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THEODORE BEZA AND THE QUEST FOR PEACE

IN FRANCE, 1572 - 1598

by

Scott Michael Manetsch

A Dissertation Submitted to the Faculty of the

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

**In partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
For the Degree of**

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

In the Graduate College

THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA

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requirement for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Heiko A. Oberman

Prof. Heiko A. Oberman

Date

4/23/97

Alan E. Bernstein

Prof. Alan Bernstein

Date

4/23/97

Helen Nader

Prof. Helen Nader

Date

5/1/97

Date

Date

Final approval and acceptance of this dissertation is contingent upon
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To Cathy, with my deepest appreciation and love.

Proverbs 31:10-11

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ABBREVIATIONS

Aymon	Aymon, Jean. <i>Tous les Synodes Nationaux des Églises de France</i> . 2 Vols. La Haye, 1710.
<i>Bibliographie</i>	Gardy, Frédéric. <i>Bibliographie des oeuvres ... de Théodore de Bèze</i> . Genève: Librairie Droz, 1960.
<i>BHR</i>	<i>Bibliothèque d'humanisme et renaissance</i> . Vols. 1-58 (1941-1996).
<i>Bulletin</i>	<i>Bulletin de la société de l'histoire du protestantisme français</i> 1-142 (1853-1996).
<i>CB</i>	<i>Correspondance de Théodore de Bèze</i> . Eds. Hippolyte Aubert, Henri Meylan, Alain Dufour, et al. Vols. 1-19. Genève: Librairie Droz, 1960-1996.
<i>CDM</i>	Chaix, Paul, A. Dufour, and G. Moeckli. <i>Les livres imprimés à Genève de 1550-1600</i> . Genève: Librairie Droz, 1966.
<i>CO</i>	<i>Ioannis Calvini Opera quae supersunt omnia</i> . Eds. G. Baum, E. Cunitz, E. Reuss. Brunsvigae, 1863-1900. 59 vols.
Friedlaender	Friedlaender, Gottlieb. <i>Sammlung ungedruckter Briefe des Reuchlin, Beza und Bullinger nebst einem Anhang zur Geschichte der Jesuiten</i> . Berlin, 1837.
<i>FP</i>	Haag, Eugène and Emile, eds. <i>La France protestante</i> . 10 Vols. Paris, 1877-1888.
Geisendorf	Geisendorf, Paul. <i>Théodore de Bèze</i> . Genève: Alexandre Jullien, éditeur, 1967.
<i>OER</i>	Hillerbrand, Hans, ed. <i>The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Reformation</i> . 4 Vols. New York: Oxford University Press, 1996.
<i>RC</i>	<i>Registers of the Small Council</i> . Archives d'Etat de Genève. Vols. 67-101 (1572-1605).
<i>RCP</i>	<i>Registers de la Compagnie des pasteurs de Genève au temps de Calvin</i> . Eds. J. F. Bergier, R. Kingdon, Olivier Fatio, et al. Vols. 1-8. Genève: Librairie Droz, 1962-1986.
<i>SCJ</i>	<i>Sixteenth Century Journal</i> . Vols. 1-28 (1970-1997).

ABSTRACT

"Theodore Beza and the Quest for Peace in France" examines the changing political strategies and religious attitudes of French Protestant leaders between the Saint Bartholomew's day massacres (1572) and the Edict of Nantes (1598). The hand-picked successor of John Calvin in 1564, Theodore Beza was an influential teacher, preacher, and power-broker in Geneva, as well as a prominent exiled leader of the French Reformed churches during the next four decades. Drawing on Beza's correspondence network, city archival materials and rare Huguenot pamphlets, I reconstruct the survival tactics of French Protestants in response to Catholic advances, document the decline in Huguenot expectations after 1572, and examine how social and political factors created widening ideological fissures within the Reformed movement by century's end. In highlighting the patterns of thought of the Huguenot leadership, my research contributes to an understanding of Protestant mentalities during the turbulent era of the French civil wars.

In the aftermath of the massacres of 1572, Beza and other exiled leaders in Geneva were not only theorists of political resistance, but major players in Protestant agitation against the Valois monarchy. As the Reformed churches withered under royal persecution and Catholic missionary activities during the next decade, the reformer and his colleagues gradually aligned their political fortunes with Henri of Navarre. Beza tempered, but did not abandon his resistance theories when Navarre became presumptive heir to the French throne (1584). In return for a secret--hitherto

unknown--annual stipend, Beza became Navarre's 'public relations agent' in Germany and Switzerland, raising money and mercenaries for Huguenot armies in the years prior to Henri's accession (1589). The bonds of friendship, patriotism and patronage made Beza a dedicated supporter of the person and program of Henri IV, even after the king converted to Catholicism in 1594. Thereafter, he urged the Reformed to trust the king's peace overtures, while attempting to silence 'moderates' who advocated doctrinal compromise in return for a political settlement. Though welcoming the Edict of Nantes, Beza and other Protestant leaders recognized that prospects for reform in France had been decisively curtailed: 'the golden age has degenerated into a century of iron.'

INTRODUCTION

"Quant est de moy, tout petit que je suis,
Je veux louer mon Dieu comme je puis.
Tesmoin sera mainte froide montagne
De ce mien zèle, et parmi la campagne,
Lac Genevois, tes rives escumeuses
Bruiront de Dieu les louanges fameuses,
Et du Très-Haut le Nom parmi les nues
Retentira dans les Alpes cornues."¹

Theodore Beza and the Refugees

Shortly before his death in May 1564, John Calvin placed the mantle of leadership for the Genevan church upon the shoulders of his friend and fellow-exile Theodore Beza. With it came this stern command: 'Guard true doctrine.'² For almost two centuries, Bezan scholarship has wrestled with the question of how faithfully he obeyed this injunction. Theologians and intellectual historians have explored Beza's doctrine in detail, treating his sacramental theology, ecclesiology, soteriology, and exegetical method.³ Invariably these studies have measured Beza

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¹"Les Psaumes et l'épître dédicatoire de Théodore de Bèze," *Bulletin* 1 (1853): 99.

²On 28 April 1564, Calvin summoned the ministers of the Genevan church to his bedside and provided final instructions. This interview was reported in Beza's *La vie de Calvin* (1564): "Que donc chacun se fortifiast en sa vocation et à tenir bon ordre: qu'on prinst garde au peuple pour le tenir tousiours en l'obéissance de la doctrine: qu'il y avoit des gens de bien, mais que ce n'estoit pas qu'il n'y en eust aussi de malins et rebelles. Que ce seroit pour nous rendre bien coupables devant Dieu, si les choses estans avancées iusques ici, venoyent après en désordre par nostre négligence." CO XXI, 102.

³Jill Raitt, *The Eucharistic Theology of Theodore Beza* (Chambersburg, PA: American Academy of Religion, 1972). Raitt, "Probably they are God's Children: Theodore Beza's Doctrine of Baptism," in *Humanism and Reform: The Church in Europe, England and Scotland, 1400-1643*, ed. James Kirk (Oxford: Blackwell Publ., 1991), 151-170. Tadataka Maruyama, *The Ecclesiology of Theodore Beza, the Reform of the True Church* (Geneva: Librairie Droz, 1978). John Bray, *Theodore Beza's Doctrine of Predestination* (Nieuwkoop: B. de Graaf, 1975). Irena Backus, *The Reformed roots*

against the standard of his eminent predecessor, often condemning him for lack of originality or scolding him for deviating from Calvin's 'pure' teaching.⁴ Most recently, the question of the continuity or discontinuity between Beza's and Calvin's doctrine of predestination has elicited a vast reservoir of ink and a flood of controversy.⁵ What has been missed in these evaluations of Beza's *theology*, however, is an appreciation for the degree to which the reformer remained true to Calvin's *strategy*. In order to understand Beza's impact on late sixteenth-century

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of the English New Testament (Pittsburgh: The Pickwick Press, 1980). Theodore Letis, "Theodore Beza as Text Critic: A view into the sixteenth-century approach to New Testament text criticism," in *The Majority Text: Essays and Reviews in the Continuing Debate*, ed. Theodore Letis (Grand Rapids: Institute for Biblical Textual Studies, 1987).

⁴Basil Hall claimed, for example: "Calvin's successors ... distorted the balance of doctrines which he had tried to maintain. His successor at Geneva, Beza, together with the Heidelberg theologian Zanchius, the English Puritan Perkins, and their associates and followers, bear much of the blame for this, even if we allow that theological change had come in order to meet changing situations, yet it is not necessary to assume that only those changes that these men made were necessarily the right ones." In "Calvin Against the Calvinists," *John Calvin*, ed. G. E. Duffield (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1966), 25.

⁵The battle-lines in this debate have been clearly drawn: Ernst Bizer, Walter Kickel, Basil Hall and Brian Armstrong have argued that Beza, by giving Aristotelian philosophy and syllogistic logic a commanding place in his theology, transformed Calvin's christo-centric and humanistically-oriented theology into an abstract system of thought, thereby introducing 'scholasticism' into the Reformed intellectual tradition. According to this line of interpretation, Beza's 'rationalization' of Calvin's theology is seen in his biblicism, as well as in his doctrines of supralapsarianism, limited atonement, and the imputation of Adam's sin. Furthermore, by introducing Aristotelian philosophy into the curriculum of the Genevan Academy, Beza is blamed for institutionalizing this nascent 'scholasticism.' See Armstrong, *Calvinism and the Amyraut Heresy, Protestant Scholasticism in Seventeenth-Century France* (Madison, WI: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1969); Basil Hall, "Calvin Against the Calvinists." This thesis, however, has been challenged, and largely refuted in recent studies by Olivier Fatio, Jill Raitt, Robert Letham, Ian McPhee, and Richard Muller. While admitting that Beza modified and clarified aspects of Calvin's thought through the use of Aristotelian categories and logic, these scholars have shown convincingly that Beza did not alter the religious and biblical center of his mentor's theology. See Letham, "Theodore Beza: A Reassessment," *Scottish Journal of Theology* 40 (1987): 25-40; McPhee, "Conserver or Transformer of Calvin's Theology? A Study of the Origins and Development of Theodore Beza's Thought, 1550-1570" (Ph.D. diss, Cambridge University, 1979); Muller, *Christ and the Decree. Christology and Predestination in Reformed Theology from Calvin to Perkins* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1986); Muller, *Post-Reformation Reformed Dogmatics*, I (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1987).

Protestantism, one must examine not only his theological system, but the program of European-wide Reformed evangelization that he directed from exile in Geneva. Like Calvin, Theodore Beza viewed himself as a spokesman for Protestants in the diaspora, a reformer of the refugee church.

Historians of early modern Europe have usually categorized the reformation in Geneva with dozens of other 'city reformations' in southern Germany and Switzerland.⁶ As in many other cities where Protestant ideas germinated, the Genevan reformation was the product of an intense campaign of evangelical preaching that appealed to civic norms and deep-seated anticlericalism, compelling burghers to reject their prince-bishop, expel the Catholic clergy, and adopt Protestant doctrine.⁷ But the unfolding of the reformation in Geneva was altogether unique in several important respects.⁸ Calvin perceived himself not solely as the minister of a city or territory, but as a pastor of refugees. Stationed in Geneva, Calvin's vision extended to his native France and beyond to the four corners of Europe. Through the Genevan Academy, and by means of his large correspondence and theological writings, Calvin recruited, trained and deployed a multi-national company of refugees committed to

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⁶Most recently, see Euan Cameron, *The European Reformation* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), 210-265; and Berndt Hamm's article "The Urban Reformation in the Holy Roman Empire," in *Handbook of European History, 1400-1600*, vol. 2, eds. Thomas Brady, Heiko A. Oberman and James Tracy (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1995), 193-228.

⁷The best general surveys of Genevan history during the sixteenth century are Jean-Antoine Gautier, *Histoire de Genève*, vols. 3-6 (Genève, 1898-1903); Paul E. Martin, ed., *Histoire de Genève des Origines à 1798* (Genève: Alexandre Jullien, Éditeur, 1951), 187-334; and William Monter, *Calvin's Geneva* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1967).

⁸See Heiko A. Oberman, "Europa afflicta: The Reformation of the Refugees," *ARG* 83 (1992): 91-112.

Reformed theology and strict moral discipline. In the reformer's hands, the Pauline doctrine of election became a salve intended to encourage and comfort dispossessed wayfarers as they trekked toward a homeland in heaven. This dynamic Reformed vision—which Heiko A. Oberman has labeled the 'Reformation of the Refugees'—initiated a new phase of Protestant expansion.⁹ While the Peace of Augsburg (1555) largely froze Lutheranism within the territorial boundaries of Germany, Calvin's program of reform, with Geneva as its command-center, achieved dramatic successes in France and through much of Europe during the middle decades of the sixteenth century.

Beza's mission strategy closely paralleled that of his 'spiritual father.' Like Calvin, all of Europe was his parish. In his large correspondence, Beza established and maintained contact with an extensive network of disciples, friends and rulers throughout the Christian world.¹⁰ The reformer's substantial literary corpus, encompassing more than 70 separate titles, reflected a similar international focus.¹¹

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⁹Oberman, "The Reformation of the Refugees," 102-103.

¹⁰The published correspondence of Theodore Beza, transcribed and edited by a team of scholars at the Institut d'Histoire de la Réformation in Geneva under the direction of Alain Dufour, has been completed through the year 1579. Regina Ugnivenko's "Inventaire de la Correspondance de Théodore de Bèze" (MLS diploma, Université de Genève, 1990) provides a list of the reformer's unpublished letters from 1581-1605. When available, I have made use of transcriptions of Beza's unpublished letters, undertaken by Hippolyte Aubert and his colleagues at the beginning of the twentieth century.

¹¹The most complete inventory of Beza's published writings is found in Frédéric Gardy's *Bibliographie des Oeuvres Théologiques, Littéraires, Historiques et Juridiques de Théodore de Bèze* (Genève: Librairie Droz, 1960). Hereafter cited as *Bibliographie*. The variety of genres in Beza's literary corpus is particularly noteworthy, including theological treatises, exegetical studies, biographical and historical works, sermon collections, biblical commentaries, poetry collections, and political tracts. An annotated, though less complete, list of the reformer's works is found in Eugène and Emile Haag, *La France protestante ou vies des protestants français*, vol. 2 (Genève: Slatkine

Through this ministry of paper and pen, Beza battled a myriad of perceived errors and enemies, counseled princes, encouraged persecuted Protestants, and promoted a Reformed vision of religious renewal throughout Europe. Likewise, as a professor of theology at the Genevan Academy from 1559 to 1599, Theodore Beza trained many of the religious and political leaders of late-sixteenth century Reformed Protestantism, whether from nearby France and Switzerland, or far-off Scotland and Poland.¹²

Through contacts made at the Academy and maintained through his correspondence, Beza, like his predecessor promoted a 'Calvinist' culture penetrating almost every Protestant country in Europe.¹³

In addition to being an author, apologist, and professor, Theodore Beza served for four decades as a minister in the Genevan church, preaching as often as five times a week, conducting catechism for the city's youth, and moderating the Company of Pastors.¹⁴ Here too, Beza's ministry had an international dimension. During the

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Reprints, 1966), 272-284. Hereafter cited as *FP*.

¹²Beza's former students included powerful barons and counts, as well as prominent ministers and illustrious professors. Among this company we find Lambert Daneau, François du Jon, Jacob Arminius, Anthony Bacon, Jean de Serres and Isaac Casaubon.

¹³In this dissertation, I will use the term 'Calvinist' and 'Calvinism' only rarely to denote the theological and ecclesiastical distinctives of Calvin's thought. These designations were coined by enemies of Calvin to disparage his theological system and influence. Thus, as early as 1555, Beza complained that opponents in Bern were calling him and Pierre Viret 'Calvinists' because of their defense of Genevan-style ecclesiastical discipline: "Nam, ne nescias, in nos quoque quidvis licet, et, ut uno verbo dicam, pro Calvinistis habemur, quod crimen multo majus est quam si caetera omnia in unum conjungas." Beza to Bullinger, 23 October [1555], *CB* I, 178. This citation challenges Alister McGrath's assertion that the ascription 'Calvinist' was invented by Lutherans, seeking to stigmatize and discredit Calvin's ideas as a foreign influence in Germany. See McGrath, *A Life of John Calvin* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1990), 203.

¹⁴Established by Calvin in 1542, the Company of Pastors consisted of the pastors in Geneva's three parish churches. In their weekly meetings, the Company supervised religious life in the city,

second-half of the sixteenth century, Geneva served as a safe-haven for thousands of refugees fleeing religious persecution in France, the Low Countries, England, and Germany. Beza played an active pastoral role in welcoming, comforting, and raising financial support for these impoverished exiles. When these displaced Protestants returned home, many took with them a sense of indebtedness to the city's clergy and an admiration for the doctrine and discipline of the Genevan church. Inevitably, refugees became 'missionaries,' spreading a Reformed theological vision to the four corners of Europe. For Beza, this ministry vision was motivated in large part by his own identity as a religious refugee. In a sermon preached at Saint Pierre's in the mid-1580s, the reformer noted: "Those of us who have fled to Geneva so as to be able to make a pure profession of the Gospel ... what are we by the world's standards? We are poor, banished folk; at the least, we are refugees from our country. When all is said and done, we are only a small handful of poor people."¹⁵

Although Beza's vision encompassed all of Europe, he retained a special love and concern for his native France. In his letters, Beza frequently spoke of France as his 'beloved country' and portrayed himself as a loyal subject of the French crown.

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communicated recommendations and concerns to the civil authorities, and corresponded with foreign churches on a variety of theological and ecclesiastical topics. Beza was the moderator of this clerical body from 1564-1580; after relinquishing control, he exercised a kind of moral leadership in the Company until the end of his life. See *Registres de la Compagnie des Pasteurs de Genève*, vols. I-VIII, eds. Robert Kingdon, J. F. Bergier, Olivier Fatio, et al. (Genève: Librairie Droz, 1969-1986). Hereafter cited as *RCP*.

¹⁵"Et quant à nous qui avons esté ici reçeus, & qui au lieu que nous disons y estre venus pour faire pure profession de l'Évangile, y apportons les ordures des lieux dont nous sommes sortis, qui sommes nous selon le monde? povres bannis, ou pour le moins fugitifs, & quand tout est dict, une petite poignée de povres gens." Beza, *Sermons sur le Cantique des Cantiques* (Genève: Jehan Le Preux, 1586), 268-269.

He grieved over the successive civil wars that threatened to destroy his native land. So too, despite the fact that the Genevan magistrates granted him the rights of *bourgeoisie* in 1559, Beza considered himself to be an 'exile' and 'refugee' until the end of his life.¹⁶ It is in Beza's relation to France—especially in his activities on behalf of the French churches—that we can see most clearly the manner in which he attempted to implement Calvin's reform strategies, and how, over time, he adapted those strategies to the political and religious exigencies that he faced. In his concern for the persecuted church, Beza ultimately formed political alliances and condoned methods of resistance and agitation that Calvin had repeatedly censured.

My primary intention in this dissertation, then, is to study Theodore Beza's *strategy* for reform in France rather than his *theology*. In particular, I will examine the changing religious attitudes, political strategies and resistance activities of Beza and his French correspondents between the Saint Bartholomew's day massacres (1572) and the Edict of Nantes (1598). Drawing on the reformer's published writings and unpublished letters, city archival materials in Geneva, and rare Huguenot books and

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¹⁶"Quod tenuitas nostra potest, hoc ipsum si res ita tulerit, et verbis et re ipsa tibi tuisque offerro, ut una exulemus, tu quidem ab Oriente, ego ab Occidente, tantisperdum in veram patriam recipiamur. O si Galliae pax obtineret, quale et quantum piis hospitium pateret!" Beza to Laurent Durnhoffer, 9 September 1579, Paris, Ste. Geneviève, ms. 1455, f. 153-154; "Vetus enim est audire res Gallicas quotidie deteriores fieri, quod ego non sine summo dolore meo dico. Amo enim patriam quamvis ingratham..." Beza to William Landgrave of Hesse, 23 February/5 March 1586, in H. Heppe, *Epistolae* (Marbourg, 1860), 25; "Cogit me quicquid Christo in primis et toti ipsius Ecclesiae, ac privatim Helvetiae et huic civitati, quae me per annos quadraginta et unum pro Christi causa exulantem tam benigne fovērunt; immo etiam quicquid Gallicae, patriae meae miserrimae, debeo, quiddam a vestra charitate, charissimi fratres, postulare." [Beza] to the Swiss Churches, 5/15 March [1589], Genève, BPU, ms. lat. 117, f. 195-196.

pamphlets¹⁷, I will document how Beza and his Reformed colleagues attempted to ensure the survival of the Protestant churches in France in the face of protracted civil war and repeated political and religious setbacks. In exploring these dynamics, I will highlight the patterns of thought and presuppositions of the Huguenot leadership during this crucial period, and show how political, social, and religious tensions gradually changed Protestant expectations and created widening ideological fissures within the Reformed movement. Shaped and radicalized within the matrix of religious fervor and social violence in France, Beza and his circle of correspondents evince many of the dreams, dilemmas, and disappointments of a persecuted minority in early modern France.

Though this volume is not intended to be a biography of Theodore Beza, it contributes to our understanding of the reformer's life in several ways. The period of Beza's life to be reconstructed here has consistently been slighted by historians. The half-dozen biographies of the reformer treat the last thirty years of his life only cursorily; the best among them does indeed include these decisive years of controversy but without exploring in detail the 'French connection.'¹⁸ Scholars have

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¹⁷My search for the relevant sources was greatly facilitated by the inventories of Huguenot books and pamphlets published in Geneva, Basle, Frankfurt, London and Amsterdam between 1572-1605. See Paul Chaix, Alain Dufour and Gustave Moeckli, *Les Livres Imprimés à Genève de 1550 à 1600* (Genève: Librairie Droz, 1966). Hereafter cited as CDM. See also Peter G. Bietenholz, *Basle and France in the Sixteenth Century* (Geneva: Librairie Droz, 1971), 251-367; R. J. W. Evans, "The Wechel Presses: Humanism and Calvinism in Central Europe 1572-1627," *Past & Present*, Supplement 2 (Oxford: The Past and Present Society, 1975), 1-74; Alfred Polard and G. R. Redgrave, eds., *A short-title catalogue of books printed in England, Scotland & Ireland and of English books printed abroad, 1475-1640* (London: London Bibliographical Society, 1969).

¹⁸The best biography of the reformer is Paul F. Geisendorf's *Théodore de Bèze* (Genève: Alexandre Jullien, 1949). Henceforth cited as 'Geisendorf.' Other full-length biographies are

examined Beza's prominent role at the Colloquy of Poissy (1561)¹⁹, his service to the Huguenot movement during the first three wars of religion (1562-1570)²⁰, his intellectual leadership and influence in Geneva²¹, and his resistance activities in the immediate aftermath of Saint Bartholomew's day.²² But no existing study addresses the reformer's role in France during the final decades of the century. Instead, it is frequently assumed that, because Beza never returned to France after the National Synod of Nîmes in 1572, he played only a marginal role in the political and religious history of the kingdom thereafter. On the contrary, I will document that Beza maintained close contact with the political and religious leaders of the Huguenot movement until the end of the century, even serving as a paid 'public relations' agent

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Hierosme Bolsec, *Historia de vita, moribus, doctrina et rebus gestis Theodori Bezae* (Ingolstadt: D. Sartorius, 1584). Antoine de La Faye, *De vita et obitu ... Th. Bezae...* (Genevae, 1607). Friedrich Christoph Schlosser, *Leben des Theodor de Beza und des Peter Martyr Vermili...* (Heidelberg, 1809). Johann Wilhelm Baum, *Theodor Beza, nach handschriftlichen Quellen dargestellt...* (Leipzig, 1843-1851). Heinrich Heppe, *Theodor Beza, Leben und ausgewählte Schriften* (Elberfeld, 1861). Henry Martyn Baird, *Theodore Beza, the counsellor of the French Reformation, 1519-1605* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1899). Briefer surveys of Beza's life and work are found in Jill Raitt, ed., *Shapers of Religious Traditions in Germany, Switzerland, and Poland* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981), 89-104. David Steinmetz, *Reformers in the Wings* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1971), 162-171. *FP*, II, 259-284. Hans Hillerbrand, ed., *The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Reformation*, vol. 1 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 149-151. Hereafter cited as *OER*.

¹⁹Alain Dufour, "La Colloque de Poissy," in *Mélange d'Histoire du XVI^e Siècle Offerts à Henri Meylan*, ed. Meylan (Genève: Librairie Droz, 1970), 127-137; Donald Nugent, *Ecumenism in the Age of the Reformation: The Colloquy of Poissy* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1970).

²⁰Robert Kingdon, *Geneva and the Coming of the Wars of Religion in France, 1555-1563* (Geneva: Droz, 1956); Kingdon, *Geneva and the Consolidation of the French Protestant Movement, 1564-1572* (Geneva: Droz, 1967).

²¹Charles Borgeaud, *Histoire de l'Université de Genève*, I (Genève: Georg & Co., 1900); Eugène Choisy, *L'État chrétien calviniste à Genève au temps de Théodore de Bèze* (Genève, 1902).

²²Robert Kingdon, *Myths about the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacres, 1572-1576* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1988); Henri Fazy, *La Saint-Barthélemy et Genève* (Genève: André Alavoine, 1879).

for Henri of Navarre. As an influential churchman and political activist, the Genevan reformer was not only a spectator, but also an important participant in the French crisis between 1572 and 1598.

In addition, my dissertation sheds new light on late sixteenth-century Protestantism and early modern French history. Political and religious events in France between 1572 and 1598 are by no means unexplored.²³ In the last two decades, social historians have produced a number of detailed local studies that describe the establishment and consolidation of Protestant communities in France during the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries.²⁴ Other scholars have recently examined the acts of the national synods of the French Reformed churches and the social discipline of Reformed consistories during the period.²⁵ Urgently needed at this

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²³The best surveys of this period are Mack Holt, *The French Wars of Religion, 1562-1629* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995); Mark Greengrass, *France in the Age of Henri IV*, 2nd ed. (London: Longman Group Limited, 1995); Denis Crouzet, *Les Guerriers de Dieu: la violence au temps des troubles de religion, vers 1525 - vers 1610*, vol. 2 (Seyssel, 1990); N. M. Sutherland, *The Huguenot Struggle for Recognition* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1980); J. H. M. Salmon, *Society in Crisis: France in the Sixteenth Century* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1975); Émile G. Léonard, *Histoire Générale du Protestantisme*, vol. 2 (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1961). Philip Benedict's article in the *Handbook of European History, 1400-1600* provides a concise overview of religious developments in France during the sixteenth century (Brady et al., vol. 2, 417-454).

²⁴A brief overview of this literature is presented by Raymond Mentzer in his article on 'France' in *Reformation Europe: A Guide to Research II*, ed. William S. Maltby (St. Louis: Center for Reformation Research, 1992), 189-213. Notable contributions include Philip Benedict, *Rouen during the Wars of Religion* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981); Janine Garrisson-Estèbe, *Protestants du Midi, 1559-1598* (Toulouse, 1980); and Kevin Robbins, *City on the Ocean Sea, La Rochelle 1530-1650* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1997).

²⁵Glenn Sunshine, "From French Protestantism to the French Reformed Churches: The Development of Huguenot Ecclesiastical Institutions, 1559-1598" (Ph.D. diss., The University of Wisconsin, 1992); Raymond Mentzer, "*Disciplina nervus ecclesiae*: The Calvinist Reform of Morals at Nîmes," *SCJ* 18 (1987): 89-115; Mentzer, "Marking the Taboo: Excommunication in the French Reformed Churches," in *Sin and the Calvinists. Morals Control and the Consistory in the Reformed Tradition*, ed. Mentzer (Kirksville, MO: Sixteenth Century Studies, 1994), 97-128.

point is an analysis of Huguenot assumptions, attitudes, and behavior in relation to the protracted civil unrest between 1572 and 1598. Thus, rather than provide a detailed chronological history of these years, I will penetrate the complex religious and political events of the period to highlight many of the fears, expectations, and ideological differences of Beza and other Huguenot leaders in his epistolary network. Through the life and letters of Theodore Beza, exiled in Geneva but looking toward France, we gain insight into the hopes, frustrations and fears that were formative in shaping Huguenot strategies during the final turbulent decades of the sixteenth century.

The 'French Connection'

Before approaching the 'old' Beza, it is necessary to describe briefly the reformer's life in France and Geneva before 1572. Theodore Beza was born at Vézelay in 1519 to parents of Burgundy's lower nobility. As a child he was sent to live with his uncle Nicolas, a member of the Parlement of Paris, where he learned his Latin letters. In 1528, the young boy experienced what he would continue to celebrate as a "second birthday" when his uncle placed him under the tutelage of Melchior Wolmar, one of the most renowned Hellenists of the age.²⁶ For seven years, first at Orléans then at Bourges, the devoted Wolmar shared with Beza his

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²⁶"Ita igitur factum ut ad te pervenirem anno Domini 1528, Nonis Decembris, quem diem ego non aliter quam alterum natalem merito soleo celebrare. Fuit enim iste mihi profecto omnium bonorum principium quae ab eo tempore percepi, et deinceps in futura vita me percepturum confido." Beza to Melchior Wolmar, 12 March 1560, *CB*, III, 44.

Figure 1: France during the Wars of Religion©

From Mack Holt, *The French Wars of Religion, 1562-1629* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995). Reprinted with the permission of Cambridge University Press.

prodigious knowledge of the Greek language and classical literature as well as his sympathies for the Lutheran ideas flooding into France from Germany.²⁷ This happy relationship abruptly ended when the Affair of the Placards (1534) and the subsequent renewal of royal persecution against suspected 'Lutherans' compelled Wolmar to leave his teaching post and seek safety in Germany. Nonetheless, Wolmar's passion for *belles-lettres* and his commitment to religious reform left a permanent mark on his student from Vézelay.

At the age of 21 Beza completed his licentiate in civil law at Orléans and returned to Paris, intent on devoting himself to the humanistic arts rather than pursuing the legal career and courtier's life envisioned by his uncle. Supported by two large ecclesiastical benefices, the young nobleman aspired to literary fame, drunk on the writings of Cicero and the poetry of Catullus. As a member of a sodality of young humanists in Paris, Beza rubbed shoulders with some of the most influential poets and grammarians of his generation. The publication of a collection of his Latin poems entitled *Poemata* (1548) seemed to assure his place among this cultured elite. He was, in the words of a friend, "well-regarded, valued, and honored" by everyone in Paris; a man "happy in the gifts of grace, nature, and fortune."²⁸

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²⁷Beza later acknowledged Wolmar's importance in his spiritual formation: "Sed hoc est omnium beneficiorum quae a te accepi longe maximum, quod verae pietatis cognitione ex Dei verbo tanquam limpidissimo fonte petita tu me ita imbuisti, ut nisi te, non dico pro praeceptore, sed pro parente colam et observem, omnium hominum sim maxime ingratus et inhumanus." Beza to Wolmar, 12 March 1560, *CB* III, 45.

²⁸Jacques Peletier, *Orthographe*, cited in Natalie Davis, "Peletier & Beza Part Company," *Studies in the Renaissance* XI (1964): 193. See also Robert Linder, "Calvinism and Humanism: The First Generation," *Church History* 44 (1975): 188-194.

In the autumn of 1548 a crisis of body and conscience altered decisively the trajectory of Beza's future plans and prospects. Bed-ridden with a serious illness, the young poet contemplated how a triad of temptations--sensual pleasure, wealth, and literary glory to come--had distracted him from a religious vow made several years earlier to repudiate Catholicism, leave France at the first opportunity possible, and seek a safe-haven for his conscience at the side of Wolmar.²⁹ Compounding Beza's spiritual angst was a second unfulfilled vow, made to the daughter of a Parisian merchant named Claudine Denosse, whom he had betrothed several years earlier but had refused to marry publicly for fear of losing the income of his benefices.³⁰

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²⁹"Denique infinitas mihi tendiculas circunquaque a Satana objectas comperio. Ego vero hic ingenue, ut par est, fatebor quod res est. Omnino decreveram antea simulatque mei juris essem, et nonnullae mihi facultates non deessent, ad te descendere, et purae conscientiae libertatem caeteris rebus omnibus anteferre, et saepissime a Deo cum precibus et lachrymis postularam, ut me hujus voti reum exaudiret. Sed quum mihi et juveni, et amicis, otio, pecunia, rebus denique omnibus potius quam consilio abundanti, Satanas omnia illa impedimenta derepente objecisset, fateor me inani illarum rerum splendore et vanis blanditiis ita fuisse pellectum, ut me totum huc et illuc abripi facile paterer.... Is enim me, quanvis extra viam sponte a meipso abreptum, nunquam tamen ita passus est errare quin saepissime ingemiscerem, et meum illud votum de Papismo penitus tandem repudiando retinerem. Effecit denique ut ita vitam instituerem, ut singulari quodam ipsius beneficio, quum neutrum mererer, nec pietate postremus inter pios, nec bonarum artium prorsus rudis inter eruditos haberer. Quumque mihi praeter illa impedimenta quae ante commemoravi triplicem laqueum Satanas circumdedisset, nempe voluptatum illecebras quae sunt in ea civitate maximae; gloriolae dulcedinem, quam ego non parvam, ex meorum praesertim Epigrammatum editione, ipsius quoque M. Antonii Flaminii doctissimi poëtae, et quidem Itali, iudicio eram consequutus; spem denique maximorum honorum mihi propositam, ad quos ex ipsis aulicis proceribus aliquot me vocabant, incitabant amici, pater et patruus hortari non desinebant, voluit Deus Opt. Max. ut miser ego et qui sciens ac prudens in hanc viam tam periculosam eram ingressus, tandem ex his quoque periculis evaderem." Beza to Wolmar, 12 March 1560, *CB* III, 46-47. Regarding the path leading to Beza's public renunciation of the Catholic religion, see Henri Meylan, "La conversion de Bèze ou les longues hésitations d'un humaniste chrétien," in *D'Érasme à Théodore de Bèze* (Genève: Librairie Droz, 1976), 145-166.

³⁰"Primum enim, ne a turpibus illis desideriis superarer, uxorem mihi despondi, sed clam, id tamen fateor, et uno tantum et altero ex piis amicis conscio, partim ne caeteros offenderem, partim quod adhuc non satis possem a scelerata illa pecunia quam ex sacerdotiis, de quibus ante dixi, percipiebam, ut impurus canis ab uncto corio absterreri." Beza to Wolmar, 12 March 1560, *CB* III, 47. See also Geisendorf, 25-28.

Shamed by his own hypocrisy and fearing the judgment of God, the tormented young man resolved to renounce the Catholic religion and emigrate from France. In October 1548, as soon as he was able to leave his sickbed, Beza fled Paris for Geneva: "I broke every chain, collected my possessions, and abandoned my native country, my kinsmen, and my friends in order to follow Christ. Accompanied by my wife, I went to Geneva in voluntary exile."³¹ The two refugees arrived in the Protestant city on October 23 or 24 and publicly celebrated their marriage several weeks later. The following spring the Parlement of Paris ordered Beza's arrest and the confiscation of his property, condemning him of the heresies of simony and Lutheranism, and censuring his journey to Geneva, the "recipient of the enemies of the Christian

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³¹"... abruptis omnibus vinculis, sarcinulis compositis, patriam, parentes, amicos semel desero ut Christum sequar, meque una cum mea conjuge Genevam in exilium voluntarium recipio." Beza to Wolmar, 12 March 1560, *CB* III, 47. Although Beza enumerated the factors leading to his conversion to Protestantism, scholars have debated the precise time at which this change occurred and the relative importance of financial, spiritual, and psychological factors in the decision. Based in large part on the letter cited above, Henri Meylan argued that Beza's 'spiritual eyes' had opened to the Protestant faith by 1535 through the influence of Wolmar and the writings of Heinrich Bullinger. He believed that it was *le maudit argent*—the cursed money of his benefices—that enticed Beza to remain in the Catholic church after his initial 'illumination' in 1535, thus cooling his religious sentiments, and encouraging him to 'spiritualize' his convictions ("Le conversion de Bèze," 155, 164). Agreeing largely with Meylan, Natalie Davis has pointed as well to the strong attraction that friends and the literary circle in Paris held for Beza ("Peletier and Beza," 193-194). Geisendorf, on the other hand, identified this long hesitation as a drama typical of adolescence: "... les années parisiennes de Bèze et la publication des *Juvenilia* [*Poemata*] appartiennent précisément à l'une de ces intermittences du coeur que cause l'adolescence" (25). All three scholars overlook a letter written by Beza much later in which he himself bemoaned the delay of his conversion to Protestantism. This 'hesitation' had been the result of indecision as he debated whether he should flee France or not, as well as the belief that he could extricate himself gradually from the Catholic religion: "Hoc enim consilium tantum ab eo absum, ut me poeniteat, ut contra, expertus quantum caeteris omnibus huius vitae commodis praestet conscientiae pure et libere verum Deum colentis tranquillitas, vehementer doleam non paucos annos mihi absque tanto bono praeteriisse, dum in utramque partem ista pensitans, frustra de hoc modo sensim expediendo laboravi, quem potius semel divini Verbi gladio secari oportuit." Beza to Johannes Paludius, 5/15 June 1597, Paris, Bibl. Ste. Geneviève, ms. 1455, f. 252^v-255^v. See also Beza's defense of his conversion in *Response à la lettre d'un gentilhomme Savoisien* ([Genève]: M. Berjon, 1598) discussed below on pages 421-423.

faith."³² Beza's flight from France reflected a profound ideological reorientation. In Beza's mind, he had placed the cross of Jesus Christ above his country and career.³³ As the patriarch Abraham had once offered his son Isaac on the altar in obedience to God, so he had sacrificed his ambitions for literary glory on the altar of the evangelical faith.³⁴

Beza's intellectual gifts and humanistic training were not to be wasted for long. At the recommendation of Pierre Viret and John Calvin, the magistrates of Bern appointed Beza to the chair of Greek at the Academy of Lausanne in November 1549, a post that he occupied for the next decade.³⁵ In addition to his teaching

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³²The act of the Parlement of Paris on 3 April 1549 noted that "aucuns malheureux entachez de la secte luthérienne ont puis aucun temps délaissé en ça la demeure et inhabitation de ce royaume très Chrétien..... et se sont transportés dans la ville de Genevve, réceptable des ennemis de la foy chrestienne et ont prins et reçu deniers pour bailler leur bénéfice en cumulant l'hérésie symoniacale avec la blasphème hérésie luthérienne, au grand dommage et scandale de la république très chrestienne." Cited in Geisendorf, 30.

³³"At ego vicissim quid tibi offeram? Idipsum scilicet quod jam olim tibi et absenti et ignorantibus detuli, hoc est, me ipsum meaque omnia, jam tum quum in misera nostra Gallia tuos et aliorum aliquot sanctissimos libros legens sic mecum cogitarem: Hem, quamdiu in his papismi sordibus volutabor? quando futurum est ut tot vere pios homines loquentes audiam? eorum coetibus intersim? una cum illis confitear Deo coeli, et calamitosum hoc vitae curriculum beatus conficiam? Haec tum erant mea vota quorum longe maximam partem ille idem mihi concessit qui fecerat ut de illis cogitarem. Id enim primum mihi praestitit (de quo utinam in ipso perpetuo gloriari possim) ut patriae fortunisque omnibus crucem anteponam; deinde accessit DD. Calvini, Vireti, Musculi, Halleri amicitia, Deus bone, quorum hominum." Beza to Bullinger, 16 Feb. 1550, *CB* I, 58.

³⁴Beza draws this comparison in one of his first works published after his conversion to the Protestant faith. See his letter preface to the *Abraham sacrificant*, eds. Keith Cameron, Kathleen Hall and Francis Higman (Genève: Librairie Droz, 1967), 45-47. For bibliographical information on this work, see *Bibliographie*, 18-32.

³⁵For Beza's tenure at Lausanne, see August Bernus, *Théodore de Bèze à Lausanne* (Lausanne: Georges Bridel & Co., 1900), 20-21; Geisendorf, 36-39. Until the founding of the Genevan Academy in 1559, the Academy of Lausanne was the most important Protestant school in French-speaking Europe, teaching theology and the two biblical languages. See Higman's helpful survey of education in French-speaking Switzerland during the sixteenth century, in *Histoire de la Littérature en Suisse Romande* I, ed. Roger Francillon (Lausanne: Editions Payot, 1996), 57-64.

responsibilities, Beza gave occasional public lectures and supervised student pensioners. In 1550 he published a highly-regarded tragedy entitled *Abraham sacrificant* (1550) for the academy's commencement exercises.³⁶ Owing to his natural proclivity for friendship and growing reputation, Beza quickly cultivated relationships with many of the leaders of the Reformed movement in France and Switzerland. His colleagues at the academy included such prominent French Protestants as the reformer Viret, the jurist François Hotman, and the Hebraicist Jean Raymond-Merlin. In this period he began corresponding with leaders of the Swiss churches, including Heinrich Bullinger, Rudolph Gwalther and Peter Martyr Vermigli, all ministers in the church of Zurich, as well as Guillaume Farel, pastor in Neuchâtel. But Beza reserved his greatest respect and devotion for John Calvin, whom he regarded as a spiritual 'father' for the remainder of his life.³⁷ Styling himself as the reformer's disciple and faithful defender, Beza not only kept Calvin abreast of theological developments in Switzerland, but also employed his sharp pen against Calvin's enemies.³⁸ The

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³⁶See the introduction to Beza's *Abraham sacrificant*, 31.

³⁷In the letter to Melchior Wolmar cited above, for example, Beza referred to Calvin as "magnus ille Joh. Calvinus alterus meus parens." 12 March 1560, *CB* III, 48. Elsewhere, he usually addressed Calvin as 'meus pater.' The *Vie de Calvin* (1564) and the *Icones* (1580) provide eloquent testimony to Beza's abiding respect for his spiritual mentor. For information about these latter two works, see *Bibliographie*, 104-127, 180-184.

³⁸During this decade Beza wrote an acerbic pamphlet against Johannes Cochlaeus (*Brevis et utilis zographia Ioannis Cochleae* [Basle, 1549]), two full-length rebuttals of Sebastian Castellio (*De haereticis a civili puniendis libellus...* [Geneva, 1554] and *De la prédestination, contre Castellion* [Geneva, 1558]), a response to Jerome Bolsec's doctrine (*Tabula praedestinationis* [n.p., 1555]) and a more irenic answer to Joachim Westphal (*De coena domini, plana & perspicua tractatio* [Geneva, 1559]). See *Bibliographie*, 17-18, 44-47, 47-53, 55-58, 59-60. Beza's *Zographia* is published in *CB* I, 49-55.

Genevan reformer, in turn, grew increasingly affectionate toward his younger protégé. Calvin came to regard the young poet from Vézelay as a "pearl" and "treasure" of the Church. "I would be very cold-hearted," Calvin wrote in 1551, "if I did not care deeply for Beza, who loves me more than a brother and honors me more than a father."³⁹

The plight of Protestantism in France was Beza's primary concern during these years in Lausanne. As Reformed churches began to be established in France, Beza watched several of his students depart for pastoral posts throughout the kingdom. When five students from the academy en route to churches in the Midi were captured in Lyon and burned at the stake, Beza penned a moving Latin elegy to commemorate their deaths.⁴⁰ Despite intensifying persecution, the prospects for reform seemed extremely encouraging in the mid-1550s: "Daily we receive joyful news about the wonderful increase of the churches in every part of France!"⁴¹ Beza wondered if religious toleration and the destruction of papal 'tyranny' in France might be near.⁴²

³⁹"Seulement ie vous diray qu'il a reçu des grâces excellentes de dieu, et les faict tellement valoir au profit commun de l'église que c'est vraiment une perle.... Mais tous ceulx qui ont en recommandation l'honneur de dieu, ayment et prisent l'homme comme ung trésor." Calvin to Madame de Cany, CO XIV, 453. "Equidem inhumanus sim, nisi eum redamem, qui me plus quam fraterne diligit, et colit non secus ac patrem." Calvin to Anonymous, 31 June 1551, CO XIV, 145.

⁴⁰One of these students named Bernard Seguin had served as Beza's secretary in Lausanne. See *Histoire ecclésiastique des Églises Réformée au royaume de France...*, eds. Baum and Cunitz, I (Nieuwkoop: B. de Graaf, 1974), 108-109.

⁴¹"Nam laeta quotidie accipimus de miro Ecclesiarum incremento in omnibus Galliae partibus! Mirum ni extrema nunc tentabit Satan, qui Herodem cum Pilato conjunxit ad opprimendum Christum, sed Deus noster in coelis est qui Satanam brevi sub pedibus nostris conteret." Beza to Farel, 16 March [1556], CB II, 35. See also Beza to Bullinger, 27 March [1557], CB II, 57.

⁴²"In Gallia vix credas quanta sit messis, et quanta Ecclesiarum incrementa. Si tres aut ad summum quatuor excipias ex eorum numero qui plurimum possunt, reliqui pene aperte testantur se a

From his post in exile he employed his pen and literary gifts in the service of the Huguenot cause. Shortly after arriving in Lausanne, Beza began translating the Psalms into French, completing a project left unfinished at the death of Clement Marot.⁴³ Published in 1562, the French psalter was to achieve immense importance for the persecuted churches of France as a guide to worship and as a source of edification.⁴⁴ Additionally during these years, Beza wrote his *Confession de la foi chrétienne* (1558), a work intended to explain and defend the basic doctrines of the Reformed churches to his elderly Catholic father.⁴⁵ Occasionally, the Greek professor

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Papismo abhorrere. Multi etiam ex adversariis offenduntur praeterita crudelitate. Certe is rerum status videtur impendere ut videatur eminens quaedam sanctae libertatis spes apparere, quod si semel fuerit impetratum a Rege, ne dubites momento corruturam illic Papae Tyrannidem, adeo accrevit paucis annis fidelium numerus." Beza to Bullinger, 20 March [1556], *CB* II, 39.

⁴³At his death in 1544, Marot had translated less than one-third of the psalms. Beza took a decade to complete the remainder of the psalter. For information on this project, together with the text of Beza's dedicatory preface, see *Bulletin* 1 (1853): 94-100.

⁴⁴Higman's apt description bears repeating: "Le psautier, conçu comme poésie, adopté comme chant d'église, devient l'une des plus puissantes armes de propagande de tout le siècle. Le chant en commun des psaumes permet à tous de manifester solidairement leur adhésion à la foi réformée. Les simples peuvent y participer aussi bien que les instruits. Dans les conventicules secrets, dans le culte public, dans les familles et sur les champs de bataille des guerres civiles, les psaumes deviennent un élément central de la vie spirituelle calviniste." Francis Higman, "Le Domaine Français," in Jean François Gilmont, ed., *La Réforme et le livre, l'Europe de l'imprimé* (Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 1990), 141. Beza himself was deeply moved when he first heard the psalms chanted in the vernacular in Geneva. In his paraphrase on Psalms 91 in *Les Pseaumes de David et les Cantiques de la Bible* (Genève: Jaques Berjon, 1581) he recalled: "Et de ma part ie recognoistray ici très-volontiers pour en donner la gloire à Dieu, ce que i'en ay moy-mesmes expérimenté. Il y a trente-deux ans que par la grâce de Dieu i'ay quitté volontairement païs & biens pour servir à Christ. Or i'ay souvenance que ce Psaume fut le premier lequel i'oui chanter en l'assemblée des Chrestiens la première fois que ie m'y trouvay; & puis dire que ie me senti tellement resiouï de l'ouïr chanter à ceste bonne rencontre, que depuis ie l'ay tousiours porté comme engravé en mon coeur..." (455).

⁴⁵See *Bibliographie*, 60-80. After his conversion to the Reformed religion in 1548, Beza had occasional contact with his father and brothers in France. In August 1556, his oldest brother came to Lausanne apparently to dissuade Beza from his religious views. Later that same year, Beza met with his father half-way between Lausanne and Vézelay (see Beza to Calvin, 8 October [1556], *CB* II, 55). Contact between father and son was again established after the Colloquy of Poissy in 1561. It seems that the only member of Beza's family to convert to the Protestant faith was his half-brother Nicolas,

from Lausanne assumed a more active role on behalf of his co-religionists. With Calvin and Farel, he searched for suitable candidates to pastor the church recently established in Paris.⁴⁶ Between 1557-1558, Calvin sent Beza on three separate missions to Germany to solicit diplomatic support for persecuted Protestants in France. By 1558, the poet from Vézelay had become Calvin's trusted confidant, a respected theologian and leader in the French Reformed movement.

Beza's tenure in Lausanne was not without its frustrations. Almost from the start, he was shocked by immorality in the city and public apathy for religious services.⁴⁷ The Bernese magistrates who controlled the Pays de Vaud rebuffed attempts by Beza and his colleagues to introduce ecclesiastical discipline into Lausanne's churches. At stake was not simply the reform of morals, but the question of ecclesiastical control. Whereas Beza and Viret envisioned a model of church governance similar to Geneva where the ministers determined doctrine and adjudicated moral cases, the authorities of Bern remained committed to a Zwinglian,

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who came to Geneva in 1570. See Geisendorf, 75-77, 176-178.

⁴⁶Beza regretted that he himself could not fill this pastoral post in Paris: "Utinam is essem qui possem hoc praestare." Beza to Calvin, 26 January [1556], *CB* II, 21.

⁴⁷"Hic quidem principum mandata palam impune violantur; quadragesima non minore religione observatur quam apud meros papistas; potationibus, blasphemiiis, scortationibus perstrepunt omnia. In concionibus mira solitudo. Ut paucis dicam, miserabilis est ecclesiae facies." Beza to Bullinger, 16 February [1550], *CB* I, 59. For Beza the moral discipline of Geneva contrasted radically with the immorality of Lausanne. In his farsical *Epistola Passavantii* (1553), Beza described religious life in Geneva through the eyes of a Catholic observer: "... ut ego possem audire haereticos sine incurrando irregularitatem, veni ad Ecclesiam Sancti Petri. Et, o pietas! non oportet loqui illic de sanctis neque de sanctabus, quia omnia sunt sicut in primitiva Ecclesia. Est tantum una cathedra, et multae sedes, et scamna plena haereticis. Fidem meam ... si tu videres eos, tu crepares per medium: nam sunt tanti, quod tu diceres quod nunquam est combustus unus." *Le Passavant de Théodore de Bèze*, ed. Isidore Liseux (Paris: Isidore Liseux, 1875), 57. For information on this satire, see *Bibliographie*, 34-40.

townhall-centered vision of reform in their territories. As a result, Beza's allegiance to Calvin became increasingly suspect: "We are considered to be 'Calvinists,' which is believed to be a crime far worse than all others put together."⁴⁸ The rift between Lausanne's professors and Bern further widened when the authorities prohibited Lausanne's clergy from preaching on the doctrine of predestination. When Beza and his colleagues protested this seemingly heavy-handed policy, the magistrates rebuked and threatened to dismiss them. By the summer of 1558, Beza found the situation in Lausanne intolerable. Over Viret's bitter opposition, Beza submitted his resignation and departed 'Babylon' to join Calvin in Geneva.⁴⁹

Beza had finally found a congenial home. As Calvin's trusted disciple, he quickly assumed an important place in the church of Geneva. Within months of his arrival, Beza had been elected as a minister in the Genevan church and assigned duties to lecture in Greek literature. In June 1559, Calvin chose Beza to be a professor of theology and the first rector of the newly-founded Academy. In addition to providing education in Latin letters and elementary Greek (the *schola privata*), the Academy offered advanced training in theology and exegesis (the *schola publica*) for young men preparing for pastoral ministry. Under Beza's leadership the Genevan

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⁴⁸"Nam, ne nescias, in nos quoque quidvis licet, et, ut uno verbo dicam, pro Calvinistis habemur, quod crimen multo majus est quam si caetera omnia in unum conjungas." Beza to Bullinger, 23 October [1555], *CB* I, 178.

⁴⁹Heiko A. Oberman describes well the angry interchange between Viret and Calvin over Beza's departure from Lausanne, and the long-term implications of this dispute. See "Calvin and Farel: The Dynamics of Legitimation in Early Calvinism," Unpublished Paper, 54-57. Used with permission of the author.

Academy quickly became an important 'nursery' for French Protestantism, training and sending hundreds of Reformed pastors and missionaries into France.⁵⁰ Beza served the Genevan church as professor and minister for the next four decades, only stepping down from the lectern in 1599 and the pulpit in 1600.

Amidst the weighty responsibilities of church and academy, Beza remained deeply committed to the Huguenot cause. The accidental death of Henri II following the Treaty of Cateau-Cambrésis (June, 1559) had done nothing to ameliorate the condition of Protestants in the kingdom. Under the regency of the devout Catholic, Francis, duke of Guise, the young king Francis II continued his father's repressive policies against the Reformed.⁵¹ Royal edicts in the fall of 1559 mandated the destruction of buildings used for Protestant sermons and the death-penalty for those who organized Reformed worship services. In Paris, the houses of suspected Huguenots were sacked, mass arrests were made, and those deemed heretics were tortured and burned at the stake.⁵² The execution of Anne du Bourg in December 1559--on whose behalf Beza had interceded before the Count Palatine in Heidelberg

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⁵⁰At Calvin's death in 1564, the Academy had an enrollment of about 1500 students, making it the largest Protestant academy in the French-speaking world. Charles Borgeaud, *L'Université de Genève*, I, 48-63; Kingdon, *Geneva and the Coming of the Wars of Religion in France*, 14-22. For an English translation of Beza's "Address at the Solemn Opening of the Academy in Geneva," see *Transition and Revolution, Problems and Issues of European Renaissance and Reformation History*, ed. Robert Kingdon (Minneapolis: Burgess Publishing Company, 1974), 175-179.

⁵¹For details about the reign of Francis II and his successor Charles IX, see Léonard, *Histoire Générale*, 103-123; Mark Greengrass, *The French Reformation* (London: Basil Blackwell, 1987), 63-78; Sutherland, *The Huguenot Struggle*, 62-177; Sutherland, *The Massacre of St. Bartholomew and the European Conflict, 1559-1572* (London: Macmillan Press, 1973).

⁵²Sutherland, *The Huguenot Struggle*, 81-83.

earlier in the fall--was but the most notable example of the king's resolve to exterminate religious dissent. As royal persecution fueled the Protestants' smoldering resentments, iconoclasm and random religious violence threatened to escalate into full-scale civil war. Between 1559-1561 Beza and Calvin appealed frequently for calm, exhorting their co-religionists to eschew iconoclasm and rebellion. The Huguenots, they insisted, must renounce the "cursed spirit of murder" and conquer their enemies by "prayer and patience" like the martyrs who had preceded them.⁵³ Nonetheless, the line between inspiring the Protestant faithful and promoting armed revolt was very thin indeed. Calvin's sermons in 1560-1561 contained violent attacks upon the French kings which could not help but enflame the passions of his audience. Likewise, Calvin and Beza's indiscrete meeting with a Protestant adventurer named La Renaudie in the fall of 1559 raised questions about their commitment to a policy of peace. Several months after leaving Geneva, La Renaudie was arrested and executed for his leadership in the ill-fated Conspiracy of Amboise, a Protestant-inspired plot to attack the French court, assassinate the duke of Guise, and place

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⁵³"Que toutes telles manières de faire, donc, comme de s'escarmoucher et regarder au bras de la chair, soyent laissées à ceulx qui sont gouvernez par ce maudict esprit homicide.... le diable est enfoncé et a reculé de plus de troys pas en arrière, veincu par les prières et par la patience de ceulx qui nous ont acquis cest heureux commencement de sainte liberté par leur sang. Il faut donc marcher en grand pas après eulx sans perdre aleine, combatans des mesmes armes avec mesmes ennemis..." [Beza? in the name of the pastors of Geneva] to the brothers of Provence, 25 January [1560?], *CB* III, 272-273. Similarly, Beza writes Bullinger: "Saepe consulimur an liceat adversus istos non tantum religionis, sed etiam regni hostes insurgere, quum praesertim secundum leges nulla sit adhuc penes regem ipsum autoritas qua illi niti possint. Neque enim desunt multi Scaevolae qui certa etiam morte parati sint veram libertatem redimere, si justa vocatio appareat. Nos hactenus respondimus, precibus et patientia superandam esse tempestatem, et eum non defuturum qui tam mirifico exemplo nuper ostenderit non modo quid possit Ecclesiae suae causa, sed etiam velit. Huic consilio hactenus paruerunt." 12 September [1559], *CB* III, 21. See also Beza to Bullinger, 1 January [1560], *CB* III, 39; Beza to the Church of Lyon, 25 November [1561], *CB* III, 222-223.

Francis II under the protective wing of the Bourbon prince Louis of Condé. Although it is unlikely that the Genevan clergy supported this venture, Beza at least was not entirely blameless for he had helped foster a rebellious mood: before La Renaudie departed Geneva, Beza had given him a translation of Psalm 94, an imprecatory hymn that called on God to avenge the proud and destroy the wicked.⁵⁴

The urgent needs of the French Reformed soon required that Beza temporarily leave his exile home in Geneva. In the summer of 1560, at the request of Antoine, prince of Navarre, Beza traveled to Nérac to give counsel and religious instruction to the noble house of Bourbon.⁵⁵ For three months he preached regularly at court, seeking to persuade Antoine and his younger brother Louis, prince of Condé, to throw their full support behind the Reformed churches and form a common Protestant front against Guise dominance at court. This program to join the Huguenot cause to the political interests of this noble family was to have far-reaching consequences in the following decades. In seeking a political 'protector,' Beza and his co-religionists inadvertantly allowed their vision for religious reform to be coopted by members of the high nobility whose political ambitions were frequently at odds with the long-term good of the Reformed churches. Although Beza's sojourn in Nérac had little apparent

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⁵⁴On the Conspiracy of Amboise, see *Histoire ecclésiastique* I, 298-301; Geisendorf, 116-119; Kingdon, *Geneva and the Coming of the Wars of Religion*, 67-76; Léonard, *Histoire Générale* II, 104-107; Sutherland, *The Huguenot Struggle*, 84-100.

⁵⁵The registers of the Company of Pastors reported: "Le 20 de juillet ou mesme an, nostre frère monsieur de Besze fut envoyé en Gascongne vers le roy et roynne de Navarre pour les enseigner en la Parole de Dieu..." *RCP* II, 92. Beza's sojourn in Nérac is described in Geisendorf, 120-124; and Nancy Roelker, *Queen of Navarre Jeanne d'Albret, 1528-1572* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1968), 142-145.

effect on the vacillating Antoine, his contact with Condé may well have helped solidify the prince's public support of the Reformed cause. So too, Beza established warm ties with Antoine's wife Jeanne d'Albret that were to last until her death (d. 1572). After her public conversion to the Reformed religion on Christmas day of 1560, Jeanne maintained regular correspondence with Geneva's clergy and became a dependable patroness of Protestant churches in the kingdoms of France and Navarre.

The following summer Beza was again requested to lay aside his duties in Geneva to journey on behalf of the Huguenot churches. This time, rather than travelling to a friendly kingdom beyond the frontiers of France, Beza was summoned to Paris to appear before the king and queen mother. The death of Francis II (December, 1560) had given Catherine de Médicis a precious opportunity to neutralize Guise influence at court and consolidate her power through a more moderate political and religious course. As regent of the government of her ten year old son, king Charles IX, Catherine quickly allied with Navarre and welcomed to the royal council such moderates as Michel de l'Hôpital and Jean de Montluc, as well as the Protestant leaders Condé and Gaspard de Coligny. In June of 1561 the royal court announced the convocation of a national synod at Poissy to address the religious crisis; the Reformed churches would be given an opportunity to expound and defend their doctrine in the presence of the king and the Catholic prelates. At the invitation of the queen and at the urging of Navarre, Condé, Coligny, and the church of Paris, Beza set out on August 17 to head the Protestant delegation at Poissy. For the clergy in Geneva, this was the long-awaited moment. They were confident that a face-to-

face theological 'disputation' with the Catholics would inevitably result in a Protestant victory. Their optimism was buoyed by dramatic reports of Protestant advances throughout the kingdom--Beza believed that as many as 1500 Huguenot congregations now existed in France.⁵⁶ They were further encouraged by the irenicism and apparent good-will of the king and queen mother. Thus, Beza journeyed to Poissy with the intent, not of compromising with his opponents, but of converting them.

The Colloquy of Poissy failed to resolve the French religious crisis, achieving neither the concord desired by the queen, nor the theological victory envisioned by the Reformed.⁵⁷ In two general sessions, Beza and the Protestant delegation--including Peter Martyr, Nicolas Des Gallars, Jean-Raymond Merlin and François de Morel--defended the principle tenets of the French Confession of Faith before the royal court and a large gathering of Catholic prelates and theologians. From the start, the distrust and ideological distance separating the parties made agreement unlikely. Beza scandalized the Catholic audience in his opening speech by asserting that "Christ's body is as far removed from the bread and wine as is heaven from earth."⁵⁸

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⁵⁶"Ecclesiae circiter mille quingentae jam illic numerantur, quarum magna pars palam Christum confitetur." Beza to [Grataroli], 15 July 1561, *CB* VIII, 282. Throughout the summer of 1561, Beza exulted about Protestant advances in France: "... incredibilis est Ecclesiarum progressus, et tanta ubique fidelium alacritas, ut nihil jam videatur posse impedire regni Dei manifestam promulgationem, si peccata nostra excipias." Beza to Jean Wolf, 25 March [1561], *CB* III, 94. See also Beza to Bullinger, 24 May 1561, *CB* III, 101-102.

⁵⁷For an incisive analysis of this important colloquy, see Dufour, "Le Colloque de Poissy," 127-137. See also Nugent, *The Colloquy of Poissy* and Geisendorf, 125-166.

⁵⁸"Nous disons que son corps est esloigné du pain & du vin, autant que le plus haut ciel est esloigné de la terre..." *Histoire ecclésiastique* I, 574. A summary of the two general sessions at Poissy (including Beza's controversial phrase) was soon after published by the Reformed under the title *Ample discours des actes de Poissy* (n.p., 1561).

So too, the reformer and his colleagues rejected the Cardinal of Lorraine's shrewd proposal that the parties find a basis for concord in the Confession of Augsburg's formula on the Eucharist. Although historians continue to debate the cardinal's sincerity, the Reformed were convinced that it was a trick to embarrass and divide them. Prospects for conciliation were further hampered by the efforts of the Jesuit superior general Diego Lainez, who in addition to attacking the Protestants as "monkeys and foxes" questioned the legality of a national church council and urged Catherine to submit all theological questions to the Council of Trent.⁵⁹ With the colloquy in an uproar, Catherine ordered that Beza and several of his colleagues meet privately with a small group of Catholic moderates, including Claude d'Espence and Montluc, in a final attempt to find agreement on the controversial question of the nature of Christ's presence in the Eucharist. After several meetings the commission drafted a common statement on the Lord's Supper that pleased almost no one except Catherine. The Assembly of Prelates judged the formulation to be 'captious and heretical' and dissolved itself on October 13 without the queen's permission. The Colloquy of Poissy was over and civil war seemed inevitable.⁶⁰

The queen mother was not ready to abandon all hope. Disregarding the

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⁵⁹"... les appellant singes & regnards, & concluant qu'il les falloit renvoyer au Concile de Trente ouvert par le Pape ... que c'estoit le lieu auquel il falloit renvoyer toutes les controversés & disputes de la foy & de la religion, de laquelle ne les femmes, ne les gens de guerre, ni autres qui n'y sont exercés, ne peuvent estre jugés recevables." *Histoire ecclésiastique* I, 666-667.

⁶⁰*Histoire ecclésiastique* I, 679-680. Nugent's evaluation of the Colloquy of Poissy is memorable: "... both sides were generally intractable and triumphalist, viewing moderation as tantamount to treason. Both parties wanted unity, but on their own terms. And both were no doubt more interested in stealing sheep than mending fences." *The Colloquy of Poissy*, 220.

Sorbonne's demand for his banishment, Catherine requested that Beza remain in Paris during the fall and winter of 1561-1562 in the hopes of reviving negotiations. As the chief Protestant minister at court, the Genevan reformer attempted to procure the demands of the Huguenot churches, including an end to religious persecution, the right of freedom of worship, and the convening of a 'holy and free' council to reform the French church.⁶¹ At the same time, Beza served as chaplain to Jeanne d'Albret, preaching regularly to the nobles who gathered in her household and administering the Lord's Supper to as many as 700 communicants. On December 10, he preached in the pouring rain to 6000 people.⁶² In the new year, under the watchful eye of Catherine and the royal court at Saint Germain, Beza again met with Catholic theologians to debate the use of images in worship. Despite the failure of this second colloquy, the prospects for Protestantism in France had never seemed brighter. Books by Beza and other Huguenot authors were sold openly on the streets of Paris.⁶³ Reformed churches continued to multiply throughout France.⁶⁴ So too, the royal

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⁶¹Greengrass, *The French Reformation*, 65.

⁶²Geisendorf, 175-178.

