academic temperament to pour over texts for any length of time. He was by nature an activist not an ivory tower scholar or any other type of scholar. We can reasonably conclude that Knox found exacting scholarly tasks tedious. These facts lead us to exclude Knox from among the translators of *The Geneva Bible*.

As noted above, Knox scholars generally fall into one of three categories about Knox's connection to the translation; there are believers, atheists, and agnostics. Perhaps a fourth category could help us reach a consensus. While Knox did not translate, it is not unlikely that he contributed to the extensive marginal notes or "glosses" which made *The Geneva Bible* so distinctive.[39] Proving this assertion is probably impossible. A search of "Knoxian" words or phrases is a fruitless enterprise. Knox's favorite words like "papist" or "idolatry" were part of the vernacular of the exile community. Even Knox's most notorious writings about the regiment of women were duplicated through the pens of Christopher Goodman and Anthony Gilby. The suggestion that Knox was one of the marginalia "redactors" comes with an argument akin to special pleading. His sermon preparation was all fertile soil for comments by Knox which may now in fact be memorialized in the margins of *The Geneva Bible*. It is not unlikely that the translators, out of friendship and deference to their pastor and colleague even solicited his comments that he might be included in this great project.

This fourth option makes me a believing agnostic. I am reasonably certain that Knox contributed to the marginalia, but the lack of hard evidence forces me into a personal agnosticism. Appropriately, this, like many components of the Knox persona is a mystery wrapped up in a paradox.[40] It is fair to conclude that Knox's contributions to *The Geneva Bible* were "marginal" at best.

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37 Kyle, *The Mind of John Knox*, 37.

38 Knox, *Works*, 4:217.

39 This is my conclusion based on the available evidence.

40 Richard Greaves uses this analogy in his chapter on "Ecumenism and Nationalism in the Scottish Reformation," see Greaves, *Theology and Revolution*, 203–16.

Index

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Michael D. Driedger

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Anne Dillon

Baptism and Spiritual Kinship in Early Modern England
Will Coster

Usury, Interest and the Reformation
Eric Kerridge

The Correspondence of Reginald Pole: 1. A Calendar, 1518–1546: Beginnings to Legate of Viterbo
Thomas F. Mayer

Self-Defence and Religious Strife in Early Modern Europe: England and Germany, 1530–1680
Robert von Friedeburg

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Luc Racaut

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Anne T. Thayer

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Philip Conner

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Claire S. Schen

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James Van Horn Melton

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Thomas F. Mayer

William of Orange and the Revolt of the Netherlands, 1572–1584
K.W. Swart, translated J.C. Grayson

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Mark Taplin

William Cecil and Episcopacy, 1559–1577
Brett Usher

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A Critical Edition and Translation of George Buchanan's
De Jure Regni Apud Scotos Dialogus
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Reformation Augsburg, 1580–1630
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Volume 3. A Calendar, 1555–1558: Restoring the English Church
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Kenneth Austin

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