⁶³The Catholic author Claude Haton noted the arrival from Geneva of "grand aultre nombre de petitz livretz, comme les psalmes maroictiques et bèziens ... et outres lesditz psalmes ... aultres livretz intitulez le *Cathécisme de la vraye religion*, le *Bouclier de la foy*, le *Baston de la foy*, et aultres infinis livres ... tous bien reliez en peau de veau rouge et noire, les aucuns bien dorez." Cited in Geisendorf, 168.

⁶⁴"Interea quotidie crescit Ecclesia satis feliciter." Beza to Calvin, 22 December [1561], *CB* III, 245. Jean Morély, sire de Villiers, shared this optimism in the early months of 1562: "We have, thanks to God, churches in nearly all the cities of the realm, and soon there will be scarcely a place where one has not been established." Cited in Greengrass, *The French Reformation*, 63. Today, scholars continue to debate the number of Reformed congregations that existed in the French kingdom in the months before the onset of civil war. Admiral Coligny's estimate of 2,150 Protestant churches in March 1562 was certainly inflated, intended to impress the regent Catherine de Médicis. By

family appeared sympathetic toward the Protestant cause: "I assure you," Beza wrote Calvin in December, "that queen of ours is better intentioned toward us than ever before. I wish I could write you about each of her three sons as much as I hear daily from reliable sources. You can not wish for more, and that from boys their age!"⁶⁵ The Edict of January in 1562 appeared to be tangible, if tentative, proof of the queen's goodwill: the Reformed churches were granted freedom to worship outside city walls (*extra muros*), Reformed synods were authorized under the condition that royal officers be present, and the legal status of Reformed ministers was implicitly recognized.⁶⁶ This Edict, which Beza urged his co-religionists to accept, represented the high water mark of the Reformed movement in France, yet only a momentary glow before the dark storm clouds of war descended on the kingdom (see Figure 2).

The first war of religion began with the massacre of Protestants at Vassy in March 1562 and ended shortly after the assassination of the duke of Guise a year later. On March 1, Francis, duke of Guise and his soldiers slaughtered some 60 Protestants who were worshipping in a barn within the city walls of Vassy. In the following weeks, Guise and his allies—including Antoine of Navarre who had turned

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tabulating contemporary references to Reformed congregations, the historian Samuel Mours has calculated the number of churches in France and Béarn to be around 1,700 during this period. Excluding the Reformed churches in Béarn, Greengrass estimates that there were between 1,200 and 1,250 Protestant churches in France during the 1560s. See *ibid.*, 42-43.

⁶⁵"Nostram illam tibi affirmo melius in nos affectam esse quam unquam antea. De tribus quoque ipsius liberis utinam tibi sigillatim multa possem scribere, quae quotidie ex certis testibus audio. Certe tales sunt pro sua aetate, quales ne optare quidem possis." Beza to Calvin, *CB* III, 242. See also Beza to Calvin, 25 November 1561, *CB* III, 226; Beza to [Calvin], 6 January [1562], *CB* IV, 17.

⁶⁶The text of this edict is found in the *Histoire ecclésiastique* I, 752-758 and is summarized by Sutherland, *The Huguenot Struggle*, 354-356.

Figure 2: Protestant Churches in 1562^o

From Mack Holt, *The French Wars of Religion, 1562-1629* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995). Reprinted with the permission of Cambridge University Press.

away from the Huguenot cause--marched on Paris and gained control of the queen mother and her sons, whom they placed under 'protective' custody. Beza, so long a proponent of peace, left Paris for the last time on March 23 and placed himself at the service of Condé, assisting the Protestant prince mobilize troops for war.⁶⁷ "I am forced," wrote Beza, "not only to be a spectator, but an actor in this horrible tragedy."⁶⁸ In the months that followed, the Genevan minister marched at the head of Condé's army, serving as his chaplain and fund-raiser. From Orléans, Beza wrote the churches of France urging them to raise money and troops for Condé in defense of the faith and to deliver the royal family from Guise 'captivity.'⁶⁹ Just afterwards, Beza risked his life by journeying to Angers to solicit funds from the churches across the Loire.⁷⁰ In the summer, Beza travelled to Germany and Switzerland again in search of mercenaries and money. After a brief rest in Geneva, Beza was called back to France. "After miraculously escaping death a thousand times, I was hoping to find some rest in Geneva. But I am again thrown into the immense conflict.... But, by

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⁶⁷For a description of Beza's activities during the first war of religion, see Kingdon, *Geneva and the Coming of the Wars of Religion*, 104-115.

⁶⁸"Cogar itaque non tantum spectator, sed etiam actor esse tristissimae tragoediae." Beza to Calvin, 28 March 1562, *CB IV*, 76.

⁶⁹"Pour tant, très chers frères, au nom de Dieu, que les riches deployent leurs deniers et les forts leurs forces, au grand besoing, pour la délivrance des églises et de nostre Roy, et ne faictes ny difficulté ny retardation quelconque, car il n'est pas temps de disputer, mais d'exécuter, voire en toute promptitude et celerité, afin de prevenir noz ennemis qui sont desja près." Jacques Spifame and Beza to the Churches of France, 5 April 1562, *CB IV*, 259-260.

⁷⁰"Excurri Andegavos usque, capitis periculo. Vel parum, vel nihil potius profeci." [Beza] to Calvin, mid-May, 1562, *CB IV*, 88. This trip is mentioned in the *Histoire ecclésiastique*: "D'autre part, afin de mieux entendre l'estat des villes de dessus la rivière de Loyre ... quelcun leur fut envoyé, lequel ayant exhorté toutes les Églises par où il passa à se cottiser libéralement pour les frais de la guerre, trouva Angers en povre estat..." (II, 22 and 547).

the grace of God, I am resolved even to die if God wills it."⁷¹ Back with Condé's army, Beza reported the news of the death of Antoine of Navarre--whom he likened to 'Julian the Apostate'--during the siege of Rouen, and participated in the vicious battle of Dreux a week before Christmas.⁷² Dressed in his Genevan gown and unarmed, the reformer neither fought nor fled.⁷³ The war finally ended in March, after the duke of Guise died of wounds inflicted by a Protestant assassin named Poltrot de Méré. But though the Peace of Amboise brought an end to the fighting, it did not resolve the fundamental differences and antipathies between the two parties. Infuriated by reports that Coligny and Beza had authorized Poltrot's mission, the Guise family vowed to avenge the duke's death.⁷⁴ Likewise, while welcoming peace, many Huguenots resented Condé's hasty settlement with the Catholics that placed significant new restrictions on Reformed worship.⁷⁵ Returning to Geneva in May,

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⁷¹"Ego millies ex media morte mirabiliter ereptus sperabam me Genevae respiraturum. Sed ecce, iterum in vastissimum gurgitem referor. Cogunt enim me Andeloti obtestationes ad ipsum quam celerrime reverti, nisi velim desertor videri....Quid ego ibi interea? Quod suaserit Dominus qui vocat. Haec mea nunc est conditio, mi pater, id est tristissima et miserrima. Sed, Dei gratia, constitui etiam mori, si ita Domino videbitur." Beza to [Bullinger], 24 September 1562, *CB IV*, 108.

⁷²Beza to Calvin, 14 December 1562, *CB IV*, 113.

⁷³Geisendorf, 217-218.

⁷⁴These reports came from Poltrot himself who, under torture, confessed that Coligny had planned the assassination and that Beza had encouraged it. Before his death, Poltrot retracted these accusations. See *Histoire ecclésiastique II*, 347-354. Beza and Coligny strenuously denied any involvement in the death of the duke of Guise. See their deposition in *CB IV*, 275-292.

⁷⁵The Edict of Amboise restricted Protestant worship to the territories of high nobles, the households of low nobles and to the suburbs of one town per baillage or senechal, as well as to one or two places in each town where it had been exercised up to 7 March 1563. For the text of this edict, see *Histoire ecclésiastique II*, 371-377. Sutherland provides a summary of the edict of Amboise in *The Huguenot Struggle*, 356-357.

Beza had reason to complain about the terms of pacification.⁷⁶ At great cost, the Huguenots had gained nothing.

Purchased with violence, peace would prove difficult to enforce and impossible to maintain. During the next decade, three successive edicts of pacification were unable to quench sectarian violence in France. Local massacres, religious riots and iconoclasm deepened preexisting distrust and hatred. On two occasions, between 1567-1568 and 1568-1570, latent hostilities exploded into all-out civil war. France's tragedy had become Europe's opportunity, as English, Spanish, Italian, German and Swiss mercenaries entered the conflict on behalf of the warring parties, seeking the spoils of war and political dominance. From his vantage point in Geneva, Beza grew increasingly distrustful of the royal family and its efforts to 'pacify' the kingdom. Catherine de Médicis' policies of reconciliation and containment--seeking to neutralize Catholic and Protestant extremists and preserve her hold on the government--made her regency unpopular with Beza and many Huguenots. After 1562, the reformer sharply and frequently criticized her rule, likening her to the wicked Jewish queen Athaliah.⁷⁷ Whereas Beza initially praised the piety of Charles IX and his brother Henri, duke of

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⁷⁶"... ac initio quidem duriores nobis istae conditiones videbantur, quum praesertim integram in manibus victoriam haberemus, sed tandem, spe nobis meliore facta, ne patriae eversionem quaesivisse videremur, nos quoque acquievimus." Beza to the Pastors of Zurich, 12 May 1563, *CB IV*, 146.

⁷⁷"Miserrimum statum esse oportet eorum qui unius mulieris (et quidem cujusmodi) imperio reguntur." Beza to Bullinger, 20 July [1563], *CB IV*, 169; "Nec enim potest Satan ex suo castello sine insigni tumultu deturbari, et in illis regionibus prout locorum gubernatores vel Domini in hanc vel illam partem propendent, necesse est quoque Ecclesias diversam conditionem experiri, quoniam Galliae status nunc compositus est partim ex ἀναρχία, partim ex γυναικοκρατεία." Beza to Bullinger, 15 April [1564], *CB V*, 48. For Catherine as Athaliah, see Beza to Bullinger, 31 October 1568, *CB IX*, 180.

Anjou,⁷⁸ by the end of the decade the reformer viewed the princes of Valois as enemies of the Reformed churches as well.⁷⁹ Despite this distrust, the Genevan reformer continued to counsel the Huguenots to submit to the edicts of pacification and comply with the scriptural injunctions demanding obedience to the king.⁸⁰ "Even tyranny is preferable to anarchy," he said.⁸¹ Nonetheless, on at least one occasion, Beza deviated from his public support of pacification to participate in a secret plot that directly violated the peace. In the summer of 1568, several months before the beginning of the third civil war, Beza and Bullinger acted as intermediaries between Huguenot military leaders and Swiss mercenary captains in an effort to raise troops to fight the royal armies in France.⁸² Although this conspiracy ultimately bore no fruit, it suggests how frustrated Beza had become and how far he was willing to go in the

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⁷⁸"Ea enim est nostri Regis atque etiam ipsius fratrum indoles, quae certa et magna pietis incrementa piis omnibus non debeat non polliceri. Faxit Deus Optimus Maximus, ut ipsius Evangelio conjuncti omnes, ipsius gloriae in sanctitate et justitia serviamus." Beza to the Pastors of Zurich, 12 May 1563, *CB* IV, 146; "De Rege scio optimam spem esse, et hoc tibi ut certissimum confirmo. Sed puer est et matrem habet. Ergo precibus opus est, si unquam alias, ut istos velut extremos in eo regno Satanae conatus Deus infringat..." Beza to Jean Haller, 24 January [1564], *CB* V, 21.

⁷⁹Beza viewed Charles IX in a somewhat positive light as late as 1568 (see, for example, Beza to Bullinger, 2 September 1568, *CB* IX, 153). In 1569, the reformer reported that Charles IX, upon receiving word of Condé's death, threw a stone through the stained-glass window of the Reformed church at Metz, saying "Male ... pereat qui hoc exemplum non sequatur." Inspired by his actions, his Catholic subjects subsequently rased the building. See Beza to Bullinger, 4 May 1569, *CB* X, 78. For Beza's early criticisms of Henri of Anjou, the future Henri III, see Beza to Bullinger, 13 April 1568, *CB* IX, 53.

⁸⁰See for example Beza's letter to the Church of Nîmes: "Vous savez que l'intention des pasteurs et anciens de l'Église n'est point de desobeyr au Roy, mais au contraire de monstrier le chemin de lui obeyr." 9 June 1565, *CB* VI, 295.

⁸¹"Sed in summa, quamvis etiam tyrannidem puto tolerabiliorem ἀναρχία." Beza to Bullinger, 9 September [1563], *CB* IV, 196.

⁸²See Kingdon, *Geneva and the French Protestant Movement*, 184-190. This conspiracy is summarized in a letter from Bullinger to Beza, 24 August 1568, *CB* IX, 124-126.

service of his French co-religionists. Six years before the publication of his militant pamphlet *Du droit des magistrats* (1574), Beza was already willing to support Protestant magistrates in their struggle against a hostile Catholic monarchy.

With Calvin's death in 1564, Beza became the moderator of the Genevan Company of Pastors and the spiritual leader of the Reformed movement in France. The fate of the Huguenots weighed more heavily upon him than ever before. The persecuted church continued to survive, even flourish in some parts of the kingdom.⁸³ Nevertheless, the broken edicts and successive waves of violence disrupted the progress of reform, destroying Huguenot temples, depriving the church of needed pastors, and sending thousands of Protestants into exile. As usual, Beza expressed his anguish to Bullinger, his confidante in Zurich: "The reason I am writing just a few lines is not that I am overwhelmed by work but by grief. For I cannot but feel upset, indeed crushed by the destruction of so many churches, the devastation of so many of the best and most noble families, and finally, the complete ruin of this excellent kingdom."⁸⁴ Even more alarming than the dissipation of the churches was the growing moral laxity and theological heterodoxy among the Huguenots during the

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⁸³"In Gallia, satis nunc tranquilla sunt omnia, et sic crescunt Ecclesiae ut mittendis operariis sufficere non possimus." Beza to Bullinger, 14 June 1565, *CB* VI, 107; "Ecclesiae interea per medias spinas emergunt." Beza to Bullinger, 19 June 1566, *CB* VII, 142; "Nihilominus tamen pergunt Ecclesiae, et quamvis non eo quod decuit incremento, tamen per medias difficultates crescunt." Beza to Bullinger, 1 January [1567], *CB* VIII, 21.

⁸⁴"Scribam autem paucis, quamvis non tam occupationibus quam perpetuis moeroribus impediatur. Nec enim hoc adhuc potui a Domino vel potius a mea ista carne obtinere, ut modum in his teneam quem tenere oportuit, adeo me tot ruentium Ecclesiarum, tot optimarum et nobilissimarum familiarum, ruentis denique ultro nobilissimi regni casus affligit." 15 July 1568, *CB* IX, 105.

1560s.⁸⁵ Prominent Reformed churchmen such as Jean Morély, Peter Ramus, and Hugues Sureau openly challenged tenets of the French Confession of Faith, demanding that lay people be permitted a greater role in church government and challenging the top-down Genevan-style of ecclesiastical discipline. Beza worked tirelessly to silence these ‘innovators’ and heal the divisions caused by them; he even sought Morély’s dismissal from his post as tutor of Jeanne d’Albret’s son, Henri of Navarre.⁸⁶ Morély strongly resented Beza’s hard-line, calling the reformer a ‘new Antichrist’ and the ‘Jupiter of the lake of Geneva.’ For his part, Beza feared that the Huguenots were forgetting their allegiance to the Genevan church, their ‘spiritual mother,’ who had educated many of their ministers, welcomed their refugees, and consistently advocated their cause.⁸⁷ At the National Synod of La Rochelle (1571)—a council over which Beza presided—, deputies discussed questions related to church government and discipline. The next year, at the National Synod of Nîmes, which Beza attended, the deputies explicitly censured the doctrines of Morély, Ramus, and

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⁸⁵“De Gallia hoc unum possum scribere vix posse fieri ut diutius perstet regnum in quo impietas et injustitia palam obtineant. Ecclesias autem vastat partim avaritia, partim luxus, ut de levitate Gallica taceam. Ita video futurum ut illic quoque comprobetur regnum Christi non esse ex hoc mundo.” Beza to [Bullinger], [19 February 1567], *CB* VIII, 69. See also Beza to Bullinger, 1 January 1567, *CB* VIII, 21.

⁸⁶The Morély affair is described in detail by Kingdon in *Geneva and the French Protestant Movement*, 37-137. For biographical information about Morély and Pierre Ramus, see *FP* VII, 505-506 and VI, 329-339.

⁸⁷“Et j’espère aussi que les enfants auront tousjours au besoin souvenance de leur paouvre mère nourrisse, laquelle est presté de s’employer mieux que jamais si elle peut et craint sur tout que ses mammelles ne tairissent par faulte de les bien succer. A quoy je vous prie de bien veiller, d’aautant que vous ne sçavés combien ce laict durera.” Beza to M. de Mouy, 10 March 1567, *CB* VIII, 81.

Sureau.⁸⁸ But the moral laxity and bitter theological divisions within the Huguenot churches had begun to diminish Beza's confidence in the success of reform in France. Gone was the triumphalism of the days of Poissy. Beza now increasingly doubted that France would ever become a Protestant kingdom: "Even if the papacy is abolished, I scarcely dare to hope that we will ever see Christ triumphant in France as I expected a few years ago during the harsh persecutions."⁸⁹ The Reformed would not conquer the kingdom of France if they could not first conquer themselves.

By 1572, a generation of Catholic and Huguenot warriors were dead and their sons had picked up the sword in the service of a religious cause inextricably entangled in a web of personal ambitions, political aspirations, and foreign intrigue. Henri, duke of Guise, succeeding his father Francis, was a devout Catholic committed to pursuing the family's vendetta against the Protestant chief Coligny. His uncle Charles, Cardinal of Lorraine, remained a powerful influence at court and the leading Catholic prelate in France. On the Protestant side, Henri, prince of Bourbon, now ruled the kingdom of Navarre in place of his father Antoine. Though scarcely twenty years of age, Henri was the highest ranking Huguenot noble and, in the event that Charles IX and his brothers died without a son, the closest heir to the French throne. Finally, Navarre's cousin Henri, the prince of Condé, was the promising young

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⁸⁸Jean Aymon, *Tous les Synodes Nationaux des Églises réformées de France*, I (La Haye, 1710), 99, 122-123. Hereafter cited as 'Aymon.'

⁸⁹"Tamen ut libere fatear quid sentiam, vix audeo sperare unquam fore ut in Gallia Christum triumphantem videamus, sicut paucis ante annis, quum persecutiones urgerent, ne si quidem papatus aboleat..." Beza to Bullinger, 1 January [1567], *CB* VIII, 21.

successor of his father Louis, who had fallen at the battle of Jarnac (1569). Navarre and Condé, together with the old admiral Gaspard de Coligny, personified the future hopes of the French Protestant movement. In mid-August 1572, when Navarre married Marguerite of Valois, sister of Charles IX, the prospects for the Reformed churches in France seemed brighter than they had been for several years. Such optimism vanished forever with the bells of Saint-Germain-l'Auxerrois on the morning of August 24.

CHAPTER I

SAINT BARTHOLOMEW AND ITS AFTERMATH, 1572-1576

"S'il faut servir au Seigneur de tesmoins,
Mourons, mourons, louans Dieu pour le moins,
Au despartir de ces lieux misérables,
Pour traverser aux cieux tant désirables."¹

At dawn on the morning of 24 August 1572 bells were heard in the quarter of Saint-Germain-l'Auxerrois of Paris. Moments before, soldiers under the command of Henri, duke of Guise, had broken down the door, overcome resistance, and assassinated the Huguenot leader Gaspard de Coligny in his bedroom.² The corpse was thrown from the window to the ground below, where angry crowds mutilated it, cutting off the head, hands and genitals, and dragged it through the streets of Paris. With Coligny and his immediate entourage dead, the bells now summoned a second wave of violence and bloodshed. Protestant notables, who a week before had been

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¹"Les Psaumes et l'épître dédicatoire de Théodore de Bèze," *Bulletin* 1 (1853): 94-100.

²Scholars continue to face the difficult task of analyzing the massacres of St. Bartholomew, an event which is subject to dramatically different interpretations due to Protestant and Catholic propaganda. For an excellent discussion of the sixteenth-century sources relative to the massacre see N. M. Sutherland, *The Massacre of St. Bartholomew*, 312-337. Subsequent interpretations of this event are summarized by Henri Dubief, "L'historiographie de la Saint-Barthélemy," in *Actes du colloque l'Amiral de Coligny et son temps* (Paris: Société de l'histoire du protestantisme français, 1974), 351-376. The best modern studies of the massacres of Saint Bartholomew are Janine Garrison-Estèbe's *Tocsin pour un Massacre, la saison des Saint-Barthélemy* (Paris: Editions du Centurion, 1968) and Denis Crouzet's *Les Guerriers de Dieu* (II, 13-143). More recently, Robert Kingdon's *Myths about the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacres* provides a helpful reconstruction of the manner in which Protestant apologists created a literature of martyrology and used it to shape European politics thereafter.

welcomed guests for the wedding celebrations of Henri of Navarre and Marguerite of Valois, were now hunted down and mercilessly slaughtered. This royally-sanctioned pogrom, in turn, unleashed an unexpected orgy of popular violence within the city, as frenzied Catholic crowds looted Huguenot homes and murdered neighbors suspected of heresy.³ The carnage penetrated even the walls of the Louvre: before dawn, the young groom Navarre and his cousin Henri of Condé were placed under guard in a royal apartment, and their soldiers and colleagues subsequently assassinated.⁴ The massacres continued in Paris throughout the following week, even as mob violence spread like a deadly pestilence to major provincial cities, including Tours, Lyon, Rouen and Orléans. In Rouen, the killing began more than three weeks after Saint Bartholomew, when Catholic extremists took over the city, locked the city gates, and killed between 300 and 500 Huguenots, many of whom had sought protection in the city's jail.⁵ By the end of October, the reign of terror had finally run its course; thousands of Huguenots were dead or had renounced Protestantism and returned to the Catholic mass.⁶ Many others chose to leave their homes and flee for their lives,

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³For a convincing explanation of the popular violence following Coligny's assassination see Natalie Davis, "The Rites of Violence: Religious Riot in Sixteenth-Century France," *Past & Present* 59 (1973): 51-91, and Diefendorf, *Beneath the Cross, Catholics and Huguenots in Sixteenth-Century Paris* (New York: Oxford University Press), 93-106.

⁴Jean-Pierre Babelon, *Henri IV* (Paris: Librairie Arthème Fayard, 1982), 187-189. Henri will later report that his comrades had been killed "... jusques au chevet de mon lit..." (*ibid.*, 188).

⁵Benedict, *Rouen*, 127-128. Janine Estèbe discusses the massacres in the French provinces in *Tocsin pour un Massacre*, 142-155.

⁶Garrison-Estèbe estimates that about 3,000 people were killed in Paris, and another 8,000 elsewhere during the 'season' of massacres between August and October 1572.

seeking refuge in Huguenot sanctuaries such as La Rochelle, Sancerre and Montauban, or, abandoning the kingdom entirely, finding safety in Protestant strongholds such as Geneva, London⁷, Heidelberg, Strasbourg, or in the evangelical cities of Switzerland.⁸

This chapter will examine the central role played by Theodore Beza and the Genevan Company of Pastors in handling the flood of Huguenot refugees in 1572-1574, as well as their campaign of propaganda and political resistance in the aftermath of Saint Bartholomew's day. Many of these details are by no means unknown to scholars of early modern France; in the past century, historians have carefully documented how the magistrates and ministers of Geneva responded to the crisis of 1572, as well as the extensive resistance literature that the massacres elicited.⁹ However, Beza's letters and Genevan archival materials permit us to document more precisely the relation between volatile social conditions and radical ideas, how together, the massacres, the Huguenot diaspora in Geneva, and suspicions

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⁷Baron F. de Schickler, *Les Églises du Refuge en Angleterre, vol. I* (Paris: 1892), 185-222; Andrew Pettegree, *Foreign Protestant Communities in Sixteenth-Century London* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986), 210-214. Among the French exiles who fled to England following Saint Bartholomew were dozens of ministers, about whom see "Ministres Réfugiés à Londres après la Saint-Barthélemy," *Bulletin* 2 (1854): 25-26. Beza reported in a letter of 19 January 1573 that there were 100 French refugee ministers in London: "Londino ad me scribitur maximam ibi servatam multitudinem piorum, inter quos centum sint ministri." Beza to [Bullinger], *CB XIV*, 14.

⁸Among the four major evangelical Swiss cities, Basle was probably the most important refuge for French exiles. The institutional basis of the French church of Basle was laid in 1572. See Bietenholz, *Basle and France*, 98. Refugees also found their way to Bern, Neuchâtel, and Lausanne. In his letter to Bullinger cited in note 7, Beza asserted that there were several French ministers in the latter two cities: "Sunt etiam aliqui Neocomi et Lausannae." 19 January 1573, *CB XIV*, 14.

⁹See Fazy, *La Saint-Barthélemy et Genève*; Kingdon, *Myths about the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacres, 1572-1576*; Geisendorf, 306-315.

of a universal Catholic conspiracy created a volatile climate of anger and fear in which radical ideas and explosive actions were born. Within the context of this 'social smoldering,' Beza and a 'brain-trust' of Huguenot refugees organized resistance activities against the Valois monarchy and waged a concerted propaganda campaign in an effort to shape Protestant memory of the massacres and rally foreign support for the Reformed in France. So too, our examination of the resistance treatises of a *Genevan* triumvirate--the well known books of François Hotman and Theodore Beza, as well as the forgotten treatise of Lambert Daneau--will more completely root Huguenot resistance literature in a social context. In the aftermath of the bloody massacres of 1572, Beza and other French exiles in Geneva were not only theorists of political resistance, but major players in Protestant action and agitation against the French monarchy.

The French Diaspora

Protestant Geneva had never faced a crisis of such magnitude as the one it confronted in the fall of 1572.¹⁰ Carried by merchants arriving from Savoy, the first reports of the massacres in France reached the shores of Lac Léman less than a week after the death of Coligny.¹¹ Beza and the pastoral corps announced this disturbing

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¹⁰For Geneva's response to the massacres of Saint Bartholomew, see Fazy, *La Saint-Barthélemy et Genève*, and Kingdon's "Reactions to the St. Bartholomew's Massacres in Geneva and Rome," in *The Massacre of St. Bartholomew, Reappraisals and Documents*, ed. Alfred Soman (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1974), 25-49.

¹¹"Le sabmedy XXX^e vindrent les nouvelles de la trahison et horrible cruauté faicte en France contre plusieurs Seigneurs et contre tous les fidèles, non seulement à Paris, mais aussy depuis à Lion

news in their Sunday sermons on August 31, exhorting their congregations to humble themselves and to pray earnestly for their co-religionists. The Small Council met in emergency session on the same day and hastily drafted letters to alert Bern of potential dangers.¹² On Monday, September 1, the ministers appeared before the council to exhort the magistrates to take courage in the midst of these threats, proposing a fast and special prayer services to avert the wrath of God against the city.¹³

In the days that followed, survivors from the French massacres began to arrive in Geneva, bearing horrifying tales of slaughter and cruelty. Refugees fleeing from Lyon reported that three thousand Protestants had been killed in the city, murdered by

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où il y avoit heu d'horribles massacres, mais par toute la France. Ç'a esté la cause que le landemain au presche de huict heures en tous les temples on fict mention de ces choses au presche pour exhorter le peuple à s'humilier et prier Dieu à ce qu'il luy plaise avoir pitié des siens." *RCP* III, 86.

¹²"Massacres de France. Messeigneurs ont esté assmblés ce matin ... sus l'advertissement donné par plusieurs marchandz revenus hyer soir de Lyon, comme le 24^e de ce moys fust tué & massacré à Paris M^r l'admiral de Châtillon, plusieurs aultres gentilhommes de la religion qui y estoient allés à la célébration des nopces du roy de Navarre & du prince de Condé. Oultre ung grand nombre de paouvres fidèles de ladicte ville & d'ailleurs ont esté de mesmes ainsy massacrés. Et comme on prétend que le semblable s'exécute par tout le reste du royaume, cecy ayant desia esté le jour précédent raporté par Sibillon, revenant de Chambéry, a esté arrêté qu'on en donne incontinent advertissement à Messieurs de Berne..." *RC* 67, 135^v.

¹³"... après avoir exhortés Mess^{rs} à prendre bon courage parmy ces troubles et menaces qui sont contre ceste ville comme sus les paouvres fidèles de France, qu'on massacre par tout comme on entend, et s'asseurer que la doctrine qu'ilz ont annoncée est ferme et certaine et partant que Dieu nous assystera et garentira; quoy qu'il en soit quant il playroit à Dieu nous faire cest honneur de souffrir pour son nom, il y aura matière de le louer et glorifier. Au reste ont advisé qu'à l'exemple des bons roix et serviteurs de Dieu, il sera bon de prévenir l'ire de Dieu par jeusne & prière extraordinaire au plus tost." 1 September 1572, *RC* 67, 136^v. The Small Council permitted special prayers (*prières extraordinaires*) to be held weekly throughout the fall, provided that the ministers agreed to shorten their sermons and, in the event of an attack against the city, to stop preaching and look after the women present.

the sword, strangled, or drowned in the Saône.¹⁴ Within two weeks between 400 and 500 refugees had fled to Geneva, many so utterly destitute that Beza likened them to victims of fire or shipwreck.¹⁵ In the meantime rumors, misinformation and panic spread through the city. Reports circulated which greatly exaggerated the number of Reformed victims and announced the poisoning of the princes Navarre and Condé.¹⁶ Refugees warned of Catholic plans to attack Geneva and kill Beza.¹⁷ The reformer was certain that the slaughter in France was the unfolding of a Catholic plot to impose the decrees of the Council of Trent by force and exterminate the Protestant religion once and for all.¹⁸ Overwhelmed by these rumors and threats, Beza shared his darkest thoughts with his friend Bullinger in Zurich: "This is perhaps the last letter I will ever write to you. For it is abundantly clear that these massacres are the unfolding of a universal conspiracy. Assassins are seeking to kill me, and I

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¹⁴"Sed Lugduni affirmant non pauciores tribus millibus, partim gladiis immanissime obruncatos, partim strangulatos, partim in Ararin praecipitados, quorum etiam nonnulli enatantes ad nosusque prevenerunt." Beza to Christophe Hardesheim, 4 September 1572, *CB XIII*, 181. The massacres at Lyon are described by Garrison-Estèbe, *Tocsin pour un Massacre*, 147-150.

¹⁵"Sed vix credas quanta sit omnium inopia, quae miseria et calamitas non aliter delapsis singulis quam ex incendio vel naufragio." Beza to Jean Cousin, 23 September 1572, *CB XIII*, 190.

¹⁶Small Council to the Count Palatine, 4 September 1572. in Fazy, *La Saint-Barthélemy et Genève*, document #5, 91. In a letter to Hardesheim on the same day, Beza repeated with some suspicions the rumor that the two princes had been killed by poison. *CB XIII*, 181.

¹⁷The first refugee to arrive in Geneva reported to the Small Council that the Catholics "ne désirent pas moins sa teste [i.e. Beza] que celle de M^r L'Admiral, et aussy qu'ilz y veulent sus tour à ceste ville." 1 September 1572, *RC 67*, 137.

¹⁸"Nec enim ambigi potest quin universalis haec sit conjuratio, adeoque Tridentini Concilii exequutio." Beza to Christophe Hardesheim, 4 September 1572, *CB XIII*, 181.

contemplate death more than life."¹⁹ This same horror and dread were reflected in a poignant letter from the Small Council to the Count Palatine on September 4th: The whole of France was bathed in the blood of innocent people and covered with dead bodies. The air was filled with the cries and groans of nobles and commoners, women and children, slaughtered by the hundreds without mercy. Was this not proof of an international conspiracy against Protestant Europe? The days of lamentation had begun.²⁰

Several thousand beleaguered refugees flocked to Geneva during the fall of 1572 and the winter of 1573, each having a particular tale of horror to recount, and many in dire need of assistance. Beza's former colleague at Lausanne, François Hotman, arrived in Geneva on October 2nd--much to the reformer's relief--after having fled Bourges in his professorial robes and doctor's cap. His colleague Hugues Doneau also escaped, donning a student's habit and leaving the city accompanied by his German pupils. "I can say," wrote Hotman the next day, "that 50,000 persons have been slaughtered in France in the space of eight or ten days. The rest of the true Christians wander by night in the forests. The savage beasts there are kinder, I

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¹⁹"Nos hic procul dubio eadem conditione sumus, et fortassis haec ad te postremum scribo. Quin vero universalis sit conjuratio, et jam jam patefacienda, ambigi vix potest. Mi pater, consulite ut in communi periculo, et si unquam alias, nunc precamini nobiscum. Ego nominatim petor, et cogito potius de morte quam de vita." Beza to Bullinger, 1 September 1572, *CB* XIII, 179.

²⁰"Les jours de lamentation sont arrivés.... tote la France est tote baignée de sang innocent et pavée de corps morts, l'air et le ciel remplis de cris et gémissemens de grands et petis hommes, femmes et enfans massacrés sans aucune miséricorde.... il n'est à doubter que cest conjuration ne soit générale, estant l'exécution du concile de Trente..." Small Council to the Count Palatine, 4 September 1572, in Fazy, *La Saint-Barthélemy et Genève*, document #5, 91-92.

hope, than those in human form."²¹ In addition, notable Huguenot ministers such as Antoine de Chandieu and Lambert Daneau fled to Geneva, leaving their possessions behind in France in their desperate flight to safety. Perhaps the escape of Pierre Merlin was the most dramatic. As chaplain of Coligny, Merlin had been with the Admiral hours before the assassination. When the massacres began, Merlin fled to a barn and hid in a hayloft for three days, narrowly avoiding the probing swords of soldiers searching for him. Thereafter, Merlin and his family found refuge in the household of Renée of Ferrara, who brought them safely out of Paris in her coach and granted them refuge at Montargis, along with another minister named Jean de L'Espine. At Beza's urgings--lest these "two great lights be snuffed out at the first strong wind"--both ministers ultimately left France and came to Geneva.²² Many Huguenot ministers and notables were not as fortunate as Merlin and L'Espine. Numbered among the Protestant victims in late summer 1572 were Pierre Ramus, Barbier de Francourt (the chancellor of the queen of Navarre), François de Beauvais (a councillor of the Parlement of Paris), François de La Rochefoucault (the governor

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²¹"Tout ce que je puis dire c'est que cinquante mille personnes viennent d'être égorgées en France dans l'espace de huit ou dix jours. Ce qui reste de chrétiens erre la nuit dans les bois; les bêtes sauvages sont plus clémentes pour eux, je l'espère, que ceux qui ont la forme humaine." French translation of the Latin original, found in R. Dareste, "François Hotman, Sa Vie et Sa Correspondance," *Revue Historique* 1:2 (1876): 55. See also Donald Kelly, *François Hotman, A Revolutionary's Ordeal* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973), 219.

²²See "Trois Pasteurs Échappés aux Massacres de la Saint-Barthélemy," *Bulletin* 41 (1892): 393-414; Agrippa d'Aubigné, *Histoire universelle*, t. III, ed. André Thierry (Genève: Librairie Droz, 1985), 350. Beza's comments are found in a letter to Renée of Ferrara, 23 March 1573: "Mais il reste qu'en parachevant de vous obliger ceste paovre Église tempestée, et se montrant quelque ouverture d'aller seurement par pays, il vous plaise trouver moyen de mettre en quelque plus grand seureté ces deux grandes lumières qui sont encores par dela exposées au danger d'estre esteinctés au premier mauvais vent qui pourra courir..." *CB* XIV, 56.

and lieutenant-general in Champagne), Charles de Téligny (an assistant to Coligny) and Armand de Clermont (a renowned Huguenot captain). As the death toll mounted, Beza struggled between hope and despair, clinging anxiously to the reports delivered by the hundreds of refugees filling Geneva's streets. "Daily I receive news from the farthest corners of France that those whom I thought safe have been killed; by contrast, I have been overjoyed to learn that some--but so very few--have survived whom I had given up for dead. O, how happy we would be if very soon we might be numbered among so many blessed martyrs!"²³

The city on the shores of Lac Léman had long been a haven for refugees. The history of Geneva since Calvin's arrival in 1536 reflected an ambivalent mix of hospitality and xenophobia, of extraordinary generosity and blatant prejudice toward these immigrants.²⁴ But in the crisis of 1572 and 1573, Beza and the Company of Pastors spearheaded a relief effort that demonstrated remarkable resolve, courage and compassion. The *bourse française*--a private fund established during Calvin's lifetime to assist French refugees--was quickly exhausted by the huge influx of refugees.²⁵ On September 8, Beza and his colleague, Jean Trembley, appeared before the city council

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²³"... ex ultimis Galliae regionibus ut periisse audiam quotidie quos salvos putabam; contra vero nonnullis gratulor (sed eheu nimium paucis) quos ut sublato requirebam.... O nos foelices si brevi tot beatissimis martyribus adjungamur." Beza to Jean Cousin, 23 September 1572, *CB* XIII, 190.

²⁴William Naphy, *Calvin and the consolidation of the Genevan Reformation* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1994), 121-143; Monter, *Calvin's Geneva*, 165-190.

²⁵See Kingdon's "Social Welfare in Calvin's Geneva" (*American Historical Review* 76 [1971]: 50-69) for an overview of Geneva's welfare institutions created before and after Calvin's arrival in the city. For a detailed study of the *bourse française*, see Jeanette Olson, *Calvin and Social Welfare, Deacons and the Bourse française* (Cranbury, NJ: Associated University Presses, 1989).

"to advise the councillors on a strategy to provide relief, whether by a collection or some other means, for these poor people who have fled here."²⁶ The council agreed to write the magistrates of Bern and Neuchâtel to solicit funds for the depleted *bourse* and, in the meantime, gave the deacons a subvention of 500 florins (approximately 66 écus) for the most urgent needs.²⁷ The magistrates also instructed the deacons to house the homeless in the city hospital--normally reserved for native Genevans and transients--and to provide them with necessary clothing and furniture. When these initial efforts proved inadequate, Beza and his colleagues wrote to friends in Switzerland, Germany and England, seeking financial assistance for the refugees. In November, at the prompting of Beza, a city-wide collection was organized in order to clothe the poor exiles against the approaching winter.²⁸ There were limits, however, to Geneva's resources and hospitality. When a messenger from the Protestant city of Nîmes secretly inquired of Beza if their community of 20,000 people could immigrate to Geneva, the Small Council stated in no uncertain terms that Beza "should not

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²⁶"Mess^{rs} de Bèze et Trembley ministres de la parole de Dieu ... ont prié Messieurs d'adviser aux moyens par lesquelz on pourra soulager ces pauvres gens qui sont icy retirés, soit par collecte ou autrement." Note the subtle rebuke in the ministers' subsequent request: "...ilz supplient Messieurs donner ordre qu'ilz [ie. the refugees] soient traictés plus gracieusement qu'ilz n'ont pas esté ces années passés tant en loages que denrées, prians particulièrement messeigneurs de céans de distribuer de leurs biens selon les facultés d'ung chascun & monstrier bon exemple aux aultres." 8 September 1572, *RC* 67, 142.

²⁷In 1590, the approximate ratio of écus-sol to livres to florins was 1 = 3 = 7.5. For the shifting comparative value of these currencies during the final decades of the sixteenth century, see Eugène Demole, *Histoire Monétaire de Genève de 1535 à 1792* (Genève: J. Jullien, 1887), 201-216. For the purposes of this dissertation, I will use the 1590 value of the écus-sol to calculate the respective worth of livres and florins.

²⁸10 November 1572, *RC* 67, 179.

become involved in this matter, nor give any answer or advice, except to encourage them generally to be on their guard and remain obedient to the king in keeping with his recent edict."²⁹ So too, Beza's colleague Charles Perrot was censored by the city council a year later when he criticized the magistrates in a sermon for chasing the poor from the city who had not received official permission to stay.³⁰

Despite the efforts of the magistrates and ministers, by late December 1572 the condition of the exiles had become desperate. The winter cold was so severe that the Rhone river and part of Lac Léman had frozen solid. Seven hundred people were dependent on assistance, not including the French ministers and their families who—whether because of social standing or lack of training—were unable to earn a living with their hands.³¹ They avoided starvation in January when Geneva received

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²⁹"La dessus en ayant désia esté parlé hyer en secret & trouvé bon de ne se mesler de donner aucune réponce ou advis, sinon en général qu'ilz se tiennent sus leurs gardes soubz l'obéissance du roy suyvant son édict nouveau..." 17 September 1572, RC 67, 152.

³⁰"Charles Perrot, ministre de la Parolle de Dieu. Icy a esté rapporté que M. Perrot en son sermon d'aujourd'huy a presché tellement qu'il semble qu'il condannat la procédure qu'on tient à chasser grand nombre de paouvres gens de ce pays, qui sont à charge à l'Hôpital, à leur demander cognoissance et respondans, alleguant que si nostre Seigneur Jésus Christ venoit pour le jour d'huy, on luy feroit amener des respondans.... A esté arresté qu'on communique avec M' de Bèze afin de le remonstrer puy après aud. S' Perrot." RC 68, 229-230. For the background of this affair, see J. E. Cellerier, "Charles Perrot, Pasteur Genevois au Seizième Siècle, Notices biographique," *Mémoires et Documents Publiés par la Société d'Histoire et d'Archéologie* 11 (1859): 16.

³¹"... nous ont raporté que desdicts paouvres persécutés y en a soubz leur charge plus de sept cens, auxquels fault assister ordinairement, sans comprendre à ce rolle un grand nombre d'autres qui travaillent en nos fossés, auxquels aussy il fault qu'ils subviennent si tost que les oeuvres cessent, soyt par le mauvais temps ou autrement.... aussy y a il plusieurs ministres jusques au nombre de cinquante, tous paouvres et chargés pour la pluspart de femmes et enfans, envers lesquels ils ne peuvent moins que de s'élargir davantage qu'envers les autres, tant à cause de leur qualité que aussi pource qu'ils n'ont nul mestier pour se pouvoir ayder." City Council to Messieurs of Bern, 23 December 1572, Fazy, *La Saint-Barthélemy et Genève*, document #36, 124.

financial aid from other Protestant cities.³² Nonetheless, in May the city council again had to provide emergency assistance to the relief fund for refugees.³³ While the summer of 1573 brought some relief, heavy rains destroyed much of the fall harvest, causing higher prices for grain and wine, and necessitating yet another public collection in October. "It deeply pains me," Beza complained to a potential donor in Nuremberg, "that we have almost nothing to give to these miserable brothers who were shipwrecked in such a violent storm and landed here almost naked."³⁴

Of special concern to the Company of Pastors were the Huguenot clergy and professors who fled to Geneva. Three weeks after Saint Bartholomew, Beza and his colleagues met with the refugee ministers who had arrived in the city—about twenty in number by that time—to welcome them and offer their pastoral and financial support. Money diverted from a fund for poor students was made available to those ministers most in need.³⁵ The French clergy were given a place to meet and allowed to preach in the city's churches occasionally; the refugee minister Lambert Daneau was

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³²These contributions included 600 écus from Bern, 400 écus from Zurich, 100 écus from Chur, 120 écus from Schaffhausen, and 500 Savoyard florins from Payerne.

³³"Estant proposé qu'il y a grande nécessité à la bourse des paouvres en ce temps si aspré, & qu'ilz sont chargés de grand nombre de paouvres nouvellement venus. A esté arresté qu'on leur donne cinq cens florins." 14 May 1573, RC 68, 107.

³⁴"Illud inter caetera valde mihi dolet, quod tot miserrimis fratribus, quos tanta illa tempestas penitus nudos in hunc portum ejecit ... vix tenuissimum victum suppeditare licet." Beza to Dürnhoffer, 15 November 1573, CB XIV, 244.

³⁵This fund, dispensed by Jean Trembley, was distinct from the *bourse française*: "... nous leur offrons l'argent qui est entre noz mains qui a esté donné aux povres escholiers de cest ville pour subvenir à ceux d'entre eux qui seront nécessiteux..." 15 Sept 1572, RCP III, 88-89. In January 1574, Trembley reported that a total of 4,100 livres (1,366 écus) had been disbursed to refugee ministers during the previous 25 months. See RCP III, 129.

thereafter employed in the nearby parish of Vandoeuvres. Moreover, Beza found teaching posts at the Academy for the most influential of the Huguenot intellectuals who fled to Geneva: Hotman, Hugues Doneau and Ennemond of Bonnefoy were appointed to teach law; Daneau was chosen as Beza's part-time assistant in the theological faculty; the celebrated philologist Joseph Scaliger became professor of arts.³⁶ For the next two years, Beza and the Genevan ministers worked tirelessly on behalf of these French colleagues, raising money for their families and intervening before the political authorities in Switzerland and Germany. In all, almost one hundred clergymen sought temporary or long-term refuge in Geneva. Many of the displaced clergy had once studied at the Genevan Academy and knew the city's ministers personally; others had been sent by the Company of Pastors to France as missionaries in the previous decades.³⁷ Several of these pastors and professors—including Antoine de Chandieu, Hotman, Scaliger, Daneau, Merlin, and L'Espine—were leaders of the Reformed movement in France. The refuge in Geneva strengthened the ties between the Company of Pastors and the Huguenot leadership, inadvertently extending Geneva's influence in France among the Reformed churches. Likewise, Geneva's efforts on behalf of the French refugees confirmed the perception

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³⁶Borgeaud, *Histoire de l'Université de Genève* I, 123-136.

³⁷The editors of the *Correspondance* of Beza have compiled a list of 95 refugee ministers whose names appear in Geneva's *Livre des Habitants* between September 1572 and August 1574. Of these named ministers, at least 15 had studied at the Academy of Geneva during the previous thirteen years. See Sven and Suzanne Stelling-Michaud, eds., *Le Livre du Recteur de l'Académie de Genève (1559-1878)*, vols. 1-6 (Genève: Travaux d'humanisme et renaissance, 1966-1980). At least six among the refugee ministers had been sent as missionaries to France by the Genevan Company of Pastors prior to 1572.

--promoted earlier by Farel and Calvin--that the Genevan church was a kind of spiritual 'mother' to the Huguenots and thus had a privileged place of responsibility and authority in their ecclesiastical affairs.³⁸ For Beza, the matter was not simply one of ecclesiastical control, but of spiritual duty: God had called him to help build the 'true' church in France; now, as a survivor of the massacres, it was his responsibility to comfort and care for the scattered remnant. This concept of duty lay very close to the heart of Beza's self-understanding: as a French expatriate in Geneva, he had a divine commission to care for the refugees of the church 'under the cross.'

From Beza's perspective, Huguenot 'martyrs' and refugees were not the only victims of the storms unleashed by Saint Bartholomew. The Catholic fury had also claimed spiritual casualties, those Huguenots who compromised by attending Catholic masses or processions, as well as 'apostates' who signed forms of abjuration in which they subscribed to the doctrines of Trent.³⁹ The reports from France during the fall of 1572 were exceedingly grim for the Reformed. Thousands of Huguenots converted to the Catholic religion, whether compelled by immediate fear, insecurity,

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³⁸The goodwill generated among the Reformed ministers by Geneva's hospitality and charity was indicated in a speech delivered by Antoine de Chandieu in June 1576 following the Peace of Monsieur. Attending a meeting of the Company of Pastors with several other French clergy, Chandieu thanked "nostre Compagnie du bon recueil faict à leurs frères après les massacres, de la grande assistance par laquelle ilz avoyent heu moyen de vivre, des bonnes consolations et advis qu'on leur avoit donné, et notamment de ce qu'on leur avoit donné lieu pour s'assembler et prier Dieu ensemble et aultres infinis biens qu'on leur avoit faicts. Qu'ilz demeuroyent délibérez de n'oublier jamais ces choses, mais de les recognoistre où ilz pourroyent envers ceste Église qui est comme leur mère et de toutes les Églises de France. Et qu'ilz délibéroyent aussy de s'adresser à nous et en prendre conseil plus que jamais, nous prians et de ne leur refuser." *RCP* IV, 55.

³⁹For a discussion of these forms of abjuration, see "Les Survivants de la Saint-Barthélemy à Paris et en Province," *Bulletin* 40 (1891): 418-421.

disillusionment, or new-found conviction. In November, Beza complained to Bullinger that "the number of those deserting is beyond counting."⁴⁰ A month later, the news was equally grave. While La Rochelle, Montauban, Nîmes and Sancerre remained steadfast, "in the rest of France the defection was and continues to be unbelievable, indeed the number of apostates almost defies counting!"⁴¹ Jean de L'Espine later asserted that no fewer than two-thirds of the Protestants in France converted to Catholicism in the aftermath of Saint Bartholomew.⁴² Although this is probably an exaggeration, evidence suggests that many more Huguenots abjured the Protestant faith than were martyred for it.⁴³

One of the most famous—or notorious—cases of conversion was that of Hugues

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⁴⁰"Sed innumerabilis est eorum qui defecerunt numerus..." Beza to Bullinger, 12 November 1572, *CB* XIII, 216. This lament reappeared in Beza's letters to Bullinger (3 October 1572, *ibid.*, 199), and Thomas Van Til (22 October 1572, *ibid.*, 208). The lieutenant-general of Guyenne offered a similar assessment in his letter to Charles IX dated 18 October 1572: "Sire! il n'y a rien de plus certain que grande quantité de ceulx de la nouvelle opinion font démonstration de se repentir de ce qu'ils ont fait par le passé. Depuis que je suys en ces quartiers, ceulx de Brageyron, Sainte-Foy, Thoneins et Clayrac, où il n'y avoict point de catholiques ou si peu que rien, la pluspart vont à la messe..." Cited in Garrison-Estèbe, *Tocsin pour un Massacre*, 165. See also *ibid.*, 145-155, 164.

⁴¹"In reliqua Gallia fuit et est incredibilis defectio, quae tamen usque adeo non pacavit immanes illas feras, ut etiam eos qui defecerunt (qui pene sunt innumerabiles) semel ad internecionem una cum integris familiis trucidare prorsus decreverint." Beza to Thomas Van Til, 3 December 1572, *CB* XIII, 230. Recent investigation confirms Beza's assessment: Benedict argues convincingly, for example, that probably more than 3,000 persons in Rouen alone returned to the Catholic church in a matter of weeks following Saint Bartholomew. See *Rouen*, 130.

⁴²"... & mesmement depuis le Massacre de la Saint Barthélemy, auquel il se fit un horrible & espouventable révolte en toutes nos Églises des deux tiers pour le moins, de ceux qui au commencement y estoient entrez avec une si grande promptitude & allegresse, qu'il sembloit qu'ils y deussent tousiours demeurer, sans iamais avoir envie d'en départir, quelque tentation qui se peust présenter devant leurs yeux..." L'Espine, *Traicté de l'Apostasie par M.I.D.L. Ministre de la parole de Dieu en l'Église d'Angers* ([Genève: n.p., 1583), Aii.

⁴³See the evidence provided by Benedict based on baptismal records from ten different Huguenot towns, in *Rouen*, 134-138.

Sureau.⁴⁴ The pastor of a prominent church in Orléans, Sureau was captured and imprisoned shortly after Saint Bartholomew's day. Long at odds with Calvin and Beza over questions of ecclesiastical organization and discipline, he had additional reservations about the basis of authority in the Reformed churches. Now the brutal massacres eroded Sureau's confidence in God's favor toward the Huguenots. From his prison cell he wrote a 'Confession of Faith' in which he admitted his doctrinal 'errors' and stated his desire to embrace the Catholic church, urging Huguenots "to abandon all wicked novelties and to affirm all those doctrines that the Apostles and their true successors have taught until today."⁴⁵ News of Sureau's conversion reached the king, who had him brought to the Louvre to meet with Navarre and Condé in the presence of members of the Sorbonne. It was in large part through his efforts that the two princes decided to attend the mass, and subsequently to convert to the Catholic religion in September.⁴⁶ Sureau's skills were thereafter used by the king to convert

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⁴⁴For information about Hugues Sureau, also known as Du Rosier, see Kingdon, *Myths about the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacres*, 119-124.

⁴⁵"...qu'ilz abandonnent toutes nouveautez pernicieuses, & se rangent à ce que les Apostres & leurs vrais successeurs ont enseigné iusques aujourdhui." Sureau, *Confession de foy faicte par H. S. du Rosier avec abiuration et détestation de la profession Huguenotique ... ensemble la refutation de plusieurs poincts, mis en avant par Calvin & Bèze, contre la Foy & Église Apostolique* (Paris: Sebastien Niuelle, 1573), K ii.

⁴⁶Sureau claimed that he was an "instrument misérable, pour induire ces jeunes Princes d'aller à la Messe, & ainsi adorer un faux dieu." *Confession et recognoissance d'Hugues Sureau, dit du Rosier, touchant sa cheute en la Papauté, & les horribles scandales par luy commis: Servant d'exemple à tout le monde de la fragilité, & perversité de l'homme abandonné à soy: & de l'infinie miséricorde, & ferme vérité de Dieu envers ses esleus* (n.p., 1573), 10-11. This work was published after Sureau had escaped France and reaffirmed Protestantism. First Condé, then Navarre, disavowed the Reformed faith in September and, under the watchful eye of the king, wrote letters of abjuration to the pope requesting pardon. Babelon, *Henri IV*, 190-191. Beza reported this news to Bullinger on 12 November 1572: "Curarunt ut abjuracionis literas scriberent etiam ad ipsum Antichristum Navarrenus et Condensis." *CB XIII*, 216.

other Huguenot notables. In a letter to a Protestant noble woman, Sureau defended controversial points of Catholic doctrine and argued that the abuses in Roman Catholicism did not justify the Protestant revolt or legitimate the Reformed ministry: "Rather, we should remain in the Catholic church, praying that God might touch the hearts of those whose divine vocation it is to restore everything."⁴⁷ On December 19, hearing that his wife and children had successfully escaped France, Sureau fled to Heidelberg and reaffirmed the faith that he had disavowed less than four months before.

The ministers of Geneva confronted the problem of 'lapse' and 'apostasy' in several ways. Beza and his colleagues wrote letters to wavering friends in France, urging them to remain steadfast and to be diligent in attending sermons, partaking of the sacraments, and reading the Scriptures.⁴⁸ For those who had already abjured the Protestant religion, the Genevan ministers published pamphlets in which the psychological and spiritual causes of their 'apostasy' were analyzed, and the appropriate remedy prescribed. The *Briefve et Chrestienne remonstrance aux François révoltez* (1574), written by the Genevan pastor Simon Goulart, was a powerful example of this genre, vividly describing the horrible judgment awaiting

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⁴⁷"Plustost nous y devons demeurer, pryant Dieu qu'il luy pleust toucher les coeurs de ceux qui selon leur vocation y doyvent mettre la main pour restablir le tout." This letter, dated 8 October 1572 from Paris, is found in Geneva, Archives Tronchin, vol. 95, 176-181.

⁴⁸See, for example, Beza's letter to a French nobleman [Henri de La Tour?], in which the reformer notes: "Vous sçavez bien, davantage, que Dieu n'a pas seulement déffendu le mal, mais aussy commendé le bien, et n'a pareillement ordonné la lecture seulement, mais aussy la prédication de sa parolle, et l'administration de ses sacremens, qu'il veult estre instrumentz de nostre salut." 1 September 1576, CB XVII, 148.

those who had converted, and pleading with them to repent and "leave the synagogue of the Antichrist and return without delay to the Church of God."⁴⁹ The Company of Pastors were adamant: there could be no compromise between Christ and Antichrist, between the church of God and the 'synagogue' of Satan.

Moreover, the Genevan Consistory employed spiritual discipline to confront, chastise, and restore those who had temporized while fleeing France.⁵⁰ On 16 October 1572 the Consistory interviewed a man named Jehan Aignon who had attended a Catholic mass in Lyon in order to avoid persecution. To demonstrate the genuineness of his repentance, Aignon and his wife were ordered to confess their errors publicly in the church.⁵¹ The case of Jehanna Gralla was more dramatic: while attending a mass, she had been forced to her knees with a knife at her throat.

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⁴⁹"... représentez-vous les tourmens eternels, le feu inextinguible, le ver ne mourant point, le pleur & grincement de dents qui vous attend infalliblement, sinon que par vraye repentance vous avez recours à la miséricorde de Dieu, & quittans la synagogue de l'Antechrist, rentriez sans aucun delay en l'Église de Dieu." Goulart, *Briefve & Chrestienne remonstrance aux François revoltez*, in Jean Crespin, *Histoire des martyrs, persécutez et mis à mort pour la vérité de l'Évangile, depuis le temps des Apostres jusques à l'an 1597* (Genève: Vignon, 1597), 754. This treatise first appeared in the *Épistle de M. Pierre Martyr Florentin à Quelques Fidèles touchant leur abjuration & renoncement de la vérité* ([Genève?], 1574), translated by Goulart, which contained five pieces relating to the subject of abjuration. See Jones, *Simon Goulart, 1543-1628* (Genève: Georg & C^e, 1917), 556.

⁵⁰For a summary of the important role that this institution played in Geneva, see William Monter, "The Consistory of Geneva, 1559-1569," *BHR* 38 (1976): 467-484. Raymond Mentzer provides a useful survey of the function of excommunication in the Huguenot churches in his article "Marking the Taboo: Excommunication in French Reformed Churches," in *Sin and the Calvinists. Morals Control and the Consistory in the Reformed Tradition*, ed. Raymond Mentzer (Kirkville, MO: Sixteenth Century Essays & Studies, 1994), 97-128.

⁵¹"Jehan Aignon de Paris ... en les derniers troubles, il avoit dict, sur la demande a luy faicte p3 ledict Gouverneur s'il voudroyt aller à la Messe, qu'il feroyt ce qui plairoyt à Dieu et au Roy... en quoy il recognoit sa faulte et en demande pardon à Dieu et à l'église. A esté arresté attendre sa repentance qu'il sera appelé avec sa femme pour recognoistre ensemble leur faulte devant l'église." A. Cramer, *Notes extraites des registres du Consistoire de l'église de Genève, 1541-1814*, unpublished notes (1853), 174. Geneva, Institut d'histoire de la Réformation.

Asked if she were a Huguenot, she had said 'no.' Given her ethnic background, the Consistory referred her case to the Italian congregation.⁵² Cases like these, which could be multiplied, forced the Company of Pastors to take more concerted action in early December 1572, several weeks before Geneva's quarterly celebration of the Lord's Supper. It was announced in the city's temples that "all those who had polluted themselves in idolatries in order to save their lives during the massacres" should present themselves to the Consistory in order to repent of their error, and thus to be prepared to approach the Table of the Lord in good conscience.⁵³ In all, about one hundred people appeared before the Consistory in the next three weeks, confessing to have attended masses, participated in Catholic processions, or allowed priests to baptize their children.

By contrast, the 'apostasy' of Hugues Sureau demanded sterner measures. In January 1573, the French refugee ministers in Geneva advised the church of Heidelberg to "watch Sureau carefully and wait for a while in order to prove the genuineness of his repentance before readmitting him fully into the church."⁵⁴ When

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⁵²"Jehanna Gralla ... pour avoir esté au temple des papistes et s'y esté agenouillée par force d'ung qui lui tenoit la dague sur le col, aussi comme estant inquisé si elle estoit Huguenotte, auroit respondu que non." 19 March 1573, Cramer, *Notes extraites*, 174.

⁵³"... à tous ceux qui pour sauver leurs vies depuis ces massacres s'éstoyent polluez aux idolatries, de se présenter au prochen Consistoire afin qu'ilz n'approchent de la Cène du Seigneur devant que d'avoir recogneu leur faulte." 7 December 1572, *RCP III*, 95-96.

⁵⁴"La Compagnie ayant entendu que M^r Hugues Sureau dict Du Rosier, qui a faict si horrible scandale en France par sa révolte, maintenant s'estoit rendu à Heidelberg et faisoit du repentant, n'a pas estimé qu'on le deust rejeter ne mespriser du tout ses confessions. Toute fois a trouvé bon que les ministres de France qui sont icy et à qui la chose artouche de plus près escripvent à l'Église d'Heidelberg qu'il estoit bon besoin, veu l'esprit et les actes mesmes précédants cestuy-cy dudict Du Rosier, de regarder diligemment sur luy et attendre quelque temps pour probation de sa repentance

Sureau sought permission to visit Geneva in November 1573, the Company of Pastors denied his request, citing lingering suspicions of his character and fears that he would bring disrepute to the city.⁵⁵ It was only in the following year that Sureau was granted full standing in the Reformed church in Heidelberg.⁵⁶

Spiritual discipline in Geneva had both an individual and a corporate dimension. The Company hoped not only to rehabilitate those who had fallen, but to cleanse the sacral community of the pollution of 'idolatry' that clung to the consciences of many of the refugees who now lived in the city. Like public fasts and special prayer services, religious discipline was a private and a public act, believed to foster the spiritual well-being of the individual as well as to ensure the sanctity and physical security of the community. If the Genevans were to avoid the fate of the Reformed in France, they would need not only to strengthen the city's fortifications but to purify their hearts.

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devant que l'admettre plainement en l'Église." 8 January 1573, *RCP* III, 99-100.

⁵⁵"Monsieur de Besze a proposé à la Compagnie que Du Rosier désiroit de venir de par-deça. Sur quoy sa vie passée ayant esté discourue, le mauvais tesmoignage qu'il a ancores aujourd'huy despuys son horrible cheute et la recognoissance telle quelle qu'il en a faicte... la Compagnie a advisé de ne le point attirer ne induire à venir de par-deçà, d'autant qu'il ne nous sçauroit apporter qu'ordure, mais bien que Monsieur de Besze luy rescrivant luy remontrera ses fautes, lesquelles nous désirons qu'il amande..." 22 November 1573, *RCP* III, 120.

⁵⁶See Church of Heidelberg to Beza, 17 May 1574, *CB* XV, 95-97.

The Charpentier Affair

Geneva's security was a matter of great concern during the fall and winter of 1572-1573.⁵⁷ Troop movements in France and reports that the duke of Savoy was mobilizing a powerful army in Piedmont seemed to confirm suspicions that the Catholics were preparing to destroy Geneva and invade Switzerland. Fears were further heightened in November when a letter written by the duke of Guise was intercepted reporting that Charles IX had resolved to exterminate the Reformed religion and that enemy soldiers, posing as refugees, had already been secretly deployed in Geneva in order to seize it.⁵⁸ No match for either the armies of Savoy or France, Geneva remained a vulnerable Protestant peninsula jutting out into a hostile Catholic sea.

In the midst of these unsettling reports and rumors, Beza and his colleagues faced a crisis of their own. In early January 1573, Bullinger informed Beza that he had seen in Zurich a scandalous pamphlet, written by a certain Pierre Charpentier, that accused the Genevan clergy of political conspiracy and indirectly blamed Beza

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⁵⁷Fazy provides a vivid account of Geneva's preparations for war during these months, see *La Saint-Barthélemy et Genève*. By contrast, William Monter asserts that "despite the excitement in Geneva when news of the massacre of St. Bartholomew burst upon her on August 23, 1572 [sic], local tensions continued to remain low .... there was no danger" (*Calvin's Geneva*, 197). This statement--while being a conclusion of hindsight subject to debate--does not appreciate the very real perception of imminent danger so evident in the register of the city council and in the correspondence of Beza.

⁵⁸In a letter (dated October 27) to his grandmother, the duke of Guise reported that "... ce jour-là le Roy en son conseil a résolu d'exterminer tout ce qui reste de ceux de la Religion et qu'on n'attend autre, sinon que les plus grands d'entre eux soyent un peu rassurés.... Au surplus qu'on a pratiqué et désia gagné en la ville de Genève aucuns lesquels, avec quelques troupes de soldats, qui y sont attendans sous couleur de religion, se doyvent emparer de ladicte ville, chose qu'est menée si secrètement et avec telle industrie et subtilité que la chose aura bien tost issue." Cited in Fazy, *La Saint-Barthélemy et Genève*, 51.

himself for the bloodshed of Saint Bartholomew's day. Bullinger urged a prompt response to this calumny lest it mislead many people.⁵⁹ Charpentier's accusations were particularly serious given his past connections with Beza and Geneva.

Charpentier had been a professor of law at the Academy of Geneva from 1566-1570, a tenure plagued by debt and frequent absences.⁶⁰ Afterwards, he had gone to Paris where he was employed by the government to spy on the Protestant churches.⁶¹ After Saint Bartholomew, Charpentier found refuge in Strasbourg and, still in the guise of a Huguenot, wrote a provocative *Lettre de Pierre Charpentier Iurisconsulte, adressée à François Portes*, published in French and Latin editions in the fall of 1572.⁶² The French court arranged for the pamphlet's wide distribution, sending multiple copies

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⁵⁹"Carpenterius ad carpendum vir idoneus, quisquis is sit, librum in te scripsit, dilecte frater, supra quam credi possit maledicum, non tum per omnia indoctum. Eo multis vereor imponet, multos seducet. Ideoque mihi pernecessarium videntur ut respondeas. Neque te, neque D. Admirallium, neque alios caesos tales esse credo, quales ille vos facit." Bullinger to Beza, 10 January 1573, *CB* XIV 2.

⁶⁰For biographical information on Pierre Charpentier, see John Viénot, "Un Apologiste de la Saint-Barthélemy, Pierre Charpentier," *Séance de Rentrée des Cours de la Faculté de Théologie Protestante de Paris* (Paris: Librairie Fischbacher, 1902), 19-42; and Kingdon, *Myths about the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacres*, 112-119. Charpentier's tenure at the Genevan Academy is recounted by Borgeaud, *Histoire de l'Université de Genève*, I, 90-93.

⁶¹John Viénot argues conclusively that Charpentier was a 'double-agent.' See "Un Apologiste," 19-29. This was also the conclusion of the author of the *Réveille-matin*: "Carpentier a toujours esté un maistre frippon effronté, un Tholozat, c'est a dire un double." Eusebe Philadelphie [Nicholas Barnaud?] *Le Réveille-matin des François, et de leurs voisins*, vol. 2 (Edimbourg [Strasbourg]: Jaques James [Bernard Jobin], 1574), 73-74.

⁶²The French edition, upon which this discussion depends, was entitled *Lettre de Pierre Charpentier iurisconsulte, adressée à François Portes Candois, par laquelle il monstre que les persecutions des Églises de France sont advenues, non par la faulte de ceux qui faisoient profession de la Religion, mais de ceux qui nourrissoient les factions & conspirations, qu'on appelle la cause* ([Strasbourg], 1572). François Portus was a professor of Greek and Beza's colleague at the Genevan Academy from 1561 to 1581. See Borgeaud, *Histoire de l'Université de Genève*, I, 75-77.

through official diplomatic channels to England, Switzerland, Germany and Poland.⁶³

The central argument of this *Lettre* was that all of France's troubles found their origins in Geneva, nourished by Beza and supporters of his seditious 'Cause.' Charpentier asserted that while Charles IX had generously granted religious liberty to the Huguenots and sought the peace and tranquility of the kingdom during the previous decade, Beza and his faction, under the pretext of religion, had continually promoted rebellion against the king and enflamed war in France. Unwilling to accept the peaceful coexistence of Catholics and Protestants, Beza, as the 'satanic inventor' and 'bishop' of this 'Cause,' had encouraged violence against priests, threatened the queen mother, and plotted to destroy the Valois dynasty. These 'fanatics' had also slandered and threatened with excommunication those moderate, peace-loving Huguenots--Charpentier included himself, Pierre Ramus, Hugues Sureau, and Jean de L'Espine in this group--who refused to follow Beza and his conspiracy. According to Charpentier, these seditious designs were particularly evident at the National Synods of La Rochelle (1571) and Nîmes (1572) where Beza and his cohorts attempted "to nourish and maintain seditions in France" by, among other things, raising money for foreign mercenaries and appointing Huguenot administrators in place of royal officers "in order to establish a new kingdom in the beard of the king."⁶⁴ In response to these

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⁶³Viénot, "Un Apologiste," 36; Kingdon, *Myths about the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacres*, 113.

⁶⁴The Synod of La Rochelle was assembled "non point pour traicter de la Religion, mais de la Cause... dressée tant seulement pour nourrir & entretenir les seditions en France.... Car à la vérité cela n'estoit autre qu'establir un nouveau Royaume en la barbe du Roy..." Charpentier, *Lettre ... à François Portus*, 17^e & 18^e.

and other rebellious plots, Charles IX was finally forced to remove this disease of treason and sedition from the kingdom by ordering the purge of Saint Bartholomew.⁶⁵ And yet, Charpentier complained, even the massacres had not completely exterminated this radical faction, for in Geneva, Beza was now busily "collecting the pieces from this recent shipwreck of the Cause in order to organize some new act of sedition."⁶⁶ The *Lettre* concluded by calling on all princes and republics to besiege Geneva--this 'receptacle of all seditious men'--and to demand the death of Beza.⁶⁷ With the reformer dead, France would once again find peace, God's wrath against the Huguenots would be expiated, and the churches would finally be healed from this cancerous 'Cause.'

Charpentier's pamphlet was a masterful stroke of Catholic propaganda. Capitalizing on theological tensions existing within the Huguenot movement before Saint Bartholomew--most notably the rift between Beza, Pierre Ramus and Jean

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⁶⁵Here we find the only explicit reference to Saint Bartholomew in this pamphlet: "Je sçay bien que tu as sçeu à Paris la matinée de saint Barthélemy, mais on ne sçait quelle entreprise avoient fait nouvellement ceux de la Cause, pour laquelle le courage du Roy aye esté si grièvement offensé, & si soudainement allumé contre eux. Seulement sçay-ie bien que dans le corps de ceste malheureuse Cause, il y avoit tant de mauvaises humeurs de trahison & sédition, assemblées de si longue main, qu'il estoit impossible que la Cause estant si malade peust vivre plus longuement." Charpentier, *Lettre ... à François Portes*, 33^r.

⁶⁶"Mais vostre bon pasteur, qui porte l'athéisme engravé au coeur, & Iésus Christ au front ... recueille des pièces de l'ancien naufrage de la Cause, pour composer quelque nouvelle sédition." Charpentier, *Lettre... à François Portes*, 35.

⁶⁷Charpentier encouraged the princes to besiege "vostre ville ABEL réceptacle de tous séditieux, & boutique de toute faction & conspiration, duquel siège elle ne sera point délivrée, iusques à ce qu'ils ayent ietté du haut en bas des murailles la teste de SEBE prince des séditieux qui s'estoit rebellé du Roy David, & avoit détourné le peuple de son obéissance, lequel Sebe si vour regardez au lettres de son nom, & à la vérité du faict, vous trouverez que c'est la figure de vostre pasteur, que Dieu aydant recevra un pareil fruit de ces trahisons & conspirations que le mesme Sebe..." Charpentier, *Lettre ... à François Portes*, 35^v-36. The biblical allusion is from 2 Samuel 20.

Morely over ecclesiastical discipline⁶⁸--his pamphlet attempted to divide further the Reformed, encouraging 'moderate' French Protestants to abandon the 'fanatical' wing of the movement, renounce Geneva, lay down their arms and seek rapprochement with the Catholic crown. Although this was not the first time a Catholic author had accused Beza of sedition, Charpentier's ties to Geneva made the accusations more credible, and thus far more dangerous.⁶⁹ Charpentier's work also appealed to a wider audience: if some of the blame for the massacres of Saint Bartholomew could be shifted from Paris to Geneva, Protestant allies in Germany and Switzerland would be less inclined to welcome Reformed refugees or support Huguenot military resistance. Moreover, by picturing the support for the Huguenot diaspora in Geneva as another example of sedition, this pamphlet threatened to compromise the efforts of the Company of Pastors to provide refuge for French exiles. In the battle for public opinion, Charpentier's accusations were a frontal assault on Beza's leadership and Geneva's roles as 'mother' and 'nursery' of the Huguenot churches.

Beza and the Genevan ministers took swift action in order to minimize the impact of this pamphlet. In early February 1573, Beza and Trembley appeared before the Small Council to advise it of the accusations made by Charpentier and to

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⁶⁸See our discussion above, pages 46-48.

⁶⁹During the First War of Religion, the poet Ronsard had criticized Beza sharply for his opposition to the king: "Si tu [Beza] es envers elle enfant de bon courage, / Ores que tu le peux, rends luy son nourissage, / Retire tes soldars, et au lac Genevois / (Comme chose exécration) enfonce leurs harnois. / Ne presche plus en France une Évangile armée, / Un Christ empistollée tout noiricy de fumée, / Portant un morion en teste, et dans la main / Un large coustelas rouge du sang humain. / Cela desplaist à Dieu, cela desplaist au Prince, / Cela n'est qu'un appas qui tire la province / A la sédition, laquelle desoubs toy / Pour avoir liberté, ne voudra plus de Roy." *Discours des misères de ce temps*, ed. Malcolm Smith (Genève: Librairie Droz, 1979), 83-84.

encourage the magistrates to petition his arrest as soon as he arrived in Basle.⁷⁰ The following month, François Portus completed a *Response* to Charpentier in which he refuted his opponent's arguments point by point.⁷¹ In spite of his claims to the contrary, Portus argued, Charpentier was a secret Catholic, a 'Monsieur Wolf' who wanted to devour unsuspecting sheep. During his stay in Geneva, this immoral man had often complained about his salary, frequently abused his wife and servants, and once even abandoned his post when the plague infected the city. Now, he dared to justify openly the barbarity of Saint Bartholomew.⁷² Portus was particularly concerned to answer the accusation of conspiracy. He denied that any French ministers, consistories, or synods had violated the *Discipline* of the Reformed churches by espousing war or revolt against the king. On the contrary, in the past eleven years of civil war, "King Charles IX and all those of royal blood have been commended to God in public prayers in every Reformed sermon and worship service."⁷³ As for Beza, he was a godly and hardworking pastor, hardly the 'pope' of

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⁷⁰On behalf of the Company, Beza and Trembley report to the council "pour obvier aux calomnies contenues en la lettre diffamatoire escrite par ledit Carpentier à M^r Portus, contre ceste ville, les ministres d'elle en général et M^r de Bèze en particulier, chargeant ceste ville d'estre la retraicte de tous malheureux et que en icelle ont este pratiqués totes les guerres, qu'il plaise à Mess^{rs} d'en escrire aux S^{rs} de Basle, parce que ledit Carpentier s'y retire quelque fois." 9 February 1573, RC 68, 37^v-38.

⁷¹The Latin edition of this work was published in Geneva by Vignon in 1573. A French translation was published the following year. I have relied upon this second edition. François Portus, *Response de François Portus Candiot, aux lettres diffamatoires de Pierre Carpentier advocat, pour l'innocence des fidèles serviteurs de Dieu, & obéissans subiets du roy: massacrez le 24 iour d'aoust 1572...* (Genève: [Jean Berjon], 1574). See CDM, 79, 81-82.

⁷²"... il n'y a personne que Carpentier, qui ose excuser ouvertement ceste barbare cruauté." Portus, *Response*, 15.

⁷³"Les guerres civiles pour la Religion ont duré onze ans ou environ dans la France. Pendant ce temps ie maintien, qu'il n'y a eu presche ni sermon fait par ministre quelconque, où le Roy Charles

Geneva or the leader of a seditious 'cause' against the French royal family. Likewise, far from being a den of rebellion, Geneva continued to fulfill its divinely ordained function as a "refuge and shelter for poor believers banished from France because of the true religion."⁷⁴ And what of this group of 'moderate' Huguenots with whom Charpentier associated himself? Portus claimed that all of them--with the exception of Ramus who had been killed in the massacres--considered Charpentier to be "a traitor, apostate, and nasty liar."⁷⁵ Thus, he concluded, these conspiracy theories had been invented by Charpentier in order to justify Catholic cruelty and to discourage foreign princes from aiding the persecuted French churches. The Huguenots were the victims, not the provocateurs of the massacres of Saint Bartholomew's day. Despite Portus' assurances to the contrary, the resistance activities of Beza and his colleagues during the following months would strengthen Catholic fears that Geneva was a dangerous staging ground for seditious plots against the king of France.

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neufième & tout le sang Royal n'ayent esté recommandez à Dieu es prières publiques." Portus, *Response*, 37.

⁷⁴"... ce sainte cité que Dieu a opposée à l'Antechrist, & conserver miraculeusement par si long espace de temps pour servir de refuge & retraite aux povres fidèles bannis pour la Religion..." Portus, *Response*, 57.

⁷⁵"... te tiennent ordinairement pour un traistre, apostat, & vilain calomniateur." Portus, *Response*, 36-37.

Under the Cross

Saint Bartholomew had a dramatic long-term effect on the Reformed movement in France. After more than a decade of persecution, economic hardship, and unfulfilled expectations, the massacres deepened existing doubts about the viability of the Reformed religion. Protestant congregations in most regions of the kingdom experienced a decline in membership after 1572, even in those areas untouched by the massacres.⁷⁶ After the liquidation of so many Huguenot nobles and generals, de Thou claimed, there was no one who "did not regard this cause as absolutely defeated."⁷⁷ In addition, as suggested by the case of Sureau, the massacres may well have been interpreted by many as a divine indictment of the Huguenot movement, thereby raising serious questions about the historical legitimacy of Protestantism in general. The fact that most of the Huguenots who converted to Catholicism in Rouen following Saint Bartholomew never returned to the Reformed religion is indicative of this disillusionment.⁷⁸ For those who remained loyal to the Huguenot cause, the massacres transformed their expectations and goals. Gone was the dream of the early 1560s that the Huguenot movement would quickly capture the soul of France--whether through evangelism, education, or war--and transform the country into a Protestant kingdom. Instead, the Reformed now faced the likelihood that they would remain a persecuted minority within France.

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⁷⁶See the compelling evidence offered by Benedict, *Rouen*, 125-150.

⁷⁷Cited in Greengrass, *France in the Age of Henri IV*, 17.

⁷⁸Benedict, *Rouen*, 125-150.

Protestant intellectuals like Beza attempted to conceptualize and explain this dramatic turn of events in theological terms. In his private correspondence, Beza depicted the victims, survivors and perpetrators of the massacres in vivid biblical images: He described the Huguenot victims in Paris as Christian 'martyrs' and likened the survivors of the massacres to a holy 'remnant,' rescued by God from evil Babylon. The king was compared to the wicked pharaoh of Egypt who had persecuted the people of God.⁷⁹ The Cardinal of Lorraine, Charles of Guise, was an incestuous atheist, a charlatan, a paricide, and a most wicked prince of Evil.⁸⁰ But Beza reserved his strongest criticisms for Catherine de Médicis. She was a 'Satan,' an Athaliah, a Jezebel, who usurped the scepter of her sons and waged war against the true church. It was this wicked queen, Beza believed, who must be blamed for the majority of France's problems.⁸¹ In addition to the scourges of anarchy and war, even nature itself seemed to reflect God's anger at the wicked regime of the Valois. Hearing a rumor that blood had rained from the skies in Lyon, Beza complained:

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⁷⁹"Pharao magis ac magis obduratus Lutetiam ut leo in antrum suum refugit, nihil aliud quam lanienam sperans, quamvis ipsis etiam catholicissimis magna ex parte exorsus." Beza to Bullinger, 12 March 1574, *CB XV*, 50.

⁸⁰In a bitterly satirical epitaph, Beza 'honored' the memory of the deceased cardinal of Lorraine: "... cardinali atheo, hariolo, mago, moeche, incesto, paediconi, proditori, venefico, parricidae, coeterisque honoribus ac titulis omnibus qui apud Romanos patres reverendissimos et illustrissimos habentur longe clarissimo, homini in oppugnanda Christi religione prae fracto et inexorabili animo, pacis publicae hosti acerrimo, portentorum et prodigiorum omnium quae maiorum vel nostra tulit aetas monstrosissimo..." Beza to Gabriel Schlüsselberger, 27 March 1575, *CB XVI*, 48. The biblical reference is to 1 Timothy 1.9-10. See also *CB XVI*, 4.

⁸¹"Rex quoque et mater nihil se magis cupere ostendunt. Ego nihil boni possum a Satana et ipsius organo sperare." Beza to Gwalther, 15 December 1576, *CB XVII*, 237. "Regina illa omnium harum calamitatum causa..." Beza to Gwalther, 28 October 1576, *ibid.*, 205.

"God is shouting, the heavens are weeping, the earth is angry, the sea bellows.... Men and women are the only ones who do not heed these warnings, mocking God even when he thunders at them."⁸² Beza's use of biblical types like these often served as a barometer of his angst and anger.⁸³ When the reformer wished to express his deepest pain, frustration, or indignation, he frequently appealed to scriptural characters and concepts, interpreting the data of his experience in light of the biblical drama of God's chosen people struggling against Satan and his minions. Here, then, Beza's theological outlook and momentary desperation found common ground. The story of the Reformed churches in France was *the* story of the elect 'Church' throughout the ages: as the Jews had suffered under the cruel oppression of the Egyptian pharaohs and wicked queens like Jezebel, as a remnant from Judah had bravely endured exile in Babylon, as early Christians had faced the lions of Nero, so now the Huguenots confronted yet another satanic plot to destroy God's elect.⁸⁴ And

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⁸²"Lugduni 20 hujus mensis ad vesperam sanguine pluit, quod tamen non fuit nisi biduo post animadversum, cruentatis propolarum chartis ac mercibus quas, oborta sub noctem ingenti pluvia, subito in officinas contraxerant, die Lunae mane quum rursum merces proponerent, deprehensis. Sic clamat Deus, lachrymatur, coelum, terra indignatur, mare brevi procul dubio magnis classibus sternendum remugit. Soli homines non monentur, imo Deo ipsi tonanti, student oppedere." Beza to [Bullinger], 28 March 1574, CB XV, 59.

⁸³For an insightful discussion of the use and purpose of biblical imagery in sixteenth-century correspondences, see Reinhard Bodenmann, "La Bible et l'art d'écrire des lettres. Pratiques dans l'aire germanique du XVI^e siècle," *Bulletin* 141 (1995): 357-382. Note especially his comment: "Je constate aussi, que ce n'est pas tant l'appartenance des (ou de l'un des) correspondants au clergé qui provoque une fréquence plus élevée d'allusions à l'Écriture. C'est plutôt certain sujets, comme la mort ... et la souffrance ... qui rendent ces allusions plus fréquentes. En fait, plus le sujet est délicat et gênant, plus le rédacteur de la lettre éprouve le besoin de se réclamer d'une autorité incontestable ou de formuler sa pensée par un pastiche biblique" (377-378).

⁸⁴The continuity that Beza perceived between the experience of the Reformed movement in France and the history of God's people in the Jewish and Christian Scriptures was seen in his preface to the *Histoire ecclésiastique* (I, i-x).

yet, in the midst of such terrible suffering and struggle, Beza believed, God would fulfill his promises to his chosen people. The Church would survive. This underlying trust was captured in two important phrases that appeared regularly in the reformer's letters after 1572: "the church never triumphs except under the cross" and "the Lord will provide."⁸⁵ In the first statement, a paraphrase of Tertullian, Beza emphasized both the inevitability of persecution and the ultimate victory of the true Church. In the second phrase, Beza cited Abraham's words of faith in Genesis 22 in order to affirm God's covenant of provision and blessing for the elect. Though deeply shaken by the shocking reversal of Saint Bartholomew's day, the reformer recast the horror of the massacres into the historical story of God's covenant with his people; despite persecution and suffering, the faithful church would ultimately be

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⁸⁵Examples of these two themes can be multiplied from Beza's correspondence: "De Gallicis autem ecclesiis, ut uno verbo omnia: res ad crucem rediit. Itaque de victoria multo quam antea melius spero. Nunquam enim, nisi sub cruce tum vicit tum triumphavit ecclesia, id est, qui vera sunt ecclesia." Beza to Count Sayne-Wittgenstein, 18 December 1581, in Gottlieb Friedlaender, *Sammlung ungedruckter Briefe des Reuchlin, Beza und Bullinger* (Berlin, 1837), 137. Hereafter cited as 'Friedlaender.' "Sed absit, ut animum propterea despondeamus, quum nunquam triumpharit ecclesia nisi sub cruce..." Beza to Count Sayne-Wittgenstein, 26 August 1584, *ibid.*, 150. "Etsi enim variis modis Dominus Ecclesias Gallicas exercet, manet tamen semen, et quidem germinans, inter medias etiam cruces..." Beza, in the name of the Company of Pastors, to the pastors of Berne, 15/25 January 1587, *RCP* V, 314. "Certe me non perterre facit haec tanta tempestas nec hostium exterorum rabies, quoniam sic semper crevit Ecclesia et Satan his artibus tum ipse sibi crucem semper fixit, tam Ecclesiae novos triumphos peperit." Beza to the church of Berne, 12/22 January 1592, Geneva, MHR, ms. Ab9. "In his miseriis, hoc unum me solatur, quod dicebat Abraham, ille credentium pater: 'Dominus providebit'; et quod crux nunquam Ecclesiam perdidit. Fiat igitur Domini Dei nostri voluntas." Beza to Dürnhoffer, 29 August 1581, Paris, Bibl. Ste. Geneviève, ms. 1455, fol. 165^v-166. "Quid igitur? Nempe ad illud Abrahami credentium patris symbolum confugiendum est: 'Dominus providebit'; quod adhuc sedulo fecimus, et per ipsius gratiam facere constituimus." Beza to Dürnhoffer, 2 June 1582, Paris, Bibl. Ste. Geneviève, ms. 1455, fol. 168-169. "Rex certe magis ac magis obduratur, nec fit ulla pacis mentio. Sed Jehova Dominus providebit." Beza to Johann Stumpf, 11/21 October 1587, Zurich, Staatsarchiv, E II 381, fol. 1461. "Sed iis certe difficultatibus magis ac magis premimur, quibus, nisi nos illud Abrahami credentium patris sustineret, nempe: 'Dominus providebit.' Gen. 22.8, iampridem omnem spem despondissemus..." Beza to Constantin Fabricius, 1/11 March 1592, Paris, Bibl. Ste. Geneviève, ms. 1455, fol. 58^v-59^v.

victorious.

Such assurance did not obviate the need for immediate action. Faced with extermination, the Huguenots adopted survival strategies that became more radical than before. La Rochelle and Sancerre welcomed hundreds of refugees and openly defied Catholic armies. While La Rochelle successfully weathered a protracted royal siege, Sancerre was finally forced to surrender to Catholic forces in July of 1573 after starvation reduced its inhabitants to eating cats, dogs and rats.⁸⁶ In southern France, Protestant assemblies began to lay the foundations of a 'state within a state'—a revolutionary union of Reformed churches that effectively usurped royal sovereignty by providing for an army, finances, justice and municipal organization.⁸⁷ In some regions of Languedoc, Protestants and Catholics joined together and took arms against the king. As Huguenot communities openly rebelled against royal authority, Protestant intellectuals became sharper in their rhetoric and more explicit in their attacks upon the Valois. Between 1573-1576, Huguenot authors waged a determined campaign of propaganda in which they defended the memory of Coligny, vilified the French court, and justified Huguenot resistance activities. Borne in the crucible of social anarchy and religious slaughter, this angry literature reflected a new phase in the French civil wars in which the Huguenots abandoned once-for-all confidence in

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⁸⁶Beza attempted unsuccessfully to raise money for the besieged residents of Sancerre: "Interea miseri fratres Sancerani consumptis canibus, felibus, muribus, patiuntur exrema, et jam ad sesquimensum frustra laboro de cogenda stipe, quam si nacti essemus, jam essent liberati." Beza to Bullinger, 15 July 1573, *CB XIV*, 154. For a vivid description of the sieges of La Rochelle and Sancerre, see Kingdon, *Myths about the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacres*, 51-69.

⁸⁷Sutherland, *The Huguenot Struggle*, 217-222.

royal promises and looked instead increasingly to desperate means of self-preservation.

Geneva's contribution to the literature of resistance against the French crown was substantial. The city's geographical proximity to France, large printing industry, influential pastoral Company, and massive refugee population created social and political conditions that were conducive to the birth of radical ideas and actions. This was particularly true after August of 1572 when many of the Huguenots' most learned jurists and theologians fled to Geneva. It was probably Beza who enlisted and coordinated this Reformed 'brain-trust' in the massive propaganda campaign against the French monarchy during the next several years.⁸⁸ A survey of the political pamphlets and books written in Geneva between 1573-1576 indicates two distinct but related objectives. First, Beza and his colleagues attempted to correct royal and Catholic interpretations of Saint Bartholomew that portrayed the massacres as a justified response to Huguenot conspiracies. Second, they developed intricate historical and constitutional arguments to defend resistance against a legitimate king-turned-tyrant. Despite the strenuous efforts of the Genevan Small Council to monitor and, finally, to censor such literature, the city on the shores of Lac Léman was a

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⁸⁸The evidence pointing toward Beza's leadership of this propaganda campaign is suggestive, though not conclusive. As the moderator of the Company of Pastors, he took an active role in finding academic posts for leading intellectuals among the refugees (i.e. Hotman, Doneau, Daneau, Scaliger). During their residence in Geneva, Hotman and Daneau wrote important resistance pamphlets. Beza's correspondence shows that he frequently had knowledge of his colleagues' literary projects before they were printed, and sometimes arranged with friends in Zurich to have them translated into German. Moreover, he often sent the books of Geneva's ministers and professors to high-placed friends in Switzerland, Germany, Scotland and Poland. Finally, Beza took the lead in the polemical campaign by writing the *Du droit des magistrats* and, probably, the *Responsio ad orationem habitam nuper in concilio Helvetiorum*.

virtual workshop and clearing house for provocative political literature in the early 1570s.

History and Hysteria

The most pressing need for Huguenot authors in 1572-1574 was to counter the Catholic version of Saint Bartholomew disseminated by the French court. Initially blaming the death of Coligny on a vendetta of the Guise family, Charles IX reversed himself several days later and claimed full responsibility for the assassination.⁸⁹ According to this second version, the king had ordered the extermination of Protestant nobles in Paris not because of their religious commitments, but as a preemptive strike to crush a Huguenot conspiracy against the royal family. This plot, the king asserted, had been masterminded by the Admiral in order to avenge an unsuccessful attempt on his life two days before.⁹⁰ This second interpretation was publicized throughout Europe by royal ambassadors in an attempt to portray the massacre of Huguenot nobles as a legitimate act of political retribution, thereby exculpating the king from the bloodbaths in Paris. In December of 1572, Pomponne de Bellièvre, the French ambassador to the Swiss cantons, defended this official version before a Swiss Diet at

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⁸⁹For these two contradictory royal versions, see the letters attached to Hotman's, *Discours simple & véritable des rages exercées, par la France, des horribles et indignes meurtres commiz es personnes de Gaspar de Colligni Amiral de France...* (La Rochelle, 1573), G2^v-G3^v, H2-H3^v.

⁹⁰Well aware of this tactical shift, Beza remarked bitterly: "Rex initio in Guisianos omnia transtulit; nunc omnino suo jussu facta scribit, et quos curavit Lutetiae in lecto trucidendos, homines quibus indignus erat mundus, audet etiam conjurationis accusare." Beza to Thomas Van Til, 10 September 1572, CB XIII, 187.

Baden. Anxious to counter this deliberate campaign of Catholic misinformation, the Genevan ministers and magistrates wrote their friends in Germany, Switzerland, and Poland in an attempt to exonerate Coligny and the Huguenots.⁹¹ In the first months of 1573, Beza and Hotman prepared Protestant 'histories' of the massacres of Saint Bartholomew, an effort not only to counter the king's 'shameless lie,' but also to fashion Huguenot memory of the seminal event.⁹² The *Responsio ad orationem habitam nuper in concilio Helvetiorum* (1573)--ostensibly the work of a Polish gentleman named Wolfgang Prischbach--was probably written by Beza, refuting point by point the contents of Bellièvre's speech to the Swiss diet.⁹³ Hotman's *Discours simple*

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⁹¹In September, Beza reported this second royal version to Bullinger: "Puto te vidisse Regis edictum typis etiam excusum, in quo declarat omnia illa Lutetiae patrata esse ex suo mandato, 'non ob religionem, inquit, sed ut praevenirem Amiralii et aliorum nefariam conjunctionem,' cui etiam probandae nunc incumbunt. Bellum sane commentum..." 24 September 1572, CB XIII, 192. Bullinger wrote Beza and Hotman by return post recommending that a 'true history' of Saint Bartholomew be written. See 10 October 1572, Bullinger to Beza, CB XIII, 203. For Bullinger and Hotman's interchange on this subject, see R. Dareste, "François Hotman," 57.

⁹²In his *Discours simple & véritable des rages exercées, par la France, des horribles et indignes meurtres commiz es personnes de Gaspar de Colligni Amiral de France, & de plusieurs grandz Seigneurs gentils-hommes* (Basle: Pieter Vuallemand, 1573), Hotman recognized the importance of preserving a 'true' history of the massacres for posterity: "I'ay pensé que ie devois cest office à la posterité de mettre par escrit la chose ainsi qu'elle s'est passé..." (A2). The importance of historical memory was also affirmed in the preface of the *Histoire ecclésiastique*: "... l'histoire est le seul moyen par lequel la mémoire des choses passées estant conservée, l'homme peut cognoistre ce qu'il n'a onques veu ni ouy, voire sans aucun danger, & trop mieux, bien souvent, que si luy-mesme l'avoit ouy ou veu; les choses passées sont comme remises en estre: le temps mesmes & la mort sont comme vaincus & domptés" (I, i).

⁹³I have referred to the Latin and French editions of this work: *Responsio ad orationem habitam nuper in concilio Helvetiorum pro defensione caedium & latrociniorum, quae in Gallia commissa sunt: editam & promulgatam Germanice* (n.p., n.d.); *Response de Wolfgang Prischbachius, à un harangue soustenant les massacres & brigandages commis en France: prononcée en l'assemblée des Liges, imprimée & publiée en langue Alemande*. Published in [Goulart], *Mémoires de l'estat de France sous Charles Neufiesme*, II (n.p., 1577), 129-157. Although Beza denied writing this work (see RCP III, 108), several modern interpreters have ascribed it to him. (See Kingdon, *Myths about the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacres*, 110-111; Alain Dufour, "Théodore de Bèze, Charles IX et les Guises," in *Das Reformierte Erbe*, band 2, eds. Heiko A. Oberman et al. [Zurich: Theologischer

& véritable (1573) was a more detailed account of the political and religious events leading to Coligny's death and the massacres that followed.⁹⁴ Both works directly challenged the royal interpretation of Saint Bartholomew's day.

Prisbach and Hotman agreed that the massacres had been motivated primarily by religious hatreds. Pointing to the contradictory versions disseminated by the royal court in the first week after Saint Bartholomew, Prisbach dismissed as ridiculous the king's assertion that he was forced to assassinate Coligny because of a Huguenot plot against the crown. Even if such a conspiracy theory were true, that certainly would not justify the abrogation of justice and the deaths of 30,000 innocent people.⁹⁵

Verlag, 1993], 73). Many details found in this pamphlet appear in Beza's correspondence or in the registers of the Small Council (e.g. suspicions of a Tridentine conspiracy, reports of reconversions to Catholicism, reference to Guise's letter to his grandmother regarding a royal plot against the Reformed throughout France). So too, external evidence points toward Beza's authorship. On 27 January 1573, Bullinger sent to Beza a copy of Bellièvre's speech that the Genevan reformer had requested a week earlier. On April 20, Bullinger wrote that, whereas he had received back from Beza the copy of Bellièvre's speech, he had not yet seen the published response to it ("Epistolam Bellievrei jam accepi cum tuis literis. Responsionem ad eam nondum vidi." CB XIV, 88). On 30 April, Beza reported to Bullinger that he had sent this response to the printer: "Responsum ad illam Bellevrii declamationem ante nundinas ad amicum quendam typographum missam, neque edidit adhuc, neque remisit, quod egerrime fero ut alia plurima quae perpeti me necesse est, quoniam iis mederi non possum. Ubi accepero, statim ad te mittam." CB XIV, 95. This correspondence makes plain that if Beza was not the author of the *Responsio* against Bellièvre, he at least commissioned it and saw it through to publication. The brother of Pomponne de Bellièvre later complained to Bullinger about Prisbach's *Responsio*: "Et praeterea alius libellus cui titulus est Responsio ad orationem habitam nuper in consilio Helvetiorum etc., ejusdem farinae, nisi quod longe contumeliosior est in Regiam Majestatem, principesque Galliae viros. Fratrem vero meum tam crebris tamque procacibus atque indignis conviciis insectatur ut nihil supra." Jean de Bellièvre to Bullinger, 2 July 1573, in CB XIV, 312.

⁹⁴The Latin edition of this work, entitled *De furoribus Gallicis*, was published in Basle by T. Guarinus (see Bietenholz, *Basle and France*, 297). CDM (78-79) indicates that a Latin edition may also have appeared in Geneva during the same year. The French translation was probably printed in La Rochelle later in the same year. See Kingdon, *Myths about the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacres*, 25, 118-119. I have relied upon a 1573 French edition of this work for the discussion that follows.

⁹⁵"Primum omnium, ut Amirallius cum aliquot familiaribus suis coniurationem illam fecerit, non tamen iusta fuit causa triginta insuper hominum millia iugulandi." *Responsio ad orationem*, 5-6.

Rather, Prisbach believed, the deadly attack against Coligny and the Huguenot nobles was an attempt to destroy the Reformed religion once for all. In his *Discours simple et véritable*, Hotman provided more details of the machinations leading up to Saint Bartholomew's day. In a secret war council on August 23, Catherine had told her circle of co-conspirators—including the king, the dauphin Henri of Anjou, and several Italian councillors—that Coligny's death was necessary to prevent a fourth civil war, adding that "in one hour all the enemies of the kingdom could be exterminated."⁹⁶ Under the queen's orders, the duke of Guise and his soldiers had carried out the executions the next day, urging Catholic crowds to join them in murder and looting with cries 'The King wishes it!' Although neither Prisbach nor Hotman believed that the massacres of Saint Bartholomew had been planned before August 22, they both suspected that the pogrom demonstrated royal consent to impose the decrees of Trent on France and to exterminate Protestants from the kingdom. For Prisbach, the massacres were "the fruits of the Council of Trent" and the "first horrible and bloody vintage that the Catholics had planned."⁹⁷ Similarly, Hotman reported that the pope had sent a secret legate to Paris in the summer of 1572 in order to convince the king to join a holy tridentine league vowed to destroy the Turks and Huguenot heretics. Whereas the king had been hesitant to agree to such a proposal, strong Italian

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⁹⁶"... en une heure tous les ennemis pouvoient estre exterminéz." Hotman, *Discours simple & véritable*, C8^r.

⁹⁷"... aut quasi Germaniae & Helvetii nesciant, Concilii Tridentini, & eius foederis (quod Sacrum appellant) hos esse fructus, decretæ inquam ab iis (ut appellant) vindemiae cruentæ has esse primitias." *Responsio ad orationem*, 17.

influence at court had ultimately prevailed. Transforming the French court into an 'Italian colony' or 'Italian sewer,' Catherine and her countrymen had subsequently masterminded the massacres of Saint Bartholomew.⁹⁸ Thus, while Prischbach was more interested in showing the contradictions in the royal accounts of the massacre than with pinning responsibility on a particular person, Hotman's treatise explicitly laid the blame for Saint Bartholomew on the queen mother and her Italian councillors.

In the next two years, more virulent Protestant 'histories' appeared that had ties to Geneva. The scandalous *Réveille-matin* (1574), often ascribed to an Huguenot refugee named Nicholas Barnaud, was included in Simon Goulart's three volume *Mémoires de l'état de France sous Charles neufiesme*, published five times between 1576-1579.⁹⁹ Likewise, the *Discours merveilleux ... de la royne Catherine de Médicis* (1575), perhaps the work of the refugee Genevan printer Henri Estienne, was illegally published in Geneva at least once.¹⁰⁰ Although these 'histories' differed from

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⁹⁸Hotman reported that some people in France referred to the court as the "...Italo france, les autres Colonie, ou cloaque Italienne..." Hotman, *Discours simple & véritable*, C3^v.

⁹⁹The authorship and publication history of the *Réveille-matin* remains a mystery. The work was apparently published in several stages, reaching its final form in 1574 when it was published in German, and perhaps also in French and Latin, at the presses of Bernard Jobin of Strasbourg. See Kingdon, *Myths about the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacres*, 70-72. CDM suggests that a French edition of this work was probably also published in Geneva in the same year (82). The *Réveille-matin* was included in Simon Goulart's *Mémoires de l'État de France sous Charles neufiesme*, which was published at least once in Geneva between 1576-1579 despite repeated prohibitions of the city council. See CDM, 87, 89, 92, 95; Jones, *Simon Goulart*, 560-563; Kingdon, "Introduction," *Du droit des magistrats*, xxxiii-xxxiv. For recent discussions of the *Réveille-matin*, see Kingdon, *Myths about the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacres*, 70-87; and Donald Kelley, *The Beginning of Ideology*, 301-305.

¹⁰⁰*Discours merveilleux de la vie, actions & déportement de la royne Catherine de Médicis, mère de François II, Charles IX, Henry III. rois de France*. Found in *Recueil de diverses pièces servant à l'histoire de Henry III, roy de France et de Pologne* (Cologne: Pierre du Marteau, 1663), 261-367. For publication information about this pamphlet, see Kingdon, *Myths about the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacres*, 200-213. The register of the Genevan city council noted on 6 June 1575 that a printer

Hotman's treatise in tone, intended audience, and purpose, they nonetheless shared his conviction that Catherine de Médicis and the Italians were to blame for France's misfortunes. The *Réveille-matin* was a diatribe against female rulers and Italians. The Médicis-Valois were held responsible for all of France's problems, having "devoured the kingdom rather than governing it, and having totally destroyed the kingdom, rather than building and strengthening it."¹⁰¹ Catherine was particularly culpable, having usurped her son's authority and brought Italian immorality into the kingdom. According to the author, Catherine had planned the Parisian massacres before the summer of 1572; in June she had sent a sealed letter to her cousin Philipppo Strozzi informing him of her intentions and asking him to organize a similar pogrom in La Rochelle. On the 'day of treason' the queen mother and her sons had fanned the flames of popular violence, even emerging from the Louvre to exult over the corpses of dead Huguenots. Now, two years later, the queen mother and her Italian courtisans ignored justice, promoted irreligion, and encouraged debauchery. As a result, the once Christian kingdom had become filled with "blasphemies and atheism, including epicureanism, incest, sodomy, and every other kind of lewdness."¹⁰² Like Beza, the author of the *Réveille-matin* likened Catherine to the wicked queen Jezebel:

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named Abel Rivery was "détenu pour avoir imprimé la vie de la royne mère de France, pleine de détractions sans congé de la Seigneurie..." (RC 70, 103"). CDM lists three separate editions of the *Discours merveilleux* suspected to have been printed in Geneva in 1575.

¹⁰¹Catherine "...le [kingdom] gourmande, au lieu de la gouverner: le destruit, & ruyne, au lieu de l'édifier & bastir." *Réveille-matin*, b.iiij.

¹⁰²"... la plus grande partie de France à l'exemple de la court est pleine de blasphèmes, d'athéisme, & parmi eux l'epicureisme, l'inceste, la sodomie, & toute autre sorte de lubricité..." *Réveille-matin* I, 94.

Israel's ruin was to Jezebel's blame,
 and Catherine's guilt is much the same.
 While one the idols of Baal sustained,
 and thus God's sacred word profaned,
 The other upholds the papacy,
 with deeds of treason and cruelty.

.....
 By the first the sacred prophets were killed,
 whom God himself had chosen and willed.
 By the second, one hundred thousand died,
 who for the Gospel gave their very lives.

.....
 In the end, was seen the judgment of God
 when Jezebel was suddenly eaten by dogs.
 But though Catherine's death is also sure,
 not even dogs will want to eat her.¹⁰³

The author of the *Réveille-matin* argued that peace and morality would return to France only once the hated Italians were banished from the kingdom and the queen mother and her sons overthrown. Catherine's example proved that "the house is cursed in which the hen crows louder than the rooster."¹⁰⁴

These same volatile themes were seen in the *Discours merveilleux*. In this vitriolic 'biography' of Catherine, the queen was portrayed as an ambitious tyrant, a pathological poisoner, and a ruthless disciple of Machiavelli. At the time of her

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¹⁰³This is my translation of the verse: "S'on demande la convenance / De Catherine & Iezabel, / L'une ruine d'Israel, / L'autre ruine de la France: / Iezabel maintenoit l'idole / Contraire à la sainte parole / L'autre maintient la Papauté / Par trahison & cruauté: / L'une estoit de malice extrême, / L'autre est la malice mesme: / Par l'une furent massacrez / Les prophetes à Dieu sacrez: / L'autre en a fait mourir cent mille / De ceux qui suyvent l'Évangile: / Iezabel pour avoir son bien / Fit mourir un homme de bien: / L'autre n'est encor' assouvie / S'elle n'a les biens & la vie: / En fin le jugement fut tel, / Les chiens mangerent Iezabel, / Par une vengeance divine: / La charongne de Catherine, / Sera differente en ce point: / Les chiens mesmes n'en voudront point." *Réveille-matin*, I.125-126.

¹⁰⁴"He Dieu que la maison est malheureuse, quand la poule y chante plus haut que le coq!" *Réveille-matin* I, 19. The author had equal disdain for Queen Elizabeth of England: "Il ne faut que la seule mort de la Royne, pour tout changer & reverser." (*ibid* II, 11).

birth, astrologers had predicted that Catherine would bring calamity and complete ruin upon the noble house or country into which she married. Based on these predictions, Catherine's uncle, pope Clement VII, had encouraged her marriage to the French dauphin Henri in 1533, hoping to destroy the French kingdom.¹⁰⁵ Hence, the author of the *Discours merveilleux* suspected that a papal plot against France had been conceived forty years before Saint Bartholomew's day! Catherine's regency in France confirmed the ominous prognostications: with an insatiable lust for power, Catherine had usurped royal authority, embroiled the kingdom in civil war, and, with her Italian councillors, carefully premeditated the slaughter of Huguenots on Saint Bartholomew's day. Now, the author of the *Discours merveilleux* believed, the queen intended to purge the Catholic nobility as well. Like the wicked Merovingian queen Brunhilda, the case of Catherine proved that "never has a woman governed our kingdom, without having brought complete disaster to it."¹⁰⁶ The author concluded his scurrilous 'biography' by calling on Catholic nobles to rescue Alençon--the youngest brother of the king recently imprisoned for a suspected plot--and to overthrow the Médicis government.

Although the *Réveille-matin* and the *Discours merveilleux* were far more inflammatory than the history written by Hotman, all of these works defended the

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¹⁰⁵ "... il [Clement] avoit baillé aux François une femme qui brouilleroit tout leur estat." *Discours merveilleux*, 273.

¹⁰⁶ "C'est le naturel de ceste Femme de ne pouvoir reposer sans faire mal. Je puis dire encor d'avantage, c'est que jamais Femme n'a gouverné nostre Royaume, qu'elle n'y ait apporté tout malheur." *Discours merveilleux*, 352-353.

Huguenots by appealing, in part, to deep-seated prejudice and fear. Hatred of Italians and mistrust of female rulers were hardly original with French Protestant authors; but, in the wake of Saint Bartholomew, many of them harnessed the visceral power of such themes to serve their religious and political ends. Despite their many differences, these three works agreed that the foreign queen mother Catherine de Médicis--that 'Satan' in the parlance of Beza--must ultimately be blamed for the horrors of Saint Bartholomew. Notwithstanding the royal version of the massacres in which the king admitted ordering the assassination of Coligny and other Protestant nobles, the Huguenot 'histories' gained several polemical advantages by shifting the blame to the queen mother. By so doing, Huguenot leaders presented themselves as the 'true' defenders of the French monarchy while defusing accusations that they were politically subversive. This strategy, in turn, allowed them to appeal to a broader public, moderate Catholics as well as French Protestants, who together resented foreign dominance at court and sought a scapegoat for France's political problems. Additionally, this literature was intended for international consumption. By recounting the horror of the massacres, showing the culpability of the Italian queen mother, and suggesting a larger Catholic conspiracy, the Huguenots attempted to elicit sympathy and political assistance from their Swiss, English, German, and Polish allies. Beza and his French colleagues sent many of these 'histories' to friends throughout Europe in an attempt to stem the tide of German and Swiss mercenaries joining royal armies, and to encourage foreign princes to welcome French refugees and support Huguenot resistance. They recognized that the political future of the

Huguenots in France depended, in large part, on their success in preserving and shaping the collective memory of the massacres of 1572.

The Genevan Triumvirate

Huguenot 'histories' were not the only treatises spawned by the violence. The massacres also compelled French Protestant thinkers to define the nature and limits of legitimate government, as well as to debate the morality and advisability of active political resistance. These concerns represent the second important objective of the political pamphlets and books that poured from the pens and presses of Geneva in the years following Saint Bartholomew. Historians and political scientists have commented at length on this resistance literature,¹⁰⁷ usually ascribing greatest importance to three treatises: Hotman's *Francogallia* (1573), Beza's *Du droit des magistrats* (1574), and the *Vindiciae contra tyrannos* (1579), probably written by Philippe du Plessis-Mornay. Together, these three Reformed thinkers are believed to epitomize the radicalization of Huguenot political thought after 1572. They are sometimes given the uncomplimentary title 'monarchomach triumvirs': the three

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¹⁰⁷I have particularly benefited from Alfred Cartier, *Les Idées Politiques de Théodore de Bèze* (Genève: A. Jullien, 1900); Julian H. Franklin, *Constitutionalism and Resistance in the Sixteenth Century* (New York: Western Publishing Co., 1969); Kelley, *François Hotman*, 238-263; Kingdon, "Calvinism and resistance theory 1550-1580," in *The Cambridge History of Political Thought, 1450-1700*, ed. J. H. Burns (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 193-218; Kingdon's "Introduction" to Théodore de Bèze, *Du droit des Magistrats* (Genève: Librairie Droz, 1970), vii-xlvii; Kingdon, *Myths about the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacres*, 136-160; Paul Moussiegt, *Hotman et Du Plessis-Mornay, Théories Politiques des Réformés au XVI^e Siècle* (Genève: Slatkine Reprints, 1970); Skinner, *Modern Political Thought* II, 302-348.

king-killers.¹⁰⁸ This conceptualization has 'canonized' these three treatises, inadvertently discouraging an exploration of the medieval and Lutheran roots of resistance theory and the careful study of less popular Huguenot resistance pamphlets.¹⁰⁹ One such treatise that has been overlooked by historians is Lambert Daneau's *Ad Petri Carpenterii ... Petri Fabri responsio*, published in Latin at Basle in 1575 and in French at Geneva the following year.¹¹⁰ Daneau's book is an important supplement to the resistance treatises of Hotman and Beza, restating the political doctrines of his two colleagues, while carefully applying them to the political and military situation in 1575. If taken together, the treatises of Hotman, Beza, and Daneau--all exiles in Geneva and professors at the Academy during this period--provide the theoretical basis for resistance against a monarch-turned-tyrant and

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¹⁰⁸See, for example, Ralph Giesey's discussion of this conceptualization in "The Monarchomach Triumvirs: Hotman, Beza and Mornay," *BHR* 32 (1970): 41-56.

¹⁰⁹The work of Robert Kingdon and Quentin Skinner are two notable exceptions from this trend.

¹¹⁰ *Ad Petri Carpenterii Famelici Rabulae saevum de retinendis armis et pace repudianda consilium, Petri Fabri responsio* (Neustadt [Basel?]: n.p., 1575). Paul de Félice, in his monograph of Daneau a century ago, did not discuss this book, although he listed it in his bibliography as of probable Daneau authorship (*Lambert Daneau, pasteur et professeur en théologie* [Paris: Librairie Fischbacher, 1882], 164-165). Félice cited a letter from Daneau to Josias Simler in support of Daneau's authorship: "Mitto tibi, munusculum, nempe Responsum meum ad Carpentarii parricidae Epistolam" (23 September 1575, Letter XXIII, *ibid.*, 310). Any doubts of Daneau's paternity of this work were dispelled by Olivier Fatio in the very useful bibliography of his more recent study *Méthode et Théologie, Lambert Daneau et les débuts de la scolastique réformée* (Genève: Librairie Droz, 1976). However, Fatio relegated a brief summary of this work to a footnote (*ibid.*, 31). Fatio cited a letter from Vulcanius to Th. Rhediger (30 August 1575, *ibid.*, 23*) to show that the Latin edition of this book was published in Basle. The *Registre* of the Genevan city council indicates that the French edition was published in Geneva: "Lambert Daneau a fait requérir luy permettre de fair imprimer ung livre qu'il a composé pour réponce à ung aultre de Carpentier. Arresté qu'on le luy permet." 8 August 1575, *RC* 70, 133'. The discussion that follows depends on this French edition, entitled *Traité duquel on peut apprendre en quel cas il est permis à l'homme Chrestien de porter les armes, et par lequel est respondu à Pierre Charpentier* ([Genève], 1576).

propose a radical program of resistance against the Valois kings.

At a casual glance Hotman's *Francogallia*¹¹¹ seems to be innocuous enough, offering a dispassionate study of the constitutional history of France with few explicit references to the sixteenth-century political situation.¹¹² From its inception, Hotman believed, the French monarchy was elective, subject to the authority of the people and limited by specific laws. The king was considered to be the guardian and tutor of the people, and the defender of their liberties. When a king violated this charge and became a tyrant, the assembly of the people had the right and obligation to remove him. Thus, an assembled 'estate' of the people not only elected Childeric, the first king of 'Francogallia,' but also later deposed him for immorality and expelled him from the kingdom.¹¹³ While Hotman recognized that after the reign of Charlemagne male primogeniture became the standard practice of succession in France, he nonetheless insisted that, as evidenced in the coronation oath, royal power was still conditional and the principle of election remained in force. Through much of the

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¹¹¹Hotman, *Francogallia*, eds. Ralph E. Giesey and J.H.M Salmon (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972). For a helpful discussion of the origins and publication history of this work, see Giesey, "When and Why Hotman Wrote the *Francogallia*," *BHR* 29 (1967): 581-611.

¹¹²The magistrates of Geneva approved the publication of the *Francogallia* with little hesitation in the summer of 1573: "Hottman. Ayant requis luy permettre l'impression d'ung livre de l'estat des affaires de France avant qu'elle fust réduite en province par les romains, arresté qu'on luy outroie." 7 July 1573, *RC* 68, 145. The French ambassador to Switzerland, however, recognized and angrily pointed out to the Genevan authorities the revolutionary implications of the book. On 23 October 1573, the Small Council considered the demand "faicte par l'ambassadeur du roy à ce que le livre composé par ledit Hottoman intitulé *Francogallia* soit supprimé, et les livres retirés par Mess^{rs} .... daultant que ce livre estant présenté au roy et à la royne, ilz en seront grandement offensés, ce qui pourroit nuire à Mess^{rs}." The council decided to consult Beza on the matter, but neither the results of this meeting, nor the final decision by the council was reported. *RC* 68, 209^v.

¹¹³Hotman, *Francogallia*, 234-235.

Middle Ages, sovereignty was shared by the king and the assembly of the people meeting in the Estates General. This representative body, as primary custodian of fundamental law, retained responsibility for electing and deposing kings, enacting legislation, regulating religion, approving taxation and deciding other affairs of state.¹¹⁴ As such, the Estates General protected the most cherished principle of government: 'The welfare of the people must be the highest law.'¹¹⁵ Hotman believed, however, that in the last century the power of the Estates was significantly attenuated by lawyers who flattered the French kings, the Catholic clergy who had usurped the first estate, and the proliferation of regional parlements. This, in turn, had led to tyranny and social turmoil, seen most notably in twelve years of civil war. The solution to France's troubles, Hotmans asserted in his epistolary preface, was to be found in the rediscovery of her ancient public law, making constitutional verities once again political realities. Although Hotman did not draw contemporary applications from this anachronistic study of French constitutional history, the implications were clear enough. The Estates General needed to check royal tyranny and restore peace and justice to the kingdom. If the king refused to protect the

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¹¹⁴"Ac superius quidem populum in comitiis non modo creandi, verumetiam abdicandi Regis potestatem sibi omnem reservasse, docuimus. Quam eandem regnandi formam constat Gallos nostros, priusquam in Romanorum potestatem redigerentur, habuisse, ut populus non minus (inquit Caesar) in Regem, quam Rex in populum imperii ac potestatis retineret." Hotman, *Francogallia*, 286-287.

¹¹⁵"Ex quibus perspicuum esse arbitramur, quod initio diximus, Maiores nostros, qui vere Franci ac libertatis custodes fuerunt, non Tyrannum sibi aut carnificem imposuisse, qui suos cives in pecudum loco ac numero haberet, sed ab omni tyrannica et a Turcica dominandi tyrannide abhorruisse, divinumque illud praeceptum arcte retinuisse: SALUS POPULI SUPREMA LEX ESTO, quippe, qui omnem plane Regni administrandi potestatem penes publicum Concilium fuisse, ut ante diximus, Placitum appellabant..." Hotman, *Francogallia*, 342-345.

welfare of the people, popular assemblies could legitimately resist him.

What was implicit in Hotman's book, was thereafter made more explicit by Beza in his anonymous *Du droit des magistrats* (1574). Evidence suggests that, during the summer of 1573, Beza and Hotman were aware of each other's writing projects, and may have discussed their respective conclusions.¹¹⁶ In several places, Beza's treatise relied extensively on his colleague's argument and evidence. But Beza's more radical theory of political resistance, and less veiled application of it to the contemporary political situation in France, justifiably raised serious concerns among Geneva's magistrates. Less than a month after approving Hotman's *Francogallia* for publication, the Small Council forbade the printing of Beza's Latin manuscript entitled *De iure magistratuum*, fearing that it would be "very scandalous and could cause many troubles and enflame passions for which this city would be blamed."¹¹⁷ Nonetheless, the following year, a French translation of the work was published in Heidelberg and a pirated edition was disseminated by a Genevan printer

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¹¹⁶In refuting a charge that he had published the *De iure Magistratuum* in violation of the prohibition of the magistrates, Beza insisted "que sa copie n'est sortie de ses mains & de son homme qui l'a copiée & de M^r Hotoman qui l'a veu..." 13 August 1573, *RC* 68, 165^v. On the other hand, Beza reported to Claude Textor the publication of Hotman's *Francogallia* in late August, and recommended its use in teaching French at Wittenberg! See 26 August 1573, *CB* XIV, 194.

¹¹⁷"Théodore de Bèze. Le livre par luy dernièrement présenté *De iure Magistratuum*, ayant esté veu par M^r le syndique Varro ... & trouvé qu'encores qu'il ne contienne que la verité totesfois pour le présent il ne leur semble pas bon qu'il soit imprimé d'autant qu'il seroit fort scandaleux et pourroit causer plusieurs troubles & émotions dont cest ville seroit chargée, parce que mesmes que le stile dudit S^r de Bèze est assez cogneu. Attendu qu'on a esté arresté qu'on ne permette pas l'impression de ce livre..." 10 August 1573, *RC* 68, 163^{r-v}. For a discussion of this affair, see Cartier, *Les Idées Politiques de Théodore de Bèze*, 6-8.

shortly thereafter.¹¹⁸

Du droit des magistrats was less erudite than Hotman's study, more a political pamphlet than a legal commentary. While using many of Hotman's historical arguments regarding the fundamental laws of France, Beza cast his apologetical nets more widely, appealing also to biblical history and natural law in order to defend and define the limits of monarchical government. He argued that there were certain rights natural to human society. In every agreement made between consenting parties--whether in marriage or government--the contracting parties had the right, under certain conditions, to dissolve the initial contract. Most notably, a contract could be dissolved when the essential conditions on which it was framed were notoriously violated.¹¹⁹ In the case of monarchical government, kings were chosen under certain conditions by either assemblies or 'lesser magistrates' who had been established under oath as protectors of the peoples' sovereign rights. When a king manifestly violated his trust and cruelly oppressed his people, the contract of sovereignty was nullified, and the assembly of citizens or inferior magistrates had the right to oppose or, if necessary, remove him.¹²⁰ Beza believed this natural law of sovereignty had been evident in the Jewish monarchies of the Old Testament, and was borne out in

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¹¹⁸Eugene Droz argues convincingly that the two French editions of 1574 were published in Heidelberg and Geneva ("Fausses Adresses Typographiques," *BHR* XXIII (1961), 379-386, 572-574). See also CDM, 80; Kingdon, "Introduction," *Du droit des magistrats*, xxix-xxxi.

¹¹⁹Beza, *Du droit des magistrats*, 44-45.

¹²⁰"... les Nations, tant que le droit et équité a eu lieu, n'on créé ni accepté leurs Rois qu'à certaines conditions, lesquelles estans manifestement violées par eux, il s'ensuit que ceux qui ont eu puissance de leur bailler telle autorité, n'ont eu moins de puissance de les en priver." Beza, *Du droit des magistrats*, 24.

contemporary European politics. He placed several caveats on this principle, however: first, the king must be guilty of extreme tyranny, having violated the fundamental laws of the kingdom; second, though resisting a tyrant might be permissible in theory, it was not expedient in every situation. Finally, like Hotman, Beza stressed that initiating resistance against a king was never the prerogative of private persons; far better for the people to suffer patiently under tyranny than to allow 'horrible monsters' like sedition and rebellion to be unleashed in a kingdom.

Beza's chief contribution to sixteenth-century resistance theory was his systematic defense of the role of 'lesser magistrates.'¹²¹ These magistrates of the kingdom—including noblemen such as dukes, counts and barons, and city officers such as mayors, consuls, syndics and aldermen—received their authority from the people, not from the king, and were under obligation to protect the public welfare.¹²² Under normal circumstances, Beza argued, these officers would fulfill their charge by persuading the king to make just laws and follow wise counsel, and by urging the Estates General—endowed with primary oversight of the king—to intervene when necessary. But when a wicked king did not heed their admonitions and refused to summon the estates, as had happened frequently in France during the last one hundred years, the lesser magistrates of the kingdom had the right to oppose him to the extent

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¹²¹Beza was not the first Reformed thinker to justify resistance of inferior magistrates to established authority. Robert Linder argues that Pierre Viret espoused a similar doctrine as early as 1547. See Linder's article "Pierre Viret" in *OER*, 236-237. Nonetheless, Beza's defense of this doctrine was more systematic and found a readier audience after the massacres of Saint Bartholomew.

¹²²Beza, *Du droit des magistrats*, 18-21.

that their public trust required. This was especially true in matters of religion. Beza asserted that lesser magistrates who resisted tyrant-kings in the defense of true religion were no less martyrs than those who endured persecution with patience.¹²³

Beza's departure from Hotman by defending not only the power of the Estates General but also the right of lesser magistrates to resist a manifestly wicked king constituted an explosive solution to France's political crisis. Although he never explicitly counselled Huguenot resistance against the Valois king, that message was implicit throughout his treatise; the preconditions that he enumerated for legitimate resistance corresponded neatly with his stated grievances against the French monarchy. Thus, Beza's work provided justification for the Huguenot call to arms immediately after Saint Bartholomew, as well as for the continued defiance of the magistrates of La Rochelle and Sancerre against besieging royal armies in 1573. Rather than pinning Huguenot fortunes on an unforeseen Estates General in the future, as Hotman had done, *Du droit des magistrats* gave immediate license to French notables and local officials to resist the king and his agents throughout the kingdom. Beza, in fact, elevated the defense of religious truth to the status of martyrdom. By basing his arguments on natural right as well as French positive law, Beza might have been hoping to broaden his appeal to disgruntled moderate Catholics, and by doing so, to encourage multi-confessional resistance to royal authority--

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¹²³"Et conclus par cela que non seulement il faut tenir pour Martyrs ceux qui auront vancu sans résistance, et par la seule patience, la Tyrannie des persécuteurs de Vérité, mais ceux aussi qui, suffisamment autorisez des Loix, & de ceux qu'il appartient, emploient leurs personnes pour la déffence de la vraie Religion." Beza, *Du droit des magistrats*, 67.

something that was in fact happening in southern France in 1573-1574.¹²⁴ It was hardly surprising, therefore, that the French ambassador Jean de Bellièvre, complaining to Bullinger about the Huguenot political pamphlets appearing after Saint Bartholomew, described this work as "by far the most destructive book written."¹²⁵

It was the refugee minister Lamber Daneau who applied Hotman and Beza's resistance theories most explicitly to the French political situation, proposing a clear Huguenot program of armed defiance against the French king. Daneau's book *Ad Petri Carpenterii ... Petri Fabri responsio* (1575) was a careful reply to Geneva's old nemesis Pierre Charpentier, who had published a second treatise entitled *Pium et Christianum de armis consilium ad Dominum* earlier in the year. In this latter work, Charpentier appealed to the New Testament to argue that Christians were strictly prohibited from defending themselves against persecution, asserting that a legitimate king was endowed by God with absolute authority over his subjects.¹²⁶ Thus, Charpentier concluded that all Huguenot resistance against the French king was

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¹²⁴See Sutherland, *The Huguenot Struggle*, 219.

¹²⁵"Audio praeterea alium librum longe perniciosissimum conscriptum esse, quem author Genevae excudendum curabat, sed prohibitus est a Magistratu, verito ne ea res nimiam invidiam civitati suae conflaret. Ejus libri argumentum est, licere subditis Principis seu Magistratus jugum excutere si ille non juste imperet, quod totum aptare nititur rebus Gallicis. Nihil attinet ut quid sit vitii in hoc axioma demonstrarem apud te qui pro excellenti doctrina atque pietate optime omnium nosti quam hoc sit christianae mansuetudini contrarium..." Jean de Bellièvre to Bullinger, 2 July 1573, *CB XIV*, Appendix V, 312. Jean de Bellièvre had replaced his brother Pomponne as the French ambassador to the Swiss cantons in early 1573.

¹²⁶Charpentier's work was entitled *Pium et Christianum de armis consilium ad Dominum Lomanium Terridae et Sereniaci Baronem* (n.p., 1575). See Fatio, *Lambert Daneau*, 22*. Although I have not been able to consult this work, Charpentier's arguments were summarized in Daneau's response.

illegitimate, and called the Reformed to disband their armies, give up their fortified cities and accept royal peace overtures or leave the kingdom.¹²⁷ Daneau's *Responsio* attacked this conception of royal absolutism by restating the resistance theories of Hotman and Beza, referring to the *Francogallia* by name.¹²⁸ All kings and magistrates, he claimed, were created by and for the people, and remained subject to laws of justice and equity. When a legitimate king became a tyrant, violating the fundamental law of a state and oppressing the citizens, the people had the right to resist him with arms. Such resistance, Daneau argued, must not be motivated by a spirit of vengeance, but by a desire to defend the country from ruin and in order to uphold the public well-being.¹²⁹ Like Hotman and Beza, Daneau was careful to identify those who could legitimately initiate such resistance: it was the purview of the three estates (whether acting together or individually) or of lesser magistrates--not

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¹²⁷I have chosen the term 'fortified cities' to render the French *places de sûreté*. First adopted in the Edict of Saint-Germain (1570), these strategic cities and towns were granted to the Huguenots in order to provide bases for their armies and safe-havens for their hunted leaders. See Sutherland, *The Huguenot Struggle*, 176-177, 359.

¹²⁸Daneau, *Traité ... en quel cas il est permis à l'homme Chrestien de porter les armes*, 27. Daneau also alluded to other resistance theories in "les livres des plus savans théologiens du monde..." (*ibid.*, 22).

¹²⁹"... quand tout est confus en un estat, ce que dessus dessous, quand toutes les bonnes & anciennes loix sont abolies par ceux que se disent les magistrats mesmes, quand par tout il n'y a qu'une manifeste tyrannie, quand au lieu de droit & équité, violence & désordre régné: ce qui se fait tout oculairement & évidemment pour le présent en France: quand di-ie nul estat n'a voix ni audience, & que les loix du royaume sont entièrement violées, voire par ceux qui les devroyent garder, est-il lors, ie vous prie, besoning d'attendre le commandement de celui qui s'appeler magistrat ou souverain, & qui luy mesme tant qu'il peut taschera à gaster & ruiner toutes choses? est-il, di-ie, lors nécessaire à un bon patriote, qui aimera cordialement & la patrie & le salut d'icelle, de se tenir quoy, & ne s'esmouvoir nullement, premier que tels magistrats luy commandent de s'opposer à la ruine du païs, & le défendre?" Daneau, *Traité ... en quel cas il est permis à l'homme Chrestien de porter les armes*, 20.

of private individuals—to organize resistance against tyranny.¹³⁰

Although Daneau's resistance theory was hardly original, his *Responsio* applied this doctrine to the French political situation far more explicitly than either Hotman or Beza. The source of France's present troubles, he asserted, were the "Franco-Italians" who ruled the kingdom with "all cruelty, barbarity, fury, inhumanity, treachery and trouble."¹³¹ These foreign tyrants had destroyed justice and public law, and continued to resist efforts to summon an Estates General. Following the death of Charles IX in 1573, Daneau claimed, the Huguenots had sought to reconcile themselves with his successor Henri III; but the new king had proved to be as hostile to the Reformed as his predecessor. Thus, the Huguenot barons, counts, and princes had just cause in taking up arms against the new king; their armies were the true defenders of "the authority of one part of the three estates, and of the formal edicts of the king solemnly enacted."¹³² Similarly, Huguenot magistrates were under no obligation to surrender their fortified cities or to heed royal edicts of pacification as long as this wicked king continued to threaten the peoples' welfare. The cities

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¹³⁰ "... si lors il se présentoit quelque magistrat ou partie des estats du royaume qui voulut aussi empescher cela [i.e. tyranny] comme moy, & m'appelast à son parti, i'y accourroy, & te dy que i'iroy en bonne conscience, & ne pourroy mesme m'en excuser, si ie vouloy estre bon citoyen & faire devoir d'homme Chrestien & fidèle." Daneau, *Traitté ... en quel cas il est permis à l'homme Chrestien de porter les armes*, 42.

¹³¹ "Mais maintenant que peut-on apprendre de tes François, ou plustost Italienfrançois ... qui vivent & regnent en France, sinon exemple de toute cruauté, barbarie, furie, inhumanité, perfidie & de trouble?" Daneau, *Traitté ... en quel cas il est permis à l'homme Chrestien de porter les armes*, 26.

¹³² "... nous avons l'autorité d'une partie des trois estats, & les édits formels du Roy si solennellemen faicts que rien plus." Daneau, *Traitté ... en quel cas il est permis à l'homme Chrestien de porter les armes*, 91.

belonged to their citizens; kings and nobles held legitimate sovereignty over these cities only when they upheld the fundamental laws of the kingdom. Finally, in response to Charpentier's criticisms, Daneau defended the presence of mercenaries in Huguenot armies during the previous civil wars. Unlike the Spanish and Italian soldiers whom the French king had employed, the small contingent of German and English mercenaries in the Huguenot army were "good friends and allies of this kingdom" who had left the country peacefully at the end of each war.¹³³ Daneau's *Responsio* to Charpentier, therefore, transformed the resistance theories of his Genevan colleagues into a political program for French Protestants. It deftly answered important questions that were confronting Reformed leaders and churchmen in 1575, particularly whether foreign mercenaries could be employed in Huguenot armies, and whether magistrates were required to give up their fortified cities and accept royal overtures of peace. Like the *Francogallia* and *Du droit des magistrats*, this treatise had an international aim as well. It assured foreign governments that the new French king Henri III was no less tyrannical than his brother, and thus provided justification for the Huguenot soldiers in the field, and the mercenary army that Prince Condé was raising in Germany and Switzerland during the summer of 1575.

Though completely overlooked by historians until now, Daneau's book is a logical complement to the resistance treatises written in Geneva during the previous two years. The provocative literature produced by this *Genevan* triumvirate--Hotman,

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¹³³Daneau, *Traitté ... en quel cas il est permis à l'homme Chrestien de porter les armes*, 56.

Beza and Daneau--demonstrates the crucial role played by French Protestant refugees in Geneva in the aftermath of Saint Bartholomew. In addition to formulating resistance theories, this Genevan 'brain-trust' advanced a practical program of resistance to ensure the survival of the Reformed churches in France. While the concept of a 'Genevan triumvirate' suffers from the limitations of all historical models, it is useful in that it roots the political theories of resistance after 1572 in a social matrix and historical context more completely. Created by exiled intellectuals in a city filled with religious refugees and smoldering with resentment, the three resistance treatises that we have studied reflected and promoted the radicalization of Huguenot thought and action in response to the horrifying violence of Saint Bartholomew.

Having described the inflammatory nature of the Huguenot 'histories' and resistance treatises following Saint Bartholomew, it nonetheless remains difficult to assess the actual social and political impact of this literature. Did defamatory portrayals of Catherine de Médicis convince Frenchmen to pick up weapons and resist her government? Did the Huguenot versions of Saint Bartholomew, filled with anti-Italian rhetoric, strike a responsive cord in Germany, encouraging princes to assist French Protestant armies or shelter her refugees? Did Daneau's *Responsio* convince Huguenot magistrates to guard their fortified cities against Henri III's peace overtures? Although these questions are impossible to answer with precision, it is clear that many people, including the Genevan city council and the French ambassador to the Swiss cantons, feared that this radical literature would aggravate

the French crisis. Even the duke of Savoy felt it necessary to send criers throughout his territories to forbid the reading of the treatises of Hotman and Beza.¹³⁴ In addition, it seems likely that the 'impassioned invective'--the phrase Beza used to describe the *Réveille-matin*--of many of these pamphlets promoted social disharmony and reaffirmed long-standing prejudices. The case of the refugee Innocent Gentillet may be indicative. Shortly after publishing a book entitled *Anti-Machiavel* (1576) that attacked Catherine and the Italian influence at the French court, Gentillet was physically assaulted in Geneva by a man "who hated him for the book that he had published against the Italians."¹³⁵ De Thou, in his *Histoire universelle*, provided additional evidence of the impact of this polemical literature. He reported that copies of *Francogallia* and *Du droit des magistrats* were distributed in a Huguenot political assembly in southern France in 1573 to convince participants of the need to return to war against the king.¹³⁶ Though suggestive, this evidence does not conclusively prove that the immense propaganda effort pursued by the clergy and French refugees in Geneva in the aftermath of Saint Bartholomew actually shaped the political fortunes of the French Protestants. Such literature did, however, continue to lend credence to Catholic fears that, in the words of Charpentier, sedition and rebellion were primary

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¹³⁴Cartier, *Les Idées Politiques de Théodore de Bèze*, 4-5.

¹³⁵"Franciso Lambert. A faict présenter requeste tendante a luy pardonner la baterie qu'il a faict cy devant à M^r Gentilet, advocat, l'ayant espié pour ce faire en hayne du livre qu'il avoit publié contre les Italiens." 10 May 1577, *RC* 72, 67^v.

¹³⁶Kingdon, "Calvinism and resistance theory, 1550-1580," 209.

exports "drawn from that nasty lake."¹³⁷

The Politics of Resistance

The massacres of Saint Bartholomew not only enflamed the pens of Geneva's ministers, but also inspired them to political action. Between 1573-1576, Beza and his colleagues involved themselves in a number of secret enterprises in the service of the Huguenot cause. Although evidence culled from the registers of the Small Council and the Company of Pastors is fragmentary, it reveals that the ministers practiced the resistance that they defended in their writings. Our study of Beza's letters further substantiates this conclusion: in the months following the publication of *Du droit des magistrats*, Beza not only continued to espouse resistance theories in his private correspondence, but also encouraged concrete acts of agitation against the French kings, whether in the form of secret conspiracies or overt military action.

What prompted the city's clergy to pursue such an aggressive policy of resistance? Certainly, they were horrified by the king's treachery and moved by deep sympathy for the destitute refugees who flooded Geneva's streets. So too, these ministers shared a firm commitment to furthering the cause of the Gospel in France. But there were probably more personal factors that motivated them as well. In 1572,

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¹³⁷"Et pour le mieux persuader ilz alléguoient plusieurs raisons prinses de l'autorité de ie ne sçay quelle nouvelle Théologie tirée de ce vilain lac, duquel on a tiré comme d'une mine & carrière toutes les séditions & conspirations." Charpentier, *Lettre ... adressée à François Portes*," 13.

the Genevan pastoral corps consisted entirely of expatriate Frenchmen.¹³⁸ As a result, they were more than spectators of Saint Bartholomew; they were, in a certain sense, its victims. Beza's example was probably not exceptional. Most of his noble friends had been murdered in the massacres. A decade of war had destroyed Vézelay, his childhood home. Many of his relatives had been killed, and his patrimony had been pillaged and burned.¹³⁹ He believed that the Reformed congregations dissipated by the massacres in France were churches that, in some sense, he had helped establish.¹⁴⁰ Other members of Geneva's Company had suffered similar losses. Charles Perrot had lost a brother in the violence of Saint Bartholomew. Simon Goulart, serving as a temporary pastor in France when the massacres began, had to flee for his life and return to Geneva. Thereafter, Goulart claimed that patriotism motivated him to resist the French king: "I have a profound love for my country. Thus, I have decided to

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¹³⁸The ministers in the city of Geneva in 1572 were Beza (since 1558), Jean Trembley (since 1564), Charles Perrot (since 1564), Jean Pinault (since 1566), Corneille Bertram (since 1566), Gille Chausse (since 1567), Antoine Chauve (since 1571), and Simon Goulart (since 1571). In the next decade, Chausse died (1574), and four new pastors joined the Company: Lambert Daneau (1574), Jean Jaquemot (1576), Jean-Baptiste Rotan (1579), and Antoine de La Faye (1580). Rotan originated from Italian-speaking Grisons, being the only minister of the Genevan company who was not a French native. A list of Geneva's clergy during the sixteenth century is found in Henri Heyer's *L'Église de Genève, Esquisse historique de son organisation* (Genève: Librairie A. Jullien, 1909).

¹³⁹"Nam ut illa privata omittam, tot mihi ereptos primariae etiam in Gallico regno nobilitatis amicos, eversam urbem in qua sum natus, omnem Bazarum familiam ad quinque pupillos redactam, incensa direptaue nostra praedia..." Beza to Jacob Monau, 26 August 1573, *CB* XIV, 201.

¹⁴⁰"Itaque te vehementer rogo, ut et nostrum omnium et mei quoque sigillatim memineris assiduis tuis apud Dominum precibus, ut, quandoquidem me superstitem tot charissimorum fratrum funeribus, imo tot Ecclesiarum ruinis esse voluit, in quarum aedificium non postremus veneram..." Beza to Bullinger, 25 October 1572, *CB* XIII, 210.

stab with my pen those tyrants as long as I live."¹⁴¹ This personal dimension--whether at its core patriotism, righteous indignation, or the desire for vengeance--was undoubtedly an important factor in radicalizing the ministers' response to Saint Bartholomew. While Geneva's magistrates were generally cautious, carefully weighing the political fallout of meddling in France, the Company of Pastors was far more disposed to political intrigue and acts of agitation in support of their countrymen and the Reformed churches.

One of the first documented examples of such resistance activity is hidden in the register of the Small Council in the spring of 1573. Having long recognized the political dangers posed by accepting large numbers of French refugees, the magistrates had required each immigrant who became an *habitant* of Geneva to swear an oath not to leave the city without authorization of the authorities. It was hoped that this measure would prevent the refugees, many of whom were armed, from using Geneva as a staging ground for clandestine attacks into France. On several occasions, however, groups of French refugees violated this oath and attempted ill-fated sorties into their homeland; in two instances, they may well have done so with the approval of Beza himself. At the end of March 1573, a group of Huguenot soldiers departed Geneva secretly with the intent of attacking Grenoble.¹⁴² The plan was soon

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¹⁴¹"Patriam meam miro complector amore: et tyrannos quandiu vivam calamo confodere statui." Goulart to Josias Simler, 10 May 1576, published in Jones, *Simon Goulart*, letter xiii. Elsewhere, Goulart writes: "Tam ardenti autem amore patriae detineor, ut vita sit mihi acerba, donec tyrannorum fraudes." Goulart to Simler, 20 November 1575, published in *ibid.*, letter x.

¹⁴²The city council was aware that some action was being planned, and debated at length whether to permit or prohibit it. On the one hand, the council believed that to disallow the attack

discovered, and some of the leaders were arrested and executed in the Dauphiné. Before their deaths, several of the prisoners stated (under torture) that the plot had been conceived in a meeting at which Beza was present.¹⁴³ Similarly, in the final weeks of 1574, refugees from Geneva mounted an unsuccessful attack on Mâcon and Châlons. When survivors of the debacle returned and were questioned, the council learned that Beza again had knowledge of the enterprise. The councillor Michael Roset was delegated to reprimand the reformer and insist that "he ought not to consent to things like that, much less be involved in them."¹⁴⁴ Such ill-conceived military ventures, originating in Geneva, were not overlooked in Paris. The king's ambassador to Switzerland complained repeatedly about the city's complicity in these enterprises, threatening that such subversive acts would jeopardize Geneva's chances of being included in any future peace treaty between France and the Swiss cantons.¹⁴⁵

The tension created between the ministers' activism and the magistrates' pragmatism exploded in a second event during the spring of 1573. After intense

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would "retarder l'avancement des affaires de l'Église de Dieu, et que les fidèles de France s'en pourroient ressentir." Nonetheless, Geneva's security was considered of greater importance, and the leaders of the plot were told not to leave the city. 26 March 1573, *RC* 68, 73^v; cited in *CB* XIV, Appendix IV, 304.

¹⁴³"Icy a esté veu ung advisement venu de Daulphiné par lequel est mandé que le fils du Sr. de La Robiniere, estant mené au supplice, déclaira que son père estoit cause de sa mort, parce qu'il avoit esté de l'entreprise faicte sur le Daulphiné, en certain jardin de Plain Palais, près celui de Daulphin, auquel se trouverent M. de Bèze, M^r de Saint-Romain, le capitaine Guay et aultres, comme aussy ledit cap. Guay et aultres l'avoient confessé à leur execution..." 29 May 1573, *RC* 68, 116^v, cited in *CB* XIV, Appendix IV, 307.

¹⁴⁴"...qu'il ne doit consentir à telles choses, moins s'en mesler." Cited in Fazy, *Genève, le Parti Huguenot et les Traités de Soleure* (Genève: Henri Georg, 1883), 21.

¹⁴⁵See for example, 21 April 1573, *RC* 68, 91; 9 July 1573, *RC* 68, 147^v.

diplomatic efforts by the evangelical cities of Switzerland, the French ambassador Jean de Bellièvre proposed in April to allow French refugees to return temporarily to France in order to collect their possessions and settle their financial affairs, under the condition that they first go to Bern and sign an oath of loyalty to the French crown.¹⁴⁶ On April 21, the same day that the proposed oath was delivered to the Genevan Small Council by a nobleman named Jean de Beauvoir-La-Nocle, the ministers met privately in the home of Beza with Beauvoir and about 40 French refugees in order to discuss the situation and consider the text of the oath. Without consulting the magistrates, the ministers revised the wording of the oath in two important ways. While the original draft blamed the massacres on 'the fury of the people,' the ministers changed the text so as to accuse no particular group or person. Second, while the ambassador's version had required the refugees to swear complete allegiance to royal authority, the revision of the ministers distinguished between obedience to the king and to his edicts.¹⁴⁷ After making these changes, the Company of Pastors sent the revised oath back to the ambassador without the knowledge of the city magistrates. Hearing

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¹⁴⁶This incident is discussed by Fazy, *La Saint-Barthélemy et Genève*, 72-74; and Kingdon, "Introduction" in *Du droit des magistrats*, xvi-xviii.

¹⁴⁷The revisions of the oath made by the Company and the original text are found in the minutes of the Genevan council for 27 April 1573: "Nous protestons que nous ne nous sommes retirés du royaume de France que pour éviter la fureur qui s'est esmeue contre nous, & pour le repos de noz consciences, n'ayans en rien forfait, que nous sachions contre le Roy ny ses édictz, suyvant lesquelz nous promettons de demourer bons & fidèles subiectz de Sa Maiesté sans faire, poursuivre, ny attenter, directement ny indirectement, aucune chose contraire à l'obéissance et service que nous luy devons.' La promesse qui leur estoit demandée, estoit telle, 'Nous promettons de demeurer bons & fidèles subiectz du Roy, sans faire, poursuivre, ny attenter chose aucune directement ny indirectement contre Sa Maiesté & son service, protestans que nous ne nous sommes retirés du royaume de France que pour éviter la fureur du peuple esmeu et pour le repos de noz consciences.'" RC 68, 94^v.

rumors about their action, the Small Council angrily summoned the ministers before them to explain. At the council meeting on April 28, Beza, speaking for his colleagues, argued that such oath-swearing was a matter of conscience and thus fell within their spiritual competence. Moreover, the ministers' secrecy in the affair had been intended to protect the magistrates: "the Company had decided that their silence was for the best and for the protection of Messieurs so that, when this matter became known, the councillors would not be accused also of having judged that the war in France against the king was justified."¹⁴⁸ This revealing entry in the city register suggests that the Frenchmen present in Beza's home a week before, in addition to revising the oath, had discussed and advocated armed resistance against the king. It is quite possible that in this secret meeting Beza defended resistance theories that would find written expression several months later in his *Du droit des magistrats*.

The magistrates of Geneva in the years following Saint Bartholomew were committed to championing the cause of the Huguenots without alienating the French king. The city's clergy and refugees, as we have seen, through their plots and pamphlets, were frequently threatening this precarious balance. The tension between the clergy and magistracy came to a head early in the summer of 1573 over the issue of the censorship of the city's printing houses. The Small Council had traditionally exercised the right of censorship over books and pamphlets printed in the city. The *Ordonnances sur l'imprimerie* of 1560 required that all manuscripts be approved by

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¹⁴⁸"Et quant à ce qu'ilz n'y ont communiqué avec dit S^r, ilz ont estimé que c'estoit pour le meilleur et pour soulager Mess^{rs} afin que, cela venant à sçavoir, ilz n'en fussent chargés par ce aussy qu'ilz avoient jugé que la guerre de France contre le Roy est juste." 28 April 1573, RC 68, 95^v.

the magistrates before going to press,¹⁴⁹ though in practice this legislation was not always strictly enforced. During the spring of 1573, however, the complaints of Bellièvre and the magistrates of Bern caused the councillors of Geneva to scrutinize more carefully the controversial literature being printed by the city's presses. In early June, Bern and the ambassador were particularly outraged by the publication of Wolfgang Prissbach's *Responsio ad orationem*. This pamphlet, the Bernese feared, would compromise her relationship with France, "anger, offend and irritate" the French king, and erode Geneva's standing before the Swiss cantons.¹⁵⁰ The Genevan city council summoned Beza and his colleagues on June 25, and, turning a deaf ear to their pleas of innocence, prohibited publication of such literature in the city.¹⁵¹ The Company of Pastors protested fiercely, arguing that such threats were "the trick of the Devil," who was trying to "abolish the glory of God and impinge upon the freedom and authority of the magistrates to permit the printing of Huguenot books."¹⁵² The

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¹⁴⁹"Que nul n'ayt à mettre soubz la presse livre qui ne soit approuvé et qu'il n'en ayt obtenu permission de la Seigneurie." Cited in Cartier, *Les Idées Politiques de Théodore de Bèze*, 17.

¹⁵⁰"... chose qui n'est d'autre proffict et utilité fors que pour picquer, offenser et irriter les princes et potentats contre nos Estats et nous causer leur male grâce et surtout pour deslier, démembrer et rompre le bon commencement de vostre négociation d'entrer en alliance avecq les cantons des Liges..." Magistrates of Bern to Council of Geneva, 20 June 1573, cited in Fazy, *La Saint-Barthélemy*, document #41, 129-130.

¹⁵¹The ministers "ont protesté n'avoir faict ny faict faire le dict livre en tout ny en partie..." Cited in Fazy, *La Saint-Barthélemy et Genève*, 77-78. Their appeal was not entirely forthright. As noted above, Beza had arranged for the printing of *Responsio ad orationem* the previous spring.

¹⁵²"... prians au reste Messieurs adviser bien à la ruse du diable, lequel, prévoiant ceste alliance, voudroit tâcher d'abolir la gloire de Dieu et la liberté et autorité que Messieurs ont de pouvoir permettre l'impression de tous livres de la Religion." 25 June 1573, cited in Fazy, *La Saint-Barthélemy et Genève*, 77-78.

magistrates remained resolute, however, and adopted a strict policy of censorship that remained in force until after Geneva's inclusion in the Treaty of Solothurn in 1579. Although, as we have seen, radical pamphlets occasionally escaped the council's scrutiny (for example Hotman's *Francogallia* and Daneau's *Ad Petri Carpenterii ... responsio*) or were printed in the city illegally (for example Beza's *Du droit des magistrats* and Goulart's *Mémoires*), many more were successfully suppressed. Geneva's ministers and professors continued to write politically explosive books, but they were forced to utilize the services of foreign printers or violate the council's ordinances.

If the Genevan magistrates were careful to avoid jeopardizing the city's security for the sake of the Reformed cause, they were not always opposed to the schemes of their pastors. Through the spring and summer of 1573, the councillors and ministers worked together in an attempt to influence the election of the king of Poland, an election that had important repercussions for the Huguenot cause in France.¹⁵³ The death of Sigismund II Augustus in July of 1572 created a succession crisis in Poland. Henri, Duke of Anjou, the younger brother of Charles IX, soon emerged as one of the leading candidates to succeed Sigismund to the Polish throne, and Charles sent his veteran diplomat Jean de Monluc to Poland in order to promote his brother's election. Monluc was armed with instructions to offer the Poles military assistance in their conflict with Moscow, diplomatic support in future difficulties with

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¹⁵³Nancy Conradt, "John Calvin, Theodore Beza and the Reformation in Poland" (Ph.D. diss., U. of Wisconsin, 1974), 186-192; Kingdon, *Myths about the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre*, 88-105.

the Turks, and a large financial incentive if Henri were elected. However, news of the massacres of Saint Bartholomew--and Henri's complicity in them--arrived in Poland ahead of Monluc, complicating his mission considerably. To counter these reports and save Henri's candidacy, the diplomat wrote to Paris asking for a more detailed account of Saint Bartholomew. In response, the government commissioned Guy du Faur, Sire de Pibrac to write a Latin pamphlet defending the official royal version of the massacres in Paris, and exonerating Henri from the massacres.

Pibrac's treatise, which portrayed Anjou as a 'heroic prince' who had even rescued a number of Protestants from angry Catholic crowds, was published in several editions and sent to Poland through diplomatic channels.¹⁵⁴

Alarmed by this disinformation and the growing support for Anjou's candidacy, Reformed ministers in Poland appealed to their Swiss friends for information about the massacres. In early December 1572, Christoph Thretius wrote to Zurich, reporting the dangerous calumnies of Monluc and urging the ministers to "communicate these things immediately to Beza so that we can counter Monluc and prevent that tyrant Henri from occupying the throne of the kingdom."¹⁵⁵ Three months later, the clergy of Zurich received a second missive from Thretius, again asking for help to counter Catholic propaganda. Bullinger apprised Beza of the situation and sent a copy of Hotman's *De furoribus Gallicis* to Poland, though he

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¹⁵⁴Kingdon, *Myths about the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacres*, 91-97; Conradt, "The Reformation in Poland," 186.

¹⁵⁵"Peto a te ... ut eadem d. Bezae sine mora communicates, quo impediri posset, ne tyrannus ille in regno occupet." 5 December 1572, cited in Conradt, "The Reformation in Poland," 186, 206.

feared that the Reformed were too late to influence the Polish election.¹⁵⁶ During negotiations that accompanied the opening of the elective assembly in early April the condition of French Protestants became a point of contention. Monluc had assured Reformed electors that the election of Anjou would improve the treatment of Huguenots in France. In an attempt to strengthen their bargaining position, the Poles appealed once again to Zurich and Geneva for an update on the French situation. The Genevan ministers brought the issue to the Small Council on April 27. After considering the risks and potential benefits, the council concluded that intervention in the Polish election stood a good chance of forcing concessions from the French crown beneficial to the Huguenots and permitted the ministers to send a special agent to Poland--a Huguenot named Rémon, baron de Thry, who had been in the entourage of Coligny--in order to communicate directly with the Polish churches and the Reformed electors.¹⁵⁷ Rémon departed Geneva in the first week of May. Although it is unknown when he actually reached his destination, it was certainly after May 15, the

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¹⁵⁶"Istis diebus allatae sunt hae ex Polonia a Tretio nostro literae, quas tibi mitto, sed ut remittas. Aliunde allata est oratio oratoris regis Galliae Monlucii habita in consessu principum Polonorum pro principe Andegavensi; quam et ipsam literis Thretii conjunctam mitto. Quid petat Thretius, intelliges ex ejus epistola, quam nimis tarde ad manus nostras pervenit. Nam accepi eam 10 Martii. Eodem die rescripsi ei vereri me ne Regem habeant priusquam meae ad ipsum literae perveniant. Conjunxi literis historiam Edinburgi impressam De furoribus Gallicis." Bullinger to Beza, 13 March 1573, *CB* XIV, 53.

¹⁵⁷"Icy a este proposé que le jour d'hyer les ministres recevrent lettres des églises de Pologne par lesquelles ilz prient d'estre informées de l'estat de la France, des causes des troubles et des auteurs de ceulx, afin qu'ilz s'en puissent servir à l'élection qu'ilz ont à faire d'ung roy, et pour réfuter les excuses et décharges que faict par delà l'ambassadeur du roy en Pologne, déclarans que selon ledit advis, ilz se guideront ne voulans rien faire que soit contre Dieu & le repos des églises françoises, et totesfois qu'en ce là ilz n'on rien voulu adviser ny respondre sans en avoir communiqué à Mess^{rs}, daultant que cest affaire est de grande conséquence et qu'il en peult advenir grand bien, ou grand mal pour ceste ville s'il venoit à notice que cest advis procedat d'icy." 28 April 1573, *RC* 68, 95.

day the Polish diet elected Anjou king of Poland.

Rémon's mission was not a complete failure, however. In the month following the election, he met with leading Reformed nobles and churchmen in Poland to expose the nature of Henri's role in the death of Coligny and the Parisian massacres. As a result, when a Polish deputation arrived in France in August to complete the negotiations and receive Anjou's oath, several Protestant members of the group had been fully informed by Rémon.¹⁵⁸ The Genevan Company of Pastors also took steps to encourage these deputies to defend the Huguenot cause at the French court. On August 10, the ministers met with the French refugee pastors and together agreed to send an embassy to the Polish deputies in order to admonish them to seek "the relief of the Churches of France."¹⁵⁹ Hence, when the Polish ambassadors finally had the opportunity to present Huguenot grievances to the king in mid-September, they had been thoroughly prepared. They asked, among other things, that the perpetrators of the massacres be punished, that Protestant places of worship be established in each *bailliage*, and that liberty of conscience be permitted in the kingdom. Not surprisingly, Charles IX angrily rejected these proposals as blatant intrusions into France's internal affairs. Nonetheless, the Polish election, and the

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¹⁵⁸Conradt, "The Reformation in Poland," 193-194. For an account of the activities of this Polish delegation, see Kingdon, *Myths about the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacres*, 104-105.

¹⁵⁹"Le lundy 10^e d'aoust, nous feusmes assemblez avec les ministres de France qui sont icy pour adviser à ce que les ambassadeurs de Polongne qui arrivoyent en France peussent estre instruitz et conduicts pour servir envers le Roy au soulagement des Églises de France. Cest affaire estant depuis communiquée à quelques Seigneurs françois qui sont icy, a esté resolu en commung d'envoyer vers lesdicts ambassadeurs deux hommes qui les advertiroient et solliciteroient. Ce qui a esté faict." 10 August 1573, *RCP* III, 111.

presence of Polish deputies in France in 1573, undoubtedly had a moderating effect on royal policy toward the Huguenots. It was not by chance that the siege of La Rochelle, which the Duke of Anjou had commanded, was abandoned in July, several weeks before the Polish deputies arrived in France.¹⁶⁰

The evidence examined so far demonstrates that Beza and his colleagues were committed to resisting the French monarchy in a variety of ways. On at least one occasion armed resistance against the king was advocated in a meeting of the French refugees and the Genevan ministers, and Beza himself supported several military raids into France. Rémon's mission to Poland shows the measures the ministers of Geneva were willing to take to frustrate the Valois, support their co-religionists, and defend the memory of Huguenot 'martyrs' of Saint Bartholomew. Ironically, the depth of Beza's antipathy and distrust of the king and queen mother was further witnessed in one plot in which he refused to participate.¹⁶¹ Shortly before Charles IX's death in May 1574, a royal deputy made contact with Beza and asked him to hand over a secret document that implicated the Guise family in the massacres of Saint Bartholomew.¹⁶² A summary of Beza's response to this mysterious request can still

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¹⁶⁰Babelon, *Henri IV*, 196; Sutherland, *The Huguenot Struggle*, 212.

¹⁶¹See Dufour's fascinating article, "Théodore de Bèze, Charles IX et les Guises," 73-78 as well as *CB XIV*, Appendix VI, 316-318. Antoine de La Faye made reference to this event in his *La vie de Théodore de Bèze* (271). La Faye's account allows us to date this event more precisely, insofar as he notes that "Cet homme [the royal deputy to Geneva] ne s'en fut pas plutôt retourné, que la nouvelle vint de la mort de Charles neuvième" (271).

¹⁶²Dufour's suggestion that this document was the intercepted letter from Guise to his mother (dated 27 October 1572) is probably incorrect. Guise's letter was, in fact, more incriminatory of the king than of Guise. See footnote 58 above.

be seen among his papers at the Bibliothèque publique et universitaire in Geneva: the reformer, while stating his willingness to act as an intermediary between the court and the Huguenots and to sacrifice his life to assure the "lasting peace of the Reformed churches" and the "preservation of the State," nonetheless refused to give the royal agent the incriminating document.¹⁶³ At the bottom of this written summary, in the script of Beza's secretary, are these words: "Response given to king Charles IX, requesting Monsieur Beza to help him avenge the Guises and other people who caused the troubles and massacres."¹⁶⁴ On the back of this same sheet, Beza himself had written: "The temptation of king Charles and the queen mother, which I overcame by the grace of God. The Syndics were informed."¹⁶⁵ This document provides a fascinating glimpse into the machinations at the French court in 1573. The Guise family had gained great political advantage through the assassination of Coligny and the massacre of the Huguenot nobility. Now, apparently, the king and queen mother were attempting to crush these powerful rivals. Despite his deep aversion for the Guises, Beza was unwilling to be party to this royal scheme to destroy this Catholic family at the cost of disinculpating the king. Better to let these enemies battle among themselves than to trust once again a king who had shown himself to be so

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¹⁶³ "... qu'il le supplie de s'asseurer qu'il n'y a home de sa petite qualité qui ayt melleure vollonté de s'employer sans y espargner sa propre vie pour une bonne et ferme paix des Églises, et notamment pour la conservation de l'Estat..." This text is published in full in *CB XIV*, Appendix VI, 316.

¹⁶⁴ "Responce donnée au roy Charles 9 demandant à Mr. de Bèze moyen de se venger des Guisars et autres qui estoyent cause des troubles et massacres." *CB XIV*, Appendix VI, 316.

¹⁶⁵ "Tentationes Regis Caroli et Reginae matris a me, Dei beneficio, superatae (consciis D. Syndicis)." *CB XIV*, Appendix VI, 317.

treacherous. "I do not wish to be included in the number of those," wrote Beza in the fall of 1573, "who are used as a decoy to trap others."¹⁶⁶

The Trumpeter of War

Beza's determination to resist royal tyranny in France remained unswayed, even after the death of Charles IX in May 1574. In fact, it was in his bold opposition to Charles' successor, Henri III, during the next two years, that Beza most clearly acted upon the resistance theories that he had espoused in his *Du droit des magistrats*. As a trusted advisor of Condé, Beza was instrumental in the mobilization and invasion of a Protestant mercenary army in the winter of 1575-1576.

In the spring of 1574, following a failed coup by Navarre and Alençon at Vincennes, Condé and two Montmorency brothers, Méru and Thoré, succeeded in escaping to Germany.¹⁶⁷ Condé abjured the Catholic religion, which he had been forced to embrace following Saint Bartholomew, and declared himself champion of the Huguenot cause. In the meantime, with the king dying of tuberculosis, the queen mother placed Navarre and Alençon under guard in the Louvre and tightened her control on the government. When Charles died on May 30, Catherine seized the

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¹⁶⁶ "... je me suis offert de m'entremettre de ceste pacification, quand on la chercheroit telle et ainsi qu'il appartient, en ayant mesmes dict et escrit mon opinion, ne soye compris au nombre de ceulx qu'on faict servir de chouette pour la pipee des aultres." Beza to [François de la Noue?], 16 August 1573, *CB* XIV, 176. Dufour suggests that this statement may be an indirect reference to the 'temptation' of Charles IX.

¹⁶⁷Sutherland, *The Huguenot Struggle*, 222; Mack Holt, *The Duke of Anjou and the Politique Struggle during the Wars of Religion* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 38-42.

regency of the kingdom, and sent messengers to Poland to retrieve her son Henri, now the successor to the throne. The interregnum offered the opponents of Catherine and the Valois a unique opportunity. Condé rallied Huguenots and moderate Catholics to his side to oppose the queen, and issued a 'Declaration' in which he protested the imprisonment of the two princes and urged the new king to eschew the 'cruel oppression' of the past and permit the Reformed religion in the kingdom.¹⁶⁸ During the same period, Damville--the Catholic governor of Languedoc and elder brother of Méru and Thoré--concluded a military alliance with the Protestants of the Midi, protesting royal taxation and vowing to take up arms against the foreigners at court who disturbed the public peace.¹⁶⁹ Beza watched these dramatic developments from Geneva with a mixture of excitement and resignation. If the Protestant princes of Germany were to supply Condé with money and troops, "there would never be a better opportunity for preserving the kingdom and overthrowing the papacy at the same time." But alas, "those who have the means lack the will, and those who have the will lack the means." Better for the Reformed to rely upon the Lord's strength and wait patiently for divine deliverance.¹⁷⁰

But though Beza might counsel Christian patience in his correspondence, he

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¹⁶⁸"Déclaration de Henri de Bourbon prince de Condé ... sur sa retraite de France," in Goulart, *Mémoires*, III (1578), 400-404.

¹⁶⁹Holt, *The Duke of Anjou*, 46.

¹⁷⁰"Et quantum conjectura assequi licet, si quid pecuniae nunc Condensi suggereretur, nulla unquam servando regno et evertendo simul papatui oblata fuit melior occasio. Sed hic accidit quod alias plerumque, nempe ut qui possunt nolint, qui volunt non possint. Itaque superest ut seipsum servans Dominus fortitudinem faciat in brachio suo, nos autem patiendi vincamus." Beza to Dürnhoffer, 23 June 1574, *CB* XV, 113.

certainly was not opposed to decisive action and secret schemes on behalf of his co-religionists. Upon receiving word of Charles' death in mid-June, Beza wrote to Bullinger in Zurich to propose a plan to assist the Reformed churches. If Henri could be delayed forcibly in Poland, then the young prince Alençon—who seemed more favorable to the Huguenots—might have a chance to escape from prison, overthrow his mother, and seize the throne for himself. At the least, the Poles should detain their king until he agreed to sign Condé's 'Declaration.'¹⁷¹ Beza asked Bullinger's support and enclosed a letter to Thretius detailing the plan along with a copy of Condé's 'Declaration.' Hotman proposed this same plot to Bullinger's colleague Rudolph Gwalther at about the same time.¹⁷² The Zurich ministers embraced this scheme enthusiastically and sent the documents of Thretius and Condé, with several letters of their own, by express courier to Poland.¹⁷³ As in the case of Rémon's mission the year before, however, the ministers' intervention came too late. On June 18, Henri had secretly escaped Cracow on horseback. After brief stops in Vienna and Venice,

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¹⁷¹"Sed quid si ille potius in Polonia retineretur? Utinam id vero fieri posset, et ex vinculis Alenconius in solium eveheretur.... Itaque haec duo demum ab illis petenda censeo: unum ut rem protrahant quantum poterunt, alterum ut priusquam eum dimittant, pacem aliquam Ecclesiis impetrent, ex scripti Condensis formula. Scribo in eam sententiam Thretio nostro, quas literas ad te apertas mitto, ut si placuerint tuas in eandem sententiam ad amicos quosque adjungas..." Beza to Bullinger, 19 June 1572, *CB XV*, 105.

¹⁷²"En attendant, il aurait au moins fallu mettre en liberté Alençon et le roi de Navarre auxquels revenait, en l'absence du roi de Pologne, l'espoir de la succession et le gouvernement du royaume. Mais ils sont gardés de très-près au château de Vincennes, par mille Suisses et autant d'arquebusiers.... mais j'espère que vous aurez soin d'écrire à vos amis en Pologne pour qu'on ne le laisse [i.e. Henri of Anjou] jamais partir, ou du moins pour qu'on le retienne le plus longtemps possible." Hotman to Gwalther, 17 June 1574, translation published in Daresté, *François Hotman*, 375-376.

¹⁷³Conradt, "The Reformation in Poland," 197. Bullinger described the ministers' actions in support of this plot in a letter to Beza, dated 28 June 1574 (*CB XV*, 117).

the new French king arrived in Lyon in early September.

During the interregnum and the early months of Henri's troubled reign, Huguenot notables who were organizing resistance against the French crown frequently sought Beza's counsel and Geneva's assistance. On July 23, the reformer reported to the Small Council that Thoré requested his presence in Neuchâtel in order to discuss the French crisis. After considering the matter, the council denied the request, ordering Beza "not to get involved in this matter."¹⁷⁴ Undeterred, Thoré arrived in Geneva at the end of the month, and spent several weeks in the city raising money and meeting with French leaders.¹⁷⁵ In mid-August the city council received a second appeal for Beza's services. Writing from Strasbourg, the prince of Condé requested that the reformer be sent to him in order to provide counsel on the means of pacification in negotiations with Henri III.¹⁷⁶ The magistrates debated the wisdom of granting this request over four successive sessions. While sympathetic to the Huguenot cause, they feared that Beza's involvement with Condé would compromise the city in the eyes of the king, particularly since the prince had recently been

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¹⁷⁴"A esté proposé que ledict S^r de Bèze a faict entendre que le S^r de Thoré est arrivé à Neufchâtel pour assembler gentilhommes françois de la Religion, et qu'ilz désirent qu'il y alle, ce que totesfois il n'ose entreprendre sans le congé de Messieurs, espérant totesfois de le détourner. A esté arresté qu'on luy die que non & qu'il ne s'en mesle point." 23 July 1574, RC 69, 129.

¹⁷⁵30 July 1574, RC 69, 132^v.

¹⁷⁶"On a reçeu lettres de M^r le Prince de Condé ... par lesquelles il prie luy acorder M^r de Bèze ministre pour quelques jours, afin d'avoir son conseil et d'aultres dignes personages qui se trouveront auprès de luy, sus les moyens de pacification, alaquelle le roy de France incline ... déclarant aussy que ceste négociation est de telle importance qu'elle touche l'assurance et stabilité de l'estat de Messieurs..." 12 August 1574, RC 69, 141-141^v. Condé's letter is found in Fazy, *Soleure*, document #1, 125-126. The entry in the *Registre* indicates that Condé also sent a letter (now lost) to Beza requesting his counsel.

proclaimed chief governor and protector by a Huguenot assembly at Millau.¹⁷⁷ There were also concerns for Beza's physical safety since, it was reported, the king wanted to kill the reformer for the plot to prevent his election to the Polish throne.¹⁷⁸ Finally, on August 15, the council granted Beza leave for 15 days, emphasizing in a letter to Condé that their minister was permitted only to "advise him on the means of peace."¹⁷⁹

Beza was gone from Geneva for four weeks, meeting with Condé, Thoré and other Huguenot leaders in Strasbourg, afterwards going to Heidelberg for consultations with the Count Palatine. What was the substance of these negotiations? It is likely that Beza and the Huguenot notables attempted to frame a common strategy and formulate demands to present to the new French king. The presence of the Palatine's ambassador at these discussions, and Beza's trip to Heidelberg, suggest that the leaders also explored the possibility of hiring German mercenaries in the event that the negotiations with the king were unsuccessful.¹⁸⁰ Although it is impossible to know Beza's precise role in these meetings in Germany, his political position is clear. In a letter that he wrote to Bullinger a month before his departure for Strasbourg,

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¹⁷⁷Sutherland, *The Huguenot Struggle*, 224; Geisendorf, 361.

¹⁷⁸"Estant raporté qu'ayant communiqué avec les S^{rs} ministres touchant M^r de Bèze & iceulx ayans faict entendre qu'ilz n'y avoient point advise, y trouvant plusieurs difficultés comme messeigneurs, entre aultres qu'il leur a esté dict que le roy de France a esté adverty que M^r de Bèze avoit envoyé en Pologne pour empêcher son élection." 15 August 1574, *RC* 69, 143.

¹⁷⁹"Arresté ... qu'on le luy envoie pour les fins par luy requises, asçavoir pour adviser aux moyens de la paix tant seulement..." *RC* 69, 143.

¹⁸⁰Geisendorf, 362.

Beza stated his approval of Condé's 'Declaration,' demanding the release of Alençon and Navarre and the freedom of Reformed worship in France. If Henri III rejected these terms, Beza had argued, "I do not see why it would not be permissible by the highest law for the Huguenots to defend themselves against that despotic ruler." Beza went on to say that he had expressed this same opinion to Condé by letter.¹⁸¹ From this missive to Bullinger, therefore, we see that Beza's commitment to resistance remained unchanged. Within a few months after Condé's escape from France, Beza had apparently initiated contact with the prince and encouraged him to defend the demands of his 'Declaration' even to the point of arms. Although the reformer was sent to Strasbourg with express instructions to pursue peace, it is more likely that, instead, he advocated an uncompromising policy toward the French monarchy that made war all but a certainty.

Beza met with Condé three more times in the next year. At the end of September 1574, less than two weeks after Beza had returned from Strasbourg, Condé arrived in Geneva in order to consult with the reformer and the city magistrates. The prince warned the councillors of the king's desire to destroy Geneva, and promised his protection. Three months later, Condé again requested Beza's counsel, this time summoning him to Basle to meet with deputies from Languedoc and La Rochelle, as

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¹⁸¹"Interea valde gaudeo vestra consilia cum nostris congruere, quod ad illum interpellandum et omnia subjectionis jura ipsi sincere offerenda attinet, iis tamen additis conditionibus, quas si recusarit, non video cur non optimo jure isti tyrannidi justissimam defensionem opponere liceat, eaque in re vos nobis assensuros spero, ubi quae nobis constant rationes, cognoveritis. Scripsi ipsi Condeo in hanc sententiam, neque id frustra, opinor." 14 July 1574, *CB* XV, 124. The letter to which Beza alludes here is lost.

well as agents of Damville, who were drafting a formal list of demands to present to Henri.¹⁸² Throughout the month of February, Condé, Beza, and the Huguenot leaders debated the best means to assure the security and freedom of the Reformed churches in France.¹⁸³ The final product of their labors--a document demanding the convening of an Estates General, freedom of Reformed worship throughout the kingdom, the establishment of fortified cities, and punishment for the perpetrators of Saint Bartholomew--was carried by twelve commissioners to Paris in April.¹⁸⁴ When Henri, to no one's surprise, rejected these proposals, Condé called Beza back to Basle in June for further consultations. During these last nine months of intense diplomacy, the Genevan reformer had become one of the prince's most trusted advisors.¹⁸⁵ In a letter of recommendation to the Genevan council, dated June 22, the prince praised the 'wisdom' and 'rare virtues' of Beza, calling him "one of my best friends."¹⁸⁶

In Zurich, Bullinger, bed-ridden and dying, was alarmed by the failure of the

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¹⁸²"A esté assemblé le conseil sus les lettres reçues de la part de M^r de Prince de Condé escrités de Basle de 27^e de ce moys, parlesquelles il prie luy prester encor M^r de Bèze pour aller par delà afin d'avoir son advis et conseil sus le fait de la pacification des églises françoises..." 31 December 1574, *RC* 69. 223. See also Condé's letter to Beza, 27 December 1574, *CB* XV, 234-235; and *RCP* IV, 3.

¹⁸³For a discussion of this conference, see Fazy, *Soleure*, 25-27. The representatives of Languedoc, in fact, did not arrive in Basle until after Beza's return to Geneva on March 5.

¹⁸⁴Sutherland, *The Huguenot Struggle*, 224-225.

¹⁸⁵Thus, Fazy's statement: "... Théodore de Bèze fut l'âme des conseils de Condé, l'inspirateur véritable de sa politique, jusqu'au moment où le jeune prince tenta la fortune des armes et entra en France avec ses gentilshommes huguenots et les soldats du Palatin." In *Soleure*, 6.

¹⁸⁶"Vous asseurant, Messieurs, qu'oultre la recommandation générale que ses rares vertus ont engravé aux cueurs de tous les gens de bien, j'en ay, pour mon particulier, une plus singulière, suyvante laquelle je feray congnoistre à quiconque sera si ozé d'attenter en sa personne qu'il se sera adressé à l'un de mes plus grandz amis." 22 June 1575, *CB* XVI, Appendix III, 276.

negotiations in Basle and fearful of yet another French war. Above all, he was concerned about the role that Beza was playing in provoking the crisis. In his last known letter to Beza, the old reformer urged his friend to strive for peace, even if the French king did not accept all of Condé's conditions. "It is not your duty or mine to blow the war trumpet, but rather to preach peace," he scolded his colleague. "I ask and beg you, my dearest brother, that you not be eager for war and blood, and that you think very carefully about the outcome of such a war."¹⁸⁷ Beza, though respectful, remained firm. Certainly, he and the Reformed had not given up on the negotiations altogether; they would prefer a tolerable and secure peace even to a just war. But what hope was there for peace, he asked, when the French court was filled with notorious tyrants and sycophants who scorned every divine and human law?¹⁸⁸ Though Beza recognized that a military remedy might be "worse than the disease," nonetheless it was inevitable that "those who delight in blood, should be saturated in it."¹⁸⁹

In mid-summer 1575 Condé began to make preparations for a military invasion

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¹⁸⁷"Sed etiam tui meique officii non est tubam inflare, sed pace potius praedicare, quam nobis Dominus mandavit.... Proinde suadebis bonis viris ut pacem quam bellum malint, modo ulla pax tolerabilis, etsi non per omnia placens, offeratur.... Si me ex hoc meo morbo hinc evocarit hoc ultimum a te intimo meo fratre peto et oro ne belli et sanguinis sis cupidus, et expendas apud te quis belli eventus." Bullinger to Beza, 16 June 1575, *CB XVI*, 116.

¹⁸⁸"Deliberatio de pace nihilo minus procedit, quam nullus est qui non anteponat bello etiam justissimo, si modo tolerabilis et secura possit obtineri. Sed quid ab istiusmodi Mezentis, omnis divini et humani juris contemtoribus juratis, expectari boni possit, ne nunc quidem video, quamvis nihil non tentandum tecum arbitror." Beza to Bullinger, 29 July 1575, *CB XVI*, 151.

¹⁸⁹"Condensem video in aliqua spe esse impetrandi subsidii, quod remedium utinam ne sit ipso morbo pejus. Sed quid facias? Sanguine saturentur oportet qui sanguine delectantur." Beza to Bullinger, 16 August 1575, *CB XVI*, 154.

of France. The young prince concluded a treaty with Frederick III, in which the Palatine guaranteed him 6,000 German mercenaries, and promised to raise an additional 8,000 Swiss soldiers and 2,000 cavalry. In addition, Condé borrowed large sums of money from friends in Geneva, and French refugees began to leave the city in order to join the Huguenot army forming in Alsace. In the meantime, Alençon escaped Paris and, declaring his support for Condé, issued a call for troops and money.¹⁹⁰ By the end of October, the invasion force was ready to march and Condé again sought Beza's assistance. The prince wrote Geneva requesting that, as with his father fourteen years before, Beza be permitted to accompany him into France as his personal chaplain.¹⁹¹ Over Beza's protests, the city councillors denied this request, though they did permit him to journey once more to Strasbourg to meet with Condé. When the reformer returned from Germany shortly before Christmas, he carried with him an original copy of the war treaty signed by Condé, Frederick III, and his son, Duke Casimir. The reformer also brought word that Condé had crossed into France with 8,500 mercenaries, three companies of cavalry, and other Walloon and Swiss soldiers. The long-awaited invasion of France had begun.

The invasion of the fall of 1575, precipitating the fifth civil war, represented the kind of resistance that Beza and other French refugees in Geneva had been

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¹⁹⁰Holt, *The Duke of Anjou*, 51-53; Fazy, *Soleure*, 48-50.

¹⁹¹"Théodore de Bèze. A proposé avoir reçu lettre du M^r le Prince de Condé oultre celle qu'il a escript à Mess^{rs} parlesquelles il le prie d'aller avec l'armée en France, ou bien aller faire ung voyage par devers luy parce qu'il a de choses importantes à luy communiquer..." 1 November 1575, *RC* 70, 172^v. See also *RCP* IV, 36-37.

justifying and advocating during the previous three years. Here was the prototypical lesser magistrate combatting royal tyranny on behalf of the fundamental laws of the kingdom. Here was theory put into practice. The invasion was in no small part the fruit of Beza's strenuous efforts during the previous eighteen months. He had decisively rejected Bullinger's *via pacis* and, instead, trumpeted the call to arms. The Peace of Monsieur (Edict of Beaulieu) that ended the hostilities the following May was, in fact, a royal capitulation.¹⁹² In an agreement mediated by Alençon, the king guaranteed the political equality of his Reformed and Catholic subjects, permitted Reformed worship everywhere in the kingdom except in Paris, and promised to call an Estates General within six months. He also granted eight fortified cities to the Huguenots and promised to create bipartisan courts¹⁹³ to adjudicate Huguenot grievances. Finally, the king agreed to pay the enormous cost of the German and Swiss mercenaries who had 'delivered' him from his wicked advisors. As hundreds of religious refugees left Geneva in the spring of 1576 to return to France, Beza had reason to rejoice. The Huguenot victory was complete. Geneva had weathered the crisis. After a season of horror and intense persecution, Reformed congregations were again beginning to flourish in France. But peace purchased with arms was tenuous. The Peace of Monsieur would prove to be as fragile as its predecessors.

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¹⁹²Sutherland, *The Huguenot Struggle*, 228-231.

¹⁹³I have used this term to render the French *chambres mi-parties*. These tribunals were to have an equal number of Catholic and Protestant judges, and were to be established in each regional parlement in order to adjudicate fairly Protestant grievances. See Sutherland, *The Huguenot Struggle*, 361.

HISTOIRE

ECCLESIASTIQUE DES
EGLISES REFORMEES AV ROYAVME
de France, en laquelle est descrite au vray la renaissance &
accroissement d'icelles depuis l'an M. D. XXI. iusques
en l'annee M. D. L XIII. leur reiglement ou discipline,
Synodes, persecutions tant generales que particulieres,
noms & labours de ceux qui ont heureusement trauaillé,
villes & lieux où elles ont esté dressees, avec le discours des
premiers troubles ou guerres ciuiles, desquelles la vraye
cause est aussi declaree.

DIVISEE EN TROIS TOMES

ayans chascque Tome leurs tables.

S'AMUSE, TANT PLUS DE

De l'Imprimerie de Jean Remy.

A ANVERS.

1580.

Figure 3: Title-page of the *Histoire ecclésiastique* (1580)

CHAPTER II

THE END OF THE GOLDEN AGE, 1576-1584

"Arrière Rois et Princes, revestus
D'or et d'argent, et non pas de vertus!
Rois, qui servez d'argument aux flatteurs,
Qui remplissez les papiers des menteurs.
Ce n'est à vous que s'adresse ceci:
Non pas qu'à vous parlé ne soit ici;
Mais vous n'avez oreilles pour entendre,
Encore moins le coeur pour y apprendre."¹

The title-page of the *Histoire ecclésiastique* (1580) displays an image of three soldiers striking the anvil of Truth (see Figure 3). Lying on the ground beside the anvil is a broken hammer; another is in the process of shattering in the hands of one of the soldiers. The legend around the woodcut reads: 'The more blows you use, the more hammers you lose.'² Coined by Beza shortly before the first civil war, this phrase aptly captured his resolute confidence in divine providence. Despite satanic opposition and intense suffering, he believed that the true church of God would

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¹"Les Psaumes et l'épître dédicatoire de Théodore de Bèze," *Bulletin* 1 (1853): 97.

²"Plus a me frapper on s'amuse, tant plus de marteaux on y use." *Histoire ecclésiastique* I, title-page. My translation of this phrase is taken from Greengrass, *The French Reformation*, 80. According to the *Histoire ecclésiastique*, this phrase was coined by Beza shortly after the massacre at Vassy in March 1562: "Sire c'est à la vérité à l'église de Dieu, au nom de laquelle je parle, d'endurer les coups, & non pas d'en donner. Mais aussi vous plaira-il vous souvenir, que c'est une enclume qui a usé beaucoup de marteaux" (II, 6). Beza also employed this image much later in the preface to his *Sermons sur l'histoire de la résurrection de nostre Seigneur Jésus Christ* (Genève: Jean Le Preux, 1593): "Car quoi que ces marteaux n'ayent iamais cessé de marteler, & cest' enclume d'endurer les coups, si est-elle tousiours demeurée sauvée, & les marteaux se sont usés, & sont allés en pièces, les uns après les autres" ¶¶¶. iij.v.

survive and continue to proclaim the gospel until the return of Jesus Christ. In the end, God's truth would be victorious.

In the years following the Peace of Monsieur (1576), Beza's confidence in divine providence was severely tested as the Reformed churches in France were battered by enemies both outside and within. The religious and political concessions obtained by Condé's invasion in 1576 proved to be ephemeral. Before the end of the year, the king and the Estates General meeting at Blois (December 1576) had abrogated the terms of pacification and once again outlawed the Reformed religion. In the sixth civil war that followed, Alençon and Damville abandoned the Protestant cause and the Huguenots were forced to accept in the Peace of Bergerac (1577) new restrictions on their worship. Henceforth, successive peace treaties at Nérac (1579) and Fleix (1580) failed to pacify the Catholic and Huguenot armies or to restrain self-enterprising noblemen from pillaging the French countryside with their private armies. Social violence, in turn, fostered widespread moral dissolution. Beza frequently bemoaned a litany of vices--including luxury, decadence, swearing, gambling, and atheism--that he believed had infected not only the royal court, but the Huguenot armies and the households of Protestant nobles as well. France seemed to be slowly 'dying' under the twin plagues of political anarchy and moral license. Nor had Reformed doctrine escaped Catholic attack. Some Huguenots were willing to trust in Catholic moderates like Alençon who defended the Protestant cause when it served their own ambitions. The success of Jesuit and Capuchin missions as well as continued attempts by Rome to promulgate the decrees of Trent in France caused

additional concerns. The kingdom, once as beautiful as "the garden of Eden" had become as desolate as "the deserts of Arabia."³

This chapter will investigate the strategies that Beza and his colleagues adopted in response to Catholic 'hammer-blows' against the Reformed movement between 1576 and 1584. This period in French history remains one of the most obscure of the *ancien régime*, subject to broad generalizations but few detailed studies.⁴ The same deficiencies pertain to scholarship on Beza and the Huguenot movement as a whole during this period. Drawing on the untapped riches of Genevan archival materials, I will demonstrate that the political allegiances and mental orientation of Beza and other exiled Huguenots changed perceptibly in the decade following the Peace of Monsieur. First, it is necessary to clarify the complex nature of the reformer's relationship with the Bourbon princes Condé and Navarre. Gradually overcoming deep suspicions of Navarre, Beza became in the mid-1580s an important intermediary between the prince and his allies in France and Switzerland. The initial stages of this rapprochement between the prince and reformer will be documented here for the first time. The second major theme to explore is the manner in which Beza perceived Catholic

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³"Bref, depuis que le monde est monde, je ne croy pas qu'il y ait eu une telle ne si desbordée meschanceté et villenie que celle qui a la vogue en ce beau royaume, qui estoit comme le jardin d'Eden." Beza to David Chaillet, 14 March 1577, *CB* 18, 55. "Mais il y a apparence que d'un costé ce sera l'issue d'un Pharaon, quant aux persécutions; et quant à l'Église du Seigneur, qu'elle trouvera son désert en la France mesmes, se ces guerres continuent, qui ne faudroit de transformer ce tant grand et opulent royaume en une Arabie la déserte, et Dieu vueille qu'au bout se trouve quelque terre de Chanaan." Beza to Frederick III, the Elector Palatine, 4 July 1575, *CB* XVI, 121.

⁴Sutherland claims that the years between the Peace of Monsieur and the establishment of the Catholic League (1584) are "possibly among the least familiar of the *ancien régime*." *The Huguenot Struggle*, 232.

reform and counterreform in France between 1576-1584. Scholars of early modern France have recently argued that despite the turbulence of Henri III's troubled reign, one can identify signs of Catholic renewal and reform during the period. What remains unexamined, however, is how the Huguenot leadership assessed and reacted to these subtle changes in Catholic religious expression. My sources make clear that Beza and other Protestant leaders were alarmed by Catholic reforms in France and took steps to counteract them. The final section of this chapter will document Beza's growing discouragement with the fruit and future of religious reform in Europe. Less than two decades after the death of Calvin, the advance of reform seemed to have stalled. Beza was alarmed by the dearth of talented leaders and the increasingly bitter internecine feud between Lutherans and Calvinists. Health problems exacerbated his growing pessimism. Beza's writings provide new insight as to how a 'third-generation' reformer attempted to preserve the evangelical legacy, counter the erosion of morals and 'pure' doctrine, and prepare the churches for the future. Beza's struggles show how fragile the Reformed religion in France was between 1576 and 1584. While scholars have identified the last decades of the sixteenth century as a period of religious consolidation and confessionalization, from Beza's perspective, the Reformed churches in these years were in a battle for their very survival.

The Search for Security

Political security was a primary concern of the Huguenots in the years immediately following the Peace of Monsieur. After years of harsh persecution and

broken promises, Beza and his co-religionists were understandably skeptical of Henri III's assurances of good will. They looked instead to obtaining legal guarantees that would assure their survival even in the face of royal duplicity. In the Peace of Monsieur, the Huguenots received eight fortified cities (*places de sûreté*), located in Languedoc, Guyenne, Dauphiné and Provence, that served as garrisons for their armies and havens for their hunted leaders. Likewise, the edict of pacification created bi-partisan courts in each regional parlement (the so-called *chambres mi-parties*) staffed with equal numbers of Catholic and Protestant judges to assure that Huguenot grievances would be adjudicated fairly.⁵ In addition to guarding these legal guarantees, the Huguenots attempted to find a reliable replacement for the assassinated general Coligny, a noble protector in whom they could entrust their military campaigns and negotiations with the king. In the aftermath of Monsieur, there were three candidates to whom the Reformed looked for leadership: Alençon, the brother of the king, who had brokered the Peace of Monsieur; Henri, duke of Condé, who had led the recent Protestant invasion of France; and Henri of Navarre, who had reconverted to the Reformed religion in June of 1576. In the next decade, Navarre would gradually emerge as the undisputed leader of the Huguenot movement. At least in part, his success was due to the growing support of Beza and his colleagues, as well as to a propaganda campaign waged by Huguenot intellectuals in Geneva.

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⁵These provisions appear in articles 18-22 and 59 of the Peace of Monsieur. For the text of this edict, see *FP X*, 127-141. See also Sutherland, *The Huguenot Struggle*, 175-177.

Alençon's relationship to the Huguenots had long been ambiguous.⁶ Though an avowed Catholic, the young prince had been a close friend of Coligny and was frequently proposed as a suitor for Queen Elizabeth of England. In the aftermath of Saint Bartholomew, Alençon became identified with a circle of 'moderate' Catholics--derisively called 'politiques'⁷--who opposed royal moves against the Huguenots and who resented Italian advisors at court. Some Protestants, like the refugee Innocent Gentillet in Geneva, envisioned Alençon crushing Italian tyranny in France and restoring Gallican freedoms.⁸ As we have seen, following the death of Charles IX,

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⁶Holt, *The Duke of Anjou*, 24-38.

⁷In the second-half of the sixteenth century, the epithet *politique* was used by French Catholics and Protestants alike. In its general useage, the term was applied pejoratively to those who were self-seeking, hypocritical, and untrustworthy. Often, however, the word had a more specialized sense, being used to describe people who, due to a lack of religious zeal and piety, were willing to subordinate religious purity to desired political ends. Historians of early modern France have been kinder to these so-called 'politiques,' often portraying them as champions of toleration who advocated a negotiated settlement between the crown and the Huguenots. Scholars like François du Crue have spoken of the 'politiques' as an organized group of individuals who, between 1560 and 1590, defended a moderate political course and ultimately, as supporters of Henri IV, advocated the compromises made in the Edict of Nantes. In fact, however, there is little evidence that the 'politiques' were an organized party, or that the proponents of religious moderation in the 1560s (e.g. Michel de l'Hôpital), 1570s (e.g. Alençon) or 1590s (e.g. Jacques-Auguste de Thou) even shared the same political principles. For different perspectives on this debate, see Christopher Bettinson, "The Politique and the Politique Party: A Reappraisal," in *From Valois to Bourbon. Dynasty, State and Society in Early Modern France*, ed. Keith Cameron (Exeter: Exeter Studies in History, 1989), 35-49; Holt, *The French Wars of Religion*, 168-169; and Greengrass, *France in the Age of Henri IV*, 13-16. As Mario Turchetti has argued in his book *Concordia o tolleranza? François Bauduin (1520-1573) e i 'moyenneurs.'* (Geneva: Librairie Droz, 1984) and in subsequent articles, the modern principle of 'toleration' was almost completely absent from the sixteenth century. What Catholic 'moderates' advocated was not toleration, but religious concord--that is, unifying the kingdom around shared religious principles and experiences. For my purposes, I will employ the term 'politique' only when I wish to capture the derision intended by contemporaries.

⁸"... ie m'asseure, Monseigneur, qu'ils vous esmouueront tousiours de plus fort à resusciter & faire reluire en vous les vertus héroïques de vos ayeuls: & à chasser hors de France les vices infames qui s'y enracinent, asavoir cruauté, iniustice, perfidie, & oppression, ensemble les estrangers qui les y ont apportez, & les François dégénéreux & abastardis leurs adhérans, qui favorisent à leurs tyrannies & oppressions, lesquelles trainent après elles la subversion de l'Estat du Royaume. Cela mesme poussera vostre Excellence à remettre sus la manière de gouverner vrayement François, usitée par vos

Beza himself supported a plot to delay Henri of Anjou's return from Poland so as to give Alençon a chance to escape house-arrest, seize the regency from his mother, and promote Huguenot interests. In the fall of 1575, after finally fleeing from court and aligning with Condé, Alençon sent his deputy Beauvoir-la-Nocle to Geneva in order to gain permission to publish a 'Protest' in which he called for an Estates General, promised to protect the Reformed religion, and urged his countrymen to expel foreign influence from the kingdom.⁹ In the months that followed, Alençon corresponded regularly with the Genevan magistrates, hoping to secure a sizeable war loan.¹⁰ By appealing to both persecuted Huguenots and disgruntled Catholics, Alençon succeeded in harvesting rich benefits from the king's humiliation in the Peace of Monsieur. To buy back the allegiance of his wayward brother, Henri III promised Alençon an annual pension of 100,000 écus, and granted him the duchies of Anjou, Berry and Touraine. The newly-designated Duke of Anjou was thus the chief beneficiary of the pacification of 1576.

In the months after the Peace of Monsieur, Anjou made a concerted effort to attract to his side leading Huguenot thinkers. He offered François Hotman the title of master of requests, with an annual salary of 1,200 livres (400 écus).¹¹ Despite these

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devanciers, & à bannir & renvoyer celle de Machiavel en Italie, dont elle est venue à nostre trèsgrand malheur & dommage." Letter preface to Alençon, in *Contre Nicolas Machiavel Florentin*, f3^{r-v}.

⁹Holt, *The Duke of Anjou*, 51-53. Innocent Gentillet requested and received permission from the Genevan Small Council to print this 'Protest' on 27 December 1575. See RC 70, 166.

¹⁰For this correspondence, see documents xxi, xxiv, xxv, and xxvii in Fazy, *Soleure*, 160-166.

¹¹Darestre, *François Hotman*, 384-385.

overtures and Anjou's role in achieving the liberal edict of 1576, Beza remained cautious. As early as 1573, Beza had voiced suspicions of the prince.¹² The reformer hesitated entrusting a religious cause to an adventurer whose ambitions seemed far greater than his convictions.¹³ In the end, Beza's caution proved well-justified. In the fall of 1576, Anjou abandoned the Huguenots and reconciled with his brother; the following spring, he commanded royal forces that besieged and sacked the Protestant strongholds of La Charité and Issoire.¹⁴ Beza was horrified by the resumption of war and angered by Anjou's betrayal.¹⁵ Writing to the ninth National Synod of Saint Foy (February 1578), Beza gently scolded his colleagues for so quickly trusting Anjou and his faction: "We have been greatly deceived, my brothers, by the blow of these politiques. We too easily believed their assurances that they wished to serve the State. But in fact, experience has shown that they were only greedy for their own gain, not interested in the public good nor sympathetic with our desperate condition. God has taught us by this that such a compromise (*un meslinge*)

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¹²See Beza to [François de La Noue?], 16 August 1573, *CB XIV*, 173-178.

¹³"De Regis fratre varia sunt hominum judicia. Quaeritur, etiam per literas, magnam sibi ab iis fieri injuriam, qui fidem ipsius in dubium vocent: et certe, si saltem valeat Cassianum illud: 'cui bono,' non est cur de ipso dubitemus. Plurima tamen maximi momenti in contrarium a nonnullis afferuntur. Ego sapienter facere arbitror, qui ab hominibus non pendent. Tempus caetera patefaciet." Beza to Gwalther, 5 October 1576, *CB XVII*, 172. See also Beza to Zanchi, 15 March 1574, *CB XV*, 54.

¹⁴"In Gallia reconciliati sunt fratres, proditorum opera." Beza to Dürnhoffer, 4 December 1576, *CB XVII*, 219. "Charitatis oppidum praeter omnem expectationem deditum est perfidioso illi Alençonio, eorum, ut arbitramur, culpa qui subsidium mittere neglexerunt. Hinc illorum copiae in Alverniam progressae, coeperunt Issoriam obsidere." Beza to [Jean-Jacques Grynaeus], 28 May 1577, *CB XVIII*, 116.

¹⁵Hotman wrote to Amerbach in February 1577: "Bèze est presque mort de chagrin." Cited by Daresté, *François Hotman*, 385.

was displeasing to him."¹⁶ The point was clear: the work of Christ must never again be entrusted to a political adventurer. A righteous cause must be led by godly men. Better to suffer under the cross than to compromise God's truth.¹⁷

Suspicious of Anjou, Beza had more confidence in Henri, prince of Condé. Henri was the son of a respected Huguenot warrior, a committed Protestant dedicated to protecting Reformed worship in France, even if by force. Beza met frequently with Condé between 1574-1575, serving as one of the prince's chief advisors in the months leading up to the Protestant invasion of France in the winter of 1576. Though the reformer did not have frequent contact with the prince thereafter, a bond of familiarity and respect existed between the two men. Condé continued to look to Geneva for political and financial support, even as Beza tracked the prince's military movements and exploits carefully.¹⁸ At times Condé did not escape the reformer's stern criticism. In the years following the Peace of Monsieur, Beza complained frequently about the bad councillors upon whom Condé relied.¹⁹ In July of 1577,

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¹⁶"Et quant à nos politiques, suffise nous, mes frères, d'y avoir esté trompez si lourdement pour un coup. Ils nous ont donné à entendre de bouche ce que de ma part j'ay creu trop aysément, à savoir qu'ils embrassoyent le point de l'Estat, mais c'estoit leur estat et non pas le bien publicq, ny commiseration qu'ils eussent de nos misères, comme l'expérience l'a monstre à nos despens. Dieu d'autre part a monstre que telle meslinge lui estoit désagréable..." Beza to the Synod of Saint Foy, 15 January 1578, *CB XIX*, 203.

¹⁷"Il reste seulement d'avoir bon courage et employer nos vrayes armes, nous gardans bien de faire du principal l'accessoire, comme on faict il y a long temps, aimant trop mieux rejeter la croix sur les espauls d'autrui que la porter." Beza to the Synod of Saint Foy, 15 January 1578, *CB XIX*, 204.

¹⁸See, for example, Beza to Gwalther, 17 March 1577, *CB XVIII*, 57; Beza to Gwalther, 16 June 1577, *ibid.*, 119; Beza to Gwalther, 28 February 1581, Zurich, Stadtbibl., A 49, p. 80-81.

¹⁹"Condensi valde metuo ab iis quibus se totum quamvis millies praemonitus regendum [tr]adit." Beza to Gwalther, 26 July 1576, *CB XVII*, 130. "Navarrenus et Condensis, utinam bonis consiliis utantur." Beza to J. J. Grynaeus, 28 May 1577, *CB XVIII*, 116. Nor was Beza the only

Beza confronted the Huguenot prince directly on the moral condition of his household. Reliable people had reported that Condé welcomed ‘papists’ in his entourage and was more inclined to listen to fawners than to heed the counsel of godly advisors. (One must wonder if Beza was including himself among these neglected councillors!) Rather than prayerfully seeking God’s wisdom in weighty political decisions, the prince and his courtiers wasted their time playing cards and dice.²⁰ Beza urged Condé to meditate on David’s words in Psalm 101 and to pattern his household after these biblical admonitions. Only then would the prince be able to silence his enemies and please God.²¹ The reformer’s blunt language did not completely alienate the prince. In 1580, Condé again came secretly to Geneva in

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French exile in Geneva with these concerns. In early 1577, Beza expressed horror that strong criticisms of Condé and Navarre, voiced incautiously to the Landgrave William IV of Hesse by him and François Hotman, were in danger of reaching the ears of the prince’s ambassadors in Germany. See Beza to Dürnhoffer, 29 January 1577, *CB* XVIII, 3-4; Beza to Landgrave of Hesse, 25 March 1577, *ibid.*, 60; Beza to Landgrave of Hesse, 24 May 1577, *ibid.*, 114.

²⁰ “... j’ay creu une partie de ce que j’ay entendu souvent, non point par des faiseurs de nouvelles, ou par lettres escriptés à la desrobée par cestui-cy ou par cestuy-là, mais par un commun tesmoignage de tous venans de par dela, ou bien se disans le savoir de ceux qui en venoient et en parlans souvent les larmes aux yeux, les uns disans que vostre maison estoit meslée non seulement de papistes opiniastres, mais aussi de ceux qui valent beaucoup pis. Les autres, qu’en vos plus grands affaires, au lieu qu’il failloit estre en perpétuelles prières avec extrême diligence, les dez et les cartes n’ont point manqué soit en vostre maison ou table, soit entre ceux qui avoient les charges principales. Les autres, que vous n’avez pas tousjours approché de vous ny escouté les plus sages et plus gens de bien.” Beza to Condé, 23 July 1578, *CB* XIX, 126. Two months earlier, Beza wrote a letter to Condé with stronger, though more general, criticisms of the prince’s behavior, but seems not to have sent it. See Beza to Condé, 4 May 1578, *CB* XIX, 89-91.

²¹ “... il fault couper la racine et estoupper la source, prenant les matières à coeur, et vous proposant le 101 pseume pour règle de toute vostre maison à bon escient, qui est le seul et vray moyen de vous rendre redoutable à tous vos ennemis et veritable devant Dieu et les hommes.” Beza to Condé, 23 July 1578, *CB* XIX, 126. Psalm 101 in the Vulgate corresponds with Psalm 100 in modern editions of the Bible. In his letter to Condé from May 4 (see footnote 18), Beza recommended that the prince read Psalms 102 and 119 [i.e. Psalms 101 and 118 in modern editions]. In fact, these latter two references would seem to contain principles more appropriate for the conduct of a prince.

order to seek Beza's counsel on political strategy. "I urged the prince," Beza reported afterwards, "that he should do everything possible to seek conditions for a holy and secure peace in France."²² With the political ascendance of Henri of Navarre in the early 1580s, Condé's role shifted from that of a faithful protector of the Reformed churches to that of a somewhat begrudging lieutenant of his cousin. Similarly, after 1584, Beza virtually forgot Condé in his enthusiastic support for Navarre.

Though Beza and his colleagues in Geneva disagreed on the relative merits of Alençon and Condé, they were united in their disdain for Henri III and in their distrust of royal initiatives to pacify France. Beza's commitment to a *secure* peace and his suspicions of the king were clearly witnessed in two incidents that occurred in the fall of 1579 and the winter of 1580. In May 1579, after months of intense diplomatic activity, Geneva was included as an unofficial partner in the Treaty of Solothurn ratified between Henri III and the Swiss cities of Bern and Solothurn. Fearing Savoy's growing aggression along France's eastern frontier, the French king agreed to finance a large garrison of Bernese soldiers in Geneva in the event of a Savoyard attack.²³ In return, the magistrates of Geneva permitted the king's subjects

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²²"Condensis ipse nuper cum quinque duntaxat equitibus per viciniam, habitu dissimulato transiit, in Occitaniam abiens, quem accersitus salutavi, et ad sanctae ac firmæ pacis quaerendas summo studio conditiones sum pro virili cohortatus." Beza to Dürnhoffer, 15 November 1580, Paris, Bibl. Ste. Geneviève, ms. 1455, 214-215^v.

²³On the Treaty of Solothurn (Soleure), see Fazy, *Soleure*, 101-106, 190-206; Gautier, *Histoire de Genève* V, 212-226. The Catholic cantons in Switzerland were strongly opposed to this treaty. Ludwig Pfyffer, a diplomat from Lucerne, complained that Solothurn would incur "l'inimitié de tous bons Catholiques et notamment du Pape." Letter of the Baron of Vézines to the Genevan Small Council, read in the council on 19 September 1578, RC 73, 183. The ministers of Geneva approved

free access to the city, thereby assuring France free commercial and military contact with its Swiss allies. Despite the treaty, Beza and the Genevan magistrates were under no illusions; though allies on paper, the Catholic king would prefer to see the city "at the bottom of Lac Léman."²⁴

In the following months, Henri III used the Treaty of Solothurn as political leverage in an effort to obtain the assistance of Geneva and Beza in pacifying his more bellicose Huguenot subjects. In September 1579, the French ambassador to Switzerland, Nicolas de Harlay, Sire of Sancy, wrote Geneva to complain that Reformed armies in the Dauphiné under the command of the Huguenot general Lesdiguières refused to heed the recent royal pacification; he asked the magistrates to intervene, noting that "there is no one in the world more suited to admonish them to do their duty towards God, their natural prince, and their country than you."²⁵ The councillors summoned Beza for his advice, who spoke at length about the dangerous machinations of the Catholic marshal Bellegarde justifying the caution of Lesdiguières.²⁶ Yet, in the end, the council honored Sancy's request and sent letters

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the ratification, although they were hesitant to negotiate with a king whose hands were stained with "so much Huguenot blood." Likewise, they feared that the French Reformed churches—which they likened to "colonies" of Geneva—might misunderstand. See RC 74, 110-111.

²⁴"... combien que le roy nous voudroit veoir au fondz du lac, totesfois il nous a aydé ce devant comme mesmes on a sçeu de la coste de Rome." [4]/14 February 1588, RC 83, 29-29^v.

²⁵"Il [Sancy] a estimé qu'il n'y avoit personnes en ce monde plus propres pour les admonester de leur devoir envers Dieu, leur prince naturel, et leur patrie que Mess^{rs}." 2 September 1579, RC 74, 151. This letter is published in Fazy, *Soleure*, Document XXXVIII, 206-207.

²⁶"... estant appellé Mons^r de Bèze qui a discoursu bien au long ce qu'a esté devisé icy devant touchant le faict de mareschal de Bellegarde avec les églises et de Daulphiné, etc. A esté arresté qu'on escrive aux y églises qui doyvent estre assemblées à La Mure." 2 September 1579, RC 74, 151^v.

to Lesdiguières and the churches in Dauphiné.

In February the following year, Sancy again contacted Geneva, asking to meet secretly with Beza and the syndic Michael Roset at Vufflens to discuss several affairs "as important to the peace of France as to this city."²⁷ Among the points of discussion, the ambassador wanted the Genevan ministers to pressure the Reformed in France to abide by the provisions of the Peace of Nérac and give up fortified cities granted them for six months.²⁸ The minutes of the Genevan Small Council from 15 February 1580 recorded in detail the interview between Beza and Sancy. The ambassador assured Beza that the king knew of the reformer's love for his native France and of his horror at the calamities that had nearly ruined it. The king deeply regretted his complicity in the massacres of Saint Bartholomew, which occurred when he was still too young to understand that the Reformed were not his sworn enemies. Sancy insisted that Henri III now wished to alleviate the suspicions of the Huguenots--as justified as they might be--and desired Beza's counsel on the means of achieving lasting peace in the kingdom. The reformer's response was guarded but polite: "I am too insignificant that the king should want my advice on a matter of such

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Although the substance of these letters is not known, they apparently contained disparaging remarks about Bellegarde. On September 10, learning that Lesdiguières was no longer in Dauphiné, the council decided not to deliver the letter to him, especially given that "il les pourroit montrer au maréchal de Bellegarde qui en seroit indigné contre ceste ville" (*ibid.*, 159^v). See Fazy, *Soleure*, 116-118. Despite Fazy's cautious assertion that "le préavis de Th. de Bèze paraît avoir été favorable," it is unclear whether Beza supported the council's decision to send letters to Lesdiguières and the Reformed churches of the Dauphiné (*ibid.*, 117).

²⁷"... qu'il a quelque affaires d'importance et qui concernent tant la paix de la France que cest estat dont il désireroit conférer avec eux..." 3 February 1580, *RC* 75, 23^v.

²⁸The text of the Peace of Nérac is found in *FP* X, 159-167.

importance. Although I am eager to offer him some suggestions promoting the peace, the matter is of such importance that I must think about it first."²⁹ The minutes of the Small Council make clear that Beza informed the French ambassador several days later that he did not believe the Reformed should trust the king and give up their fortified cities.³⁰ The reformer stated this same opinion to a friend in Germany later in the spring: "The Catholics find a pretext for war in the fact that the Huguenots refuse to hand over some cities granted them for the time being to assure their security. But to do so would be like stretching their throats to the executioner, since

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²⁹"... ledit S^r Amb^r ayant adressé sa parolle à M^r de Bèze en présence dudit S^r Roset, luy dit, 'Vous sçaves que le Roy ... ne s'est pas si peu enquis des affaires du royaume, qu'il n'ayt sçeu que vous, M^r de Bèze, n'avez tousjours eu quelque affection à vostre patrie et que la calamité qui y est advenue ne vous ayt touché. Et pourtant, j'ay charge du Roy mon maistre de vous parler à bouche et vous dire qu'il est desplaisant de ce qu'est passé et de ce que plusieurs choses se sont passées que l'aage ne luy permettoit de comprendre. On a fait mourir plusieurs, estimant qu'ilz fussent ses principaux ennemis, qui ne l'estoient. Mais aujourd'huy il ne fait distinction pour raison de la Religion car il cognoit que ceux de la sienne, qui ont moins d'occasion, entreprennent de grandes choses. Et d'autant que le mal du costé de ceux de la Religion vient d'une défiance fondée sur raison et qu'il seroit expédient de trouver les moiens de l'oster, le Roy désireroit entendre de vous quelque bon advis pour entretenir la paix, laquelle il veut garder, nonobstant qu'il soit sollicité à la guerre.' A quoy ledit S^r de Bèze a répondu: 'Je suis de trop petit sens pour mériter qu'un tel Roy s'enquière si je suis au monde et qu'il désire avoir mon advis d'une chose si importante. Et à la verité, je désirerois sçavoir quelque chose qui peut servir à la paix, mais l'affaire estant de tel poidz, il mérite bien qu'on y pense.' A quoy ledit S^r Amb^r répondit: 'Penses y pour me le faire entendre dans 7 ou 8 jours afin que j'en advertisse le Roy auquel j'ay charge d'adresser mes lettres directement ou à M^r d'Oz.'" 13 February 1580, *RC* 75, 29-29^v. For a discussion of this interview, see Geisendorf, 366-367.

³⁰On 15 March 1580, Beza reported to the magistrates that Sancy "... a suivy son conseil pour le trouver plein de raison, sinon en ce qu'il fait mention que ceux de la religion ont grande occasion de ne rendre les villes et d'estre défiants pour les contraventions qu'on a fait en leurs personnes à la paix, d'autant qu'il ne fait mention des contraventions réciproques de ceux de la religion.... Prié ledit S^r de Bèze d'exhorter ceux ausquelz il escrira d'entendre à la paix." *RC* 75, 48. The conclusion of this affair occurred two months later, when the magistrates of Bern sent Beza a memoire written by the ambassador on the means of pacifying France. This document suggested that, given the mutual distrust of Catholics and Huguenots, the Swiss should provide garrisons in French cities so that "on osteroit les armes de la main du peuple." Alarmed by this proposal, the Genevan magistrates ordered Beza to "respondre en façon qu'il ne montre point donner advis la dessus mais qu'il renvoie ceste délibération à ceux de la Religion qui sont parmi les affaires et lesquelz peuvent mieux juger ce qui leur est nécessaire." 18 May 1580, *RC* 75, 91. On June 7, Beza showed the draft of his response to the Bernese to the Genevan magistrates, who corrected several of the articles (*ibid.*, 106).

the peace edict is so wickedly broken."³¹ The interchange between the French ambassador and Beza demonstrates the importance that the king attached to Geneva's influence on the French Reformed. Nonetheless, there is no indication that royal pressure succeeded in changing Beza's attitude. While the reformer feared anarchy and desired peace, he did not waver from his distrust of the king, nor from his conviction that a false peace would be worse than no peace at all.

Courting a Prince

During the decade following the Peace of Monsieur, Beza increasingly looked to Henri of Navarre to champion the Huguenot cause and assure the security of the Reformed churches. In 1576, however, the reformer's support of Navarre was not at all certain. Having fled the French court in the first weeks of 1576, Navarre officially renounced Catholicism at Niort on 13 June 1576.³² As the ranking Protestant noble in France, Navarre was soon recognized as the 'Protector' of the

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³¹"De rebus gallicis, aperte iam in Delphinatu, Occitania et Aquitania armis oppugnantur nostri, quaesito belli praetextu, quod restituere aliquot urbes pro sui securitate ipsis ad tempus commissas recusent; id est, quod praebere carnificibus iugulum nolint, quum nusquam edictum pacis observetur." Beza to Laurent Dürnhoffer, 3 May 1580, Paris, Bibl. Ste. Geneviève, ms. 1455, fol. 156v-157.

³²Beza's correspondence in the winter and spring of 1576 contained several references to Navarre's movement back toward the Reformed churches. In March, Beza wrote Dürnhoffer: "Navarrenus tertio die superioris mensis praetextu venationis Lutetia cum aliquot equitibus, ut antea saepe consueverat, egressus.... Sic igitur in Normanniae fines contendit, ubi occurrentibus mox ad illum multis, accersitum ad se Verbi ministrum concionem habere jussit, in qua palam, pro ecclesiasticae Gallicae disciplinae more, veniam est a Deo totoque coetu precatus, quod homines potius quam Deum veritus, tamdiu sese impiis illis sacris contra conscientiam polluisset. Et in Ecclesiam sic receptus, puerum ad baptismum obtulit. Ea res dici non potest, quantopere totam aulam perturbavit." 12 March 1576, *CB* XVII, 47-48. For Navarre's public reconversion, see Beza to Gwalther, 7 July 1576, *ibid.*, 124-125.

Reformed churches by a Huguenot assembly.³³ But though Beza and the Huguenots welcomed the prince's reconversion, they were hesitant to trust him. During his three years of 'captivity' at court, rumors had circulated that accused the prince of gross immorality and lavish excesses. The anonymous author of the *Réveille-matin* vividly depicted the promiscuous escapades of Charles IX, Henri of Anjou, and Navarre following the truce of July 1573, including hosting a banquet where the guests were served by naked prostitutes.³⁴ Such scandalous reports tarnished the reputation of Navarre, evoking inevitable and unfavorable comparisons between him and his cousin Condé. While Navarre had been 'playing' with the Catholic kings at court, his cousin had been forging ties with the Reformed churches in Germany and Switzerland, positioning himself as the spiritual heir of Coligny. While Navarre had been wavering between religious confessions in the spring of 1576, Condé had been marching at the head of Protestant armies to avenge Saint Bartholomew and secure the freedom of the Reformed churches. Whereas Condé was a committed Calvinist, Navarre seemed to be more 'politique,' willing to place political goals above religious

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³³Anquez, *Histoire des Assemblées Politiques*, 25.

³⁴"J'ay veu les trois rois qu'on appelle, le tyran, le roy de Pologne et le tiers, le roy de Navarre, qui pour rendre grâce à Dieu pour la paix et leur délivrance, ne cessoyent de le despiter, et le provoquer à vie par moeurs lascivés, puanteurs et autres sardinapalismes. Je sçeu comme les trois beaux sires s'estoyent fait servir en un banquet, solemner par des putains toutes nués.... Je ne croiray iamais que Neron, Caligule, Héliogabale, & le vilain Sardanapale ayent approché que de loin à l'infameté de ceux cy." *Réveille-matin* II, 167-168. See Babelon's *Henri IV* for a further description of Navarre's behavior at court (206-209). It is intriguing to wonder if Beza, perhaps having seen a manuscript of the *Réveille-matin* before its publication in 1574, was alluding to this passage in a letter to Bullinger on 25 September 1573 in which he bemoaned the immorality of the French court (without mentioning Navarre): "Lutetiae vix credas quid egerint nostri sive Sardanapali sive Heliogabali, quorum vix mihi persuadere possum, longissime abesse iudicium, quod tamen est in manu Domini. Omnes fremunt, etiam hostes Evangelicae veritatis desperati..." *CB* XIV, 217.

principles and hesitant to alienate the support of moderate Catholics.³⁵ From Beza's perspective, Navarre's character undoubtedly seemed more reminiscent of his undependable father Antoine than his devout mother Jeanne d'Albret.

The gradual rapprochement between Beza and Navarre, dating from 1577, was due in large part to the insecurity of Geneva's political position and to the prince's recognition of the city's weighty influence both inside and outside of France. Whereas Geneva sought military protection against Savoy's threats, a mediator at the royal court, and assistance in collecting payment of a sizeable debt from the French churches, Navarre desired the approval of the Genevan ministers and access to Swiss resources, both of which were important to solidify his leadership of the Huguenot movement. In May of 1577, learning that a secretary of Beauvoir-La-Nocle was preparing to depart for the court of Navarre in far-off Gascony, the Genevan magistrates asked that their good wishes be communicated to the prince.³⁶ In addition, this messenger carried a letter (dated May 18) from Beza to François de La Noue, an advisor in Navarre's council. This letter is important for two reasons. First, it reveals that sometime before mid-May 1577, Henri of Navarre had contacted

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³⁵For Navarre's religious attitudes, see Babelon, *Henri IV*, 220-226 and the article "Les idées confessionnelles de Henri de Navarre," *Bulletin* 41 (1892): 130-144.

³⁶Beauvoir had come before the Small Council in April asking for a loan of 500 écus to make the voyage to Navarre (28 April 1577, *RC* 72, 60^v). The following day, having received funds from a private source, Beauvoir returned to the council to pay back the magistrates the loan and to promise to recommend them "envers le roy de Navarre et aultres S^s de la religion." The council ruled that "on le prie d'avoir ceste ville en recommandement mesmes de solliciter par tous moyens le paiement des sommes deues à la S^{te} par les Églises." *RC* 72, 61^v. Due to the dangers of the voyage, Beauvoir delayed his departure until November, sending instead a secretary to Navarre carrying the magistrates' goodwishes. See Fazy, *Soleure*, 68-69. For the debt owed by the French churches to Geneva, see De Crue, *Henri IV et Les Députés de Genève*, 8.

Beza, asking the reformer to come to France to provide counsel. Writing to La Noue, Beza politely declined this invitation, pointing out that his age, vocation, and obligation to the city's magistrates made such a voyage impossible.³⁷ Second, Beza took the opportunity to advise La Noue--and by implication Navarre--on the conditions for an acceptable peace in France. He argued that the Reformed must never agree to a peace that limited Protestant worship to fewer places than those stipulated in the Peace of Monsieur. So too, Navarre should continue to demand legal action against the perpetrators of the massacres of Saint Bartholomew, and oppose efforts to restore the Catholic religion in Béarn.³⁸ Later in the summer, Beza again urged La Noue to resist royal attempts to attenuate Reformed worship in the kingdom, emphasizing that internal liberty of conscience would be meaningless without external

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³⁷"Vous aurez sçeu, comme je croy, qu'il a pleu à la Majesté du roy de Navarre me commander de l'aller trouver; en quoy je me haïrois moy mesme si la volonté me défailloit. Mais l'âge ny ma vocation, ny l'autorité de ceux à qui je suis obligé, ne le sçauroient nullement permettre, joint que peut-estre je ne luy seray inutile quand il luy plaira m'honorer de ses commandemens." Beza to François de la Noue, 18 May 1577, *CB* XVII, 94.

³⁸"... je ne puis voir comment en bonne conscience nous puissions consentir à limiter l'Esprit de Dieu à certains lieux, sur tout à le forclorre des villes, qui ne meurent et ne changent point, comme les coeurs et les maisons des Princes et autres hommes de quelque qualité qu'ils soient. Je voy aussy peu que nous ayons pu consentir à l'impunité entière des massacres, et nous fermer entièrement la porte pour en demander quelque jour justice quand Dieu en aura fait ouverture. Et ne peut entrer en mon entendement que Dieu puisse ny vueille bénir tels accords, de sorte que je conseillerois plutost de mettre la teste sur le bloc, et souffrir toutes choses sans résistance, s'il en faloit venir là, qu'approuver telles conditions. J'ay aussy esté adverty que les catholiques de Bearn pressent fort la restitution de leur exercice. Je vous prie de bien considérer qu'il y a grande différence entre tolérer pour un temps une idolatrie, jusques à ce qu'on ait loysir de la faire connoitre, et entre le restablissement d'icelle, après avoir esté légitimement abolie, ce que je ne croy pas se pouvoir faire sans horriblement irriter le Seigneur, de quoy l'issuë ne sçauroit estre que lamentable." Beza to La Noue, 18 May 1577, *CB* XVIII, 93-94.

exercise of religion.³⁹ Despite the reformer's advice, the Peace of Bergerac, negotiated by Henri III, Navarre and Condé in September, ending the sixth civil war, was more restrictive than its predecessor the year before, showing the distance between the reformer's hopes and French political realities in 1577.⁴⁰

Security concerns caused Geneva to look to Navarre again the following year. Amidst troubling rumors of an imminent attack by Savoy and fears caused by Spanish troops from Milan passing near the city en route to the Netherlands, Beza urged Geneva's magistrates to solicit Navarre's assistance in recovering the French debt and "to intercede before Henri III to include this city in the perpetual peace with France, and complain to him of the most recent Savoyard enterprise."⁴¹ At this same meeting, Navarre's agent Claude Antoine de Vienne, baron of Clervant, delivered a letter from the prince assuring the magistrates of his affection, and promising them the military

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³⁹"J'ajouteray seulement ce point qu'à mon petit advis, si on veut déterminer à Dieu où il parlera, et ailleurs non du tout, il nous faut attendre pis que jamais. Mais je mets grande différence entre point d'exercice absolument, et point d'exercice dans le corps des villes, mais bien aux fauxbourgs et autre lieu prochain, non du tout discommode: comme j'appelle rien, ou plutost liberté de n'avoir nulle religion, ce qu'on appelle liberté de conscience sans exercice de religion." [June-July 1577], *CB* XVIII, 128.

⁴⁰The Peace of Bergerac limited the places of Reformed worship to the fiefs and households of Protestant grand *seigneurs*, to the suburbs of one town per bailliage or senechal, and to those cities under Huguenot control once the peace was ratified. See Sutherland, *The Huguenot Struggle*, 271-273; Salmon, *Society in Crisis*, 204-205.

⁴¹"Mons' de Bèze icy comparu proposant que maintenant sus le retour de M' de Clervant et M' du Lac vers le Roy de Navarre, daultant qu'il y a une assemblée au 25 de juin prochain pour adviser des moiens d'acquicter les églises de leurs dettes, il avoit pensé que ceste occasion seroit propre pour tascher de recouvrir la partie dheu à la S^{re} par les églises.... Par mesmes moins pourroit on tascher et assaier que le roy de Navarre intercidat vers le roy de France pour faire entrer ceste ville en la paix perpétuelle avec la France, en se pleignant au roy de ceste dernière entreprise..." 22 April 1578, *RC* 73, 84^v.

support of the Huguenot general Lesdiguières in the event of an attack.⁴² Although Navarre was unsuccessful in obtaining payment of the French debt, he and Condé did dispatch deputies to the king to promote Geneva's inclusion in the Treaty of Solothurn.

While Beza was willing to solicit Navarre's political assistance and protection, nonetheless his attitude toward the prince before 1584 remained guarded and full of suspicion.⁴³ The reformer was critical of the prince's hesitations and accommodations on the battlefield. Invariably, when he made a comparison between the military prowess of Navarre and Condé, the latter won out.⁴⁴ Navarre's marriage to Marguerite, daughter of Catherine de Médicis, raised additional concerns.⁴⁵ Although the couple's relationship was frequently turbulent, Marguerite represented a dangerous

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⁴²"Pour l'affection qu'il [i.e. Navarre] ha à tout ce que touche de bien de ceste ville et sa conservation, il n'a voulu faillir escrire incontinent au S^r Lesdiguières aultant affectueusement qu'il a peu d'y avoir l'oeil et d'y apporter tout le soing et diligence que y est requise.... Et sus ce propos a esté rapporté ... que ledit S^r de Clervant ayant faict entendre la volonté dudit S^r Roy à M^r de Lesdiguières, il avoit ordonné mille hommes de pied et deux cens chevaux pour le secours de ceste ville avec délibération..." 22 April 1578, RC 73, 84^v-85. For this second embassy of Clervant to Geneva, see Edouard Rott, *Histoire de la Représentation Diplomatique de la France, auprès des Cantons Suisses, de leurs Alliés et de leurs Confédérés*, II (Berne: Imprimerie A. Benteli, 1902), 185, 365.

⁴³It does not appear that any letters from Beza to Navarre have survived from the years 1576-1585. It is evident from the prince's correspondence and the Genevan city council registers, however, that Beza wrote him at least three times, and probably more frequently. By contrast, there are five extant letters from Henri of Navarre to Beza during this period, published by M. Berger de Xivrey, in *Recueil des Lettres Missives de Henri IV*, t. I-VIII (Paris: Imprimerie Royale, 1843-1872).

⁴⁴"Condensis fortissimus est, et aperte bellum gerit. Navarrenus mihi mollior factus videtur." Beza to Gwalther, 17 March 1577, CB XVIII, 57. "Navarrenus dolis adhuc et artibus potius quam vi aperta petitur. Condensis Rupellam et alias aliquot Santonum urbes tuetur." Beza to Gwalther, 16 June 1577, *ibid.*, 119.

⁴⁵"Navarrana ad maritum remittitur, unde nihil boni ominor." Beza to Gwalther, 29 August/8 September 1583, Zurich, Stadtbibl., A 49, fols. 92-93.

influence threatening to draw Navarre back under the control of the Valois court. So too, Beza frequently complained about the dangerous councillors with whom Navarre surrounded himself⁴⁶ and disapproved of the immorality and excess at the prince's court in Nérac. The scandalous reputation of Navarre's household was in view when the eleventh National Synod of La Rochelle (1581) censured the moral license of Reformed notables, condemning fashions such as make-up, pleats and hoops, provocative hair styles, and low-cut dresses.⁴⁷

Navarre's unreliability was particularly evident during the so-called 'War of Lovers' in 1580. Having begun the war unexpectedly, Navarre unilaterally signed the Peace of Fleix (1580) to conclude it, without consulting either of his allies Jean Casimir or Condé. It seemed to Beza that the prince was serving his own interests rather than the common cause of the Huguenots: "It is not surprising that Navarre, by listening to wicked councillors, has brought himself and the Reformed into extreme peril. I hope that Condé can soon extricate our brothers from this danger. Although I prefer any kind of peace to war--as long as it is a secure peace--nonetheless I have

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⁴⁶"Nostri principes juvenes sunt, neque eos habent a consiliis quos oportuit." Beza to Gwalter, 3 April 1577, *CB* XVIII, 72. "Navarrenus et Condensis, utinam bonis consiliis utantur." Beza to Grynaeus, 28 May, 1577, *ibid.*, 116. See also footnote 19 above.

⁴⁷The censure named "ceux [habitudes] qui ont quelques marques notoires d'impudicité, de dissolution ou de nouveauté trop fastueuse & indécente, comme sont les Fards, Plissures, Houpes, Lardoires, Guiquerolets, Seins ouverts, Vertugadins & autres choses semblables, desquelles tant hommes que femmes abusent dans leurs parures." Aymon I, 152-153. Moreover, it was not by chance that Lambert Daneau dedicated to Navarre his book against dancing, entitled *Traité des danses, auquel est amplement résolue la question asavoir s'il est permis aux chrestiens de danser* ([Genève]: François Estienne, 1579).

completely despaired of it."⁴⁸ Sensitive to these criticisms, Navarre defended his unpopular truce to Beza at the end of 1580. He had ended the hostilities, the prince claimed, because of the poor discipline and mutinous spirit of his Huguenot armies, and out of concern for the Reformed churches, which had suffered greatly by the immorality accompanying the war.⁴⁹ Now, Navarre asked Beza to support his decision publicly by interceding before the French churches and the princes Condé and Casimir.⁵⁰

It is unclear whether Beza acquiesced to Navarre's request for support. What is evident, however, is that he was angered by the prince's rashness, believing that the security of the Reformed churches had been jeopardized by the ill-advised peace settlement, and he vented these emotions to Navarre by return mail. The nature of

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⁴⁸"Navarrenus malis usus consultoribus mirum nō sese simul et nos in ultimum adduxit discrimen, cui utinam Condensis mederi satis tempestive possit. Et mallet tamen qualemcumque pacem, si firma esse posset, de qua prorsus despero." Beza to Gwalther, 28 February 1581, Zurich, Stadtbibl., A 49, fol. 80-81. Note also Beza's earlier letter to Gwalther on 12 January 1581: "In Galliis adducta omnia video in summum discrimen, eius culpa, qui in mali alicuius genii sententia, sicut temere et inconsultis iis quorum id intereret, arma cepit, sic quoque deponere decrevit. Pacem pridem ego quamvis, salva religione, bello praetulerim, si modo firma posset obtineri, qua de re prorsus despero." Beza to Grynaeus, 12 January 1581, Basle, Univ. Bibl., Kirchen Archiv, C. I. 2, Bd. II, fol. 72. The 'War of Lovers' is described by Babelon, *Henri IV*, 270-272.

⁴⁹"Elle [la paix] nous estoit nécessaire, non pour crainte de nos adversaires ... mais pour les divisions, désobéissances, rapines et désordres que estoient parmi la plus part de nous. Dont il advenoit que la guerre apportoit plus mal à nos églises que de conservation. Toute religion et piété se perdoit, le peuple comme en désespoir commençoit à se mutiner; et n'y avoit règle ny discipline aulcune que l'on voulust observer." Navarre to Beza, [end of November] 1580, in *Lettres missives de Henri IV*, I, 330.

⁵⁰"Je vous prie disposer le monde de delà à la recevoir, et en escrire à ceulx que cognoistrez estre besoing, spécialement à mon dict cousin et à monsieur le duc Casimir, afin que, demeurant l'union d'entre nous plus ferme (qui est le vray bien de nostre conservation), nous advisions à servir Dieu, et réédifier les vieilles ruines.... Je sçais que vostre créance peut beaucoup à cest effect, et que le saint désir qui est en vous, par ce moyen produira un bon fruit; que ce sera l'approbation de tout ce que nous avons fait, qui, pour mon particulier, n'est sorti d'autre intention que pour servir à la gloire de Dieu..." Navarre to Beza, [end of November] 1580, *Lettres missives de Henri IV*, I, 333.

Beza's criticisms are clear from Navarre's hasty response in February 1581. Once again, the Huguenot prince tried to defend his unpopular truce by insisting that he had the best interests of the churches in mind.⁵¹ Moreover, Navarre attempted to deflect criticisms of the immorality of his court, assuring Beza that he intended "to regulate my household with prudence," blaming any moral excess on the "perversity of this age."⁵² Notwithstanding these criticisms, Navarre expressed his delight at the reformer's letter, and invited him to attend the National Synod that he had convened for La Rochelle at the end of February 1581. He urged Beza to write frequently, to speak frankly and freely with him, and "to continue your good admonitions as if you were my father."⁵³

The gradual détente between Navarre and Beza continued the following year, furthered by their mutual self-interest. In March 1582, the prince informed Beza that he was still unable to reimburse Geneva for its war loan, blaming his delinquency on the "coldness and stupidity" of the French churches, that constantly "cry and

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⁵¹"Mais cognoissant les misères que les Églises souffroient par la continuation des troubles, voire la dissipation, j'ay pensé qu'il valoit mieulx se remettre ez mains de Dieu qui peut convertir les coeurs, et combattre par bonne voye, que de voir les confussions et les désobéissances qui traversoient toutes limites de crainte de Dieu et d'honneur; et davantaige qu'il estoit nécessaire regagner sur nous en temps de paix ce qu'avons perdu par la guerre: qui est le restablissement de l'ordre et de l'harmonie requise entre les Églises, qui par faulte d'intelligence s'en vont en grand' division." Navarre to Beza, 1 February 1581, published in *Lettres missives de Henri IV*, I, 352.

⁵²"... j'ay deslibéré de m'employer bon escient et de régler ma maison; confessant la vérité que toutes choses se sentent de la perversité du temps." Navarre to Beza, 1 February 1581, published in *Lettres missives de Henri IV*, I, 352-3

⁵³"Je vous prie m'aimer tousjours, vous assurant que ne sauriez despartir de vostre amitié à prince qui en soit moins ingrat et continuer vos bonnes admonitions comme si vous estiés mon père." Navarre to Beza, 1 February 1581, in *Lettres missives de Henri IV*, I, 351-354.

complain" when he solicits them for funds.⁵⁴ In an autographed post-script, he told Beza of his plans to meet with the queen mother to promote the peace of the churches, asking the reformer to "assure everyone that I will do nothing to prejudice the Huguenot cause."⁵⁵ Two months later it was Geneva and Beza who needed assistance. Alarmed by the military preparations and threatening overtures of Charles-Emmanuel, the young duke of Savoy, the reformer and magistrates alerted Navarre of the deteriorating situation.⁵⁶ Responding decisively to these threats, Henri dispatched his deputy Clervant to Savoy, and promised Beza that he would send an engineer to survey Geneva's fortifications and, if necessary, provide soldiers to lift a siege.⁵⁷ By the end of 1582 Navarre had clearly aligned his political fortunes with Geneva. Because the allies were joined by a "religious bond that should never be

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⁵⁴"... encores n'ont-ils rien touché pour la froideur et stupidité de noz églises, qui crient et se pleignent, comme j'entends, combien que je ne les aye aulcunement pressées, et que je sois encore à recevoir le premier denier, si ce n'a esté pour le S^r de la Noue." 6 March 1582, *Lettres missives de Henri IV*, I, 443.

⁵⁵"J'espère que nous verrons dans dix jours la Reyne; ce que j'ay pensé estre nécessaire pour le bien de la paix et le repos de nos églises..... Je vous prie, Mons^r de Bèze, assurer tout le monde que je ne feray rien qui nous porte préjudice." 6 March 1582, *Lettres missives de Henri IV*, I, 433.

⁵⁶Gautier, *Histoire de Genève* V, 251-285. Charles-Emmanuel, son of Emmanuel-Philibert, succeeded his father as duke of Savoy in 1580. During his long reign of 50 years, this aggressive Catholic prince repeatedly threatened Geneva, blockading the city, laying waste to the surrounding fields and vineyards, and mounting several military expeditions. Most notable among these engagements was the four-year long war between Geneva and Savoy from 1589-1593, and the surprise attack on the night of the 'Escalade' in December 1602. In 1585 Charles-Emmanuel married a daughter of the king of Spain. See Monter, *Calvin's Geneva*, 198-199; Geisendorf, 368-370.

⁵⁷Instructions to Clervant [1582], published in Duplessis-Mornay, *Mémoires et correspondance*, II (Genève: Slatkine Reprints, 1969), 153. In Navarre's letter to Beza on 13 May 1582, the prince assures the city of his protection: "... je le [La Coste] feray partir pour aller vers eulx [les Genevoise], sçachant combien le temps doit estre diligemment employé en telz affaires. S'il est besoin encor, je trouveray moyen de fere jeter des hommes de commandement dans leur ville, qui se sont trouvez dans plusieurs sieges.... que selon cela j'employe les moyens que Dieu m'a donnez pour une si bonne occasion..." *Lettres missives de Henri IV*, VIII, 227-228.

broken," he was willing sacrifice his possessions, even his life, to assure the preservation of this 'city of Calvin' and 'Protestant Rome.'⁵⁸ In addition to these verbal assurances, the French prince was taking tangible steps to reform his council and household, changes that delighted the Reformed. To the cadre of Huguenot notables on his council in 1582 Navarre added a young nobleman named Philippe Duplessis-Mornay, a devout Calvinist and good friend of Beza.⁵⁹ Thereafter, Duplessis-Mornay became one of Navarre's most trusted advisors, responsible for fashioning a new public image for the prince capable of inspiring the confidence of Huguenots and foreign Protestants.⁶⁰ In May 1583, Duplessis-Mornay communicated Navarre's good wishes to the twelfth National Synod meeting at Vitré, asking it to

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⁵⁸"Pour mon regard, il me fera ceste grâce de me continuer la volonté qu'il m'a donnée de n'espargner jamais ne ma vie, ne mes moyens en ce qui touchera vostre déffense et conservation, en laquelle je suis et veux demeurer ferme, tant à cause du lien de religion qui nous doit estraindre indissolublement, que aussy pour le regard de l'alliance et confédération que vous avez avec le Roy mon seigneur." Navarre to the Genevan Small Council, 10 January 1583, *Lettres missives de Henri IV*, I, 496. The phrases 'cité de Calvin' and 'Rome Protestante' appear in Navarre's letter to the magistrates of the Grisons, 14 December 1582, cited in "Henri de Navarre et 'Messieurs de Genève'," *Bulletin* 94 (1948): 9.

⁵⁹In a letter to Peter Hubner dated 26 May/5 June 1583, Beza described Duplessis-Mornay as "primus Navarreni secretarius, imprimis et mihi a multis annis amicissimus..." Paris, Bibl. Soc. Prot. Français, ms. Labonchère, I, f. 22. I am grateful to M. Alain Dufour for his assistance in identifying this 'secretarius' of Beza. Duplessis-Mornay's respect for Beza's abilities and authority was displayed in a position paper that he wrote for Navarre in 1580 on the question of restoring Catholicism to Béarn, in which he recommended that the prince convene a theological colloquy between Catholics and Protestants, to which he should call "les plus capables ministres des Églises françoises, entre lesquels il pourroit choisir MM. de Bèze, Chandieu, Villiers, Merlin, de Spina et aultres..." Cited in Duplessis-Mornay's *Mémoires et correspondance*, II, 96. This same respect is seen in his later correspondence with Beza. Thus on 30 December 1588, Duplessis-Mornay comments to Beza "... nul ne vous honore plus que moi." *Ibid.* IV, 284.

⁶⁰Among other reforms, Duplessis-Mornay initiated a strict 'rule' for Navarre's household, dictating the time that the prince should wake and retire, his daily spiritual disciplines, and the general moral climate of the court. See "Advis donné au Roy de Navarre, sur le régleme[n]t de sa façon de vivre," in Duplessis-Mornay, *Mémoires et correspondance*, II, 189-193. See also Babelon, *Henri IV*, 291-295.

send delegates to the prince's court in order to further communication and cooperation.⁶¹ Notwithstanding these encouraging developments, Beza remained wary of Navarre. The biblical principle could be applied to Navarre as well: "Do not trust princes!"⁶²

Beza's correspondence makes it clear, therefore, that in the early 1580s the reformer viewed both Navarre and Condé with varying degrees of suspicion. Beza was not politically naive. He was all too aware that the goals of the Reformed churches were frequently incompatible with the political interests of Huguenot notables. While Beza welcomed the military and political support that Navarre and Condé offered, he recognized that these princes could not be trusted to act on religious principle alone. Ultimately, as Beza frequently reminded his correspondents, Huguenot security rested in the providence of God, not in the promises of men. Nonetheless, the reformer did have some very clear ideas of what the 'ideal' ruler should be like. In his *Psalmorum sacrorum libri quinque* (1579) Beza spelled out this ideal in the paraphrases that he included before the translation of each psalm.⁶³ These paraphrases repeatedly extolled the biblical king David as a 'type' of

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⁶¹"Le Seigneur du Plessis se présenta à cette Assemblée au Nom du Roi de Navarre, proposant de la part de Sa Majesté, qui étoit en ce tems là de l'autre côté de la Loire, que l'on lui envoiât des Députés ... qui pussent demeurer auprès de Sa Majesté, pour l'informer du véritable État des Églises, & auxquels il pût aussi communiquer tout ce qui seroit de plus important pour le bien & la conservation desdites Églises." Aymon, I, 170.

⁶²"Vides rerum vicissitudinem, et quam illud sit necessarium praeceptum: Nolite in principibus confidere [Psalm 146.3]." 5/15 November 1583, Zurich, Stadtbibl., Bd. 141, fol. 104.

⁶³The work was published in five Latin editions, beginning in 1579, with a French translation in 1581. I have consulted the 1580 Latin edition and the 1581 French translation of this work: *Psalmorum sacrorum libri quinque, vario carminum genere Latine expressi, & argumentis atque*

godly monarch; taken together, they provided a virtual 'mirror' for righteous rule.⁶⁴

Like David, the godly prince did not flee his duty at court but was careful to avoid the flattery of sycophants. He insured the pure and sincere worship of God in his kingdom and set an example by attending religious services. The righteous prince acted as a faithful shepherd of his people, gently leading them and protecting them against malefactors. David's example showed, furthermore, that magistrates did not have absolute power, but were rather "limited by specific laws and conditions."⁶⁵

Beza may well have intended this depiction of a godly monarch to serve as a thinly-veiled reproach to the Valois kings. In his discussion of Psalm 52, for example, Beza pointed out the similarities between King Saul's assassination of the priests of Nob (1 Samuel 22.6-23) and Charles IX's complicity in the massacres of Saint

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Paraphrasi illustrati (Genevae: [Vignon], 1580); *Les Pseaumes de David et les cantiques de la Bible, avec les argumens & la paraphrase de Théodore de Besze* (Genève: Jaques Berjon, 1581). For these editions, see CDM 94, 96-97, 100, and *Bibliographie*, 131-134. The Small Council approved the publication of the Latin edition on 16 May 1579: Beza requested "luy permettre imprimer les pseauxmes qu'il a traduitz en vers latins avec paraphrase et s'il échet cy après d'imprimer et traduire lesdits paraphrases en françois, de luy accorder de mesmes avec privilège. A esté arresté qu'on le luy outtroie pour six ans" (RC 74, 50^v). Note that although printed in 1579, the rough draft of this work was completed at the end of 1577: "Opus Psalmorum absolvi, sed quotidie emendo." Beza to Dudith, 15 December 1577, CB XVIII, 208.

⁶⁴For a discussion of the 'mirrors of princes' as a genre in Renaissance literature, see Skinner, *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought* I, chapter 8.

⁶⁵"Que ce qui fait que les Magistrats s'oublient ordinairement, vient de ce qu'ils ne regardent volontiers qu'à ceux qui sont au dessous d'eux, oublians celui qui est eslevé par dessus leur teste, & qui les a establis non pas en son siège propre comme s'ils pouvoient devenir ses compagnons, mais pour avoir puissance seulement sur certain nombre d'hommes; & encores non point pour avoir une puissance absoluë comme on veut dire, mais laquelle soit reiglée par certaines loix & conditions, & aussi à temps & non à perpétuité." Beza, *Paraphrases*, Psalm 82, 409.

Bartholomew.⁶⁶ But there is no evidence in these paraphrases of the Psalms that the reformer was anticipating a dynasty of righteous Bourbon kings or justifying a Huguenot revolt against the Valois in order to establish it.⁶⁷ Rather, through the example of king David, the reformer was holding up a 'mirror' of godly rule in which princes like Navarre and Condé could see their faults and reform their habits. From Beza's perspective in the early 1580s, Navarre fell far short of such a biblical ideal. While willing to write Navarre and provide him council, Beza was unable to forget the prince's religious volte-face in the days following Saint Bartholomew.

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⁶⁶*Paraphrases*, 240. In addition, Beza probably drew an association between the life of David and the experiences of Navarre and Condé in his description of David's betrayal at Saul's court, despair, and flight from Jerusalem (*Paraphrases*, Psalm 31, 114; Psalm 69, 323). In this context, Beza made the following contemporary application: "... & nous sçavons comme en ces changemens si soudains il advient par fois à ceux qui se sont monstrez des plus vertueux, de faire de terribles conclusions, & en fin mesmes se laisser aller do tout" (*Paraphrases*, Psalm 31, 114). Edward Gosselin believes that this statement refers to Antoine de Navarre's betrayal of the Huguenot cause in 1562 (see his "David in *Tempore Belli*: Beza's David in the Service of the Huguenots," *SCJ* 2 [1976]: 44). It would probably be more accurate to view this passage as a reference to Navarre and Condé's conversion to Catholicism in 1572.

⁶⁷Edward Gosselin's thesis that Beza, in his *Paraphrases*, envisions a "holy kingship to be constituted in France by Henri de Navarre" is belied by internal and external evidence ("David in *tempore belli*," 31). The book was dedicated to an English gentleman, not to Navarre. Beza never mentioned the French prince by name, and any association between the experiences of Navarre and David requires us to make an interpretive leap (see footnote 66). And, to admit a parallel between king David and Navarre in individual cases hardly substantiates the thesis that Beza idealized Navarre or anticipated his future rule; the very nature of a 'mirror' for princes is to portray the attributes of an ideal ruler and exhort kings, princes and other magistrates to emulate them. Likewise, Gosselin's assertion that Beza is espousing a theory of resistance proves untenable: his argument rests on a single passage from the *Paraphrases* that he interprets incorrectly (see Beza's comments on Psalm 109, *Paraphrases*, 560). If this book is as explosive as Gosselin believes it to be, we are left to wonder why the Genevan magistrates permitted it to be published—with the name of the author and the place of printing included—at a time when the city was concluding the Treaty of Solothurn with Henri III, and why it was republished in Geneva two times *after* Navarre's accession in 1589! Finally, Beza's extant correspondence challenges Gosselin's conclusions. In 1579, Beza was critical and suspicious of Navarre. The first time the reformer raised the possibility of a Bourbon dynasty in his extant correspondence was in a letter to Dürnhoffer on 2/12 May 1584, only a month before Anjou's death. Gosselin has not studied Beza's letters from this period, and is apparently unaware of the fact that Navarre converted to Catholicism in 1572 and returned to the Reformed religion only in 1576.

The Catholic Offensive

Doubt about Navarre's trustworthiness was not the only concern that Beza and the Genevan ministers faced when they looked toward France in the early 1580s. After years of being on the defensive, Catholicism in France was beginning to change, revitalized by new expressions of devotion and strengthened by a new commitment to education and evangelism.⁶⁸ Examples of these changes were plentiful. By 1580, Jesuit clerics had established fifteen schools in the kingdom and were beginning to challenge aggressively the theological dominance of Geneva.⁶⁹ Capuchin missionaries, in France since 1574, achieved notable successes among the common people through their preaching and the example of their austere lifestyles.⁷⁰ During the 'white processions' of 1583-1584, hundreds of thousands of pilgrims travelled through many parts of France with white crosses and candles in hand, partaking in ritual acts of penance, seeking to purify the kingdom of the guilt of sin and heresy.⁷¹ Even Henri III participated in these penitential exercises. With the

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⁶⁸For a general discussion of Catholic reform and counterreform in France during the last two decades of the sixteenth century, see Marc Venard's chapter in *Histoire de la France religieuse*, II, 298-310.

⁶⁹See William V. Bangert, S.J., *A History of the Society of Jesus* (St. Louis: The Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1972), 64-71, 119-131. A. Lynn Martin, *The Jesuit Mind. The Mentality of an Elite in Early Modern France* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988); E. Piaget, *Histoire de l'Établissement des Jésuites en France (1540-1640)* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1893), 103-276.

⁷⁰On the founding and character of the Capuchin order, see the helpful introduction of Elisabeth G. Gleason, "The Capuchin Order in the Sixteenth Century," in *Religious Orders of the Catholic Reformation*, ed. Richard L. DeMolen (New York: Fordham University Press, 1994), 30-57.

⁷¹See Denis Crouzet's fascinating description of these processions in *Les Guerriers de Dieu*, II, 297-310. Crouzet argues that the 'white processions' were a reflex toward innocence motivated by a sense of eschatological anguish: "Les processions blanches sont les processions d'une société catholique en situation panique de surcharge émotionnelle devant l'immensité dite de Dieu de ses péchés;

encouragement of his Jesuit advisor Edmond Auger, Henri founded no less than four separate congregations of penitents and joined them frequently in processions, prayers, flagellations, and fasts.⁷² Finally, although the decrees of Trent were not promulgated in France until 1615, a handful of French bishops began to implement modest tridentine reforms well before the turn of the century.⁷³ Between 1581-1590, several French provincial councils unilaterally affirmed the tridentine profession of faith, accepted the new Roman breviary, missal and catechism, and adopted tridentine rules regarding access to clerical orders, marriage, pastoral visitations, and the founding of seminaries. Likewise, though without juridical force, Sixtus V's decree that bishops make periodic visitations within their dioceses was obeyed by as many as ten French bishops between 1587-1598.

These subtle changes in Catholic practice and spirituality during the final

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une société qui se sent désormais parvenue à un point extrême d'avertissement divin et donc de culpabilité." *ibid.*, 327-328. Crouzet documents that during the summer and fall of 1583, more than 72,000 pilgrims came to the cathedral of Reims to perform acts of penance (*ibid.*, 300).

⁷²See A. Lynn Martin, *Henry III and the Jesuit Politicians* (Geneva: Droz, 1973), 88-89, 117-118, 147, 150-151. These penitential groups included La Congrégation des Pénitens de l'Annonciation de Notre Dame (1583), Les Hieronymites (1583), La Compagnie des Confrères de la Mort et Passion de Notre-Seigneur Jésus-Christ (1584), and La Congrégation de la Conception de Notre Dame (1585).

⁷³See Marc Venard's helpful survey of the tridentine reforms adopted in France during the sixteenth century, in *Histoire de la France religieuse*, II, 298-305. Frederic Baumgartner provides a more negative assessment of episcopal reform in France during the period: "Hubert Jedin has defined three distinguishing marks by which the success of the Tridentine reform can be measured: the convocation of reform synods to institute the Tridentine reform, episcopal visitations according to its norms, and the founding of Tridentine seminaries. This program largely assumed a resident prelate, and for that reason alone the French Church showed little sign of reforming prior to 1600." Baumgartner estimates that the proportion of absentee bishops in France was around 65% before 1588, and over 80% during the years of anarchy thereafter. In 1589-1590, there were 99 bishops appointed to French dioceses. Baumgartner, *Change and Continuity in the French Episcopate, The Bishops and the Wars of Religion, 1547-1610* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1986), 110-111, 115, 166-167.

decades of the sixteenth century defy simple description as 'Catholic reform' or 'counterreform.'⁷⁴ They display aspects of both. The penitential piety of the 'white processions' contained elements of spiritual renewal as well as a revulsion against the defilement by the Protestant 'heresy.' Jesuit educational ministries not only instructed boys in the rudiments of the Catholic faith but also comprised a powerful vanguard to refute Protestant error and convert Huguenot communities. Religious reforms in late sixteenth-century Catholic France were both reactive and proactive, a delayed response to Protestantism as well as a creative search for spiritual restoration.

Beza viewed these reforms in French Catholicism with concern. On the one hand, the Genevan reformer found Henri III's penitential exercises comical and hypocritical. One moment the king dressed in the garb of a penitent and flagellated himself, the next he revelled in the debauchery of the court. Even the people of Paris mocked these cathartic displays of religiosity. Likewise, Beza perceived the king's frequent pilgrimages to thermal baths and Catholic shrines in the hopes of curing his infertility as superstitious and idolatrous. At least, he noted, these feverish acts of devotion distracted Henri from waging war against his Protestant subjects.⁷⁵

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⁷⁴Following Hubert Jedin's two-fold typology, I understand counterreform to mean the counterattack of post tridentine Catholicism against Protestantism. By the term Catholic reformation I mean the long-standing movements and efforts within the Catholic church to implement reform and achieve purification of ecclesiastical institutions, beliefs and teaching. See Elisabeth G. Gleason's helpful survey "Catholic Reformation, Counterreformation and Papal Reform in the Sixteenth Century," in *Handbook of European History* II, 317-345.

⁷⁵"Is [i.e. Henri III] totus in flagellatorum sectam inclinans incredibili cum omnium etiam ex plebe ludibris, quum paulo ante discessum ex urbe primus in poenitentiae signum cineritio indui colere coepisset, nunc ad suum luxum et choreas fertur repente revertisse..." Beza to Gwalther, 26 June/6 July 1583, Zurich, Stadtbibl. Simmlerische. Smlg., Bd. 141, fol. 63. "De rebus Gallicis, Rex ad flagellatorum poenitentium ordinem alterum nuper adiunxit, Hieronymitarum, et in utrumque iuravit,

The reformer viewed the specter of tridentine reforms in France with more uneasiness. From Beza's perspective, the Council of Trent was not a reform council, but rather a satanic attack on divine truth.⁷⁶ Repeated papal attempts to impose tridentine decrees on France thus constituted a direct threat to the Reformed churches. Apparently unaware of specific parochial reforms, Beza remained convinced that Trent had created a united Catholic front committed to extirpating the Protestant religion from Europe. In the months following the close of the Council, reports circulated that the pope had encouraged Philip II to impose the tridentine decrees on France by force and, with Spanish assistance, was plotting the destruction of Geneva and the evangelical cantons of Switzerland.⁷⁷ The massacres of Saint Bartholomew

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adulatoribus omnium ordinum certatim eodem concurrentibus." Beza to Gwalther, 11/21 February 1584, *ibid.*, fol. 139. "Rex nuper expeditis equis paucis Lugdunum invisit.... Inde ad uxorem in thermes, non ita procul Lugduno remotas, abiit, peregrinatione quoque ad Divam Mariam Puteanam (id est locus apud Alvernos vetustissima idolomania celeberrimus) instituta, ut prolem scilicet Virginis intercessione impetret." Beza to Dürnhoffer, 28 August 1582, Paris, Bibl. Ste. Geneviève, ms. 1455, fol. 167-168. See also Beza to Gwalther, 18/28 June 1583, *ibid.*, fol. 57; Gwalther to Beza, 30 June/10 July 1583, Gotha, cod. chart A 405, fol. 651; For a description of Henri III's penitential practices, see Martin, *Henri III and the Jesuit Politicians*, 151.

⁷⁶Beza argued that throughout the history of the Catholic church "les aveugles mesme pourront aysément veoir que en partie l'ambition, en partie la vanité et ignorance, joinct l'évidente et désespérée malice des évesques a esté telle que Satan a ouvertement présidé en leurs assemblées. Que sera ce donques si nous nous proposons pour reigle les conciles assemblés depuys ce temps-là, ausquelz l'Église a esté manifestement opprimée de tyrannie, comme en celluy de Trente dernier?" Beza to Louis of Condé and the Reformed nobles of France, 20 February 1565, *CB VI*, 255.

⁷⁷"Alii existimant ista omnia confingi a Tridentini Conciliabuli exequutoribus ut in consilia sua non inquiramus, et certum est superiore etiam hebdomade sollicitatum fuisse Regem [Charles IX] a Pontifice adversus hanc civitatem." Beza to Bullinger, 15 July 1564, *CB V*, 96. In January of 1566, Beza transmitted to the Small Council a report from France claiming that the pope and Catholic princes of Spain, Savoy, and Italy were plotting "premièrement de prendre Genève, puis ruiner les Cantons Évangéliques à l'ayde des papistes, s'ils peuvent." Afterwards, this Catholic army would invade France in order to force Charles IX to abrogate the peace of Amboise and accept the canons of Trent, and then impose "l'inquisition d'Espagne" on the Low Countries. See 20 January 1566, *CB VII*, 328-329. Beza reports a similar rumor in the fall of 1577: "Helveticae copiae sunt in Campaniae finibus, et pro certo credunt multi cum Hispanis sese conjecturas, ut aperta vi oppressis Ecclesiis, id est non

raised similar fears a decade later.⁷⁸ Between 1578-1583, the duke of Anjou's military campaigns in the Low Countries against Spain exacerbated concerns that a union of Catholic armies would soon force the decrees of Trent upon France and Switzerland.⁷⁹ The dauphin's dangerous game widened the growing rift between the house of Valois and Catholic Spain, convincing many men and women that the duke of Guise was the true champion of Catholic interests in France. In this volatile political situation, rumors of a tridentine plot again became rife.⁸⁰ Fears were heightened in 1582 when Charles-Emmanuel blockaded Geneva. Beza suspected that this was the first step of "the execution of the Council of Trent in these regions, knowing the strategic importance of the city of Geneva for the ruin of the four

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contemnenda totius regni parte prorsus destructa, Tridentinum Concilium invehatur cum Hispanica inquisitione." Beza to Bullinger, 5 September 1567, *CB* VIII, 170.

⁷⁸Duplessis-Mornay, in his "Advertissement sur la réception et publication du Concile de Trente" (1583) notes: "... les extrêmes rigueurs et excès du mois d'aoust 1572, qui sembloient avoir ouvert ou la porte, ou la fenestre au susdict Concile." *Mémoires et correspondance* II, 197. See also pages 54-55 above.

⁷⁹Against Henri III's will, Anjou began in 1578 to raise troops to deliver the Netherlands from Spanish domination in the hopes of receiving the Dutch crown. His schemes and military campaigns in the Netherlands ultimately earned him the relatively innocuous title 'Duke of Brabant' in 1582.

⁸⁰In December of 1581, Beza recieved information of a secret meeting in Venice between deputies of the pope, the emperor, and the princes of Spain and Italy that reinforced his long-standing fear that Rome was organizing a league intent on imposing Trent on France and extirpating Protestantism once for all. Beza wrote Gwalther on 27 December: "Scribitur ad me ex Lutetia, et quidem a fratre optimae fidei, istuc esse alicunde perlatum, clam apud Venetos haberi, aut brevi habendum a fidissimis quibusdam papae, Caesaris, Hispani et Itatorum omnium principum consiliariis secretum conventum, in quo de confoederatione universali adversum nostrae confessionis omnes agatur, occasione Belgici belli arrepta.... Gallia nulla fit mentio, quem tamen vix crediderim istorum conscium non esse." Zurich, Stadtbibl., Simmlerische Smlg., Bd. 140, fol. 58. Six weeks later, Gwalther reported to Beza that his informant in Venice had not sent any details about this meeting (see 9 February 1582, Gotha, Cod. chart A 405, fol. 660). On 18 February 1582, Beza again broached this subject with Gwalther (see Zurich, Stadtbibl., A 49, fols. 88-89). Henceforth, the rumor circulated that a Spanish army was being prepared to invade Belgium and that the Catholic cantons of Switzerland had concluded a treaty with Rome.

evangelical cities of Switzerland."⁸¹ The following year, Beza was still wary of an international Catholic conspiracy: it seemed likely that Charles-Emmanuel, the duke of Guise, and 30,000 Spanish and Italian soldiers--this time in conjunction with Henri III--were preparing to attack Geneva and Switzerland. After killing Beza and eradicating Zwinglianism and Calvinism, this mighty Catholic force was planning to march on the Low Countries to crush the Protestants and restore Spanish control.⁸² These rumors and fears demonstrate that, for Beza and many Huguenots, the legacy of Trent comprised much more than a collection of doctrinal statements or a program of ecclesiastical reform. Instead, Trent had re-armed a militant Catholicism, marshalling a powerful phalanx of Catholic princes who subscribed to the same creed and who were united in their commitment to extirpate 'heresy' from Europe. For Beza, the promulgation of the tridentine reforms was equivalent to a declaration of war on Protestantism. As such, promulgation of the tridentine decrees in France represented not simply an encroachment on Gallican liberties, but a deadly threat to

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⁸¹"... considerant le but principal de eulx que nous savons se servir de ces querelles du tout frivoles et de ce jeune prince [i.e. Charles-Emmanuel] très mal conseillé, pour commencer le jeu de l'exécution du Concile de Trente en ces quartiers, sachans de quelle importance est la ville de Genève pour la ruine des quatre villes évangéliques de Suysse..." Beza to M. de Walsingham, [October 1582], Geneva, BPU, ms. lat. 117, fols. 174-175.

⁸²"Rex Biturigas, id est versus nos, adventat. Haec omnia, praeter certos nuntios de iurato huius urbis excidio et proximi nobis principis (qui Sabaudi cognatus est) adversum nos insidiis paratis, faciunt ut coniiciam non in hac urbe duntaxat, sed in omnes harum ac vestrarum partium Ecclesias esse hos exercitus comparatos, irrupturo per Alsatiā Guisio, per hanc autem urbem quam habent pro iam intercepta, Italis et Hispanis qui ad triginta millia, ut accipimus, colliguntur, progressuris, ut inde profligatis Zuinglianis et Calvinianis, et Beza insignibus ac perpetuo memorabilibus poenis affecto, omnes victrices istae copiae simul in Belgicum procedant.... Neque hac ego duntaxat ex coniectura dico, sed iam quadriennium est ex quo explorator quidam hic captus et supplicio affectus, haec consilia decreta fuisse significavit et scribi se dictante voluit, adiunctis aliis quae minime falsa fuisse rerum exitus ostendit." Beza to [Gwalther], [September 1583], Zurich, Stadtbibl., A 49, fols. 94-95.

the survival of the French Reformed churches.

The debate over the Gregorian calendar in 1582 provides further evidence of the degree to which Protestants like Beza suspected reforms initiated by Rome.⁸³ Although the inaccuracies of the Julian calendar had long been recognized, papal commissions in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries failed to find an adequate solution.⁸⁴ In the final session of the Council of Trent, the bishops referred the matter to the pope for further consideration. In February 1582, following the recommendations of a special commission, Gregory XIII signed a bull reforming the calendar by calculating the vernal equinox at March 21 and adopting a system of leap-years to compensate for future errors. In addition, the papal bull stipulated that the ten days of 5-14 October 1582 would be skipped so as to rectify errors introduced by the Julian system. Whereas almost all of Catholic Europe soon adopted the Gregorian calendar, Protestant magistrates and churchmen were far more hesitant. Lutheran theologians in southern Germany declared the innovation to be a trick of Satan by which the pope again sought mastery over the world. The *antistes* of Zurich, Rudolph Gwalther, believed that the papal 'Antichrist' wished to sow discord among the Swiss by the calendar.⁸⁵ Beza shared his view, perceiving the new calendar as an

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⁸³See Pastor, *The History of the Popes* XIX, 283-296.

⁸⁴The Julian calendar computed the solar year 11 minutes and 14 seconds too long. Thus, every 128 years a complete day was added, creating an ever-growing discrepancy with the ecclesiastical calendar of feast days.

⁸⁵"Ita Antichristus hoc etiam suo commento turbas ausit, et lites seminavit novas." [Gwalther] to Beza, 6/16 January 1584, Gotha, Cod. chart A, fols. 695-696.

innovation sure to cause disharmony. Following the Swiss diet at Baden in the spring of 1584, at which the matter was hotly debated, Beza reported to a friend in Nuremberg: "You are right to fear the Gregorian calendar lest Satan throw down the apple of Eris."⁸⁶ In a published sermon several years later, Beza argued that he opposed not the revision of the calendar *per se*, but the reasons for the reform; the Catholics' concern for the precise dates of ceremonies, feasts and fasts smacked of Jewish legalism.⁸⁷ In the end, confessional concerns superseded scientific precision as Geneva, the evangelical cantons of Switzerland, and the Protestant states of Germany rejected the new style of calculation and retained the Julian calendar. To have done otherwise, it was feared, would have lent support to Roman tyranny and legitimized

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⁸⁶"Gregorianum illud Calendarium, non immerito vereris ne iaculatus sit Sathan tamquam ἔριδος μῆλον, scissa iam etiam Helvetia, Pontificiis videlicet illud, quamvis non sine magna disceptatione, amplexis, nostris vero illud aperte recusantibus; quorum exemplum sequimur. Provideat Dominus Deus noster tum huic malo, tum aliis infinitis calamitatibus..." Beza to Dürnhoffer, 2/12 May 1584, Paris, Bibl. Ste. Geneviève, ms. 1455, fols. 180^v-181^v. Eris was the goddess of discord who threw an apple—inscribed with the words 'for the fairest'—into the assembly of the gods. See Robert D. Bell, *Dictionary of Classical Mythology* (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-Clío, Inc., 1982), 9.

⁸⁷"De nostre temps aussi ce bon Pape Gregoire tresième, n'a pas fondé la correction du Calendrier des Chrestiens, sur ce qui en donnoit iuste occasion, à savoir, à cause du calcul du mouvement des cieux, nécessaire pour les saisons & à plusieurs affaires de la vie humaine: mais pour ramener ceste feste de Pasque au iour ordonné par le Concile Nicene, comme si le Soleil n'avoit rétrogradé depuis: comme si la religion Chrestienne gisoit en telle observations.... il faloit ramener les Chrestiens en un nouveau Iudaïsme, la distinction de iours, de viandes & de travailler, ou chommer par invention des hommes..." Beza, *Sermons sur l'histoire de la passion* (Genève: Jean Le Preux, 1592), 476-477. A year later, Beza returned to this issue: "Novum denique istud Calendarium certe videre non possumus, cur tantopere nonnullos offendat. Habuit enim fortasse iustam causam magistratus illius non recipiendi, ut (quod nonnulli ostenderunt) nec commode nec recte constructi. Nec illud, fateor, ut ab illo Antichristo profectum, admitti videtur potuisse sine quadam illius tyrannidis approbatione. Sed cum res ista sit per se vere civilis, et Magistratus, quocumque tandem consilio istud fecerit, observationem illius sibi subiectis populis mandarit; quam tandem hic culpam sustinent, qui civile istud, non ut a Papa, sed ut a suo Magistratu profectum mandatum, conservant? Imo nobis certe non liquet, quidnam opinioni sua possint praetescere, qui propterea suam et aliorum conscientiam turbent." Beza to Thomas Fabricius, 28 August/7 September 1593, Paris, Bibl. Ste. Geneviève, ms. 1455, fol. 98-101.

papal authority. Not until 1701 did Geneva and Zurich finally adopt the Gregorian calendar.

The Jesuit Threat

In addition to periodic panics of a tridentine conspiracy and deep-seated suspicions of papal reforms, Beza and the Huguenot leadership were becoming increasingly alarmed during the late 1570s and early 1580s by the growing influence of the Society of Jesus throughout Europe. The mixture of curiosity and concern with which the pastors and people of Geneva viewed the Jesuits is demonstrated in a fascinating account by the Jesuit Luca Pinelli who visited the city in 1580.⁸⁸ Having taught theology at a Jesuit college in France for three years, Pinelli was returning to Italy when the war forced him to make a stop in Geneva. At his lodging he met a fellow-Neapolitan named Galeazzo Caracciolo who, recognizing him as a Jesuit, assured him that he was welcome in the city and that "everyone will try to be polite and courteous to you, because this city is very religious and friendly."⁸⁹ Thereafter, Caracciolo sent a messenger to Beza--whom the author described as the "pope among

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⁸⁸Pinelli's account was published in 1596 under the title "Alcune cose più notabili e pericoli accaduti a me Luca Pinelli della Compagnia di Giesù." A portion of this text is found in Mario Scaduto, ed., "La Ginevra di Teodoro Beza nei ricordi di un gesuita lucano, Luca Pinelli (1542-1607)," *Archivum Historicum Societatis Iesu* 20 (1951): 117-142. An English translation of parts of this text is found in Martin, *The Jesuit Mind*, 84-88.

⁸⁹"Ma egli mi disse: State de buono animo, che se bene vi trovate fra gente aversissima da Giesuiti, tutta via vedrete che ognuno cercherà de farvi piacere e cortesia, per essere questa città molto religiosa e amorevole." In Scaduto, ed., "La Ginevra di Teodoro Beza," 135.

the Calvinists"--to inform him that the Catholic cleric wished to meet him.⁹⁰ Later in the day, Beza welcomed Pinelli warmly in his home. "I am very happy that God has granted me this opportunity to speak to a Jesuit before I die. I once even saw your general Father Lainez, when he came to France [for the Colloquy of Poissy], but I was not allowed to contact him."⁹¹ In their ensuing conversation, Pinelli informed the minister of his training in philosophy and theology. Beza responded, "as for philosophy I think that you may be very proficient; for I hear that Jesuits are quite skilled in this type of study. As for theology, on the other hand, either you err or we err." With this, Pinelli concurred: since there was only one truth, it could not be found in contrary arguments. Beza insisted, however, that disputation was neither necessary nor useful for souls. "Neither do I like," he added, "the writing of so many books, because so much writing and disputing hides and obscures the truth."⁹² After discussing a variety of issues, Beza showed Pinelli through his home before bidding him farewell. In later years, the Genevan reformer did not treat other Jesuit opponents as courteously.

During the next days, Pinelli moved freely about the city in his clerical

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⁹⁰"Intanto mandò uno al S.or Teodoro Bezza, che in quella città e tra i Calvinisti è come un Papa..." In Scaduto, ed., "La Ginevra di Teodore Beza," 137.

⁹¹"Gaudeo plurimum esse mihi a Deo concessum antequam moriar agere cum Jesuita. Vidi quidem aliquando Patrem vestrum Generalem Laynez cum venit in Galliam, sed non licuit mihi nec agere, nec loqui cum eo." In Scaduto, ed., "La Ginevra di Teodoro Beza," 137.

⁹²"Soggiunse egli: Quo ad filosofiam quidem puto te plurimum profecisse; audio enim Jesuitas in hoc genere studiorum esse valde versatos; quo ad theologiam autem vel vos, vel nos erramus.... Mi disse che il disputare in questi tempi non era necessario, nè utile per le anime, nè vorrei (disse di più) che si scrivessero tanti libri, perchè il tanto scriver e disputar nascondono et infuscano la verità." In Scaduto, ed., "La Ginevra di Teodoro Beza," 137.

clothing, arousing large crowds of curious Genevans who wanted to see and hear a real Jesuit, as if he was some sort of incarnate demon. One of the city's magistrates confronted him, arguing that the Society of Jesus had been established by the devil to fight the Church of Christ. To this Pinelli countered that God had providentially raised up the Jesuits "in order to oppose the stratagems of the devil and in order to teach the world the way of salvation by defending the faith of God." This was proved, he argued, "because at the same time that Luther left the church, God raised up the Jesuits. Moreover, in the Church of Christ no religious order in so short a time has expanded so much as the Society of Jesus, which would not have happened were it not due to God's providence."⁹³ Pinelli remained in Geneva for three days. During his time in the city, he noted with some surprise, "I never heard any blasphemy, swearing, or indecent language." He attributed this "to diabolic cunning in order to deceive the simpleminded by having the appearance of a Reformed life."⁹⁴

Pinelli's account illustrates that, despite their many differences, the Jesuits and

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⁹³"Signor Senatore, vi ingannate attribuendo al demonio, quel che se deve attribuire a Dio; hor sappiate che Iddio ha sempre havuta particolarissima cura e providenza della sua Chiesa e secondo i bisogni ha mandato l'aiuto; e perchè in questi tempi dal demonio sono state trovate molte heresie contra la verità della santa fede, le quali accecano gli huomini in perdizione delle loro anime, per questo Iddio ha mandata la compagnia di Giesuiti in aiuto della sua Chiesa, acciò si opponessero a gli inganni del demonio e defendendo la fede di Dio insegnassero al mondo la vie della salute. E che sia così, si vede, perchè al medesimo tempo che Lutero si separò dalla Chiesa, Iddio eccitò i Giesuiti. Di più, nella Chiesa di Christo niuna religione in sì breve tempo si è tanto dilatata quanto la religione di Giesuiti, il che non è stato senza providenza particolare di Dio, acciò potessero sovenire in tutte le parti della sua Chiesa, che fussero delle heresie contaminate." In Scaduto, ed., "La Ginevra di Teodoro Beza," 139.

⁹⁴"Quel che mi diede qualche maraviglia fu che, in tre giorni che stetti in Geneva, non udì mai una bestemmia, nè giuramento, nè parola sconcia; il che attribui ad arte diabolica per ingannare i semplici con apparenza di vita riformata. Intesi ancora infinite nuove contra il papa, cardinali e religiosi, le quali tutte erano finte per trattenere gli apostati e farli abhorrire i cattolici." In Scaduto, ed., "La Ginevra di Teodoro Beza," 141.

Calvinists shared at least three basic assumptions: both recognized the central importance of education in the task of 'winning' France; both admitted a begrudging respect for the influence of the other; and each ascribed the 'reforms' of their opponent to the deception of Satan. The dramatic expansion of the Society of Jesus throughout Europe posed the single greatest intellectual challenge to Calvinism at the end of the sixteenth century. By 1589 Beza complained that "those 'Jebusites' sound the bugle for war throughout the Christian world."⁹⁵ While recent Jesuit scholars have argued that, at its inception, the primary purpose of the Society was pastoral rather than polemical,⁹⁶ nonetheless by the latter decades of the sixteenth century Beza and other Huguenot leaders recognized the Jesuits as sworn enemies of Protestantism and aggressive apologists for the Catholic religion.

In the 1570s Beza was only gradually becoming aware of the dangers that Jesuit missionary activities posed to Protestantism in France and the rest of Europe. Few allusions to the Jesuits appear in his letters before 1577. In that year Beza complained to a correspondent in Germany that "the Jesuits are shouting and writing in many different places."⁹⁷ At the same time Beza began to follow with interest a

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⁹⁵"... denique in orbe Christiano universo classicum canant ἀλαζκες illi lebusitae." Beza, *Iobus Theodori Bezae partim commentariis partim paraphrasi illustratus* (Genevae: Ioannes Le Preux, 1589), 17.

⁹⁶The most prominent spokesperson for this understanding of the early Jesuits is John O'Malley. He argues that the Society of Jesus "would have come into being even if the Reformation had not happened, and it cannot be defined primarily in relationship to it." *The First Jesuits* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993), 17.

⁹⁷"... praesertim hoc tempore, quo Jesuastres passim clamitant et scriptitant, papistis bene sperandum esse de suis adversariis mox expugnandis, inter quos tantae dissentiones tam diu vigeant." Beza to the Landgrave William of Hesse, 25 March 1577, *CB* XVIII, 60.

'battle of books' between his friend Antoine de Chandieu and the Spanish Jesuit François Torrès which continued for the next seven years.⁹⁸ Praising Chandieu's second rebuttal of Torrès in 1580, the Genevan reformer remarked: "I think that Chandieu is God's instrument to oppose these Jesuits. It fills me with joy to see that God has raised up a new generation of champions like him to replace veterans like myself."⁹⁹

During the next five years, unsettling reports arrived in Geneva of Jesuit advances throughout Europe.¹⁰⁰ In Switzerland, the Jesuits--like "bellows of Satan"--had begun to work in Fribourg and Lucerne, stirring up the Catholic cantons against the Reformed and establishing printing presses to counter publications coming from Geneva.¹⁰¹ In Germany, Jesuit treatises and pamphlets caused such concern that in 1585 a minister of Heidelberg begged Beza and Chandieu to respond to the books of Jesuits who "sing triumph before victory" and cause great harm to the Reformed

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⁹⁸Bernus, *Antoine de Chandieu*, 81-82.

⁹⁹"Spero te legisse alteram Sadeelis [i.e. Chandieu] nostri ad Turrianum responsionem, in qua sane mihi videtur seipsum superasse: quem hominem certe existimo divinitus istis Jesuastris oppositum, et incredibiliter exulto, quum tales video excitatos, aliis iam delassatis veteranis successuros, quae spes ne me fallat, Deum Opt. Max. precari non desino." Beza to Gwalther, 29 November 1580, Basle, Univ. Bibl., Kirchen Archiv, Bd. II, C. I. 2, fols. 68-69.

¹⁰⁰For a helpful survey of the progress of the Jesuit mission throughout Europe between 1580-1615, see William Bangert, S.J., *A History of the Society of Jesus*, 97-148.

¹⁰¹"... Jesuitae ut Satanae flabella Lucernae et Friburgi collocati, qui sponte currentes incitent, factis, ni prorsus fallor, coniurationem Tridentinam patefaciunt." Beza to Gwalther, 14 March 1582, Zurich, Stadtbibl., Simmlerische Smlg., Bd. 140, fol. 80. "Agetur etiam de quaestionibus illis in nova typographiae Friburgi excusis, quibus Jesuitae doctrinam nostram infamare moliuntur. Acriter nostri censentillis respondendum.... Audiui Lucernates quoque Jesuitas de typographia instituenda deliberasse." Ludwig Lavater to Beza, 5/15 September 1585, Gotha, Cod. chart A 405, fol. 141.

churches.¹⁰² In Scotland and England, Jesuit missionaries became conspirators in a Spanish-Guise plot to rescue Mary Stuart from prison, overthrow Queen Elizabeth, and restore Catholicism to England.¹⁰³ The situation in central and eastern Europe was almost as precarious for the Protestants. Building upon the foundations of the missionary work of Peter Canisius, by the 1580s the Jesuits had 700 clerics and nineteen schools in the empire and dominions of the Austrian Hapsburgs. Impressed by their educational program, a former councillor to Emperor Maximilian II named André Dudith had the temerity to tell Beza that he, for one, believed that the Jesuit schools were superior to the Reformed academies. Beza replied curtly: "Do you really think, my dear sir, that the pseudo-disciples of Jesus are better prepared and instructed than our ministers? I am sure that you will change your opinion after you

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¹⁰²"Misi superioribus mensibus Domino Sadelo [i.e. Chandieu] Wilhelmi Lindani et cuiusdam Petri Michaelis Jesuitae tractatus *De missa et Transubstantione panis*, eumque rogavi obnixè, ut paucis hominibus impudentissimis responderet; quod se facturum pollicitus est. Sed cum metuam, eum his motibus bellicis, nunc propter peccata nostra exortis, impeditum iri, rogo obnixè ut humanitas tua scripta praedicta examinare, et ad ea respondere dignetur, si forte Dominus Sadeelus propter has calamitates id tam cito praestare nequeat. Puto enim id eo magis esse necessarium, quod impudentissimi isti homines (maxime Jesuita, qui sua garrulitate Coloniae aliquam eruditionis existimationem consecutus est, et multum nocet Ecclesiae Dei) triumphum canant ante victoriam, propterea quod hactenus nemo extiterit, qui ad ipsorum ineptias et mendacia responderit." Stephen Isaac to Beza, 29 July/8 August 1585, Geneva, Archives Tronchin à Bessinge, f. Bèze, vol. 5, fol. 198.

¹⁰³This conspiracy, known as the *Impresa*, is described by Martin, *Henri III and the Jesuit Politicians*, 63-74. In the aftermath of this unsuccessful plot, Beza showed continued concern about the influence of Jesuits in Scotland and England: "In Scotia, Rex, sanctae institutionis pernitus oblitus, et, ut verisimile est, totius Insulae imperio inhians, pessimis denique usus consultoribus, rescissis primum omnibus Ecclesiastica εὐραξία nervis, et paulo post admissis lebusitis, et revocatis qui exilabant lupis, Ecclesias mirabiliter evertit." Beza to Dürnhoffer, 26 October/5 November 1584, Paris, Bibl. Ste. Geneviève, ms. 1455, fol. 182-182v. "In Anglia recens de quinque coniuratis Jesuitis sumptum est supplicium, addita et scripta declaratione non religionis cause, sed horrendae coniurationis convictos iustas huius sceleris poenas dedisse." Beza to Gwalther, 24 March/3 April 1584, Zurich, Stadtbibl., Simmlersche Smlg., Bd. 141, fol. 161.

have read carefully the enclosed treatise as well as the book by Chandieu that I am sending to Monau. Both of these will show you that the Jesuits are unbelievably ignorant in logic."¹⁰⁴ Eighteen months later, after reading Chandieu's books, Dudith remained unconvinced.¹⁰⁵

The Society of Jesus was making inroads into France as well. Although the Jesuit mission in France was relatively small in comparison to Spain, Portugal or Italy--numbering around 315 men in 1575--it was becoming a significant intellectual force in the kingdom, causing concern among Reformed leaders. In view of the proliferation of Jesuit academies throughout the country, the ninth National Synod at St. Foy (1578), moderated by Pierre Merlin, expressly forbade parents from sending their children to these schools.¹⁰⁶ In addition to educational ministries, the Jesuits established confraternities in French cities and frontier towns, including Lyon, Aix, Nîmes, Périgueux, Pont-à-Mousson, Avignon, and Metz.¹⁰⁷ Moreover, Jesuit

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¹⁰⁴"Ain' tu, mi D. Duditi, paratiores et instructiores esse nostris Pseudo-Jesuitas? Mutabis, ut spero, sententiam, hoc perlecto scripto itemque altero Sadeelis nostri, quod ad D. Monavium mitto, ex quibus incredibilem etiam istorum in logicis ἀπαιδευσίαν deprahendes." 2/12 July 1583, Paris, Bibl. Ste. Geneviève, ms. 1456, fol. 476^v-477.

¹⁰⁵"Est quidem ille cuius propugnationem suscipiebam, non contemnenda causa, de qua multae adversae acies omnibus temporibus dimicarunt, neque, ut video belli finis ullus erit unquam, Jesuitis acriter rem gerentibus. Quod ad alterum quidem illius epistolae caput attinet: *De ecclesia*, inquam, in qua certe (ut hoc obiter dicam pace vestra) non satis eorum profligasse copias vester Sadeel in *Posnaniensibus assertionibus*, vir doctrina et ingenio singulari." Dudith to Beza, 13 January 1585, Gotha, Cod. chart, A 405, fol. 473-474.

¹⁰⁶"Les pères & mères seront exhortés de prendre soigneusement garde à l'instruction de leurs enfans qui sont la semence & la pépinière de l'Église, & tous ceux qui les envoient aux Ecoles de Prêtres, des Jésuites & des Nonains, seront fortement censurés..." Aymon, I, 130.

¹⁰⁷Piaget, *Histoire de l'Établissement des Jésuites en France*, 108-109.

influence was prominent at the Valois court.¹⁰⁸ During 1581-1582, the Jesuit Pierre Matthieu served as an advisor and confessor to Henri III. After being dismissed for meddling in political affairs, Matthieu became a confidante of the duke of Guise and a secret legate for the Catholic League.¹⁰⁹ The Jesuit provincial Edmond Auger had a longer tenure at court. Having been Henri of Anjou's chaplain during the battle of Jarnac, Auger returned to Paris in 1583 in order to help the king establish his penitential orders. Auger remained one of Henri III's chief advisors until being recalled to Italy in 1587.¹¹⁰ Beza was convinced that Jesuit advisors like Matthieu and Auger 'owned' Henri III and were pushing him to adopt harsher measures toward the Huguenots.¹¹¹

As formidable opponents of the Protestants in France, the Jesuits were making great progress in the battle to shape 'popular' opinion. Jesuit schools, preaching

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¹⁰⁸As early as 1578 Beza and Hotman had complained about Jesuit influence at the Louvre: "Neque dubitamus Celsitudinae Vestrae notum esse, cardinales et Jesuitas, qui in aula Galliae dominantur, assidue nos apud Regem calumniari..." Beza and Hotman to William IV, Landgrave of Hesse, 28 February 1578, *CB XIX*, 46.

¹⁰⁹Martin, *Henry III and the Jesuit Politicians*, 79-83, 126-156.

¹¹⁰Martin examines Auger's relationship to Henri III and influence at court in *Henry III and the Jesuit Politicians*. In 1569, Auger had written a pamphlet entitled *Le pedagogue d'armes* justifying a holy war against the Protestant 'heretics.' Following Saint Bartholomew's day, Auger's preaching in Bordeaux may well have provided the spark that ignited the massacres in that city. Nonetheless, Martin claims that during the late 1570s and early 1580s, Auger's influence over Henri III was primarily devotional. Though a virulent opponent of the Reformed, Auger belonged to a 'Gallican faction' within the French Jesuits, and probably did not support the publication of the decrees of Trent in the kingdom (124, 178-179).

¹¹¹"Rex, quasi haec ad se non pertineant, totum est Capucinis et Edmondo [Auger] suo Jesuitae deditus." Beza to Grynaeus, 9/19 March 1586, Basle, Universit. Bibl., Kirchen Archiv, C. I. 2, Bd. II, fol. 97. "De rebus gallicis, decretum est Regi, quem totum Jesuitae et Capucini possident, unicam suam religionem pati, et aleam potius quamvis subire, quam de hac sua sententia decedere." Beza to Grynaeus, 20/30 June 1586, *ibid.*, fol. 100.

missions, catechetical instruction, and publishing efforts in the last quarter of the sixteenth century constituted a direct challenge to the institutions and ministries that had formed the basis of Reformed success in France during the 1550s and 1560s. Adopting similar methods, these two ideological foes entered a desperate struggle to capture the minds of the young and bolster the religious convictions of the old. One of the first skirmishes of this drawn-out theological struggle occurred in the early 1580s between John Hay, the rector of the Jesuit academy in Tournon, and Jean de Serres, a Reformed minister and rector at the academy of Nîmes. In 1580, Hay published in English a tract entitled *Certaine demandes concerning the Christian religion and discipline* that contained 166 theological questions posed to the Calvinist church of his native Scotland.¹¹² The work was translated into French in 1583 and into German two years later.¹¹³ In the meantime, Hay wrote a group of theses that were posted to the door of the Reformed academy of Nîmes, challenging the authority of the Protestant churches, and defending the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist and the use of images in worship. Jean de Serres answered both Hay's treatise and theses in four separate books between 1582-1586, known as the *Quatre Antijésuites*.¹¹⁴

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¹¹²For a helpful biographical sketch of Hay, as well as the text of this treatise, see *Catholic Tractates of the Sixteenth Century*, ed. Thomas Graves Law (Edinburgh: William Blackwood and Sons, 1901), xxxv-xli, 31-70. The literary controversy between Hay and his Reformed opponents is detailed in Carlos Sommervogel, *Bibliothèque de la Compagnie de Jésus*, IV (Bruxelles: Oscar Schepens, 1893), cols. 161-166.

¹¹³Sommervogel claims that the German translation of Hay's treatise was the first book printed at the Jesuit publishing house in Fribourg. *Bibliothèque de la Compagnie de Jésus*, IV, 162.

¹¹⁴The best account of the life of Jean de Serres is found in Charles Dardier's *Jean de Serres, sa vie et ses écrits* (Paris, 1883). See also *FP IX*, 263-268 and pages 384-400 below. For the background of de Serres' work against the Jesuits, see J. W. Lelièvre, "Les Antijésuites," *Bulletin* 36

The clergy in Geneva closely followed the interchange between Hay and de Serres. De Serres was well-known in Geneva, having studied theology under Calvin and Beza between 1559-1566 and worked as a pastor in nearby Jussy for several years. At least one of his treatises against Hay was published in Geneva.¹¹⁵ Many years later, Beza praised de Serres for attacking the Jesuits "more harshly than anyone who writes in French."¹¹⁶ Beza, however, was not content to remain a spectator of this theological debate. In 1586, the Genevan reformer wrote a refutation of Hay, entitled *Response aux cinq premières et principales demandes de F. Jean Haye*, in which he forcefully defended the legacy of Calvin, the vocation of the Reformed ministry, the perspicuity of Scripture, and the priority of Scripture to church tradition.¹¹⁷

The *Response* contained Beza's most sustained critique of the Society of Jesus. The reformer was galled by the very name of the order: the Jesuits had wickedly usurped the name of God's son, something neither the followers of Benedict of Nursia

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(1887): 142-146.

¹¹⁵*Pro vera ecclesiae Catholicae autoritate, defensio: adversus Joannis Hayi* ([Genevae]: Jacobus Stoer, 1594). See CDM, 143. In addition, the register of the Small Council indicates that the printer Eustach Vignon received permission to print an unnamed work of de Serres' in 1583.

¹¹⁶De Serres "les [i.e. the Jesuits] a plus rudement assaillis que nul autre de nostre langue." Beza to Chevalier, 1/11 December 1595, Geneva, Archives Tronchin à Bessinge, f. Bèze, vol. 5, fol. 289.

¹¹⁷*Response aux cinq premières et principales demandes de F. Jean Haye, moine Jésuite aux ministres Escossois* ([Genève]: Jean Le Preux, 1586). See *Bibliographie*, 192-193, and CDM 115. Gardy and the editors of CDM prove from the registers of the Small Council that this anonymous work was, in fact, written by Beza: "François Le Preux. A présenté requeste tendante à luy permettre d'imprimer ung livre intitulé *Responce aux demandes de Jean de Hay Jésuite* par M^r de Bèze. A esté arresté qu'on le permet." 12/22 April 1586, RC 81, 78^v.

nor Francis of Assisi had dared to do. The identification of Jesus and the Jesuits was all the more outrageous in that whereas Jesus had preached peace, these "windbags of Satan" delighted in violence, stirring up civil war in France.¹¹⁸ Beza further believed that the Society was illegitimate in its foundation and abusive in its so-called ministries. Despite the fact that the Fourth Lateran Council (1215) had banned all new religious orders, the Jesuits and Capuchins--these 'new monastic creatures'--wandered throughout Europe, spreading controversy and errors. As confessors, the Jesuits sold absolution at so high a cost that "in less than 30 years they have acquired more property than all the other monks put together in 300 years."¹¹⁹

Beza reserved some of his sharpest criticisms for the Jesuit educational system. The Jesuits lured young boys to their schools and seduced those who demonstrated intellectual promise.¹²⁰ Because most Jesuit instructors were not trained in theology, they taught their students only how to argue and debate rather than the truths of the Scripture. Hence, neither the Jesuits nor their students were qualified to preach or

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¹¹⁸"... vous non Iésuites & vrayes amateurs de paix mais Anti-Iésuites & soufflets de Satan, qui n'avez cessé que n'avez r'allumé le feu en la povre France pour le septième fois." Beza, *Response*, 29.

¹¹⁹"Chacun le apperçoit, comme l'arbre se cognoit par les fruicts, ayant si bien practiqué vos confessions & absolutions, & si bien mesné les consciences des pources testateurs, & vendu si chèrement vostre *Gratis*, qu'en moins de trente ans vous avez notoirement par la destruction d'infinies familles, plus acquis de rentes que tous les autres Moines en trois cents ans." Beza, *Response*, 38-39. Beza repeated this criticism in his *Sermons sur le Cantiques des Cantiques*: "Mais qu'est-ce de tous ces renards devenus loups, au prix de ceste fausse caravane horde de ceste vermine, polluant ouvertement le saint nom de Iesus, vendans tellement, ces malheureux, ces ordures *Gratis* à ceux qui s'en veulent paistre, qu'ils ont si bien graté qu'ils ont en moins de 40. ans attiré & emmoncelé en leurs tanières plus de butin que tous les autres renards & loups n'ont sçu entasser en cinq cents ans, quoy qu'ils ayent eu le temps propre à leur souhait" ([Genève: Jean Le Preux, 1586], 444).

¹²⁰"... vous faciez mestier pour vous entretenir, d'attirer à vous & suborner les jeunes gens; esquels vous cognoissez quelque vivacité d'esprit." Beza, *Response*, 44-45.

teach.¹²¹ By contrast, Beza believed that Reformed academies avoided the deficiencies of competing Jesuit institutions. The Reformed lecturers had studied theology and had received an academic degree. They were thus prepared to teach their students both the classical languages and the theological sciences. He admitted, however, that academic training alone was insufficient to qualify a person for the pastoral ministry. In response to Hay's criticism that Calvinists in Scotland permitted artisans with limited academic background to become ministers,¹²² Beza emphasized that piety and knowledge of the Scriptures were more important than knowledge of *belles lettres* for the pastoral vocation.¹²³

Beza's stated reason for contrasting the educational programs of the Reformed and the Jesuits was to defend the authority of the Protestant ministers. In his mind,

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¹²¹"Tiercement que fait-on autre chose en vos escoles qu'arguer, crier, tempester les uns contre les autres? sans que les escoliers ayent iamais esté auditeurs, non plus qu'il se trouve entre vous de Docteurs & expositeurs des livres du vieil & nouveau Testament.... par quelle tradition Apostolique, par quel canon pur & ancien Concile prouvez vous messieurs les Jésuites, & Capussins nouvelles creatures monachales, que vous ayez autorité soit de prescher en l'Église, soit d'enseigner en l'escole, sans avoir esté iamais disciples, disputeurs, ni graduez en aucune escole de vostre Théologie?" Beza, *Response*, 37-38.

¹²²Hay had argued: "Also seing ye confesse in the same place, that men can not so weill proffite in the foresaid knowledge, except thay be first instructed in the tounes and humaine sciences ... and therefore it is necessarie that seid be sawin for the tyme to come, to the intent that the kirk be not left barren and waist to the posteritie, and also that for this effect scoles be erected quhairin youth may be trained in the knowledge and feare of God, I demand quhy ye admittit at the first entres of your doctrine in Scotland, and yit dois, tailyeours, skinnars and wther artisans and workmen, quha war newer instructed bot in thair awin craft and wocation, quhilk thai left and abiured, and at thair awin hand without any farder calling to the ministerie, begouth to teach the people, hawing for all learning ane onlie protocole of thair preachings, some Inglishe buikes, quhilks skairslic thay wnderstude thame selwes." *Demandes*, 37.

¹²³"Combien donc que tant qu'il est possible on doive eslire personnages qui ayent cognoissance des bonnes letres avec piété: si est ce que la piété avec le zèle & sainte simplicité doivent aller devant: & tel manie un instrument de quelque estat mécanique, qui est toutesfoit plus digne de manier le glaive de la parole de Dieu, que ceux la mesmes qui auront estudié toute leur vie..." Beza, *Response*, 43.

whereas many Jesuits had little knowledge of theology, and were thus unprepared to preach and teach, Calvinist clergy entered their ministries with the requisite biblical training and zeal. Because Reformed pastors lived and preached the truths of Scripture, they--not the Jesuits--were legitimate ministers of the Christian Gospel. Legitimacy was determined by the truth of the message rather than by apostolic succession. But behind this theological debate lay more practical concerns. Would parents entrust the education of their sons to the Jesuits at Tournon or to the Reformed at Nîmes? Were the Jesuits or the Calvinists better able to train the youth of France? These questions were crucially important not only for the institutional survival of academies in Tournon and Nîmes, but also for the religious future of the French kingdom.

Protecting the Past

By the early 1580s, the reformer was becoming increasingly discouraged by the obstacles to religious reformation in Geneva, France and Germany. Everywhere he turned there seemed to be bad news. France was torn by anarchy and moral license; the churches continued to suffer 'under the cross.' Geneva's survival seemed to 'hang by a thread' in the face of repeated threats and schemes of Charles-Emmanuel. In Germany, the Lutheran princes had signed the Formula of Concord (1578) which effectively condemned as heretics all those 'crypto-Calvinists' and Huguenot refugees who did not subscribe to it. The Gnesio-Lutherans now openly persecuted the Reformed, purging Calvinists from their theological faculties and

imprisoning pastors who subscribed to a Reformed view of the Lord's Supper.¹²⁴

Even Heidelberg, a long-time stronghold of the Reformed religion, had passed over to the Lutheran camp following the death of Frederick III (1576).¹²⁵ The gulf between Lutheran and Reformed Europe was widening quickly amidst a flurry of theological attacks and mutual incriminations. All of these religious reversals left the reformer more gloomy and introspective than usual. "Pray for me," Beza wrote to an English friend in 1580, "so that even though I am overwhelmed by so many storms, I might press on to that heavenly harbor. I have a feeling that it is not far off now."¹²⁶

Beza's sense of crisis was compounded by his growing feebleness. Always eager to tell friends about his various maladies, the reformer's correspondence after 1580 was filled with accounts of the aches and pains accompanying old age. In addition to weakening eyesight and hearing, he was hampered by arthritis in his legs,

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¹²⁴For a helpful survey of Lutheran 'orthodoxy' in the second-half of the sixteenth century, see Robert Preuss, *The Theology of Post-Reformation Lutheranism, A Study of Theological Prolegomena* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1970). Robert Kolb carefully describes the factions within Lutheranism--the so-called Gnesio-Lutherans and the Philippists--in his article "Dynamics of Party Conflict in the Saxon Late Reformation, Gnesio-Lutherans vs. Philippists," *Journal of Modern History* 49 (1977): 1289-1305. For Beza's early relationship to German Lutheranism, see Robert Kingdon, "Barriers to Protestant Ecumenism in the Career of Theodore Beza," in *Probing the Reformed Tradition*, eds. Elsie Anne McKee and Brian Armstrong (Louisville, KY: Westminster Press, 1989), 237-251.

¹²⁵For an excellent summary of religious and political developments in Germany during this period, see Léonard, *Histoire Générale du Protestantisme*, II, 20-30. For Beza's perspective on the victory of the Gnesio-Lutheran party, see my reviews of *CB XV-XVI* in *Zwingliana XXI* (1994): 175-180. The son of Frederick III, Louis VI (1576-1583), established Lutheranism in the Palatinate during his short reign. The Reformed religion was restored with the accession of Jean-Casimir in 1583.

¹²⁶"Precare pro me Dominum, mi Juni, ne tot superatis, ipsius beneficio, tempestatibus, in ipso portu, a quo non procul abesse me sentio, infelix impingam..." Beza to Peter Junius [Young], 20 May 1580, Oxford, ms. Smith 77, 387-388.

intestinal pains, and recurring sinus congestion.¹²⁷ By the middle of the decade, he was forced to rely increasingly on a secretary because of shaking in his hands.¹²⁸ In the winter of 1579-1580, Beza was afflicted with a severe lung infection that kept him bed-ridden for seven weeks. Alarmed by the reformer's ill-health, the magistrates of Geneva decided to call first Daniel Toussain, and then Duplessis-Mornay to the city as an assistant and future replacement for Beza.¹²⁹ When both men declined and the reformer's health improved, the Small Council gave up the search.¹³⁰ Three years later, sensing that his life might be nearing an end, Beza undertook a final journey to Bern, Zurich, Basle, Schaffhausen and Neuchâtel to visit his friends and consult with the magistrates of these evangelical cities. The warm welcome that Beza received pleased him immensely: "I can hardly remember anything that has happened to me more pleasant in my entire life!" No sooner had he returned to Geneva, however,

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¹²⁷"... haec rescribo affecta valetudine, surdaster et caecutiens, ac insuper dexterum pedem et sinistrum femur aegre trahens, ex nervorum, ut aiunt medici, imbecillitate, cui frustra adhuc tentarunt remedium adhibere. Fiat Domini voluntas et misericordia super me." Beza to Gwalther, 2/12 May 1583, Zurich, Stadtbibl., Simmlerische Smlg., Bd. 141, fol. 306. "Quod ad me vero privatim attinet, vix annum huius caducae vitae meae sexagesimum quintum egressus, quum ipse mihi bellissime viderer valere, incidi in gravissimum, ac pene dixerim saevissimum extremarum dorsi vertebrarum dolorem, ex subtilissimis, ut aiunt Medici, vaporibus a cerebro defluentibus contractum, qui nunc in femoris dextri nervos depulsus cogit me, partim aegre repentem, partim in lectulo decumbentem narcessere." Beza to Count Louis of Sayn-Wittgenstein, 11/21 July 1584, cited in Friedlaender, 147. For a discussion of Beza's physical maladies during this period, see Geisendorf, 323-324.

¹²⁸Beza thus signed a letter to his friend Dürnhoffer in the summer of 1584: "Tuus Beza, sic vacillante manu, ut aliena uti cogatur." 26 August/5 September 1584, Paris, Bibl. Ste. Geneviève, ms. 1455, fols. 181^v-182.

¹²⁹See *RCP* IV, 157, 162.

¹³⁰See *RC* 75, 14.

than the physical pain returned.¹³¹

Added to these physical discomforts was his deep concern for the Reformed churches. Beza frequently spoke of the "pain of soul" that he experienced when he thought about the suffering of Protestants in France: "I am crushed not so much from work--although I have many responsibilities--as from that constant and very realistic concern. For why should I not be filled with pain when the French churches have been harassed, torn apart, and crushed for so long?"¹³² This psychological pain was heightened by the German situation. Beza found it almost incomprehensible that the followers of Luther would betray their fellow-Protestants by subscribing to a so-called Formula of Concord which decisively excluded them. It seemed to the Genevan reformer that, because of their wickedness, God had turned his back on these 'first-born sons' of the Reformation even as he had once rejected the first-born sons of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.¹³³ In anathematizing the Reformed, he believed, the

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¹³¹"Fuit autem mihi usque adeo suaviter consumptum hoc omne tempus in illo amicissimo fratrum complexu, fortassis postremo, ut vix quicquam iucundius tota vita mea mihi contigisse meminerim. Domum autem reversum eadem illa mala rursum adorta sunt..." Beza to Johann Crato, 2/12 July 1583, Paris, Bibl. Ste. Geneviève, ms. 1456, fols. 479^v-480^v. See also Beza's letter to Dürnhoffer on the same day, Paris, Bibl. Ste. Geneviève, ms. 1455, fols. 173-173^v.

¹³²"De rebus nostris, valeo sicuti senes plerique solent, non tam laboribus, quos tamen multos sustinui, quam perpetui quadam eaque iustissima aegritudine fractus. Cuinam enim non possim dolori indulgere, Gallicis Ecclesiis tam dire vexatis, direptis et oppressis?" Beza to George Buchanan, 20/30 May 1584, in *Georgi Buchanani Scoti ad viros sui seculi clarissimos eorumque ad eundem epistolae* (London, 1711), 72-73. See also Beza to Johann Crato, 28 August 1582, Paris, Bibl. Ste. Geneviève, ms. 1456, fols. 382-382^v.

¹³³"Sed haec est hora potestatis tenebrarum, sic promerente eorum praesertim improbitate, qui cognita veritatis luce abutuntur. Fiat ergo voluntas Domini, non minus iusti iudicis, quam misericordis patris: et incipiat sane iudicium ab ipsius domo. Quid si vero reiiciantur nunc quoque primogeniti, ut olim Ismael, Esaiias, et Reuben, et Davidis fratres?" Beza to Landgrave William of Hesse, 9 August 1580, printed in Heinrich Heppe, *Epist. Th. Bezae* (n.p., 1860), 26-28.

descendents of Luther had rejected Christ. It was now left to the descendants of Calvin--the 'younger sons' of the Reformation--to preserve divine truth in an increasingly dark and hostile world. Divided into two hostile theological camps, Protestantism was all the more vulnerable to Catholic armies and Jesuit missionaries.

The burden of physical ailments and worries made Beza more reflective and less combative. Tired of the endless--and apparently futile--theological battles with Lutheran opponents, Beza desired to immerse himself in his studies of the Psalms and the New Testament, to put aside 'Aristotelian' learning and focus, instead, on 'Christian' wisdom.¹³⁴ The report of the Jesuit Pinelli here resonates with Beza's correspondence: the reformer was wearied by the constant disputes that only seemed to obscure the truth. Beza's biblical *Annotationes* was particularly dear to him. During the last two decades of his life he frequently returned to these annotations, emending, correcting, and supplementing the exegetical notes accompanying his Latin translation of the New Testament. Although he had become a theologian under the tutelage of Calvin, Beza remained first and foremost an exegete at heart.¹³⁵ But while

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¹³⁴"Nam haec etiam aetas ac valetudo mea postulant, ut vel istas scribendi partes aliis resignem, vel certe ad placidius aliquod scriptionis genus me totum convertam, unde consolationem maiorem capiam, *περὶ τῆς ἀναλυσεως*, non illa aristotelica, sed christiana cogitans. Itaque me superioribus mensibus in scribenda brevi psalmorum paraphrasi exercui..." Beza to André Dudith, 2 June 1579, Paris, Bibl. Ste Geneviève, ms. 1456, fols. 247-249.

¹³⁵Of his annotations of the New Testament, Beza will say "... nihil habeo in hac vita charius." Beza to [Grynaeus], 23 August/2 September 1586, Basle, Univ. Bibl., Kirchen Archiv, C. I. 2, Bd. II, fol. 101. For Beza's role as an exegete, see Irena Backus, *The Reformed Roots of the English New Testament*, passim. Beza's preference for biblical studies over theological polemic is demonstrated in a letter to Dürnhoffer: "Sunt etiam sub praelo maiores nostrae annotationes, quam plurimis locis et auctiores et emendatiores; in cuiusmodi studiis, potius quam in scriptitandis apologiis, et fovenda in istis hominibus garriendi et rixandi libidine, quicquid mihi vitae et satis magnae ad docendum et scribendum tranquillitatis concedet Dominus transigere, ipso favente, decrevit." 5/15 September 1587,

he longed for a tranquil life of biblical study, insulated from theological squabbles, nonetheless he was unwilling to shirk what he believed to be his duty. Theological error must be refuted. Divine truth must be defended. This central conviction lay very close to the heart of Beza's sense of vocation: "the truth—far more precious than life itself—must never be betrayed to silence."¹³⁶ Though desiring a contemplative life free of controversy, he believed it his divine duty to battle the theological errors that threatened Christ's Church from all sides. Living precariously between Lutheran Germany and Catholic France, attacked by 'Ubiquitarians' and Jesuits, this weary warrior found little opportunity for rest.

Beza's anxiety was accentuated by an emerging crisis of leadership in the Reformed churches. In the fifteen years following Saint Bartholomew, the Reformed had lost many of their most gifted ministers and intellectuals. The death roll of these Protestant 'lights' was impressive, including many men whom Beza numbered among his closest friends and correspondents: Heinrich Bullinger (1575), Josiah Simler

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Paris, Bibl. Ste. Geneviève, ms. 1455, fols. 15-16.

¹³⁶"Sed tamen prodenda non est ne silentio quidem veritas, ipsa vita longe pretiosior." Beza to Crato, 2 January 1582, Breslau, Stadtbibl., mss. Rhediger, vol. 249, no. 223, fols. 365-366. This theme appears elsewhere in Beza's correspondence: "Si qui a me dissentiunt, aut si a nonnullis dissentio, studeo errores, aut illorum aut meos, agnoscere. Hunc candorem in paucis agnosco, ab omnibus mihi praestari desidero. Quod etsi non obtineo, tamen quantum in me erit, officii, quod Christianum decet, meminero." Beza to André Dudith, 12/22 March 1583, Paris, Bibl. Ste. Geneviève, ms. 1456, fols. 442-444v. "Ut autem ingenue fatear quod res est, tantopere me taedet scribendarum apologiarum, his praesertim temporibus, in quibus tam multos video non errore iudicii neque ignorantia, sed una improbitate et pervicacia peccare, ut perpetuum mihi fuerim silentium indicturus, nisi me nonnulli pergere iuberent, citata etiam gravissimi testis Augustini sententia, qui post Apostolum, doctorem Ecclesiae non tantum veritatis propugnatorem, sed etiam erroris expugnatorem appellavit; cui assentiunt quoque Christianus ille philosophus, nos admonens christianorum esse proprium, ut non tantum *περι ἀληθείας*, sed etiam *υπὲς ἀληθείας* disserant." Beza to Henri Moller, 25 March 1579, Paris, Bibl. Ste. Geneviève, ms. 1456, fols. 279-281.

(1576) and Rudolf Gwalther (1586) from Zurich; Zacharias Ursinus (1583) and Caspar Olevianus (1587) from Heidelberg; John Knox (1572) and George Buchanan (1582) from Scotland; and Pierre Toussain (1573) and Joachim Camerarius (1574) from Germany. As Beza mourned the loss of his friends, he felt increasingly isolated and became ever more concerned for the future. It seemed that he was one of the few survivors from that first generation of reformers who had turned the world upside down. His daily prayer became: "Protect what was, control what will be."¹³⁷ Concerned to preserve the legacy of the first reformers, and to inspire by their example a future generation of leaders, Beza undertook two historical works, both of which appeared in 1580: the *Histoire ecclésiastique* and the *Icones*.

The *Histoire ecclésiastique*¹³⁸ recounted the first five decades of the Reformation in France, from the early reformers in the circle of bishop Briçonnet at

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¹³⁷"Fiat mihi secundum Dei mei voluntatem, apud quem hac quotidiana prece uti consuevi: Tege quod fuit; quod erit rege." Beza to Count Sayne-Wittgenstein, 11/21 July 1584, published in Friedlaender, 147.

¹³⁸The paternity of the *Histoire ecclésiastique* has been debated for over a century. While it is undisputed that as early as 1565 Beza began collecting materials with the intention of compiling a history of the French churches, scholars disagree as to whether he or another unknown redactor executed the project. Examining Beza's correspondence from 1579-1580 and the registers of the Small Council, Geisendorf concluded that the reformer probably had no direct role in the compilation of this history (340-345). Two passages from Beza's correspondence in 1578 challenge Geisendorf's conclusion. In January, the reformer informed Dürnhoffer that he was very busy working on an historical writing: "Opto mihi tantum duntaxat vitae a Deo Opt. Max. tribui, ut haec inchoata possim absolvere et aliud quoddam operosius scriptum historicum de quo nunc non est scribendi locus." 13 January 1578, *CB XIX*, 2. In August, Beza again apprised Dürnhoffer of this project, this time in greater detail: "Totum me nunc et jam ab anno uno et altero occupat Gallicae Bibliorum interpretationis emendatio et Gallicarum Ecclesiarum historia a prima illarum instauratione usque ad primi belli civilis exitum, opus ingens, varium et plurima vere admiranda complectens, quod confido me ante hyemem absoluturum, Gallice quidem scriptum, quod postea Latinum fortassis aliquis faciet, plus otii et facultatis ad eam rem nactus quam ego." 27 August 1578, *CB XIX*, 158. This second quotation proves decisively that Beza played a central role in drafting and editing the *Histoire ecclésiastique*.

Mieux to the Peace of Monsieur in 1576.¹³⁹ According to the preface, the purpose of this history was to preserve a record of the wonderful work of God in France, which, through the Protestant Reformation, had rescued the light of truth from the abyss of superstition and ignorance, and had raised up courageous men and women who defended this truth with their lives.¹⁴⁰ By recording this history, the illustrious deeds and pure doctrines of the first generation of reformers would be preserved for posterity. Beza's *Icones* had very much the same purpose, though with an international focus. This work contained a portrait, a brief biographical sketch, and an eulogy of more than forty churchmen, martyrs, princes, and princesses who had been sympathetic to the cause of the Protestant Reformation throughout Europe.¹⁴¹ This generation of courageous men and women had "not only loved and maintained virtue, but also had restored to a place of honor the mother of all virtues, namely true

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¹³⁹The preface of the *Histoire ecclésiastique* states that the work will examine the forty years from the onset of the Reformation in France in 1523 until the end of the first civil war in 1563. At the end of volume 3, the redactor briefly summarizes the history of the Reformed churches from 1563 to 1576.

¹⁴⁰"Certainement puis qu'il a pleu à Dieu comme de renouveler le monde depuis environ soixante ans, faisant derechef sourdre la lumière de sa vérité, belle & claire, hors des abysmes de l'ignorance & superstition esuelles elle avoit esté si longtemps plongée, ce seroit une trop grande lascheté de tomber en la mesme faute de nos ancestres, taisant à la postérité les moyens plus qu'esmerveillables, par lesquels l'Éternel considerant non pas ce que le monde méritoit, mais ce qu'il a promis à son Église, a fait un si grand oeuvre par les plus petits & contemptibles du monde; l'opiniastreté de ceux qui s'y sont opposés et s'y opposent encores, & au contraire la constance invincible de ceux qui ont si courageusement combattu pour la vérité, jusques à la seeler par leur propre sang." *Histoire ecclésiastique* I, v-vi.

¹⁴¹Originally appearing under the title *Icones, id est verae imagines virorum doctrina simul et pietate illustrium* (Genevae: Jean de Laon, 1580), it was translated into French by Simon Goulart and republished the following year under the title *Les vrais portraits des hommes illustrés* (Genève: Jean de Laon, 1581). See CDM 96, 100; and *Bibliographie*, 180-184. For a helpful introduction to this work, see Alain Dufour's preface to the Slatkine reprint of the 1581 French edition (Geneva: Slatkine Reprints, 1986), i-viii.

religion."¹⁴² Although Beza was sensitive to the accusation that the images in his book were 'idolatrours'--a charge that Jesuits would later make--he nonetheless believed that the portraits served a necessary function: by seeing a pictorial likeness of the reformers, people would be more likely to listen to their message and emulate their example.¹⁴³ As with the *Histoire ecclésiastique*, the *Icones* was written to remind contemporary Protestants of past 'heros' and to preserve their message of reform for the future.¹⁴⁴

But even as Beza praised the great men and godly rulers of the past, he found himself bemoaning his own generation. He feared that the days of reformation were over. Sending a copy of the *Icones* to a friend in Germany, Beza commented: "It has always delighted me greatly to remember the era of those great men, which I have come to compare with a golden century. But alas! How quickly it was

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¹⁴²"... i'ay entrepris louer les personnages, qui non seulement ont aimé & maintenu, mais aussi qui ont remis en honneur la mère des vertus, c'est a savoir la vraye Religion." Letter preface to James VI of Scotland, in *Les vrais portraits*, ii.

¹⁴³"Mais, à l'avanture, aucuns, des nostres mesmes, eussent trouvé meilleur qu'on n'eust inséré dans ce livre aucunes images: de peur que les adversaires (que nous accusons d'estre idolâtres) ne prennent occasion de là de nous calomnier. Le leur respon, ce qu'ils n'ignorent pas, que la pourtraiture, tailleure, & autres telles sciences, qu'on sait pouvoir estre appliquées à divers bons usages, ne sont à condamner en elles mesmes. Si la vive voix touche iusques au coeur les escoutans, on ne sauroit nier, puis que nous ne pouvons ouir sinon ceux que nous voyons, que la presence des personnes ne nous esmeuve bien fort, voire iusques là que nous révérans les gens d'autorité, encores qu'ils ne disent mot." *Les vrais portraits*, ii'. Beza mentions the attacks of Jesuits against his work in a letter to Dürnhoffer on 12/22 March 1583: "Alteram *Iconum* partem nescio an sim absoluturus, quibusdam improbantibus quod imagines adiecerim, et Iesuitis etiam ipsis hoc Ecclesiis Gallicis exprobrantibus. Sed hoc nihil me moveret, si nostrorum nobilium iconas et historica quaedam possem nancisci." Paris, Bibl. Ste. Geneviève, ms. 1455, fols. 172-173.

¹⁴⁴"... quam optarem editam fuisse, posteritatis causa, quae istiusmodi pulcherrimis et sanctissimis exemplis erudiri potuit." Beza to Abraham Musculus, 5 March 1578, Zofingen, Bibl., P. 14 (Epist. Reform.), I, fol. 27.

changed, not into a century of silver or bronze, but into a century of iron!"¹⁴⁵ After the glories of the past, he now lived in an age that was 'unfortunate,' 'evil,' and 'completely exasperating.'¹⁴⁶ The light of reformation was receding. In a sermon published in 1586, Beza returned to this theme: "We should not be surprised, if today we see the work of God retreating rather than advancing, nor if the darkness thickens in several places where the sun of Truth had once begun to shine so brightly."¹⁴⁷ In Germany, in Scotland, in parts of Eastern Europe--Beza believed that the shadows of error and irreligion were suffocating the light of the Gospel.

Even Geneva had lost its original religious fervor. In his *Sermons sur le*

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¹⁴⁵"Iuvit me tamen et iuvat incredibiliter magnorum illorum virorum memoriam animo repetere, quos cum aureo seculo comparare consuevi; eheu! quam cito non in argenteum et aeneum, sed plane ferreum seculum commutato." Beza to Dürnhoffer, 8 March 1580, Paris, Bibl. Ste. Geneviève, ms. 1455, fols. 154^v-155^v. Beza here was paraphrasing Tertullian's statement: "Ne dilexeritis aurum in quo prima delicta populi Israël denotantur. Odisse debetis quod Iudaeos perdidit, quod derelinquentes Deum adoraverunt. Iam tunc aurum ignis est esca. Ceterum tempora christianorum semper et nunc vel maxime non auro sed ferro transiguntur: stolae martyriorum praeparantur, angeli baiuli sustinentur." Tertullian, *De cultu feminarum*, II.13.6, found in *La Toilette des Femmes*, ed. Marie Turcan (Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 1971), 166-168. Huguenot authors employed similar language following Saint Bartholomew's Day. In his treatise against Pierre Charpentier, François Portus commented: "Ce Siècle donc n'a pas esté d'or, ains d'ordures & meschancetez lamentables." *Response de François Portus ... aux lettres diffamatoires de Pierre Carpentier*, 28. Likewise, in the *Réveille-matin*, the author argued that if the Estates General was restored to its pristine place of authority in France, then "...on verroit bien tost l'aage d'or, que les Tyrans ont effacé de France, pour y planter celuy de fer, d'oppression, & d'infameté, reluire comme au paravant..." (vol. 2, 191).

¹⁴⁶"Ah! mi frater, quando tandem ex hoc infelicissimo saeculo ad aeternam illam quidem demigrabimus?" Beza to Dürnhoffer, 21 September 1580, Paris, Bibl. Ste. Geneviève, ms. 1455, fols. 160-160^v. In expressing his condolences at the premature death of Bullinger's son in Zurich, Beza wrote: "Video enim amisisse Ecclesiam Tigurinam optimipatris filium ... cuiusmodi nimium multa solent hoc exulceratissimo seculo evenire." Beza to Gwalther, 5/15 November 1583, Zurich, Stadtbibl. Simmlerische Smlg., Bd. 141, no. 104.

¹⁴⁷"Ce n'est donc pas merveilles si on voit aujourdhui l'ouvrage de Dieu, au lieu de s'avancer, se reculer: & mesmes les ténèbres redoublées en plusieurs lieux, esquels le Soleil de vérité avoit commencé de livre bien clairement." *Sermons sur le Cantique des Cantiques*, 163.

Cantique des Cantiques (1586) Beza recalled wistfully the 'golden days' of the reformation in Calvin's city: It used to be that people were so zealous for the Word of God that they never tired of the ministers' sermons. Men and women lived disciplined and righteous lives. Homes resonated with psalms and praises to God. Even foreigners, when they entered the gates of Geneva, would forget their foul language and bad habits. But now all this had changed, Beza believed. People had become greedy and distrustful. They spent their time playing games and whoring, copying the outrageous fashions and disgusting hairstyles popular in France. "Fye, fye, fye! on such stinking and repulsive habits. They have nothing to do with true Christianity!"¹⁴⁸

We may well question the trustworthiness of Beza's memory and the reliability of his pulpit rhetoric. Calvin's sermons in the early 1560s had contained similar moral censures of the inhabitants of the city, suggesting that the 'golden days' of the Genevan reformation were never as ideal as Beza remembered. Similarly, the Jesuit cleric Pinelli's account of his visit to the city in 1580 indicates that the Genevans had

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¹⁴⁸"Je le di à mon grand regret, faisant comparaison du temps que i'ay veu, auquel il y avoit un si grand zèle à la Parole de Dieu, que les Pasteurs n'y pouvoient fournir, & non sans beaux & grands fruicts, tant au bon ordre observé en l'estat publicq, que és familles particulières, qui resonnoient de Pseaumes & louanges de Dieu: le voisin advisoit le voisin, les scandales publics n'estoyent dissimulés: les estrangers oubloient leurs iuremens & autres manières de faire entrans dans les portes de Genève.... Et maintenant quoy? à grand peine retenons nous le nom de ce dont nous avons la vraye substance, & nostre feu s'est trouvé un feu de paille.... Chascun s'adonne à son particulier: l'avarice & desfiance ont gagné les coeurs: il n'y a loix qui puissent refréner le cours des dissolutions & pompes, au temps que nous debvrions estre au sac & à la cendre: aussi peu refréner les ieux, paillardises & adultères, à l'endroit de quelques uns.... Et que diray-ie de ces vilains & puants androgynes, c'est à dire hommes femmes, avec leurs passefillons, & cheveux crespés & frisés? fy, fy, & fy encore une fois, de telles ordures, & puantises qui ne sentent rien moins que la vraye Chrestienté." *Sermons sur le Cantique des Cantiques*, 103, 104, 270.

not altogether abandoned moral discipline. Nevertheless, as Beza grew older and watched a generation of fellow-reformers die off, the early days of the Protestant reformation became a golden memory, an imaginary vision of what had once been and a painful reminder of how much had changed.

With the loss of the first company of reformers, Beza recognized the desperate need to train a new generation of ministers and teachers. It was the responsibility of the few 'survivors' of the golden century to prepare young men to assume the theological mantle of their predecessors.¹⁴⁹ The Genevan Academy was of central importance in Beza's program to preserve the Reformed legacy and "protect what was." Since the death of Calvin, he had occupied the chair of theology at the academy, giving lectures three times a week in addition to his pastoral duties. Students from throughout Europe--Anglican, Lutheran as well as Reformed--attended Beza's lectures, many looking to him as a theological master and spiritual father. Although in 1572 the brilliant Lambert Daneau was hired as an adjunct professor on the theological faculty, nonetheless Beza repeatedly opposed establishing a second chair of theology: if professors of equal rank were to disagree on some point of doctrine, this could easily lead to division, disharmony, and even heresy.¹⁵⁰ The legacy of Calvin's reformation had to be preserved at all cost.

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¹⁴⁹"Sed, mi frater, quum pauculos reliquerit adhuc Dominus ex illo feliciore seculo, qui iuniores docere et admonere possint eorum quae ipsi non sunt experti, Dominus profecto discrimen illud semper servabit, de quo testatur noster Esaïas..." Beza to Gwalther, 5/15 November 1583, Zurich, Stadtbibl. Simmlerische Smlg., Bd. 141, no. 104.

¹⁵⁰See Borgeaud's excellent discussion in *Histoire de l'Université de Genève*, I, 222-241. Much to Beza's regret, Daneau left Geneva in 1581 to teach theology at the University of Leiden.

The pivotal place that the Academy occupied in the Genevan clergy's vision for international Protestantism was demonstrated in a crisis of 1586-1587. In the summer of 1586 Charles-Emmanuel again besieged Geneva with his powerful army, preventing the city from harvesting its crops or importing wheat.¹⁵¹ A Savoyard fleet on Lac Léman enforced the blockade. With the city treasury virtually empty and the Academy almost entirely vacated, the magistrates decreed in August 1586 the suspension of university courses and the temporary dismissal of the three professors other than Beza. On August 5, Beza and his two clerical colleagues, Jean Pinault and Jean Jacquemot, appeared before the Small Council to protest the decision. Their impassioned appeal was revealing: The Genevan Academy, they argued, was famous throughout the world. It had long been the 'nursery' of Reformed ministers in France. Even now, students from far-off England were on their way to Geneva to prepare for the ministry. If the academy were closed, this would bring dishonor to the magistrates of Geneva and great harm to the churches. Beza and his colleagues further suggested that the closure would please their enemies and give a strong advantage to Catholic colleges. The Jesuits, it seemed, had established schools everywhere, even in Savoy and Switzerland. By contrast, due to the devastation of war, the French churches had only a single college left, at La Rochelle.¹⁵² As a

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¹⁵¹For the history of this crisis with Savoy, see Gautier, *Histoire de Genève*, V, 399-436.

¹⁵²"Ceste escole est la pépinière des ministres de France. On y envoie d'Angleterre des escoliers pour se former au ministère, comment on faisoit des Flandres cy-devant. Tout cela sera ruyné. Ce n'est pas l'honneur de la Seigneurie. Ilz alleguent les jésuites qui ont dressé des escoles partout mesmes en Savoie et en Souisse. Ilz dient aussy que les églises de France sont ruynées partout n'y ayant collègue que à La Rochelle.... Si on cope icy, le rest s'en ira.... L'Escole de Genève a esté

result of the ministers' pleas, the Genevan magistrates rescinded their decree and permitted the Academy to remain open. Three months later, however, with the treasury empty, they were forced to dismiss the professors of Greek, Hebrew, and philosophy. Beza alone was left. During the next eight months, he kept the academy 'open' single-handedly, giving public lectures in theology three times a week. Appropriately, he chose to lecture on the book of Job.¹⁵³ Finally, in the summer of 1587, the armies of Savoy, ravaged by the plague, were forced to loosen their grip on the city, allowing both students and professors to return to the Genevan Academy.¹⁵⁴ Charles-Emmanuel's policy of aggression against Geneva remained unchanged, though temporarily thwarted.

Important changes occurred in the political allegiances and mental orientation of Beza and other Huguenot leaders in the eight years following the Peace of Monsieur. During this period, the Huguenots increasingly looked to Henri of Navarre for protection and leadership. Beza communicated occasionally with Navarre and encouraged the magistrates of Geneva to seek the prince's military and political assistance. Nonetheless, before 1584, Beza did not entirely trust the prince, wary of both his advisors and his commitment to the Reformed religious cause. In the

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estimée par tout le monde.... Si cecy se faict Genève sera ensevelie, noz ennemis s'en rejouiront." 5/15 August 1586, RC 81. Cited in Borgeaud, *Histoire de L'Université de Genève* I, 192-193.

¹⁵³"Bèze offrit à la Compagnie de faire 3 leçons en théologie depuis 9 iusques à dix en la sepmaine de M. de La Faye, pour entretenir l'Eschole en ce temps si fascheux et lorsqu'il n'y avoit point de professeur. La Compagnie l'accepta et le remercia. Suivant cela, il commença le mardi suivant le livre de Job." 20 January 1587, RCP V, 144.

¹⁵⁴The chair of Hebrew was reestablished at the Academy in July of 1587. In September, the chair of Greek was restored. See Borgeaud, *Histoire de L'Université de Genève*, I, 197-198, 203.

following years, Beza abandoned these suspicions and became an enthusiastic supporter of Navarre. The years between 1576-1584 also reflected important changes in Beza's mental outlook. Like other Huguenot leaders, he became increasingly concerned about Jesuit activities throughout Europe that posed a direct challenge to Reformed theology and institutions. The Jesuit advance fed, and seemed to confirm, long-standing fears about plots to impose the tridentine decrees on Protestant Europe. A constellation of other factors--including Beza's ill-health, divisions within Protestantism, and an apparent failure of moral discipline among the Reformed in French-speaking Europe--magnified his concerns about the future of religious reformation. The golden age seemed to be over. The confident motto of Protestant Geneva, 'After darkness comes the light' (*Post tenebras lux*), was in danger of being inverted: 'After light, the darkness returns' (*Post lucem, tenebra*). As Beza faced the future, his daily prayer seemed all the more necessary: "Protect what was; control what will be."

CHAPTER III

THE RETURN OF NAVARRE, 1584-1589

"Or doncques, Rois, oyez parler un Roy;
 Et vous, bergers, oyez, non pas de moy,
 Mais d'un berger la musette sonner,
 Que Dieu voulut luy-mêmes entonner.
 Oyez, brebis, la musique divine,
 Qui sçait donner plaisir et médecine.
 Gémissiez-vous? vous serez consolées.
 Avez-vous faim? vous en serez saoulées.
 Endurez-vous? on vous soulagera.
 Avez-vous peur? on vous assurera."¹

On 10 June 1584, the duke of Anjou, presumptive heir to the French throne, died of tuberculosis. The dauphin's decease seemed to convulse nature itself; on the same day, gale winds "unlike any in human memory" destroyed sixty ships between La Rochelle and Bordeaux, stripping all fruit from the trees.² The political storms unleashed by the death of Anjou, the last Valois heir, were even more deadly.

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¹Beza, "Les Psaumes et l'épître dédicatoire," 97.

²As a Huguenot at Saint Jean d'Angely reported: "Le 10 de ce mois & le dernier de May selon l'ancien calcul & jour que Mons. mourust, il y eust par deçà quarante lieues aux environs tant sur mer que sur terre une si horrible tempeste que de mémoire d'homme on n'en a veu chose qui en approche. Il y ha eu soixante navirres qui se sont perdus depuis Bourdeaus jusqu'à la Rochelle & les environs des Sables d'Aulonne. Aucun fruict n'est demeuré sur les arbres. Je prie l'éternel qu'il nous fasse profiter à ces chastiments, & après nous avoir salué qu'il vous octroye." François Du Moutier to Beza, 19 June [1584], Geneva, BPU, ms. fr. 410, fol. 10. The death of the cardinal Charles of Lorraine in 1575 had also played havoc with nature: "Le bon cardinal mourut le lendemain ou la nuit suivant Noël d'une fievre chaulde.... Et à l'instant mesmes courut un vent austral si furieux, non seulement en Avignon, où il est mort, mais aussi en la pluspart de France, qu'il a abbatu plusieurs clochers, maisons et forests. Et l'appelle-t-on le vent du cardinal." Beza to G. Schlüsselberger, 27 March 1575, *CB* XVI, 48.

Fearing the succession of Henri of Navarre, Catholic loyalists throughout the kingdom organized a powerful 'Catholic League' pledged to resist the Bourbon prince, extirpate the Reformed heresy, and preserve the time-honored tradition of 'one king, one faith, one law' (*un roi, une foi, une loi*). Led by the duke of Guise and backed by the financial, political and military support of Spain and Rome, the Catholic League gained control over Henri III in the Peace of Nemours (1585) and declared war once again on the Protestants. Navarre and Condé were forced to beg for mercenaries from their Protestant allies, even as large numbers of Reformed refugees fled the kingdom bound for England, Switzerland, Germany and Geneva. During the next four years, the French monarchy endured a series of political disasters: on the 'Day of the Barricades' in May 1588 supporters of the Catholic League forced Henri III to flee Paris; in the final weeks of 1588, the king assassinated the duke of Guise, thereby eliminating his chief rival, but alienating permanently many of his Catholic subjects. Finally, on 1 August 1589, a Dominican monk named Jacques Clément mortally wounded Henri III at his camp on the outskirts of Paris. For Beza, France had dramatically become 'the theatre of divine judgment': Henri of Navarre--a Protestant--was now the lawful king of France.

Whereas these events are well-established, little is known about the role of Beza and how the Huguenots in Geneva and France shaped political and religious events in France between 1584-1589. During these years, Beza became an ardent supporter of Navarre, serving as his 'public relations' agent in Switzerland and Germany. The decisive steps leading to the rapprochement between the prince and

reformer, and the bonds of patronage that formalized their relationship, will be documented here for the first time. In addition, this chapter will explore new themes in Huguenot political pamphlets and books during these crucial years. Although a recent monograph has examined treatises written by supporters of the League after 1584³, a parallel study of Huguenot polemical literature during the period does not yet exist. Thus, we will explore the manner in which French Protestant authors defended Navarre's right to the throne, rebutted the papal excommunication of the Bourbon princes, and attempted to stem the tide of Protestant abjurations following the Peace of Nemours (1585). Our investigation of this long-neglected literature will shed new light on the shared concerns and attitudes of the Huguenot leadership in the face of the Leaguer offensive. As in the years following Saint Bartholomew, French refugees with a 'Genevan connection' played a significant role in political agitation and in comforting the Reformed churches 'under the cross.'

The Catholic League

The death of Anjou in June 1584 ushered in the final, most violent phase of the French civil wars. With the exhaustion of the Valois line, Henri III designated Navarre as his legal heir by virtue of primogeniture. Though thrilled by the prospect of a Protestant king on the throne of France, Beza and the Huguenot leadership recognized the perilous temptations and dangers that Navarre faced. Rome and Spain

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³Frederick Baumgartner, *Radical Reactionaries*, passim.

would spare nothing to convert or kill the Protestant prince. Navarre's confessional lapses of the past were an additional concern.⁴ Thus, during the summer and fall of 1584, Beza and his colleagues were torn between hope and fear as they looked toward France. Reports of Navarre's constancy were encouraging. "But do you think," Beza asked a friend in Germany, "that Satan will ever permit a pious king to sit on the throne of France? Unless I am completely deceived, in that kingdom the greatest calamity of the entire world is imminent."⁵

The political developments that Beza anticipated were not long in coming. Shortly after the dauphin's death, a small clandestine association of royal officials, lawyers and clergy called the 'Sixteen' established committees of public safety in each of Paris' sixteen quarters.⁶ Members of this 'Holy Union' or 'Catholic League'

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⁴Several weeks before receiving the report of Anjou's death, Beza wrote to Grynaeus in Basle: "De rebus Gallicis, desperatur magis ac magis de Alençonii valetudine, et iam Sathan omnia molitur ut Navarrenum, proximum iam illo sublato regni haeredem, aut blanditiis ad se revocet ... aut vi aperta prosternat. Ego optima quaeque spero de ipsius constantia; sed homo est, et quidem iuvenis, denique vanissimi patris filius. Itaque precibus hic nobis opus est, si unquam alias." 6/16 June 1584, Basle, Univ. Bibl., Kirchen Archiv, C. I. 2, Bd. II, fol. 94. The first report of Anjou's death arrived in Geneva on 22 June/July 1: "Il [Michel Roset] a nouvelles du roy que Monsieur [Anjou] est mort des le 10 de ce mois selon le nouveau calendrier." RC 79, 87'.

⁵"In Gallia nosti proximum nunc esse regni haeredem Navarrenum, cui favere Rex quoque existimatur, et de cujus constantia optima quaeque speramus. Sed an passurum Sathanam arbitraris, ut pius Rex unquam Galliae regnum ineat? Aut igitur me fallunt omnes conjecturae aut maximae quoque tempestates illinc orbi terrarum imminet." Beza to Count of Sayne-Wittgenstein, 26 August/5 September 1584, published in Friedlaender, 149-150.

⁶The most prominent members of this 'Sixteen' were Charles Hotman, Jean Prévost, and Mathieur de Launoy. Hotman was the treasurer of the bishop of Paris and probably the cousin of François Hotman. See the evidence provided by Kelley, *François Hotman*, 300-301. Jean Prévost was a priest of Saint Benoît, and Launoy was a former Protestant, now a Jesuit and a canon in the cathedral of Soissons. In 1580, an anonymous tract against Launoy and another 'apostate' minister was published in Geneva under the title *Response chrestienne, aux calomnies et renouvelles faussetez de deux apostats, Matthieu de Launoy Prestre, & Henry Pennetier, n'aguères ministres, & maintenant retournéz à leur vomissement* ([Genève], 1580). See CDM, 99.

vowed to prevent Navarre's accession, extirpate heresy from the kingdom, and preserve the French monarchy as 'holy' and 'catholic.'⁷ The local political cells were responsible for recruiting new members, raising funds, and coordinating political agitation. Benefiting from widespread disaffection with Henri III's 'moderate' policies toward the Protestants, the Catholic League soon gained broad political support first among Paris' middle class, later among the petty bourgeoisie and artisan classes. At the same time this Catholic union was spreading rapidly to other French cities, promoted by the 'Sixteen' and fueled in part by a sense of eschatological anguish and a crusading spirit.⁸ Some Jesuit preachers lent their support by refusing absolution to penitents who did not embrace the League.⁹ By 1588, the Holy Union operated in more than 300 towns and cities, forming a militant Catholic network that endangered the independence of the French monarchy almost as much as the political

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⁷This was, in fact, a second Catholic League. Following the Peace of Monsieur, a group of provincial cities formed a loosely-organized association or 'League,' whose members agreed to oppose the implementation of the royal edict, swearing to defend Catholicism as the only religion in the kingdom. The king succeeded in co-opting this nascent, potentially seditious faction at the General Estates of Blois in December 1576 by supporting the abrogation of the Peace of Monsieur. See Baumgartner, *Radical Reactionaries*, 54-57; Sutherland, *The Huguenot Struggle*, 238-245. For background information on the history, strategies, and social composition of the second Catholic League, see Holt, *The French Wars of Religion*, 121-152; Greengrass, *France in the Age of Henry IV*, 42-72; Baumgartner, *ibid.*, 37-51; Salmon, "The Paris Sixteen, 1584-94: The Social Analysis of a Revolutionary Movement," *Journal of Modern History* 44 (1992): 540-576.

⁸Although Crouzet overstates his case by underestimating social, economic, and political tensions, nonetheless he correctly points to the religious motivations and passions underlying the formation and appeal of the League: "La surface mentale cachée sur laquelle la Ligue se développe est fondamentalement sacrale, tout comme l'était celle de la violence prophétique des premiers troubles." *Les Guerriers de Dieu*, II, 342.

⁹L'Estoile wrote: "Les Jesuistes auront le soing / De faire à tous signer la Ligue: / C'est le principal de leur brigue. / Autrement ne nous absouldront, / Mais pauvres prescheurs damneront / A tous les diables avec eux. / O Ligue des ambitieux!" Cited in Martin, *Henri III and the Jesuits*, 138.

future of Henri of Navarre.

In addition to local activities in urban centers, the Holy Union established close ties with many Catholic princes and notables. The duke of Guise quickly emerged as the noble champion of the League; his armies provided the military muscle necessary to impose Leaguer demands on Henri III and to wage war against Navarre. In the fall of 1584, Guise dispatched the Jesuit provincials Claude Matthieu and Henri Samier to Rome in order to obtain from Gregory XIII (1572-1585) the excommunication of Navarre and papal approval of the Catholic League. On their return to France, Matthieu and Samier stopped in Switzerland to arrange for a Catholic mercenary army for the League.¹⁰ The goals of the Catholic League were embodied in the treaty of Joinville in December 1584, in which Philip II agreed to pay the Guises 50,000 écus per month to wage war against the Huguenots with the objective of crushing the Protestant religion in France and the Low Countries, as well as placing Navarre's uncle, the Cardinal of Bourbon, on the French throne. The cardinal, in turn, promised that once he was king he would repudiate those policies of Henri III harmful to Spain and would publish the decrees of the Council of Trent in France.¹¹ Thus, in the treaty of Joinville, Spain threw its support behind the Holy Union and, for the first time, intervened officially in the French civil wars.

Watching these dangerous developments, Beza and his colleagues in Geneva

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¹⁰Martin, *Henry III and the Jesuit Politicians*, 126-130.

¹¹See Sutherland, *The Huguenot Struggle*, 277-279; Babelon, *Henri IV*, 340-350; Salmon, *Society in Crisis*, 234-238.

suspected that the long-feared Catholic alliance against Protestant Europe was finally taking shape. United under the banner of Trent, the Catholic princes Phillip II, Henri of Guise, and Charles-Emmanuel seemed committed to the two-fold policy of furthering their dynastic holdings and imposing by force the counterreformation on the Protestant states of Europe.¹² Such suspicions were not groundless. In March 1585, Charles-Emmanuel married the Spanish Infanta; emboldened by the League and encouraged by his new father-in-law, the duke established an economic blockade on Geneva later in the summer. In the same year, the new pope Sixtus V (1585-1590) promised Savoy money and soldiers for an attack on Geneva.¹³ The situation in the Low Countries was equally grave. In June 1584, William of Orange had been cut down by a Catholic assassin hired by Spain. Now, Spanish troops under the command of Alexander Farnese were crushing Protestant resistance, systematically reconquering the cities of Ghent, Brussels and Antwerp.¹⁴ In France, the duke of Guise and the Catholic League gained control of Henri III in the so-called Peace of Nemours in June of 1585. Under this agreement, Navarre was barred from

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¹²"Certum est autem regnum ab istis sceleratis, religionis praetextu, eversa, si fieri possit. Borboniorum familia, quae sola regii sanguinis superest, peti. Cui occasione, quis defuturum Hispanum existimet? aut istos, si res illis ex animi sententia, quod absit, succederent, Galliae finibus contentos fore suspicetur? Praesertim Bavaro affinitate coniunctos, et, quod ad ambitionem attinet, eodem inexplibilis ambitionis studio, fratres Bavararum germanos?" Beza to Constantin Fabricius, 24 August/3 September 1585, Paris, Bibl. Ste. Geneviève, ms. 1455, fols. 4-4^v.

¹³Lucien Cramer, *La Seigneurie de Genève et la Maison de Savoie de 1559 à 1595*. Tome II: *Les projets d'entreprises de Charles-Emmanuel I^{er} sur Genève, 1580-1588* (Genève: A. Jullien, Éditeur, 1950), 61-75.

¹⁴Léonard, *Histoire Générale du Protestantisme*, II, 80-81. The assassination of William of Orange is vividly described in a letter from Beza to Gwalther, 30 July/9 August 1584, Zurich, Stadtbibl., ms. F. 37, fols. 205-206 & 52.

succession, the previous edicts of pacification were revoked, and the Reformed religion was outlawed. Huguenot ministers were to leave the kingdom in 15 days, while their congregants were commanded to abjure the Protestant faith or emigrate within six months.¹⁵ In a single stroke, all the concessions granted the Reformed during the previous twenty-three years were annulled; the Huguenots had to convert, flee, or face death. In September, Sixtus V lent his support to the League's efforts by excommunicating the Bourbon princes as 'relapsed heretics,' thereby stripping Navarre of the kingdoms of Navarre and Béarn, and eliminating him from succession to the French throne.¹⁶

For Beza, the participants and strategems of the 'tridentine alliance' had finally been unmasked: the Guise family, having fanned the flames of war in France for more than two decades, was now plainly coercing the French king, using religion as a pretext for its own dynastic ambitions; the Catholic king of Spain, long resentful of French intervention in the Netherlands and suspicious of Henri III's political intentions, was now directly intervening in French affairs in the hopes of destroying the kingdom altogether; the duke of Savoy, long obsessed with the dream of restoring Geneva to his patrimony, now prepared to conquer this Calvinist haven once for all.

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¹⁵See Beza's description of this peace in his letter to Crato, 26 November/6 December [1585], Paris, Ste. Geneviève, ms. 1456, fol. 503^v-505. Several months later, the king revised his decree, commanding all Huguenots to abjure or leave the kingdom within two weeks under penalty of death. See Sutherland, *The Huguenot Struggle*, 278-281; Babelon, *Henri IV*, 344-346.

¹⁶Babelon, *Henri IV*, 346; Sutherland, *The Huguenot Struggle*, 279-280. For the French version of the bull of excommunication, see François Hotman's *Protestation et défense pour le Roy de Navarre Henry III, premier prince de France, & Henry prince de Condé...* (Genève: Jean Le Preux, 1587), 293-303.

And behind these conspirators, Beza thought, stood the Roman pontiff, who endeavored to destroy the Protestant heresy, put an end to the freedoms of the Gallican church, and restore his hegemony over Catholic Europe in the process.¹⁷ The Peace of Nemours was a declaration of war against Navarre and the Huguenots; the eighth civil war that followed was the longest and most violent of the French religious wars. As Beza and Navarre recognized, what was ultimately at stake was not simply the Reformed faith, but the survival of the French monarchy itself.

The Right to Rule

The roads leading to Geneva were again crowded with refugees during the fall and winter of 1585-1586. As thirteen years before, the ministers of the city proposed special fasts and prayers for the French church and supervised city-wide collections for the destitute refugees.¹⁸ Once again the Genevan professors and clergy—as well as churchmen in Beza's network of correspondents—picked up their pens to defend the Huguenots' innocence and refute the charges of their enemies. Now, however, the

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¹⁷For Beza's earlier references to the 'tridentine conspiracy,' see 55-56 above. In 1585, Beza discussed the Catholic alliance in two letters to his friend Dürnhoffer in Nuremberg. See 6/16 April 1585 and 20/30 April 1585, Paris, Bibl. Ste. Geneviève, ms. 1455, fols. 184-184^v, 184^v-185. In the second of these letters, Beza wrote: "Sed quum iam aperte sese prodiderit Tridentini Conciliabuli Syncretismus, et Guysiana factio toties ante multos annos praenunciata eruperit et tota in primis Gallia, nullis Dei flagellis erudita, convelli ab ipsis fundamentis coeperit..." For Beza's fullest description of this tridentine military alliance, see his letter to the Churches of Switzerland, 5/15 March [1589], Geneva, BPU, ms. lat. 117, fols. 195-196. François Hotman's correspondence was filled with similar concerns about this Catholic conspiracy. See Kelley, *François Hotman*, 268, 281, 284.

¹⁸See 17/27 November 1585, *RC* 80, 159; 5/15 August 1586, *RC* 81, 158^v-159; 5/15 September 1586, *RC* 81, 191; 2/12 April 1585, *RCP* V, 68; 13/23 August 1585, *RCP* V, 86; 18/28 February 1586, *RCP* V, 109; 15/25 July 1586, *RCP* V, 129.

task was more constructive than subversive: arguing that royal authority had been coerced by the Guise faction and the Catholic League, they called their co-religionists to rally behind Navarre in defense of the monarchy and the kingdom. Between 1585-1588 Protestant authors mounted a three-front defense against Catholic attacks, championing Navarre's right as legal heir to the French throne, exhorting the Reformed to remain steadfast in the face of harsh persecution, and challenging the papal excommunication against the Huguenot princes. Too long ignored by scholars, this literature provides revealing insights into the mindset and concerns of Huguenot leaders as they faced the threat of the Catholic League.

The question of Henri of Navarre's legal right to the French throne was of utmost concern to Huguenot authors even before the treaties of Joinville and Nemours. The law of succession in France during the sixteenth century was unclear on several points.¹⁹ First, although the so-called Salic law--which stipulated that the French crown was hereditary only through the male line--was generally accepted, several jurists, including François Hotman himself, had recently challenged it as an invention of French lawyers during the Hundred Years War in order to exclude Plantagenet claims to the French throne.²⁰ Because the house of Lorraine, and thus the duke of Guise, was believed to have descended from Charlemagne through (two) women, the validity of Salic law was a matter of great political importance. In

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¹⁹See Baumgartner, *Radical Reactionaries*, 63-64; Greengrass, *France in the Age of Henri IV*, 38-39; Kelley, *François Hotman*, 295-298.

²⁰Hotman discredits the Salic Law in chapter eight of his *Francogallia*, see 268-275.

addition, French legal tradition provided no clear precedent as to whether a royal candidate beyond ten degrees of consanguinity could inherit the throne, and whether the legitimate eldest son, or his oldest living uncle, should have priority in a collateral line. The house of Bourbon was related to the royal family through Robert of Clermont, the sixth son of Louis IX (1226-1270); thus, more than twenty degrees of sanguinity separated the prince of Navarre from Henri III. Nonetheless, if the law of primogeniture was strictly observed, Henri of Navarre, as the eldest son of Antoine of Navarre, would be the heir closest to Henri III; Antoine's younger brother Charles, Cardinal of Bourbon, would be second in line; and Condé, son of Antoine's youngest brother, would be third (see Figure 4). By contrast, if proximity was determined by blood rather than primogeniture (as applied in the case of intestate inheritance according to Roman law), the Cardinal of Bourbon had precedence (20 degrees removed from Henri of Valois) over his nephew Navarre (21 degrees removed).²¹ With these ambiguities, the law of royal succession became a matter hotly contested by Catholic and Protestant jurists in France after the death of Anjou.

François Hotman was foremost among the Huguenot jurists who examined these controversial legal questions. In August 1584, Navarre requested that Hotman write a treatise addressing the matter of succession. "This large and complex question, so vital for posterity, needs to be clarified, and no one can do this better than you. Work at it with diligence and attention, therefore, and be assured that I

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²¹Greengrass, *France in the Age of Henri IV*, 38-39.

Figure 4: The Bourbon Succession

will reward so useful a service."²² Hotman accepted Navarre's charge, though his task was complicated by several arguments that he had included in the *Francogallia* twelve years before. Having questioned the validity of Salic Law in the *Francogallia*, he could not now invoke it to exclude the Guise family from succession. So too, his earlier theories of the elective nature of the French monarchy now proved particularly troublesome as he attempted to establish Navarre's right to the throne. That Hotman recognized these difficulties is clear; in his 1586 edition of the *Francogallia*, he deemphasized the original electoral basis of the French monarchy and added a final chapter enumerating the fundamental laws of the kingdom, including the law of succession.²³ This same theoretical retreat was seen in his *Disputatio de controversia successionis regiae* (1585) published in response to Navarre's commission.²⁴ Here any hint of popular sovereignty was exorcised; instead, Hotman established Navarre's

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²²Cited in Kelley, *François Hotman*, 292.

²³Kelley, *François Hotman*, 298. Ralph Giesey and Salmon, in their edition and English translation of the *Francogallia*, discuss the 1586 edition of this work, and provide the texts that Hotman added relating to the fundamental laws of France (99-107, 459-477). Among these 'fundamental laws,' Hotman included: (2.) the king has no right to designate the heir of the kingdom, since "established custom alone confers the kingdom on the successor;" (3.) at the death of the king, "the hereditary claim to the kingdom passes to his eldest son by birth, and it is unlawful to substitute a younger son for an elder" (*ibid.* 463, 465).

²⁴The original edition of this work was printed in Geneva by Guillaume de Laimarie for Jacques Chouet in 1585. The register of the city council reports on 17/27 May 1585: "Sus la permission outtroïée dernièrement [11/21 May 1585] audit S. Ottoman d'imprimer son traicté pour le roy de Navarre & son droict de succession à la courone de France, ayant esté dict qu'il n'y mettroit son nom, à requis luy permettre cela en faveur du roy de Navarre qu'aultrement cela luy tourneroit à blasme. A esté arresté qu'on le luy accorde ayant esté veue comme a esté raporté par plusieurs." *RC*, 80, 69^v. See CDM, 114. I have used a second edition of this work, published in Latin in 1586. For a helpful overview of sixteenth-century legal theory concerning royal succession, see Ralph Giesey, "The Juristic Basis of Dynastic Right to the French Throne," in *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society* 51.5 (1961): 1-47.

precedence to the French throne on the basis of his 'royal birthright' (*suitas regiae*), passed directly from the common ancestor (the genearch) to the eldest son in the senior line. In other words, the legitimate heir to the French throne possessed the right of succession by virtue of his 'adoption' as a first son from the royal genearch, not because of any relationship to the current royal incumbent. Rather than being based on blood proximity or primogeniture, the inheritance of the French throne was thereby established on 'fundamental law,' that is "the ancient law of the people, which makes clear that the eldest born son has priority, not because of his person, but because of his rank, position, and age."²⁵ Hotman appealed frequently to the fifteenth-century jurist Jean of Terre Rouge to make this point: with respect to royal succession, French custom and 'fundamental law' (*vis consuetudinis et legis*) transcended Roman civil law and regional practice. Navarre's claim to the throne, founded upon this royal birthright, was thus immune from the will of the king and the attacks of Catholic lawyers.²⁶

Hotman's defense of Navarre's legal right to the French throne did not go unchallenged. Between 1585-1588, several Catholic pamphlets appeared that rejected Navarre's candidacy, employing a variety of reasons and arguments. Some Catholic

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²⁵"Regia autem hereditas, quae neque a Rege, neque ex ipsius iudicio, amore, aut studio erga successorem proficiscitur, sed ab antiqua populi lege, filio natu maximo destinata est, non personae, sed gradui, loco & aetati destinata intelligitur..." Hotman, *Disputatio de controversia successionis regiae*, 23.

²⁶Hotman, citing Jean de Terre Rouge, argues: "... ex sola vi consuetudinis & legis in regno Franciae succeditur, quod sicut nec ex voluntate dispositiva, & testamentaria regis successio defertur, sic nec ex tacita voluntate: sed sola consuetudo defert regnum succedenti." Hotman, *Disputatio de controversia successionis regiae*, 23.

polemicists defended the duke of Guise's right to the throne by attacking the Salic law and depicting the house of Lorraine as the legitimate heirs of Charlemagne. More convincing were those apologists who, like Matteo Zampini, Italian councillor to Henri III, defended the royal claims of the Cardinal of Bourbon by arguing from Roman and canon law that blood, not primogeniture, was the determining factor for succession along collateral lines. All of these authors were in agreement, however, that the 'law' of Catholicity--as evidenced in the royal oath to defend the Catholic religion--was an 'ageless' and inviolable law of the kingdom.²⁷ Catholic France required a Catholic king.

If recondite legal debates were inaccessible to many literate French men and women, arguments based on this 'law' of Catholicity were immediately relevant, sure to stir passions and heighten fears. Louis Dorléans' popular *Advertissement des Catholiques Anglois* harnessed the visceral strength of this 'law' by describing the dangers of heretical rulers (drawing examples from England and Germany) and arguing that two religions could never coexist peaceably in the same kingdom. Heresy spread through the body politic like gangrene, inevitably spawning rebellion and civil war. To prove his assertion, Dorléans pointed to Beza's (alleged) complicity in Poltrot's assassination of François of Guise in 1562²⁸ and to Calvin's harsh statements in his published sermons on Daniel, where he encouraged the

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²⁷Baumgartner, *Radical Reactionaries*, 63-81.

²⁸Dorléans was repeating the accusation made by Jerome Bolsec in his book *Historia de vita, moribus, doctrina et rebus gestis Theodori Bezae* (Ingolstadt: D. Sartorius, 1584), 88-89.

Reformed to "break the nose of Catholic kings rather than obey them."²⁹ Huguenot resistance literature following Saint Bartholomew further demonstrated, he believed, the seditious nature of the Reformed heresy. "In their *Francogallia*, which is one of the most detestable books ever to see the day and which was composed to place France on fire, they cry that it is lawful to choose a king to their desire; tell the heretics then that the king of Navarre is not to our desire and that he remain in his Béarn."³⁰ Turning the Huguenot resistance literature of the previous decade against the Reformed and their political champion Navarre, Dorléans highlighted the dangers of this 'heresy' and exploited the contradictions inherent in Huguenot political theory before and after the death of Anjou.

Sympathizers of Navarre, both Huguenots and moderate Catholics, answered these arguments in turn: Philippe Canaye and Hotman wrote rebuttals of Zampini's work³¹, and the Catholic author Pierre de Belloy penned the *Apologie Catholique* in which he defended the Salic law and attacked Leaguer pretensions, while asserting the

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²⁹These charges were repeated and refuted by Duplessis-Mornay in his *Lettre d'un gentilhomme Catholique François, contenant brève réponse aux calomnies d'un certain prétendu Anglois* (1586), in *Mémoires de la Ligue, contenant les événemens les plus remarquables depuis 1576... I* (Amsterdam: Arkstée & Merkus, 1758), 416, 432. This first volume of the *Mémoires de la Ligue* was originally published in La Rochelle in 1587, under the title *Premier volume de recueil, contenant les choses mémorables advenues sous la Ligue* and is often attributed to Simon Goulart. The next five fascicles of this work are known to be the product of Goulart's efforts. See Jones, *Simon Goulart*, 596-597.

³⁰Cited in Baumgartner, *Radical Reactionaries*, 72.

³¹Philippe Canaye, Sr. de Fresne, *Ad tractatum Matthaei Zampini ... de successione praerogativa primi principis Franciae ... responsio* ([Genève], 1588); Hotman, *De tractatum Matthaei Zampini de successione ... responsio* (n.p., 1588). See CDM, 117, 122-123.

"unquestionable and legitimate succession of the king of Navarre."³² Duplessis-Mornay's *Lettre d'un gentilhomme Catholique François* (1586) was one of the most important of the half-dozen treatises that refuted Dorléans' influential book.³³ The central concern of Duplessis-Mornay was to clear the Reformed of the charge of political subversion and show that Catholics and Huguenots could live peaceably together in a kingdom ruled by a Protestant king. He found 'laughable' Dorléans' assertion that Beza had conspired with Poltrot in the assassination of the duke of Guise. As for Calvin, Duplessis-Mornay assured his readers that the reformer had never encouraged his congregation to 'break the nose' of Catholic kings. On the contrary, Calvin had frequently commanded the Reformed to respect even wicked and unbelieving princes in obedience to Paul's command in Romans 13.³⁴ In order to

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³²The Catholic League attempts not only "diminuer & obscurcir l'indubitable, & légitime succession du Roy de Navarre ... mais aussi pour avancer leurs faux, calomnieux, & supposez titres, ou prétentions." E.D.L.I.C. [Pierre de Belloy], *Apologie Catholique, contre les libelles, déclarations, advis, et consultations faictes, écrites, & publiées par les Liguez perturbateurs du repos du Royaume de France; qui se sont eslevez depuis le décès de feu Monseigneur, frère unique du Roy* (n.p., 1586), 7.

³³For bibliographical information about these responses to Dorléans' *Advertissement des Catholiques Anglois*, see Jacques Le Long, *Bibliothèque historique de la France, contenant la catalogue des ouvrages, imprimés & manuscrits, qui traitent de l'histoire de ce Royaume...* (Paris: Jean-Thomas Herissant, 1769), 290.

³⁴"Il [Dorléans] fait accroire à Calvin qu'il dit sur Daniel, qu'il faut cracher au nez des Rois Catholiques, plutôt que leur obéir, & qu'il y médit de nos Rois François & Henri, &c. Je l'ai recherché exprès pour mieux mesurer toutes ses menées par les plus remarquables.... Calvin dit, qu'à l'exemple de Daniel, quelque lieu qu'il tint en la Maison du Roi, il vaut mieux désobéir & déplaire à son Prince, que d'offenser Dieu. Qui sera le Catholique qui n'en parlera de même? .... Ains, voici les mots que j'ai rencontrés à l'aventure, je dis à l'ouverture du Livre, au Sermon 3, sur le chap. 5 [of Daniel], que les Roiaumes se donnent par la providence de Dieu, soit par succession ou par élection, soit par sort ou par conquête: qu'il ne s'y fait changement qui ne soit ordonné de lui: que toutes Puissances en procèdent; mais particulièrement, qu'en l'État Roial il y a plus d'excellence, étant cette police nonseulement ordonnée de lui, mais comme son image: qu'à cause de cette image, engravée de Dieu en la face des Princes, ils doivent être obéis de leurs Sujets, ores même qu'ils usent d'excès en leurs Gouvernemens: & que de fait ils sont souvent obéis, parce seulement qu'ils portent

appreciate the respectful attitude that Huguenots had for their magistrates, he insisted, one must disregard Catholic calumnies of Beza and Calvin, as well as "defamatory treatises that are considered wicked and insolent by everyone," and instead read the 'Confession of Faith' and official statements of the Reformed churches. These documents, along with the examples of England, Denmark, and Germany, proved that Protestants made faithful and obedient subjects.³⁵ The kingdom was threatened, not by the Reformed, but by the Catholic League, the king of Spain, and the Jesuits who continued to stir up war and sought to kill the French princes Navarre and Condé.

Duplessis-Mornay proceeded to defend Navarre as the legitimate heir to the French throne. Hotman and Belloy, he argued, had shown conclusively that every law ancient and modern gave precedence to the nephew over the uncle.³⁶ Similarly, in recent years the king and queen had recognized Navarre as the 'first prince of the blood' and the Parlement of Paris had affirmed the prince's proximity to the throne.

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cette image..." [Duplessis Mornay], *Lettre d'un gentilhomme Catholique François*, 432-433.

Duplessis-Mornay, however, had not examined Calvin's sermons on Daniel closely enough. In Calvin's seventh sermon on Daniel, the reformer said: "Or si un prince se veut destourner de Dieu, et s'exempter de sa subiection, qu'il ne se contente point de cette simplicité là, pour dire ie suis l'officier de Dieu, quand viendra il là dessus? il n'est pas digne d'estre accomparagé à un poulx, à un ver, ou quelque autre vermine, car les poulx sont encores creatures de Dieu, et voila un vilain qui avoit esté institué de Dieu, pour estre son lieutenant, et toutesfois il se mocque de son prince souverain, il le va mettre en oubli, *n'est il pas digne qu'on luy crache au visage? il est bien certain, car il est plus détestable que toutes les creatures du monde* [italics mine]." CO 41.395. I am indebted to Max Engamarre for this reference.

³⁵"... je dis les Livrets diffamatoires, qui sont tous licentieux & insolens de part & d'autre, & qui ne font foi ni pour l'un ni pour l'autre; il faut lire les Confessions de foi; il faut lire les Traités exprès; il faut voir si la Reine d'Angleterre, si le Roi de Dannemarc, & si les Princes Protestans sont obéis en leurs États..." Duplessis-Mornay, *Lettre d'un gentilhomme Catholique François*, 433.

³⁶"Et puis il [i.e. Dorleans] devoit répondre aux Traités de Hottoman & de Belloy, par lesquels il est prouvé par toutes Loix, tant anciennes que modernes, qu'ès choses non divisibles le fils de l'ainé est préféré au frère, le neveu à l'oncle." *Lettre d'un gentilhomme Catholique François*, 422.

Moreover, the so-called 'law' of Catholicity was belied by French political history. Several great kings of France, most notably Philip IV (1285-1314), had fought against the popes and had been declared heretic. It was birth, not orthodoxy, that made a prince a king. Though Navarre was a Protestant, he had always shown forbearance toward his opponents, even to monks and priests; in Béarn, he had permitted the Catholic religion to continue without disturbance. Duplessis-Mornay concluded, therefore, that because Navarre was a benevolent and moderate prince, his accession to the throne would preserve the kingdom and ensure the peaceful coexistence of the two religions.

Scholars of early modern France have pointed to the fact that after the death of Anjou Huguenot writers such as Hotman, Duplessis-Mornay, and Theodore Beza almost immediately abandoned their radical theories of resistance and their defense of contractual monarchy, becoming champions of France's royal tradition.³⁷ This remark certainly applies to Hotman: in his 1586 edition of the *Francogallia* and in the *Disputatio de controversia successionis regiae* he decisively departed from the doctrine of elective monarchy that he had argued a decade earlier. Likewise, if Duplessis-Mornay was the anonymous author of the *Vindiciae contra tyrannos* (1581),

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³⁷As Michael Wolfe has argued: "The paralyzing limits of Huguenot loyalism can further be seen in the well-known shift that took place after 1584 in the political writings of such Protestant luminaries as Duplessis Mornay, François Hotman, Théodore Beza, and a host of lesser publicists. Almost overnight, they dropped the radical theories of legitimate resistance and constitutional monarchy elaborated after the Saint Bartholomew's Day Massacres and became staunch champions of France's royal tradition--a tradition, of course, shorn of its overtly Catholic attributes." *The Conversion of Henri IV. Politics, Power, and Religious Belief in Early Modern France* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993), 31-32.

as is widely believed, then his *Lettre d'un gentilhomme Catholique François* represented a similar volte-face. The case of Theodore Beza, however, is more complex. The Genevan reformer did not write another political treatise after the *Du droit des magistrats*. The evolution of his political theory--if it existed--must be gauged from occasional references scattered throughout his literary corpus after 1573. Contrary to the confident claims of several modern interpreters, this fragmentary evidence demonstrates that Beza continued to advocate *in theory* the constitutional right of resisting wicked rulers. However, in the 1580s, the focus of his political concerns shifted from defending legitimate resistance activities to proscribing illegitimate acts of violence that threatened France's social stability and jeopardized Navarre's political future.

This tactical shift in Beza's political focus is evident in both his published works and in his unpublished correspondence. With the Company of Pastors, Beza often reminded the Reformed that *private persons* were not permitted to resist legitimate rulers, even those who persecuted the 'true' religion: "This rule is of utmost importance: no private person is allowed to touch the sword in order to avoid the cross. A Christian is commanded either to avoid persecution by fleeing or to endure it patiently."³⁸ Stated positively, "all Christians without exception" should

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³⁸"Valeat igitur in primis haec regula: nemini privato licere gladium ad repellendam crucem stringere, quum potius vel fuga devitare vel patienter ferre iubetur." Beza to Count Sayne-Wittgenstein, 19/29 May 1583, Berlin, Kgl. Bibl., ms. Beza, fols. 143-145. See also the letter from Beza in the name of the Company of Pastors to the Protestants of Valais: "Quod ad privatos attinet, pari in parem imperium non est, ne in rerum quidem humanarum usu, nedum in iis quae ad conscientiam alterius spectant; privatorum igitur zelus intra vocationis suae fines consistat oportet, tristissimis alioqui sequuturis eventis, quod et vetera et recentia exempla demonstrant..." (10/20

"obey the magistrates in all that pertains to public order, regardless of whether their rulers are believers or non-believers."³⁹ In themselves, these statements are unremarkable. For more than a half-a-century, Protestants had decried the 'rebelliousness' of Anabaptists and affirmed the authority of magistrates over their subjects. Even Beza's *Du droit des magistrats* had censured acts of resistance committed by private persons. But the higher frequency with which the Genevan reformer condemned such resistance activities after 1576 indicates his growing concern about wanton violence and lawlessness by individuals who had no constitutional warrant to resist legitimate authority. This concern was particularly evident in Beza's strong criticisms of the Catholic League which, he believed, empowered politically ambitious princes and stirred up private persons to rebel against lawful authority. As Leaguer pamphleteers espoused increasingly radical theories of resistance following the assassination of the duke of Guise in December 1588, Beza and other Huguenot authors more explicitly defended the legitimacy of Henri III and more forcefully eschewed civil disobedience.⁴⁰ In the face of Catholic resistance

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November 1592, published in *RCP* VI, 278-280). See also Beza, in the name of the Company of Pastors to the Reformed in the Low Countries, 7 [March] 1580. Published in H. de Vries, *Genève pépinière du calvinisme hollandais*, II, 296.

³⁹"... il faut que tous Chrestiens sans exception, par la doctrine & pratique de Iésus Christ & de ses Apostres, obeissent comme subiects aux Magistrats, soyent fidèles our infidèles, en ce qui appartient à la police civile." *Response aux cinq premières et principales demandes de F. Jean Haye*, 184.

⁴⁰"... nihil unquam furiosus ausi sint ulli populi in legitimum suum principem, quam in hunc Regem Parisienses, eo uno excepto, quod in ipsum absentem saevire non potuerunt." Beza to the Count of Sayne-Wittgenstein, 4/14 March 1589, published in Friedlaender, 176. Elsewhere, Beza frequently portrayed the Catholic League as a 'criminal conspiracy' of Guise and Spain to seize the French throne. See [Beza] to Constantine Fabricius, 24 August/3 September 1585, Paris, Bibl. Ste.

theories and activities, Huguenot leaders like Beza claimed the high moral ground, urging obedience to lawful authorities and condemning the 'criminal conspiracy' of those who sought to undercut the will of Henri III and challenged the legal status of Henri of Navarre as heir to the French throne.

But despite concerns of Catholic subversion, Beza did not entirely abandon the doctrine of constitutional resistance against tyrannical rulers. In his *Sermons sur l'histoire de la passion ... de nostre Seigneur Iésus Christ* (1592), the reformer spelled out explicitly the uses and abuses of political power, as well as the grounds for legitimate resistance. Examining the Gospel account in which Peter cut off the ear of the high priest's servant in the Garden of Gethsemane (Matthew 26), Beza drew the following lessons: God had given to magistrates the power of the sword to administer justice against criminals and heretics. Those rulers who practiced injustice and became tyrants lost the divine right to wield the sword. Nonetheless, it was not for private persons to resist wicked magistrates with force of arms. As godly subjects, they must employ "the true weapons of a Christian, namely prayers and patience, which are the victory of the saints." Having said this, Beza gave an important exception: when the laws of the kingdom provided legal remedy against a legitimate ruler who had become a tyrant, the people could and should employ it.⁴¹ Indeed,

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Geneviève, ms. 1455, fols. 4^v; Beza to Jean Crato, 16/26 November 1585, *ibid.*, ms. 1456, fols. 503^v-505; Beza to Grynaeus, 23 December 1588/2 January 1589, Basle, Univ. Bibl., Kirchen Archiv, C. I. 2, Bd. II, fol. 134.

⁴¹"Mais si faut-il qu'en tel cas les personnes privées sachent que pour cela ils ne doivent, ni ne peuvent en bonne conscience opposer l'espée à l'espée pour résister à leur supérieur, mais in tel cas doivent demeurer en leur degré de sujets, se servans des vraies armes Chrestiennes, à savoir, de

when the laws granted to individuals (*particuliers*) the right to wield the sword, they did so as from God.⁴² While Beza did not explicitly identify these 'individuals' as lesser magistrates, they were probably what he had in mind. Rulers were subject to law and could be deposed by public officials who had been given a constitutional mandate to restrain injustice and tyranny.

Beza returned to the theme of political resistance in a sermon on Jesus' trial before Pilate. Here again, the primary emphasis was on civil obedience: Jesus' example "demonstrates to us the duty that subjects owe to their superiors, even if they are unbelievers or torturers, as long as in obeying them we are not forgetting to give God the honor that we owe him."⁴³ Because magistrates had been placed in their offices by God, it would be mutinous and seditious for private persons to attempt to snatch the scepter from them. Nonetheless, God sometimes chose to use extraordinary means or "the laws and governments of kingdoms and other political

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prières & de patience, qui est la victoire des saints. Je di quand pour remédier à la tyrannie, le Seigneur n'a mis en main autres remèdes par les loix des Royaumes, & semblables gouvernemens. Car s'il y a tels remèdes, on s'en peut & doit servir, mais tousiours avec tout respect qui est deu au superieur." *Sermons sur l'histoire de la passion ... de nostre Seigneur Iésus Christ* (Genève: Jean Le Preux, 1592), 219-220. For an overview of Beza's published sermons, see Michel Delval's "La Prédication d'un Réformateur au XVI^e Siècle: L'Activité Homilétique de Théodore de Bèze," *Mélanges de Science Religieuse* 41 (1984): 61-86.

⁴²"Le second poinct est, que toutesfois & quantes que les loix arment les particuliers, alors reçoivent-ils aussi le glaive, comme de la main de Dieu." Beza, *Sermons sur l'histoire de la passion*, 220. Beza distinguished this right to the sword from the more general right of self-defense (220).

⁴³Jesus "reconoist que Pilate avoit puissance sur luy, quoyque luy fust innocent, & Pilate fust un Payen, nous monstre le devoir des suiets envers leurs supérieurs, voire infideles, & torsionnaires, pourveu que pour leur obeïr, nous n'oublions de rendre à Dieu, ce qui est deu à Dieu selon nostre vocation..." *Sermons sur l'histoire de la passion*, 700.

states" to remove wicked rulers.⁴⁴ Although Beza again refrained from stating what form these legal restraints might take, one thing was clear: when laws existed that limited political power, they could be applied to oppose the magistrates.

Beza's *Annotationes* provides additional evidence that the reformer never completely abandoned his doctrine of political resistance. Beza labored over this Latin translation of the New Testament for more than forty years; in five separate editions between 1556 and 1598, the reformer supplemented and amended the copious exegetical notes or 'annotations' accompanying each scriptural passage.⁴⁵ In the editions before 1598, Beza's annotations on Romans 13--the *classicus locus* for civil obedience--were traditional: all citizens must obey their magistrates, given that these rulers have received political power from God.⁴⁶ In the 1598 edition, Beza repeated

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⁴⁴"Mais au reste c'est à celuy [i.e. God] qui a donné de rescinder la donation [i.e. of political authority]: ce qu'il fait quand, & par tels moyens extraordinaires qu'il lui plaist, ou selon que portent les loix & polices des Royaumes & autres estats politiques de ce monde. Mais toy qui es personne privée: toy mutin & séditieux, qui veux arracher le sceptre celuy auquel Dieu l'a donné pour estre par dessus toy, que fais-tu? veux-tu estre plus fort que Dieu, qui sera le garent de sa donation?" *Sermons sur l'histoire de la passion*, 705.

⁴⁵The title of Beza's New Testament was *Iesu Christi D. N. Novum testamentum, sive Novum foedus. Cuius Graeco textui respondent interpretationes duae: una, vetus; altera, nova, Theodori Bezae, diligenter ab eo recognita. Eiusdem Th. Bezae Annotationes...* Each of the five editions (1556, 1565, 1582, 1594 and 1598) were published in Geneva, and contained in three columns the Greek text, the Vulgate text, as well as Beza's Latin translation of the Greek text. At the bottom of each page, Beza added copious exegetical and theological notes. Beza stated his intentions for this work in the letter-preface to the 1598 edition: "Nempe, ut tandem, Deo dante, commoda quapiam ratione collatis tot spectatissimae, tum pietatis, tum doctrinae, Theologorum iudiciis, certa quapiam extet S. Scripturae Latina interpretatio, in qua per ipsorum quoque vere Christianorum Principum orthodoxorum auctoritatem sancita, & in varia vulgarium linguarum idiomata (consultis semper ipsis fontibus) transfusa, Ecclesiae vere Christianae omnes acquiescant." In *Annotationes* (Genevae, 1598), ¶. The *Annotationes* served as a base-text for all Protestant Bibles for the next two centuries. See Geisendorf, 68-74, 334.

⁴⁶"... hic vero videtur hoc dicendi genus non carere emphasi, ut intelligamus, omnes mortales, nullo prorsus excepto, subiici suo magistratui oportere.... Caeterum quia ordinare interdum idem declarat atque instituere, & ex mandato faciendum aliquid discernere, censuerunt nonnulli Paulum his

this traditional formula, but made several important additions in his textual notes.

First, in his annotations on Romans 13.1, the reformer stated more explicitly the responsibility of citizens to obey their rulers—even wicked rulers—as long as they were established by legitimate means: "It is not by chance that the Apostle used this figure of speech here [i.e. 'powers'], but so that we might know that this obedience ought to be given to those rulers, even if they are unworthy. Because Christ was obedient to Caiaphas and Pilate, and Paul appealed his case to Nero. But he makes this proviso: that the ruler has been raised up according to the law of God and in keeping with every law human or divine, not established seditiously or tyrannically in violation of the Word of God or against the political laws."⁴⁷ To this general principle, however,

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verbis ostendere, Deum esse magistratum dignitatis auctorem. Id vero ego ita esse fateor: sed quum in superiore membro sit hoc diserte dictum ab Apostolo, causam non video cur hoc ipsum iterum inculcet, & quidem addita particula δε, quae non eadem, sed diversa plerunque solet copulare. Existimo igitur Apostolum primum quidem testari in genere ius ipsum & potestatem magistratus a Deo esse: deinde vero, quia varii sunt magistratum gradus, & dixerat oportere omnes non uni alicui potestati sed potestatibus subiici, huius etiam potestatis distributionem & εὐταξίαν eidem Deo vindicare, ut infimis etiam ordinibus parendum esse sciamus. Sunt autem haec duo connexa, id est, magistratus dignitas, & cuius dignitatis distributio..." This passage appears in the 1565, 1582, 1594 and 1598 editions of the *Annotationes* with only minor (unimportant) variations. See, for example, *Annotationes* (1565), 211-212. I have not had access to the 1556 edition to verify if this passage is found there as well. Note that in the citation above Beza, unlike Jean Bodin, wished to *divide* sovereignty between various magistrates.

⁴⁷"Nomine isto tropice [i.e. 'potestatis'] intelliguntur, qui sunt in illis dignitatibus constituti: sed non est temere usus hoc tropo Apostolus, ut sciamus hanc subiectionem ipsis dignitatibus habendam, etiam si indigni sint qui eo sunt evecti; quod Christus ipse in Caiapha & Pilato, & Paulus ad Neronem provocans observavit. Sed hoc tum salvo ipsius Dei iure accipiundo, tum potestatibus vel divino vel humano iure constitutis, non autem contra Dei verbum impie aut contra politicas leges seditiose vel tyrannice introductis." *Annotationes* (Genevae, 1598), 87. Later in his annotations on verse one, Beza adds an additional comment on the authority of a wicked ruler: "Sed duorum hic oportet meminisse, nempe de legitimis potestatibus, quibus hominum genus auctore Deo hunc ordinem suggerente regitur: non de iis quae sint a Tyrannide, ac etiam ab impietate profectae: deinde de rebus ipsis, non de quibusvis personis ista potestate fungentibus, hoc Pauli dictum accipiendum: quanvis non absque Dei iudicio & ordinatione mali quoque Magistratus imperent, sed hoc nihil spectat ad Pauli scopum" (87).

Beza added an important exception in his comments on Romans 13.5: If a legitimate magistrate became a tyrant, then he could be opposed by legal means. "The power of the magistrate is not undercut when, in a manner holy and necessary, a person employs remedies that are opposed to manifest tyranny and ratified by the public authority of that particular civil state."⁴⁸ Thus, once again Beza recognized limits to political authority. When sanctioned by law, citizens could oppose a king-turned-tyrant. As in his *Du droit des magistrats*, the Genevan reformer continued to teach that political authority was not 'absolute,' but was subject to legal constraints. Although the prospect of Navarre's accession after 1584 prompted Beza to moderate his tone, nonetheless he remained for the rest of his life suspicious of investing absolute political authority in a single individual.⁴⁹

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⁴⁸"... vim autem Magistratui non infert, qui Tyrannidi manifestae opposita, & publica auctoritate cuiusque civilis status sancita remedia, sancet & necessario usurpat." *Annotationes* (1598), 88.

⁴⁹This discussion of Beza's doctrine of resistance after 1580 requires a curious addendum. In 1595, a theological student named Hosea André, being examined for the pastoral ministry in Geneva, asserted that it was unlawful for Christians to take up arms against their prince for the sake of religion. The two magistrates who heard the examination reported his 'erroneous' interpretation to the Small Council on 23 May/2 June 1595. The councillors charged Beza to warn André of his error and correct it. "Les S^r Malliet & Lect conseillers commis pour ouyr les propositions dedits Perrot, André & Manissier ont rapporté que hier en la présence de plusieurs spectables ministres & notamment de M^r de Bèze ilz entendirent proposer ledit Perrot, lequel traictant le texte de l'épistre Sainct Paul concernant les principautés, commit ung erreur en sa proposition distinguant les principautés & dominations en deux choses, sçavoir au spirituel & au temporel & allégant que le spirituel tenoit le premier rang. Ce que ledit André reffuta par sa proposition où neantmoins il commit aussy ung erreur allégant qu'il n'estoit permis a ung chrestien de s'armer contre son prince pour le faict de la religion, tous deux n'estans beaucoup fondez.... A esté arresté que lesdits Perrot, André & Manissier soyent receuz au ministère & que on les face advertir des erreurs par eulx faictes en leur propositions par M^r de Bèze & qu'ils soyent admonestez de suyvre vivement leurs estudes." RC 90, 97^r-98. Two days later, Beza appeared before the Council to report that he had corrected the errant views of André and Perrot: "Spectables Théodore de Bèze & David Boiteux estans comparus ont prié recevoir le serment desdits Perrot, André & Manissier de s'acquitter de la charge de ministre en laquelle qu'ils ont esté appellés & ont déclaré qu'ils ont censuré lesdits André & Perrot des erreurs par eulx faictes en leurs propositions ..." 25 May/4 June 1595, RC 90, 99^{r-v}. Beza's apparent opposition to André's errant proposition was in

The Campaign Against 'Apostasy'

The second prominent concern of French Protestant authors in the years 1585-1588 was to warn Huguenots against 'apostasy' and prescribe remedies for those who had already lapsed. D'Aubigny's assertion that the Peace of Nemours in 1585 "compelled three-times more Huguenots to go to the mass than had gone after Saint Bartholomew" may be an exaggeration⁵⁰; nonetheless, Beza and his colleagues were alarmed by the attrition in the Reformed ranks. Huguenots who had chosen to remain in France beyond the king's six-month deadline, whether out of fear for family and possessions, or because of ill-health and old age, were renouncing the Reformed faith and returning to Catholicism in large numbers.⁵¹ Those who refused to attend Catholic mass and sign forms of abjuration denouncing the Reformed religion were thrown into prison, where they faced torture and death.⁵² In many parts of France, the once flourishing Reformed churches had been completely decimated. Once again,

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keeping with his consistent support of legitimate resistance.

⁵⁰Cited in Bernus, *Antoine de Chandieu*, 104.

⁵¹"Hinc miserrima repetita trepidatio, quae multos coegit rebus penitus imparatis diffugere, multorum imbecillitatem evertit, non paucos vel per aetatem vel morbum retentos in miserrimam miseriam adigit." Beza to Crato, 16/26 November 1585, Paris, Ste. Geneviève, ms. 1456, fols. 503^v-505.

⁵²"Jamais le roi n'a poursuivi nos frères avec tant d'acharnement. Non content d'assurer l'impunité à ceux qui sont revenus à la messe, il leur impose à tous une formule d'abjuration exécration. Il les force même à déclarer par écrit qu'ils le font sans être contraints et parce qu'ils détestent cette religion. Ceux qui ont refusé de signer ont été jetés dans les prisons où ils attendent les tortures et la mort." Hotman to Grynaeus, 21 April/1 May 1586, French translation published in Dareste, "François Hotman," 411.

Beza noted, the church under the cross was "visible only to God."⁵³

Other Reformed ministers were equally concerned at the attrition in the Huguenots' ranks. In February 1586, from the safety of Saint Jean d'Angely, the pastor Jean de L'Espine wrote his congregation in Angers, horrified by reports that most of them—even some who had professed the Reformed faith for 25 or 30 years--were "turning around and fleeing the true religion."⁵⁴ In so doing, L'Espine claimed, they had violated the covenant that they had publicly professed and had shipwrecked their souls, abandoning the company of Christ and his apostles for demons and the Antichrist. The minister urged the fallen to repent and return to the true faith; it was only in the 'ark of Noah' that they could be saved from impending judgment. Conversely, those who had remained steadfast must pray, meditate on Scripture, and attend Reformed services, recognizing that "those who wish to follow Jesus Christ must be prepared to endure cold, heat, famine, thirst, threats and dangers" just as soldiers in times of war.⁵⁵

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⁵³"Gallicarum cis Ligerim ecclesiarum nuper florentissimarum et quarum faciem abolere nulla belli diuturnitas nec saevitia potuerat, vix ulla nunc species apparent, immo nulla, nisi apud ipsius Dei oculos..." Beza to the Count of Sayne-Wittgenstein, 19/29 December 1585, published in Friedlaender, 156.

⁵⁴"... jour en jour n'avons aucunes nouvelles de vous, sinon que la plus part se révoltent & se départent de la Religion.... C'est grande pitié qu'entre vous soient trouvé gens, lesquels vingt & cinq & trente ans, ayant fait droite profession de suivre Jésus-Christ & son Évangile: en ces derniers temps se soient laissés si facilement écouler, par la publication d'un simple Édit..." L'Espine and Jean le Mercier, "Lettre de Monsieur de l'Epine, Ministre de la parole de Dieu, & Jean le Mercier, ancien, à l'Église d'Angers," published in *Mémoires de la Ligue*, I, 293-4.

⁵⁵"... qui veulent suivre Jésus-Christ se doivent disposer à endurer le froid, le chaud, la faim, la soif, les dangers & alarmes ... auxquelles est sujette & exposée la condition des gens de guerre." L'Espine, "Lettre," 298.

Shortly after the Peace of Nemours, several Huguenot authors addressed the problem of Catholic conversion in greater detail. The second edition of Jean Chassanion's *Histoires mémorables des grans & merveilleux iugemens et punitions de Dieu* (1586) was a collection of *exempla*, biblical stories, contemporary anecdotes, and fantastic tales of divine judgment against a variety of sins and sinners.⁵⁶ Chassanion gave generous space to the sins of persecution and apostasy, illustrating God's wrath against each in turn. The fearful consequences of persecuting the Christian church were exemplified in the story of a certain Jean Martin de Briquères, who cut off the nose of a Reformed minister in an attempt to prevent him from preaching the Gospel. Martin was subsequently attacked by a wolf who bit off his nose; he died from this injury a short time later.⁵⁷ The sin of apostasy was equally dangerous. The bishop of Mâcon, having once professed the Gospel, was seized in the pulpit by horrible pains when half of his body burned like fire, and the other half was frozen like ice. He died from this malady with tortured cries.⁵⁸ The fate of Laubespain, councillor in the parlement of Grenoble was even more horrifying. Having renounced the Reformed faith, he became a vicious persecutor of the true church, even murdering the ministers of Valence by strangulation. On one occasion,

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⁵⁶Chassanion, *Histoire mémorables des grans & merveilleux iugemens et punitions de Dieu avenues au monde, principalement sur les grans, à cause de leurs mesfaits, contrevenans aux commandemens de la loy de Dieu* (Genève: Jean Le Preux, 1586). The Genevan city council approved the publication of this work on 18/28 May 1586. See RC 81, 105^v. The original edition of this work was published in nearby Morges in 1581.

⁵⁷Chassanion, *Histoires mémorables*, 63-64.

⁵⁸Chassanion, *Histoires mémorables*, 106-107.

however, after being rejected by a beautiful woman, the love-lorn Laubespain began to ignore his hygiene and became infested with a large number of lice that gradually choked him to death.⁵⁹ Through these and other tales, Chassanion assured persecuted Huguenots that God was not oblivious to their plight and would judge their enemies in due time.⁶⁰ The commensurability of divine punishment and human crime--nose for nose, strangulation for strangulation--offered Huguenots assurances that their suffering would soon be avenged. Finally, the graphic depiction of divine wrath against apostasy served as a stark warning that those who abjured the Protestant religion were to face a more severe condemnation, whether on earth or in heaven.

Though less gripping than Chassanion's *Histoires mémorables*, books by Reformed ministers Antoine de Chandieu and Léonard Constant were more systematic and thorough in addressing the causes, consequences and cures of apostasy. Chandieu's *La responce à la profession de foy publiée contre ceux de l'Église Réformée* (1586) addressed those men and women who, being swayed by Catholic disinformation, had abandoned the Protestant religion for doctrinal reasons.⁶¹ Chandieu was particularly concerned to answer abjuration guides distributed by monks in Bordeaux that 'proved' the Protestant faith heretical by misquoting and vilifying

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⁵⁹Chassanion, *Histoires mémorables*, 107-109.

⁶⁰"Si pour un temps il semble que Dieu dorme, & qu'il ne lui chaut des violences & oppressions que les siens souffrent & endurent; il ne laisse pas pourtant d'avoir tousiours l'oeil sur eux, & de faire vengeance de leurs ennemis en temps opportun." Chassanion, *Histoires mémorables*, 72.

⁶¹Chandieu, *La responce à la profession de foy publiée contre ceux de l'Église Réformée. Avec la réfutation tant des calomnies qui y sont contenues, que généralement des erreurs de l'Église Romaine Prétendue Catholique* (n.p., 1586). The editors of CDM question whether this work was published in Geneva (115).

Luther, Calvin, Pierre Martyr, and Beza. Chandieu countered with a 750 page defense of the Protestant articles of faith to convince some to "return to God and to their senses."⁶² Less erudite but with more rhetorical force was the *Remonstrance Chrestienne* (1586), written by Beza's one-time Genevan colleague Léonard Constant. This work addressed those men and women who, out of fear, temptation, or weakness, had signed forms of abjuration and returned to the Roman church despite theological conviction.⁶³ Constant pointed out that such spiritual hypocrisy held grave dangers. It was no more possible for Christians to give their bodies to the Devil while keeping their hearts pure before God, than it was for a woman to prostitute herself while remaining faithful to her husband. If these 'secret' Protestants remained in the Roman church, he warned, their hearts would gradually harden into an apostasy that was irremedial and fatal. It would be safer for them to entrust themselves to "the mercy of lions, tigers, bears and other savage beasts" than to continue to attend Catholic mass.⁶⁴ Moreover, spiritual hypocrisy harmed the Church at large, causing scandal to simple believers and depriving the Reformed churches of needed ministers.

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⁶²"Nous leur présentons ceste responce que nous leur avons faite; désirans que par la faveur & bénédiction de Dieu, nostre labeur si petit qu'il est puisse servir à chacun, & singulièrement à ceux que ceste dernière tempeste a emportez afin que touchez vivement du S. Esprit, ils reviennent à Dieu & à eux mesmes." Chandieu, *La responce à la profession de foy*, 20.

⁶³L.C.L [Constant], *Remonstrance Chrestienne et salutaire aux François qui se sont desvoyez de la vraye religion & polluez és superstitions & idolatries de la papauté* ([Genève]: [J. Stoer], 1586). See CDM, 116.

⁶⁴The apostates have "procuré leur perdition, leur déshonneur & confusion éternelle avec la vostre, & les avez mis avec vous en plus grand danger, sans comparaison, que si vous les aviez vous-mesmes livrez entre les mains des plus cruels & sanguinaires brigands qui soient au monde, ou exposez à la merci des Lions, des Tygres, des Ours ou autres bestes sauvages." Constant, *Remonstrance Chrestienne*, 100-101.

By attending Catholic services, these 'turncoats' betrayed the blood of Huguenot martyrs and justified the cruel acts committed by "the murderers and accomplices of Satan and of the Antichrist."⁶⁵ The solution that Constant proposed was self-evident: these temporizers must repent of their grave sin and flee Babylon. By faith, they must again take up the cross of suffering and return to the true Church--this 'ark of Noah'--in which they alone could be saved from the wrath of God.⁶⁶ Although Constant's arguments were hardly original--many had been presented in Calvin's treatise against the Nicodemites forty years earlier--nonetheless his book, along with the works of Chandieu and Chassanion, served as a barometer of Huguenot anxiety in the mid-1580s. The Reformed movement, it seemed, had not only lost momentum, but was losing its adherents in France. Beza verbalized these same concerns in a sermon to his Genevan congregation: "Who impedes the advancement of the kingdom of God the most today? .... It is neither the Jews nor the Turks. Rather, the chief culprits are the so-called Catholic church, her leaders, and those miserable apostates and heretics who deserted us. They abandoned us because they were not truly part of us."⁶⁷ For these Huguenot leaders, there was no ground for compromise: only those

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⁶⁵"... continuans en vostre révolte vous rend coupables de tout le sang innocent qui a esté respendu iusques à ce jourd'huy par les meurtriers & Satellites de Satan & de Antechrist..." Constant, *Remonstrance Chrestienne*, 79-80.

⁶⁶"Finalement craignez d'estre enveloppez en cest horrible jugement que le fils de Dieu dénonce contre ceste maudit Babylonne ... & retournez dans l'Arche de Noé, si vous voulez estre sauvez de l'ire de Dieu qui menace toure [sic] la terre." Constant, *Remonstrance Chrestienne*, 123.

⁶⁷"Car qui empesche le plus aujourd'hui l'avancement du royaume de Dieu, & que l'Église ne se resioüisse de ce repos? Ce ne sont point ni les luifs, ni les Turks au prix de ceux qui s'appellent l'Église Catholique, voire les pilliers d'icelle; & quelques malheureux Apostats, & hérétiques sortis du milieu de nous, pource qu'ils n'estoyent pas des nostres à la vérité [1 John 2.19]." Beza, *Sermons sur*

men and women who sought refuge in the 'ark' of the Protestant church would be rescued from God's wrath. But, in the troubled political waters of France, this 'ark' was taking on water and losing its passengers.

Responding to Rome

The third major concern of Huguenot authors between 1585-1588 was to attack papal pretensions in France. Sixtus V's censure of Navarre and Condé as 'relapsed heretics' was, in the eyes of non-aligned French men and women, an intrusion in France's political affairs and an encroachment of Gallican freedoms. Leaguer attempts to promulgate the decrees of Trent in the kingdom were viewed with similar suspicion. Seeking to capitalize on these Gallican sentiments, Navarre released a "Déclaration" against the League in June 1585 in which he countered their calumnies in forty strongly-worded articles. In response to the accusation of heresy, the prince defended his religious sincerity and commitment to the Christian faith and religion, adding that his conversion to Catholicism following Saint Bartholomew's day had been coerced, and was thus invalid. He decried the plots of Jesuit assassins and the cruel persecutions of the Catholic League that threatened the French kingdom. Finally, while rejecting the authority of Trent in France, Navarre promised to submit his conscience to the decision of a free and legitimate general or national council of

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les trois premiers chapitres du Cantique des Cantiques... ([Genève]: Jean Le Preux, 1586), 367. These sermons were approved for publication on 23 July/2 August 1586. See RC 81, 152^v. For bibliographical information about this work, see CDM, 115 and *Bibliographie*, 193-195.

the Church.⁶⁸ Five months later, Navarre published a second statement--this time co-authored with Condé--in response to the papal excommunication. Calling Sixtus V a malicious liar and heretic, he promised to prove such allegations in a free and legitimate church council.⁶⁹ Playing on Gallican sympathies, Navarre presented himself as a victim of papal ambition and the champion of the liberties of the French church.

Following the lead of Navarre, other Protestant authors joined the campaign against papal interference in France. Here was a unique opportunity for Reformed protagonists to appeal to moderate Catholics as well as Huguenots, weaving an apology of Navarre's cause, a defense of Gallican liberties, and an attack against Roman abuse into a three-strand propaganda 'scourge' with which to beat Leaguer opponents. At the request of Navarre, François Hotman picked up the gauntlet to defend the Bourbon princes against the papal excommunication.⁷⁰ In the *Brutem fulmen* (1586), Hotman described seven papal crimes or 'nullities' that rendered Sixtus V incompetent to condemn the princes: impiety, tyranny, corruption of religion, sacrilege, high treason (*lèse-majesté*), hostility against humanity, and

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⁶⁸"il est & sera toujours tout prêt à se soumettre à la détermination d'un légitime Concile général, ou national..." Henri of Navarre, "Déclaration du Roi de Navarre, contre les calomnies publiées contre lui," in *Mémoires de la Ligue*, I, 120-148. See also Babelon, *Henri IV*, 348.

⁶⁹"Copie de l'opposition faite par le Roi de Navarre & Monseigneur le Prince de Condé, contre l'excommunication du Pape Sixte V," in *Mémoires de la Ligue*, I, 243-244.

⁷⁰Navarre's agent Jacques de Ségur wrote Hotman in September 1585 to request this service, stating that "the king knows of no one in all Christendom who can better accomplish this." Cited in Kelley, *François Hotman*, 303.

falsehood.⁷¹ Abandoning the impassive tone of earlier works, Hotman's book was angry and abusive, detailing the political conspiracies, immorality, cruelty, and self-aggrandizement of popes past and present. All Christendom should stand in horror at this 'furious excommunicator' who had so boldly interfered in the secular affairs of state. France awaited a righteous king who would "chase this Babylonian prostitute from her proud See" and deliver the Christian church from spiritual slavery.⁷² In contrast to the pope's perfidy, Hotman emphasized Navarre's spiritual constancy. The prince could not be considered a relapsed heretic because his conversion after Saint Bartholomew had been made under duress. Snatched from the marriage bed, he had been exposed to the brutal massacres of his friends and forced to sign an abjuration against his will. Thereafter a prisoner in the royal court, he had "searched day and night for an opportunity to escape the armed guards" so that he might flee to freedom and publicly "reject that which he had been forced to do out of terror."⁷³ More than a simple defense of Gallican liberties, Hotman's apology was a blatant attempt to reinterpret and justify Navarre's three-and-a-half year confessional hiatus.

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⁷¹This discussion relies upon the French translation of Hotman's *Brutem Fulmen*, entitled *Protestation et défense pour le Roy de Navarre ... contre l'injuste et tyrannique bulle de Sixte V* ([Genève]: [Jean Le Preux], 1587) See CDM, 120. For a description of this work, see Kelley, *François Hotman*, 303-306.

⁷²"Nous devons doncques bien désirer que quelque roy généreux & magnanime nous soit donné du ciel, lequel chasse ceste paillarde Babylonique de son orgueilleux siège, & délivre la pauvre Église Chrestienne d'une si longue & misérable servitude; la remetant en sa première liberté & dignité." Hotman, *Protestation et défense*, 280.

⁷³"Mais c'estoit plustost une trèsgrande fermeté & constance en ce ieune Prince, d'espier jour & nuit l'occasion d'évader d'entre les gardes armés qui le veilloient, afin que ce trouvant libre, il peust détester & reiecter ce qu'on lui avoit fait faire par terreur & contrainte." Hotman, *Protestation & défense*, 256.

If the prince was to command the respect and trust of Huguenots and moderate Catholics, it was imperative that he appear to be a sincere and devout Christian, the victim of royal coercion and papal excommunication rather than of religious indecision.

Other Huguenot authors repeated Hotman's major arguments, defending Navarre's moral rectitude, attacking papal ambitions, and attributing the prince's conversion in 1572 to compulsion. From Chandieu's perspective, Navarre and Condé were "two princes famous for their piety, virtue, courage, and desire to reform the Church."⁷⁴ The papal excommunication was prompted, not by the immorality or heresy of the princes, but by the pope's desire to undermine the monarchy and laws of France. Similarly, Duplessis-Mornay argued that the papal censure was part of a Roman conspiracy to place the duke of Guise on the French throne. Sixtus V's assertion that Navarre was a 'relapsed heretic' was invalid, in as much as the prince had been forced under fear of death to convert to Catholicism in the first place. If the apostle Bartholomew had used such coercive tactics in evangelizing India, Duplessis-Mornay wryly noted, "he would have persuaded no one to become a Christian."⁷⁵ The Catholic Pierre de Belloy joined Huguenot authors in abrading papal pretensions. Despite their confessional differences, both could agree that the pope was treating the "succession of the kingdom of France as if it were an

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⁷⁴"... tous deux Princes trèsrenommez, pour leur piété, vertu & valeur & trèsdésireux de la réformation de l'Église." Chandieu, *La Responce à la profession de foy*, 15.

⁷⁵Duplessis-Mornay, *Lettre d'un gentilhomme Catholique François*, 431.

ecclesiastical fief."⁷⁶

Leaguer attempts to promulgate the decrees of the Council of Trent in France elicited fierce Protestant responses as well. The most systematic Huguenot refutation of Trent in the 1580s was *Le bureau du concile de Trente* (1586), written by Innocent Gentillet, a French jurist in exile in Geneva.⁷⁷ The primary purpose of Gentillet's work was to prove that Trent was an illegitimate council and to answer recent 'remonstrances' of the French clergy demanding the promulgation of the tridentine decrees. The Council of Trent, he believed, had been a "huge collosus, built on a foundation of deception and ignorance."⁷⁸ In violation of ancient canons, the council had been convened by the pope rather than by the emperor. Although the council was called 'ecumenical,' most regions of Christendom had not been represented. The bishops and prelates who had attended the council were almost all Italians, subservient to the will of the pope. Most importantly, the Council of Trent had not permitted the Protestants to propose or defend in disputation their confession of faith. The Pope

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⁷⁶"Il [i.e. the pope] juge la succession du Royaume de France, comme d'un fief Ecclesiastique." [Pierre de Belloy], *Moyens d'abus, entreprises et nullitez du rescrit et bulle du pape Sixte V* ([Genève]: [Ant. Chuppin], 1586), 183-184. See CDM, 115. The Genevan city council approved this work for publication on 13/23 July 1586. See RC 81, 145^v.

⁷⁷*Le bureau du concile de Trente: Auquel est monstré qu'en plusieurs poincts iceluy concile est contraire aux anciens conciles & canons, & à l'autorité du Roy* ([Genève]: Elie Viollier, 1586). See CDM, 116. That Beza approved of this work is seen from an entry of the minutes of the Small Council in May of 1586: Innocent Gentillet requested permission "d'imprimer ung livre qu'il a composé pour soustenir la pureté de la doctrine chrestienne contre les erreurs du concile de Trente, lequel il a fait veoir par M^r de Bèze qui l'atteste.... A esté arresté qu'on luy outroie." 30 May/9 June 1586, RC 81, 111^v.

⁷⁸"... un grand Colosse basti sur la baze de la ruse des uns, & de l'ignorance des autres." *Le bureau du concile de Trente*, 305.

had been both their accuser and judge. For these reasons, therefore, the Council of Trent was neither legitimate nor free, and should be dismissed as a 'nullity.'⁷⁹

Gentillet urged Henri III to follow the example of his predecessors who had rejected the tridentine decrees, recognizing that they would only "undermine and overthrow secular authority and make it subservient to papal authority" which was derived from "ambition and greed" rather than true spirituality.⁸⁰

Armed with these 'proofs,' Gentillet turned his attention to those bishops who were urging Henri III to promulgate the tridentine decrees in France. By advocating Trent, these prelates were guilty of preferring papal honor to royal dignity. And for what purpose? Despite their pious claims to the contrary, the French clergy had no intention of leaving behind its privileges, exemptions and immunities. They demanded honor from their parishoners without fulfilling their charge of preaching the Word of God and living a holy life. While the bishops complained of their poverty, everyone knew that they were too rich. Most disconcerting, the French prelates in a 'Machiavellian' fashion promoted civil war in France by exhorting the king to destroy the Huguenots without a hearing.⁸¹ Gentillet concluded, therefore, that the promulgation of the tridentine decrees would not reform the Gallican church; rather

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⁷⁹Gentillet, *Le bureau du concile de Trente*, 305-329.

⁸⁰"Joint que quiconque remarquera de prés plusieurs Décrets de ce Concile, cognoistra facilement qu'ils ne tendent qu'à énerver & abbatre les puissances seculières, & les submettre à la Papale: laquelle ilz appellent bien spirituelle, mais ne tenant du tout rien de la spiritualité, ains seulement de l'ambition & de l'avarice." *Le bureau du concile de Trente*, 329.

⁸¹Gentillet, *Le bureau du concile de Trente*, 330-355.

they would promote civil war and attenuate royal authority. Instead, the king should heed Navarre's recent "Déclaration" and convene a free national church council in which the prince and the Reformed could be judged by the Word of God. If they were shown to be in error, Navarre and the French Protestants would lay down their arms and accept Catholic instruction.

The succession crisis and the revival of the Catholic League after 1584 forced Reformed apologists to address old questions even while engaging in new controversies. Long-standing concerns about Navarre's religious sincerity resurfaced once he was a legitimate contender for the French throne. Huguenot intellectuals defended Navarre's religious constancy, even as they abandoned or, in the case of Beza, down-played theories of resistance in order to protect him from Leaguer attacks and the papal excommunication. The rash of abjurations following the Peace of Nemours elicited new apologetical works, adding to a growing Protestant literature condemning apostasy and counseling the spiritually weak. Likewise, although the final session of Trent had concluded more than a decade earlier, Leaguer pressure on Henri III to promulgate the council's decrees revived Protestant critiques of Trent and fueled Gallican sympathies. Our review of Huguenot polemical literature between 1585-1588 suggests that Navarre had substantial success in procuring the support of Protestant intellectuals in the political crisis after 1584. François Hotman, Antoine de Chandieu, Duplessis-Mornay, Philippe Canaye--these prominent Reformed thinkers and churchmen became vital players in the campaign to defend Navarre's legitimacy in print. Established in part through the bonds of patronage (as was the case with

Hotman) and political appointment (as with Chandieu, Duplessis-Mornay and Philippe Canaye), Navarre used this Huguenot brain-trust to defend his claims to the French throne and to promote his political and military fortunes in France. The prince employed political sagacity in his relationship with Theodore Beza as well. In the years following the death of Anjou, Navarre succeeded in winning Beza's loyalty and political support, employing the reformer's sizeable influence to garner the financial and military assistance of allies in France, Switzerland, and Germany.

The Return of Navarre

The crisis precipitated by the death of Anjou and the Peace of Nemours proved to be decisive in turning Beza into an enthusiastic supporter of Henri of Navarre. In part, Beza's confidence was inspired by the prince's perseverance in affirming the Reformed faith despite threats from the king, the League and the pope. Navarre was no saint--his sexual exploits were notorious--but the influence of the Calvinist Duplessis-Mornay in the prince's inner circle boded well for the future. Likewise, from 1585 to 1588, Beza's close friend Antoine de Chandieu served as Navarre's personal chaplain, providing the Genevan reformer with another means of access to the Protestant prince.⁸² As the legitimate heir to the French throne, Navarre came to

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⁸²On 1 January 1585, Navarre appointed four Reformed ministers to serve his household on a rotating three-month basis. This ministerial team consisted of de Clerville, de Vaulx, Chandieu, and Hespérien. Beza later claimed that Chandieu hardly left Navarre's side between 1585-1587: "Caeterum, qui has tibi literas reddidit Sadeel [i.e. Chandieu] ille noster est, qui toto pene isto triennio a Navarreni latere non discessit..." Beza to Grynaeus, 19/29 March 1588, Basle, Univ. Bibl., Kirchen-Archiv, C.I.2, Bd. II, fol. 125. Chandieu's moral influence over Navarre was demonstrated by the minister's strong rebuke of the prince after he engendered a son with the daughter of a notable

embody many of the reformer's hopes and dreams. Although Beza frequently reminded his friends that they should place their trust in God rather than in men, he became increasingly hopeful that a Protestant king might one day grant liberty to the Reformed religion in France. Growing mutual dependencies furthered the rapprochement between the prince and the Genevan minister. More than ever, Navarre needed Beza's help to procure Swiss money and mercenaries to fight the powerful armies of the League and the king. Similarly, Geneva needed the prince's protection against the continued threat of Savoy. The ties of dependence were formalized and strengthened after 1585 as Navarre began to pay Beza an annual stipend for his services. Allied by a common religious cause, shared 'friends,' and mutual needs, Beza put aside many of his suspicions of the previous decade and began to embrace enthusiastically the person and program of Henri of Navarre.

Less than two weeks after the Peace of Nemours, Henri requested Beza to undertake a diplomatic mission on his behalf, delivering a letter to the four evangelical cities of Switzerland. In this message, Navarre warned the cities of the disastrous consequences of the alliance between Henri III and the Catholic League, and begged them to recall their mercenaries fighting in Leaguer armies.⁸³ Because of ill-health, Beza committed the prince's letter to a trusted courier, attaching his own

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from La Rochelle. Navarre heeded his chaplain's words, admitting his fault before his army at Pons. See Bernus, *Antoine de Chandieu*, 101, 105-106.

⁸³For a summary of Navarre's diplomatic instructions to Beza, see 7/17 July 1585, Schaffhausen, *Staatsarch.*, Korresp. 26. Also see Rott, *Histoire de la Représentation Diplomatique de la France*, II, 365-6.

appeal on behalf of Navarre and the Reformed churches of France.⁸⁴ At the same time, he wrote his pastoral colleagues in the Swiss cities: "By the explicit command of his Majesty, and in the name of numerous suffering Christians, I beseech you honorable brothers, that you urge your people to call back their soldiers, and that from the pulpit you commend the French churches--which are under extreme duress--to the prayers of all the faithful."⁸⁵ In the following months, Beza was in regular contact with Navarre and his deputies. He received instructions and sent recommendations to Navarre through the prince's ambassador to Switzerland, the count of Clervant.⁸⁶ In addition to providing counsel, Beza represented the prince's interests before the Genevan city council. On two occasions he obtained permission from the magistrates to publish letters written by Navarre to defend himself against the calumnies of enemies in France.⁸⁷ More importantly, during the next several

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⁸⁴See, for example, Beza to the Burgermeister and Council of Schaffhausen, 7/17 July 1585, Schaffhausen, Staatsarchiv, 26, 1585/3.

⁸⁵"Itaque vos et ex illius Serenissimi Regis expresso mandato, et tot miserrimorum fratrum nomine etiam atque etiam rogo, fratres observandi, ut et apud vestros sedulo hanc causam agatis de revocandis ipsorum militibus, et pro concione Gallicas Ecclesias, ut in extremum discrimen adductas, piorum precibus commendetis..." Beza to the Pastors of Schaffhausen, July 1585, Schaffhausen, Ministerialbibl., Ulmeriana IV, p. 108.

⁸⁶"J'ay advisé de vous fere ce mot seulement par Beringen mon valet de chambre, et vous prier de vous employer le plus soigneusement et diligemment que vous pourrez en ce que je vous ay recommandé par le S^r du Fresne, et pareillement en ce que M. de Clervant vous fera entendre de ma part, et dont nous avons besoing comme de chose qui nous est nécessaire et importante, et en quoy toute la chrestienté a intérêt. Pour quoy me promettant de votre bon zèle et fidélité, que vous n'obmettez rien de ce qui sera en vostre pouvoir..." Navarre to Beza, 25 February 1586, Geneva, Archives Tronchin 2, fol. 4.

⁸⁷"Lettres du roy de Navarre à la cour du parlement de Paris & à la Sorbonne, ayans esté présentées par M^r de Bèze pour estre imprimées, & veues icy. A esté arresté qu'on en permit l'impression." 1/11 December 1585, RC 80, 166. "M^r de Bèze a fait leue une lettre escrete par le roy de Navarre au clergé de France ... prier permettre de l'imprimer. Arresté qu'ainsy soit fait."

years, Beza frequently wrote to his contacts in Germany and Switzerland, urging them to pray and to provide money and mercenaries for Navarre's desperate war effort against Leaguer armies.

Beza's diplomatic efforts on behalf of Navarre reflected his growing trust in Navarre's commitment to the Reformed churches and his confidence in the justice of the prince's cause against the usurpation of the Guise family and the interference of Spain. Beginning in 1585 or 1586, the relationship between the reformer and the Bourbon prince was formalized by ties of patronage. The account book of Navarre's ambassador Clervant for the years 1585-1587 records that Beza and François Hotman each received 500 livres (around 165 écus) per annum for two years as "pensions and wages" for services rendered to the king of Navarre.⁸⁸ This sum represented more than 170% of Beza's annual monetary salary, a substantial amount given the reformer's increasing financial difficulties.⁸⁹ Beza continued to receive this annuity for two or three years following Clervant's death in 1588; thereafter, the reformer collected partial disbursements of this pension from the royal court on several

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16/26 February 1586, RC 81, 40^v. For the texts of these letters, see Duplessis-Mornay, *Mémoires et correspondance* III, 213-215 & 286-289.

⁸⁸"A messieurs de Bèze et Hottoman pour leurs pensions et gaiges que le Roy de Navarre leur a accordés de cinq cens livres par an chacun. La somme de six cens soixante six escus deux tiers pour deux années cy." This entry is included in a document entitled "Estat des frais faits par feu monsieur de Clervant en Souisse et Allemagne, Depuis l'an 1585" dated 14 December 1588, Geneva, MHR, Archives Tronchin III, fol. 94.

⁸⁹See Jean-François Bergier, "Salaires des Pasteurs de Genève au XVI^e Siècle," in *Mélanges d'Histoire du XVI^e Siècle, offerts à Henri Meylan* (Genève: Librairie Droz, 1970), 159-178. During this period, Beza was earning 700 florins per year, plus additional subsidies of wheat, cheese and wine. As demonstrated on page 286-288 below, Beza was facing serious financial difficulties by 1590.

occasions.⁹⁰ In return for this annuity, Beza was expected to use his influence in Germany and among the Swiss cantons to promote Navarre's interests, encouraging the allies to give money and soldiers for the Huguenot war effort. Additionally, Beza was responsible to solicit and receive money from the French churches in order to pay Navarre's debts incurred by hiring Swiss and German mercenaries.⁹¹ In a document dated 23 May 1588, Navarre granted to Beza, Chandieu, and several other French notables authority to negotiate and conclude financial agreements in his name with all foreign counts, estates, princes and cities.⁹² This evidence shows conclusively that the Genevan minister was an important link in the financial and political network between Navarre and his Protestant allies in Switzerland and Germany. These ties of patronage not only reflected Beza's growing confidence in

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⁹⁰In a letter to Henri IV, dated perhaps in 1596, Beza reminded the king that from the time that he had entered into the "service à Vostre Majesté, de sa seule bonne grâce et mouvement, luy ordonner une pension annuelle de deux cens escus sol [sic!], de laquelle par le moyen de Monsieur de Sillery, lors ambassadeur de Vostre Majesté en Suisse, il a reçu deux ou trois années que plus..." Geneva, MHR, Archives Tronchin, f. Bèze, III, 54-55. For details about the financial ties between Beza and Navarre after 1589, see pages 287-288, 441-442.

⁹¹Thus, Guillaume de Vulliermin delivered 8,000 écus sol to Beza from Montmorency on 22 July 1587 "pour le service de la Ma^e du Roy de Navarre, tant pour la levée des compagnies Suysses que pour lez fraiz et despens de lever secours..." Found in "Déclaration par laquelle Guillaume de Vulliermin s'engage à payer à Th. de Bèze et autres ... la somme de 4000 écus d'or." Geneva, MHR, Archives Tronchin III, 83. Again, on 30 January 1589, deputies from High and Low Languedoc sent 17,776 écus to Beza and Chandieu to be used "suyvant la volonté et ordonnance dud. seigneur Roy de Navarre, pour partie du payement qu'il luy conviendra faire d'une levée d'armée estrangère en Allemagne, et ausd. estrangers, non en autre affaire, ny sans nouveau exprès commandement de sad. Majesté." Deputies of Languedoc to Beza and Chandieu, Geneva, MHR Archives Tronchin, f. Bèze, III, 143. A letter from De Teissières accompanied this latter payment, noting that the monetary gift was in response to the fund raising efforts of Beza and Chandieu: "Il n'est pas besoin de vous recommander cest affaire auquel nous n'avons rien fait que par vos remonstrances et exhortation réitérées." 30 January 1589, Geneva, MHR, Archives Tronchin, f. Bèze, III, 191-192.

⁹²See the document entitled "Pleins pouvoirs données par Henri, roi de Navarre, à La Noue, de Ségur, de Guitry, de Réau, de Besze, de La Roche-Chandieu, de Fromentières et de Fresnes." Geneva, MHR, Archives Tronchin III, 4.

Navarre, but also formalized their relationship, making tangible their respective expectations and obligations. Beza's growing commitment to his prince, now also his patron, was to compel him to lay aside remaining reservations and throw his influence completely behind Navarre and the dream of a Bourbon king.

The task of marshalling German and Swiss support for the French churches was far from easy. The German princes were hesitant to assist the Huguenots because of confessional differences and for fear of imperial reprisals.⁹³ Lutheran princes who burned effigies of Calvin, imprisoned crypto-Calvinists, and subscribed to the Book of Concord (1580) were hardly inclined to support the Huguenots in their struggle against the Catholic League. The evangelical Swiss cities, on the other hand, in addition to fundamental political and philosophical reservations about sending mercenaries to France, had concerns about the sincerity and reliability of Navarre himself. Johann Stumpf, minister of Zurich expressed this mistrust to Beza. Stumpf feared that political self-interest might prompt Henri to betray the Huguenot cause and ally with the French king. Although the conversion of Saul in the book of Acts provided proof that God could dramatically transform a sinner, nonetheless the believers in Damascus were prudently skeptical until the change was confirmed by God. That same caution must be exercised in the case of Henri, "lest a holy cause be carelessly thrown to the dogs."⁹⁴

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⁹³Ludwig Lavater to Beza, 7/17 August 1585, Gotha, Mss. Bibl. Gotha, Cod. chart A 405, fol. 140. See also Babelon, *Henri IV*, 353.

⁹⁴"Nisi certe seriam poenitentiam evidenti aliquo documento probaverit metuendum est ne pium Josaphatum impius Achab communi exitio implicet. Potens est quidem Deus et misericors, cui ex

As the Swiss hesitated, Navarre became increasingly irritated. He vented his frustrations to Beza in October 1586: Great inconvenience and harm had resulted from the repeated delays of the Swiss allies in providing mercenaries. He had to carry on the war effort alone, and his soldiers were beginning to grumble and lose courage.⁹⁵ Navarre sent a similar message to his deputy Ségur, recruiting soldiers in Saxony: "Haste, haste, haste! The delays are ruining us!"⁹⁶ Navarre's rebuke had its intended effect. Soonafter, Beza wrote his pastoral colleagues in Switzerland to request, yet again, military assistance from their cities. But now, the reformer's tone was altogether different. For the first time, Beza was not only promoting the Huguenot war effort, he was also defending--even extolling--the sincerity and virtue of Henri of Navarre. To Zurich, Beza spoke of the prince's steadfastness, devotion,

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Saulo Paulum facere facillimum fuit. Nec tamen fratres Damasceni eidem converso nisi ipso Deo quasi sponsore certificati, credere poterant [Acts 9.1-27]. Utinam hic nihil peccetur nimia credulitate. Serpentina profecto prudentia opus est, ne sanctum temere obiiciatur canibus." [April] 1586, Zurich, Staatsarchiv, E II 381, fols. 1486-1487.

⁹⁵"Je vous ay aussy averty de l'estat de nos aferes et vous ay représanté l'yncomodité et dommage que nous aporte le retardement du secours quy nous avoyt esté promys, et que nous avons sy longuement attendu.... Tous s'annuyent et beaucoup perdent courage et désespèrent de l'assystance de ceus qui ont un notable yntérest en ceste cause que nous soustenons seuls, encores qu'elle soye commune, et que de nostre perte partyculière en dépende une générale." Henri de Navarre to Beza, 28 October [1586], Geneva, Archives Tronchin, f. Bèze, t. 2, fol. 10. The next spring, Duplessis-Mornay repeated this urgent appeal to Beza: "Si nos amis estrangers tiennent promesse, nous respirerons ung peu après tant de travaulx; mais, comme je vous disois par mes dernières, nous n'avons que faire d'esperance pour nous nourrir le courage; car, grâces à Dieu, nous sommes résoleus en tous événemens de nous défendre à pied." [March] 1587, published in *Mémoires et correspondance*, III, 495-496.

⁹⁶"Hâtez, hâtez, hâtez... le retardements nous ruine." Henri de Navarre to Ségur, cited in Babelon, *Henri IV*, 368.

and gifts of soul and body.⁹⁷ To Bern, Beza praised Navarre's virtuous and heroic character.⁹⁸ To Basle, Henri's exceptional wisdom and virtue were extolled.⁹⁹ To Schaffhausen, he commended the devotion, virtue, and noble wisdom of Navarre and Condé.¹⁰⁰ These ascriptions are all the more striking given their absence from Beza's correspondence hitherto. Pushed by the desperate situation in France, encouraged by Henri's steadfastness, and bound by a sense of duty to his patron, Beza had become a 'public relations' agent for the prince, throwing himself wholeheartedly into systematically rehabilitating the image of Navarre among the Swiss allies.

Geneva's vulnerability in these years contributed to the rapprochement between Beza and Navarre. By 1587, political developments in France, Switzerland and Savoy had made the city on Lac Léman increasingly dependent upon Navarre's political and military support. Navarre's ambassador Clervant appealed to this political symbiosis between city and prince in a revealing letter to the Small Council in February of that year. Because of the power of the Catholic League in France and

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⁹⁷"... principis constantiam, cum summa pietate, et heroicis animi ac corporis virtutibus nequeo tibi pro dignitate praedicare." 29 October/8 November 1586, Hannover, Niedersächs. Landesbibl., ms. XLIII, 1991c, fols. 7-8.

⁹⁸"Navarreni certe sanctam animi vere heroici magnitudinem, satis praedicare tibi non possumus, ut et Condensis et Gallicae conjunctae nobilitatis." 15/25 January 1587. This letter is published in *RCP* V, 314.

⁹⁹"Navarreni vero constantiam cum maxima pietate et sapientia singulari coniunctam, magis ac magis augeri, quantum quidem adhuc ex eius dictis ac factis perspicere licuit." 22 January/1 February 1587, Basle, Univ. Bibl., ms. Frey-Grynaeus, ms. II, Bd. 9, p. 38.

¹⁰⁰"Atqui contra affirmo tibi nihil esse posse nihilominus nostro Navarreno et Condensi, nostrorum denique reliquiis, vel sanctius ac religiosius, vel generosius simul ac prudentius." 22 February/2 March 1587, Schaffhausen, Ministerial Bibliothek, Ulmeriana, t. IV, p. 107.

the tensions in the Swiss alliance, Geneva was politically and militarily isolated. The duke of Savoy no doubt saw the moment propitious and, with the encouragement of the king of Spain and the Pope, was poised to invade Geneva's territories. Similarly, if France was conquered by Leaguer armies, Geneva would soonafter be destroyed. Thus, Clervant argued, Geneva must join its fortunes to Navarre and the Huguenots in France, rather than trust in the provisions of the Treaty of Solothurn or the good will of Swiss allies. "The Reformed cause now knits together the interests of the king of Navarre, the churches of France, and Geneva." The city on Lac Léman should support the French churches and Navarre in every way possible to assure its own survival. Such assistance could pay big dividends in the future, for "if France had a king committed to the Reformed religion, this would serve as a counter-weight against the pope and his allies" and would diminish papal power in the kingdom of France and elsewhere.¹⁰¹ The 'support' Clervant had in mind was substantial: a loan of 15,000 écus and a commitment by Geneva and Bern to organize a secret attack on Savoy. The city councillors refused both of these requests; nonetheless they did allow Clervant and his deputies to raise money for the Huguenot war effort from among

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¹⁰¹"Il [Savoy] void aussy la France tellement brouiller que ceux de la religion ne peuvent rien faire pour la secourir car ilz ont à se défendre eulx mesmes tant contre la ligue que contre le roy de France de prester son nom, ses forces, et finances pour prolonger sa propre ruyne conspirée par ledit Ligue .... le roy d'Espagne, le Pape, et ceulx de la Ligue ont aultant d'intérestz à la commodité de Genève au regard de la France, qu'ilz veulent dissiper comme la France & la Souisse ont de se maintenir l'ung l'autre que sera donner faveur de tous les susdictz contre ledit ville.... Je dis doncs qu'en premier lieu la religion conjoint en ung mesme intérestz le roy de Navarre et les églises de France, avec celles de par deça. Et que si la France avoit ung roy de la religion réformée, il emporteroit le contrepoids contre le Pape et les siens, et comme le premier & plus grand roy entre les Chrestiens, il tireroit la terre par la papaulté.... en second, que si la France est subiuguée de la Ligue que ceste ville ne peult subsister. Par quoy elle se doit esforcer à porter aux affaires des églises de France & du roy de Navarre tout ce qu'elle peult." 13/23 Februy 1587, RC 82, 33-33'.

Geneva's citizens during the spring of 1587. So too, as mercenary armies converged on Geneva in June and July, the magistrates approved sizeable loans to feed and equip them.¹⁰²

The mercenary armies that prepared to invade France during the summer of 1587 included regiments from Neuchâtel, Bern, Zurich and Basle, the fruit in part of Beza's strenuous efforts during the previous year-and-a-half. In thanking the ministers of Bern and Zurich for their assistance in recruiting the Swiss contingent, Beza gave detailed instructions on how this holy "war of the Lord" should be waged. The Swiss troops must be accompanied by steadfast and pious ministers who would exhort the soldiers to act righteously and do their duty. Officers must promise their magistrates to expel all blasphemers, drunkards and women from the camp. Beza cited his own experience as chaplain in the armies of Louis of Condé twenty-five years earlier as an example: "I remember in that first civil war, for twelve months from its beginning to its end, through my strenuous spiritual and physical efforts, there was (God is my witness) hardly a single prostitute in the entire Huguenot camp, and I never heard a single word of blasphemy."¹⁰³ Beza feared that if these same moral precautions were not taken now, the mercenaries--indeed, the Huguenots in

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¹⁰²See De Crue, *Henri IV et Les Députés de Genève*, 12-13; RC 82, 114, 128, 132, 138, 141, 146, 155, 156.

¹⁰³"Sed scio, primo illo bello Civili, cui ab initio ad finem per duodecim menses perfectos interfui, incredibili cum animi cruciatu et corporis labore, (quorum mihi testis est Deus) vix ullam in totis nostrorum Gallorum castris visam foeminam: et de blasphemia execranda nunquam me quicquam audivisse." Beza to Abraham Musculus, 6/16 June 1587, Zofingue, Bibl. municip., p. 14, Epist. Reform. II, fol.. 100.

general--would suffer "the very harsh judgment of God" and the outcome of the expedition would be jeopardized.¹⁰⁴ Too old to accompany the armies he had helped recruit, Beza watched helplessly as the Swiss soldiers departed for France, praying that this 'holy war' would not be defiled by the indiscipline or immorality of the troops. In fact, it was in large part the sexual preoccupations of Navarre, not of his soldiers, that turned the invasion of 1587 into a military disaster.

The mercenary army of 20,000 Swiss and German soldiers under the command of the baron of Dohna finally invaded Lorraine in August 1587. The campaign was a debacle almost from the start. The soldiers were quickly demoralized by poor leadership, difficult conditions, and disease. After joining with an army commanded by François of Châtillon (the son of Coligny) coming from Languedoc, the Swiss soldiers became further disgruntled by long aimless marches and the harassment of royal armies. On November 22, the Swiss unilaterally surrendered to a deputy of the king, agreeing to withdraw from France in return for a large sum of money. Leaving the main body of the Huguenot army, the mercenaries were subsequently slaughtered

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¹⁰⁴"Quum hoc enim bellum sit bellum Domini necesse est illud sancte geri, quantum fieri potest, sequuturo alioqui longe severissimo Dei iudicio, ex tertii praecepti formula. Rogo vos igitur, precor, obtestor, si salvos esse vos et Gallos vultis, detis operam ut ne sint vestri idoneis aliquibus, id est fortibus et vere piis, Verbi ministris destituti, a quibus assidue excubantibus, officii admoneantur. Intemperantiam multum fuerit aliquatenus frenasse; blasphemias autem et scorta quis tolerarit? Utinam frustra istud metuerim de vestris in Ecclesia tot excellentibus pastoribus freta et tot Dei donis exornata natis; et sane spero supervacuam fore hanc meam petitionem. Iterum tamen hoc a vobis peto, et hoc etiam addo, ut quum ista maxima ex parte, a ducum ipsorum exemplo et auctoritate pendeant, omnibus modis efficere conemini ut duces in primis et praecipui sub illis ordinum ductores, expressa promissione obligentur coram Deo sese neque blasphemias neque scorta inter suos scienter passuros. Alioqui non tantum nostros non iuverint, sed etiam pessimis exemplis offenderint; nec felicem ausim istius expeditionis exitum mihi polliceri. Urgete igitur istud, quaeso, instate et conficite, si vestros et nostros salvos vultis. Vultis autem, satis scio." Beza to Johann Stumpf, 6/16 June 1587, Zurich, Staatsarchiv, E. II 368, p. 161-3.

by Leaguer forces as they returned home.¹⁰⁵ The remainder of the Protestant army was defeated by the duke of Guise at Auneau and capitulated two weeks later. In the meantime, the prince of Navarre, still basking in his stunning victory at Coutras (October 1587) and preoccupied with a favorite mistress in Guyenne, made no effort to unite his army with the mercenary troops. The army that Beza had worked so hard to recruit had accomplished nothing.

The military debacle of 1587 threatened to isolate Navarre from his Protestant allies and raised new concerns about the prince's religious intentions. Seeking to minimize the political fallout of this disaster, Navarre sent his deputy Antoine de Moret, Sieur de Réau scurrying through Switzerland and Germany to exonerate himself and express his sadness at this 'great onslaught.'¹⁰⁶ In February 1588, he sent his chaplain Chandieu on a second mission to assure the allies of his goodwill and spiritual resolve.¹⁰⁷ In the meantime, the citizens of Geneva watched the mercenaries straggle home, "mangled, exhausted by hunger, wasted by disease, more like cadavers than men." They assisted the wounded soldiers as they could, burying many

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¹⁰⁵Babelon, *Henri IV*, 391-394; Albert Gobat, *La République de Berne et la France pendant les Guerres de Religion* (Paris: Gedalge, Libraire-Editeur, 1891), 203-219. See also Beza to Constantine Fabricius, 24 January/3 February 1588, Paris, Bibl. Ste. Geneviève, ms. 1455, fols. 12-13.

¹⁰⁶"Commode vero ad nos venit a Navarreno missus vir nobilis et prudens istac quoque, postquam Bernenses et Tigurinos viderit, postea in Germaniam transiturus cum optimis mandatis, ex quibus spero intellecturos omnes nullam in ipso Navarreno culpam huius dissipationis haerere." Beza to Grynaeus, 17/27 January 1588, Basle, Univ. Bibl., Kirchen Archiv, C.I.2, Bd. II, fol. 123. See Rott, *Histoire de la Représentation Diplomatique de la France*, 204, 303. Gobat, *La République de Berne*, 215-216.

¹⁰⁷Rott, *Histoire de la Représentation Diplomatique de la France*, 204; Bernus, *Antoine de Chandieu*, 112-113; Gobat, *Le République de Berne*, 215.

of them.¹⁰⁸ Clervant himself was a casualty of the invasion of 1587, dying in a castle nearby. Beza and his colleague Jean Jaquemot appeared before the Small Council to propose a city-wide fast in order to appease the wrath of God against "his poor Church." In addition to the horrifying "dissipation of this mercenary army" and anxieties for England, Scotland and the Netherlands—which nervously awaited the approach of the Spanish armada—the ministers expressed concerns about the "temptations that the king of Navarre faces today." If the Huguenot prince were to convert to Catholicism, they feared, the result would be "the complete ruin of the Reformed churches in France."¹⁰⁹ Following the ministers' recommendation, the city councillors published a fast for Christmas eve. Though harboring his own concerns, Beza tried to allay the fears and suspicions of the allies, assuring his friends in Germany and Switzerland of the prince's courage and steadfastness.¹¹⁰

Notwithstanding these assurances, however, some like Stucki of Zurich remained uneasy, fearing lest out of revenge, hope, dread or foolish promises Henri of Navarre

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¹⁰⁸"Quos haec civitas laceros, fame confectos, morbis attritos, cadaveribus denique quam hominibus similiores, partim que potuit humanitate fovit, partim mortuos sepelivit." Beza to Constantin Fabricius, 24 January/3 February 1588, Paris, Bibl. Ste. Geneviève, ms. 1455, f. 12-13.

¹⁰⁹"Estans icy comparus Mess^{rs} de Bèze & Jaquemot ... ont proposé que voyant l'ire de Dieu sus sa paouvre Église, la dissipation de ceste armée, la tentation où se retrouve par le jourd'huy le roy de Navarre, lequel s'il se laissoit aller aux promesses & espérances qu'on luy proposoit semble deporter la ruyne totale des Églises de France." 15/25 December 1587, RC 82, 229^v. See also RCP V, 173.

¹¹⁰See Beza to Constantin Fabricius, 24 January/3 February 1588, Paris, Bibl. Ste. Geneviève, ms. 1455, fols. 12-13; Beza to Dürnhoffer, 7/17 February 1588, Paris, Bibl. Ste. Geneviève, ms. 1455, fols. 17^v-18^v; Beza to Grynaeus, 8/18 August 1588, Basle, Universitäts Bibliothek, Kirchen Archiv, C. I. 2, Bd. II, fol. 130.

might "abandon his faith, religion, and duty."¹¹¹

It was with many of these same worries in mind that Beza wrote his patron in March 1588. Amidst reports that Navarre had secretly made contact with the king at Poitou, the reformer's tone was stern, almost threatening. The prince was too inclined to trust wicked councillors out of his "clemency and good nature." He must avoid compromising associations with the enemy, and instead continue to foster fraternal bonds with the Reformed in France and Germany. If Navarre neglected or betrayed these friends, Beza warned, it would be impossible for him to receive any mercenaries from them in the future or to preserve his reputation.¹¹² In sum, Beza argued, the prince must guard himself lest his "good will" and "desire for a good peace" serve as a trap to ensnare him.¹¹³ God alone ruled the days, months, and years, and he alone would bring the civil wars to an end in due season. In the meantime, Navarre must trust in the strength and providence of the Almighty, who

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¹¹¹"Regis Navarreni fortitudo atque constantiae admirabilis, quam in utrisque literis tuis praedicas, nos in tot tantisque malis, curis et solitudinibus nostris vehementer reficit et recreat, Deumque toto pectore precamur ut animum illius sancto suo spiritu magis magisque corroboret, ne ulla vel spe, vel metu, vel minis, vel promissis sese a fide, religione officioque suo dedari patiatur." Wilhelm Stucki to Beza, 4/14 March 1588, Paris, BN, f. Dupuy 268, fol. 187-190.

¹¹²"... vous entreteniez par tous moyens avec Monseigneur le duc Casimir toute bonne é sincère intelligence, et que par mesme moyen l'union mutuelle se continue inviolablement entre les églises françoises et estrangères de nostre confession. Sans lequel lien ainsi réciproque, je supplie très-humblement Vostre Maiesté d'estre persuadée qu'il est comme impossible que vous tiriez aide quelconque des estrangers, ni mesme que vous conserviez vostre réputation en son entier..." Beza to Henri of Navarre, [March] 1588, published in Aumale, *Histoire des Princes de Condé* II, 425.

¹¹³"Ayez au contraire l'oeil ouvert de tous costés, et cognoissant par tant d'expériences à quelles gens vous avez à faire, tenez pour suspectes les promesses les plus avantageuses, à ne souffrez que ny vostre bonté, ny le désir d'une bonne paix (laquelle Dieu nous doint sur toutes choses!), servent de piège pour vous enlacer..." Beza to Navarre, [March] 1588, published in Aumale, *Histoire des Princes de Condé* II, 426.

had chosen him "to be his arm and hands in the world at this hour for the advancement of his glory and the preseveration of his afflicted Church."¹¹⁴ In the next four years, Beza frequently reminded Navarre of this divine calling and holy mission in France. From the reformer's perspective, the interests that bound Navarre, the French Reformed churches and Geneva together were not simply, or primarily, related to money, mercenaries, and political survival; rather, God had knit these allies together to serve the cause of the Gospel in France. If Beza could overlook Navarre's moral deficiencies and support so tirelessly the recruitment of mercenaries, it was because of his passionate pursuit of this higher spiritual objective.

The Theatre of God's Providence

Astrologers had predicted that 1588 would be a year of cataclysms.¹¹⁵ Beza too sensed that the crisis in France was fast approaching a dramatic climax and that the fatal year was at hand. "The horrible tragedy in France is now being played out. Heaven and earth cry with a loud voice that a calamitous year threatens not only us

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¹¹⁴"Et surtout, pour ce que ceste tempête a desjà longtemps duré, et ne se void encore apparence de la fin, il est requis, Sire, que vous considériés en vous-mesmes que, si Dieu a réglé le cours des iours, des mois é des ans, à plus forte raison il a borné l'espreuve des siens, qui luy sont trop plus préteux que le ciel ny la terre, et dont luy-mesmes tient en sa main la iuste mesure. Adioustez à cela, Sire, que c'est au bout de la carrière, é non au commencement ny au milieu, que se trouve le prix de la iouste é ceste couronne incorruptible que Dieu vous a préparée spécialement, comme il lui a pleu vous choisir pour estre son bras é sa main en ce monde pour ceste heure, à l'avancement de sa gloire et conservation de ses pauvres affligés..." Beza to Navarre, [March] 1588, published in Aumale, *Histoire des Princes de Condé* II, 427.

¹¹⁵For a fascinating survey of astrological prognostications for the year 1588, see Crouzet, *Les Guerriers de Dieu*, II, 362-364.

but the whole world."¹¹⁶ The following twelve months would indeed prove to be dramatic, both for Beza personally and for the Reformed in France.

In April, Beza's wife Claudine Denosse died unexpectedly at the age of 66. Grief-stricken, the reformer expressed his deepest feelings to a friend in Germany: "She was a woman endowed with all the virtues of a wife, with whom I spent 39 years, 5 months, and 28 days in utter harmony. She never undertook formal studies, but she possessed so many remarkable virtues that I found it easy to endure this lack. Nothing more bitter in this life could have happened to me, and I have never craved the comfort of friends more. Just when I am most in need of help--soon to be 70 years old, if the Lord wills it--I have lost an incredibly devoted wife. Yet blessed be the name of the Lord our God."¹¹⁷ Four months after the death of Claudine, Beza married a widow named Catherine de Piano, a refugee from Piedmont, in order to

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¹¹⁶"Gallica horrenda tragoedia nunc est ξυ επιτασι. Annum funestissimum nobis, id est toti mundo, instare, caelum ipsum et terra sonora voce testantur." Beza to Dürnhoffer, 17/27 October 1587, Paris, Bibl. Ste. Geneviève, ms. 1455, fol. 196^v-197. See also Beza's comment to Grynaeus at the end of the year 30 December 1587/9 January 1588: "Annum proximum tibi et piis omnibus feliciorum opto quam iam praedixerint Astrologi. Sed quid tum? Si veri comperiantur, qui tam saepe ipsi necem, nobis infinita trophaea fixerit?" Basle, Univ. Bibl., Kirchen Archiv, C.I.2, Bd. II, fol. 121.

¹¹⁷"... foeminam matronalibus omnibus virtutibus ornatam, cuicum placidissime annos transegi triginta novem, menses quinque, dies viginti octo: nullis quidem unquam ex ea susceptis literis, sed quae plurimis maximisque virtutibus efficeret, ut hanc sterilitatem facile perferrem, ut nihil in hac vita accidere mihi potuerit acerbius et amicorum consolatione nunquam magis indigerim: annum mox ingressurus, si Dominus dederit, septuagesimum, ac proinde tum demum amissa mariti, ac pene incredibiliter studiosa uxore, quum eius auxilio maxime indigerem. Sed benedictum esto Domini Dei nostri nomen." Beza to Constantine Fabricius, 30 April/10 May 1588, Paris, Bibl. Ste. Geneviève, ms. 1455, fols. 19^v-20^v. Beza's letter to Grynaeus in Basle reflected similar grief: "Ego privatim, quantum possum, temperare longe acerbissimum dolorem meum enitor. Et sub hac Dei potentis manu proficere in illa vitae melioris expectatione, ad cuius fruitionem uxorem illam meam charissimam praemis." 4/14 May 1588, Basle, Univ. Bibl., Kirchen Archiv, C. I. 2, Bd. II, fols. 127-128.

avoid the pain of solitude and to ease the difficulties of his old age.¹¹⁸

In the meantime, the political situation continued to deteriorate for the Reformed in France. In March 1588, Condé became ill during a meal and died two days later, allegedly poisoned by his wife.¹¹⁹ Beza feared that the "bridle of the spirit of homicide" had been unleashed.¹²⁰ Two months later, the duke of Guise defied the king's prohibition and entered Paris, causing an explosion of popular support. When royal troops tried to reestablish control of the city three days later, the people of Paris, perhaps at the instigation of the 'Sixteen,' erected barricades and resisted. With the city besieged and in an uproar, Henri III fled his capital on May 13.¹²¹ As a result of the 'Day of Barricades,' the Catholic League, with its champion the duke of Guise, was now firmly in control of Paris and many other major towns and cities in the kingdom. The League gained complete power over the king in the Edict of Union of July 1588 that required all royal officials to swear an oath of allegiance to the Holy

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¹¹⁸"Expendam tamen illa pressius, quod mihi facere ex animi sententia nondum licuit, partim variis ac pene infinitis curis occupato, quas differre in aliud tempus nec potui, nec debui; partim perpetuo in illa mea orbitate moerore, ita me, quantumvis repugnantem, opprimente, ut pene nullus fuerim, ac tandem amicorum consilio, & cohortationibus victus, de altero matrimonio ad vitandam solitudinem, & sublevanda meae senectutis incommoda, cogitare fuerim coactus." Beza to Johann Piscator, 27 August/6 September 1588, published in E. S. Cyprian, *Catalogus codicum manuscriptorum bibliothecae Gothanae* (Leipzig: I. F. Gleditsch, 1714), 51-52. For information about Beza's second marriage, see Geisendorf, 325-327.

¹¹⁹Babelon, *Henri IV*, 397-398; see also Navarre to Beza, March [1588], in H. Aumale, *Histoire des Princes de Condé*, II, 422-423.

¹²⁰"... Dieu est grandement courroucé contre nous, puisqu'il a lasché si avant la bride à l'esprit homicide, et par conséquent qu'il est plus besoin que jamais de penser à une bonne et vraye conversion..." Beza to Navarre, [March] 1588, published in Aumale, *Histoire des Princes de Condé* II, 424.

¹²¹See Greengrass, *France in the Age of Henry IV*, 53-55; Baumgarnter, *Radical Reactionaries*, 48-51.

Union as well as recognize Guise as the 'lieutenant-general of the crown.'¹²² As the Catholic League flexed its political muscles in France, a powerful Spanish fleet of 130 vessels set sail from Lisbon bound for England. The dramatic defeat of this Armada in August provided the Reformed a rare opportunity for rejoicing: just as God had once delivered Moses and the Israelites by drowning pharaoh's army in the Red Sea (Exodus 14.21-29) so God had again thrown "the horse and rider into the sea."¹²³

Events in France, however, left the Reformed with little reason for rejoicing in the fall of 1588. Henri III was a helpless pawn in the hands of the duke of Guise and the Catholic League. In the Estates General, convened at Blois in October, a majority of the delegates were supporters of the Holy Union, determined to articulate its ideals and implement its political goals. Repeating many of the arguments of Huguenot polemicists after Saint Bartholomew, these delegates asserted the authority of the Estates General and the sovereignty of the people, insisting upon certain fundamental laws to which even the king was bound.¹²⁴ In addition, the Estates judged Navarre ineligible to succeed Henri III and rejected his call for a national council to resolve the religious crisis. But at the moment when the victory of the Catholic League

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¹²²Wolfe, *The Conversion of Henri IV*, 41-42.

¹²³"De classe tamen Hispanica non procul Caletibus profligata non est quod dubites, ut vere nobis nunc sit illud recinendum Mosis canticum Exodi 15, ac praesertim angelorum illud Mariae carmen dulcissimum: Cantate Jehovahae, eo quod admodum excelluit, equos et ascensores eius deiecit in mare." Beza to Grynæus, 20/30 August 1588, Basle, Univ. Bibl., Kirchen-Archiv, C.I.2, Bd. II, fol. 131. A year later, Beza published a poem in honor of the English victory over the Spanish Armada, dedicated to Queen Elizabeth. *Iobus Theodori Bezae partim commentariis partim paraphrasi illustratus*, 8.

¹²⁴Greengrass, *France in the Age of Henry IV*, 55-56.

appeared complete, the weak king Henri III unexpectedly, and ruthlessly, avenged the years of humiliation he had endured at the hands of Guise. On December 23, the king summoned the duke of Guise to his royal chambers at Blois and watched as his guards assassinated the Catholic noble. Subsequently, Henri ordered the arrest and execution of the Cardinal of Guise and several members of the Sixteen. At the same time, the elderly cardinal Charles of Bourbon was placed under arrest. Two weeks later the queen mother Catherine de Médicis died of natural causes, horrified by the bloodbath and fearing--it was reported--for her son's soul and the survival of the kingdom.¹²⁵

If the brutal massacre at Blois was completely unexpected, the reactions to this event in Paris and Geneva were entirely predictable. In Paris, Leaguer preachers walked the streets crying "Murder! Fire! Blood! Vengeance!" against Henri III, and angry crowds destroyed statues of the king.¹²⁶ Several weeks after Guise's death, the Sorbonne released all French men and women from obedience to Henri III, encouraging armed resistance against him. The Sixteen appointed Guise's brother, the duke of Mayenne, as the lieutenant-general of the kingdom. With the Catholic

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¹²⁵Beza wrote to Johann Jezler of Schaffhausen: "De rebus Gallicis, vide, mi frater, quousque exarserit sceleratorum furor; et mecum Dei providentiam admirare. Guisio et fratre eius Cardinali, tandem insperato Regis mandato, quem ipsi paulo post, uti constat, vel caedi, vel monastrismo destinarent, trucidatis, et Regina matre paulo post ex moerore mortua..." 4/14 February 1589, Schaffhausen, Ministerial Bibliothek, Ulmeriana t. III, p. 123. For an account of these dramatic events, see Babelon, *Henri IV*, 415-418; Wolfe, *The Conversion of Henri IV*, 42; Greengrass, *France in the Age of Henri IV*, 58; Holt, *The French Wars of Religion*, 131-132.

¹²⁶Greengrass, *France in the Age of Henri IV*, 59. Beza reports to Constantin Fabricius on 1/11 January 1589 that "Aurelii et Parisienses, hoc accepto nuntio tam insperato, tumultuari, detractis etiam quibusdam Regis imaginibus, coeperunt." Paris, Bibl. Ste. Geneviève, ms. 1455, fols. 24^v-25^v.

League now firmly in control of civic government in Paris, acts of terrorism against suspected royalists and 'politiques' became common place. By the spring of 1589, the Holy Union had gained control of most of the major cities in France, including Rouen, Orléans, Amiens, Dijon, Troyes, Bourges, Bordeaux, Chartres, and Nantes.¹²⁷ Sixtus V's excommunication of the French king in May gave further support to the Leaguer revolt.

In Protestant Geneva, meanwhile, news of the death of Guise was greeted with joy. At the recommendation of the ministers, the Genevans celebrated the massacre with a fast and the Lord's Supper, giving "solemn thanks to the Lord Almighty, the defender of his cruelly persecuted church and the protector of the kingdom of France," and praying that God would "complete the work that he had begun."¹²⁸ As in the case of the destruction of the Armada five months earlier, Beza expressed his deepest emotions in the words of the Old Testament: "This thing has been done by the Lord, and it is wondrous in our eyes."¹²⁹ God had finally permitted the king to

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¹²⁷Salmon, *Society in Crisis*, 251-257; Babelon, *Henri IV*, 419-420.

¹²⁸"De quo etiam heri, Deo Opt. Max., ut Ecclesiae suae calamitosissimae assertori et Gallici regni vindici, coniuncto cum Coena Domini ieiunio, solemnes gratias egimus; hoc etiam precati, ut pro sua singulari clementia quod coepit opus perficiat." Beza to Grynaeus, 23 December 1588/2 January 1589, Basle, Univ. Bib., Kirchen Archiv, C. I. 2, Bd. II, fol. 134. This fast was proposed in a session of the Company of Pastors on 20/30 December 1588: "Le vendredi 20, d'autant qu'on entendit des nouvelles certaines de la mort de M. de Guise et de son frère le Cardinal de Guise que le Roy avoit fait mourir et qu'il y avoit matière de louer Dieu de telles nouvelles, advisé qu'en faisant le jeusne on monstreroit aussi qu'on se resjouissoit en la grâce du Seigneur." *RCP* V, 213. The report of Guise's death arrived from Lyon on 19/29 December and was discussed in an emergency session of the Small Council the same evening. See *RC* 83, 239.

¹²⁹"Et haec quidem certissima sunt, de quibus vere nobis praedicare licet Davidicum illud: A Domino factum est istud, et est admirabile in oculis nostris [Psalm 118.23]." Beza to Grynaeus, 23 December 1588/2 January 1589, Basle, Univ. Bib., Kirchen Archiv, C. I. 2, Bd. II, fol. 134.

gain righteous vengeance over his arch-enemy, the duke of Guise.¹³⁰ Reformed apologists interpreted the assassination in various ways. Writing to Navarre, Duplessis-Mornay described the duke's death as an act of divine judgment; God had avenged the wrongs done to Navarre without the prince having to 'bloody his hands.'¹³¹ For Simon Goulart, the massacre at Blois represented a long-awaited satisfaction for the blood of the martyrs spilled on Saint Bartholomew's day, presaging the beginning of the final deliverance of the Church predicted in the book of Revelation, the total defeat of the Antichrist and the glorification of the elect.¹³² The Huguenot pamphlet *Discours sur ce qui s'est passé depuis six mois* was less mystical and more practical. The anonymous Protestant author provided ten 'proofs' of divine judgment against the Guises, distinguishing their ignoble demise from the glorious deaths of Huguenot martyrs. The events at Blois demonstrated that the Reformed religion was approved by God; consequently, apostates should repent, flee 'Babylon,' and return to the Protestant faith before it was too late.¹³³ Whatever their

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¹³⁰"De rebus Gallicis, tandem induit Dominus Regem Gallum iustissimae ultionis spiritu, quum hoc unum superesset, ut reipsa regnum inter se dividerent coniurati." Beza to Dürnhoffer, 7/17 January [1589], Paris, Bibl. Ste. Geneviève, ms. 1455, fols. 197-198.

¹³¹"Nous avons à louer Dieu. Ses jugemens sont grands, et la grace qu'il nous faict, non petite, d'estre vengé de vos ennemis, sans en souiller vos mains." Cited in Patry, *Philippe du Plessis-Mornay*, 149.

¹³²"Cette délivrance est le commencement & le saint présage de quelque délivrance beaucoup plus grande, dont l'Église a les Lettres & Sceaux en ses trésors; c'est la totale ruine de l'Antechrist & de sa troupe bandée contre le Fils de Dieu; c'est la parfaite glorification des élus au Roiaume céleste...." The death of Guise "fait (si j'ose ainsi parler) bien ample satisfaction à l'Église, du sang des Martyrs, épandus depuis cinquante ans, notamment en l'an 1572..." [Goulart], preface to *Mémoires de la Ligue*, III, v, viii.

¹³³"Il n'y a remède que par une humble reconnoissance & confession de leurs fautes, & de revenir à Dieu qui nous tend les bras à tous si bénignement par cette délivrance, & de reprendre

differences, all of these apologists shared Beza's major premise: the death of Guise was a wondrous example of divine justice.

The assassination of the duke of Guise proved to be a political disaster for Henri III. Having defied the Catholic League, he now faced its wrath. Not only Paris, but most of the major cities of France were in open rebellion against him. Armies under the command of the duke of Mayenne were hastily reorganized during the spring of 1589 to oppose the king. Leaguer pamphleteers like Jean Boucher, one of the founding members of the Sixteen in Paris, argued that, in light of the king's cruelty and the Sorbonne's act of deposition, private persons could in good conscience take up arms and kill this notorious tyrant.¹³⁴ Politically isolated, Henri III desperately needed the support of the Huguenots. Following a series of secret diplomatic exchanges, Henri III and Navarre signed the treaty of Trève on 3 April 1589.¹³⁵ The kings agreed upon a general cease-fire for one year, during which time Navarre promised to place his army at the king's service in defense of the kingdom against their common enemy, the Catholic League. In return, the king permitted the Huguenots to keep the cities they currently occupied (thus largely rescinding the

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courage sur les occasions qu'il nous en donne en cette merveille, pour lui être plus fidèles & plus constans une autre fois.... Ceux qui ne l'ont fait, & sont rentrés en cette Babilone si lâchement, maintenant que Dieu commence d'y exercer ses jugemens; que le coup qu'il a déjà donné sur nos ennemis, leur soit la voix des Prophètes, qui crie; sortez du milieu de Babilone, mon Peuple, afin que ne receviez de ses pechés, & ne soiez participans de ses plaies." *Discours sur ce qui s'est passé depuis six mois*, in *Mémoires de la Ligue*, III, 483.

¹³⁴Baumgartner, *Radical Reactionaries*, 123-144. This pamphlet was, in fact, at press when Henri III was assassinated in August 1589.

¹³⁵See Sutherland, *The Huguenot Struggle*, 366; Holt, *The French Wars of Religion*, 132-133.

Treaty of Nemours and the Edict of Union) and granted Navarre one town per bailliage throughout the kingdom, plus the fortified city of Saumur. Duplessis-Mornay, who was instrumental in the ratification of the treaty, compared it to the biblical story of the good Samaritan: like the Samaritan traveler, Navarre had rescued the king after he had been robbed of his state by brigands and abandoned by the Catholic clergy.¹³⁶ Navarre's charity toward the king proved that he was a true Christian, a prince of the blood, a 'Samaritan of the Gospel.'

Beza was delighted by the truce.¹³⁷ After long years of royal oppression the king was finally beginning to recognize that the Huguenots were his faithful subjects.¹³⁸ The events in France proved conclusively, he believed, that the Leaguers, rather than the Reformed, were conspirators against the crown and enemies of the kingdom of France. Whereas fifteen years earlier Beza had viewed Henri III as a

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¹³⁶"A nostre roy, ceste histoire, si nous la considerons, convient uniquement, despouillé vraiment de son estat par les brigands, négligé du sacrificateur et du levite; mais je dirai plus, vendeu, livré, trahi pour la pluspart par le clergé. Il lui estoit donc loisible, s'il feut oncques, d'accepter le bon secours de ce Samaritain de l'Évangile, tant plus d'ung prince chrestien, proche de sang, de volonté et de créance; d'ung prince, disons, qui ne peult estre hérétique, puisqu'il ne le veult point estre..." Duplessis-Mornay, "Justification de l'union du roy de Navarre au service du roy Henry III," in *Mémoires et correspondance*, IV, 373.

¹³⁷It does not seem that Beza had the opportunity to counsel Navarre on the advisability of a truce with the king. On 11 February 1589, Duplessis-Mornay wrote M. de Morlas asking him to request Beza's support for the truce in order to quiet the more 'zealous' Huguenots: "Faictes, je vous pryé, que M. de Bèze donne ce conseil au roy de Navarre, comme aultresfois il a faict, par une lettre expresse, et que nous puissions monstrier aulx zelés non assés considérés. Et pouvés lui escrire que nous avons ceste question à debattre ici contre les nostres." *Mémoires et correspondance*, IV, 315. This request apparently was made too late for Beza to respond in time. See Patry, *Philippe du Plessis-Mornay*, 153.

¹³⁸"Regem initio sperantem fore ut ista insania ultro concideret, adigit magis ac magis necessitas ad eos evocandos, quos unos fidos sibi fuisse nunc tandem et videt et agnoscit. At spes omnis nostra in uno Deo esto." Beza to the Count of Sayne-Wittgenstein, 28 March/9 April 1589, published in Friedlaender, 179.

tyrant to be resisted with arms, now the king was a "legitimate prince" who must be obeyed by Huguenots and Leaguers alike.¹³⁹ Filled with a new optimism, the reformer appealed to his friends in Switzerland and Germany later in the spring for more money and mercenaries to assist the war effort in France. Beza anticipated that, with their forces joined, Henri III and Navarre would quickly reduce Paris to submission and crush the Catholic League once for all. Awed by the providence of God, the reformer expressed his deepest emotions to Navarre: "I do not know where to begin or finish, for God has given so many dramatic signs to us, his terrifying judgments on some and boundless compassion on others. We see the wonders of his providence displayed in the leaders that he has chosen and employed, raised up as on a stage for the whole world to admire.... This is why, without entering any further into this abyss from which I could never extricate myself, I will be content to praise and magnify God, even while adoring that which I do not understand. At the same time, I pray according to the glory of his holy name that he might continue the work he has begun so miraculously, casting his eyes with compassion on poor France, especially on the king, on you and the other princes of the blood, and on his poor children who continue to be persecuted so harshly."¹⁴⁰

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¹³⁹"De rebus Gallicis, ut paucis omnia complectar, trucidato Guisio et ipsius fratre Cardinali et captis praecipuis, qui in ipsum Regis caput conjurarant, eo usque exarsit Satanae et ipsius mancipiorum rabies, ut nihil unquam furiosius ausi sint ulli populi in legitimum suum principem, quam in hunc Regem Parisienses, eo uno excepto, quod in ipsum absentem saevire non potuerunt." Beza to the Count of Sayne-Wittgenstein, 4/14 March 1589, published in Friedlaender, 176.

¹⁴⁰"Le subject que j'ay de lui escrire est si abundant et si plain de diverses occurrences que je ne sçai par ou commencer ni achever, soit que je regarde à celui qui nous donne tant de tesmoignages, tant de ses plus terribles jugements sur les uns, que de ses infines compassions sur les aultres, soit que je considère les personnes qu'il produict et met en oeuvre en ce temps auquel il nous faict veoir comme

Events in France during the next four months seemed to justify Beza's optimism. Leaguer armies were powerless to stop the two kings as they marched toward Paris. By July they were on the outskirts of the capital with a formidable army, including 5,000-6,000 Huguenot soldiers, and 10,000 Swiss mercenaries.¹⁴¹ Beza excitedly reported these details to a friend: "The king with an army of 40,000 soldiers has occupied a suburb of Paris on one side, and Navarre on the other. We expect that the surrender will follow very soon."¹⁴² In fact, Henri III never avenged the Day of Barricades. On the morning of 1 August 1589, a Dominican monk named Jacques Clément entered the royal chamber and mortally wounded Henri III. Before dying the last Valois king proclaimed Henri of Navarre to be his lawful heir. A Protestant prince was now the king of Catholic France.

Reports of the assassination reached Beza and Chandieu in Geneva almost three weeks later.¹⁴³ Beza could scarcely contain his excitement as he announced the

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en un théâtre plus hault eslevé que jamais les merveilles de sa providence depuis un bout du monde jusques à l'autre, soit que j'aye esgard aux grandes affaires qui se manient. Voilà pourquoi, sans entrer plus avant en cest abisme dont je ne sçauois sortir, je me contenterai de le louer et magnifier en adorant ce qui je ne puis comprendre, et le suppliant qu'ainsi qu'il a pleu pour la gloire de son saint nom de commencer et avancer son oeuvre si avant et si miraculeusement, regardant de son oeil de compassion la povre France en général et spécialement celui qui en est Roy, vostre personne et tout son sang et ses povres enfans si durement affligez..." Beza to Navarre, 20/30 May 1589, Paris, BN, f. Dupuy, 322, fols. 292-293.

¹⁴¹Babelon, *Henri IV*, 431.

¹⁴²"Ad res autem Gallicas quod attinet, nobis a quodam Mombelgardo regrediente pro certo renuntiatum est regem cum quadraginta millium exercitu Lutetiae suburbia una ex parte, Navarrenum autem ex altera occupasse magna cum brevi sequuturæ deditionis expectatione. Quod si fiat, vix fieri poterit, ut conjurati Hispanogalli diutius subsistant." Beza in the name of the Company of Pastors to the Church of Zurich, 15/25 July 1589, published in *RCP* VI, 151-154.

¹⁴³Beza reported rumors of the royal assassination in a letter to Grynaeus on 9/19 August 1589 (Basle, Univ. Bibl., Kirchen Archiv, C. I. 2, Bd. II, fol. 162). Official confirmation of the king's

news to his friends in Switzerland and Germany: Navarre had become king of France by the wondrous and miraculous hand of God. His accession offered a unique chance for Protestants "to suppress the raging of the Antichrist."¹⁴⁴ Nonetheless, the reformer recognized, Henri had need of their prayers now more than ever, given the united opposition of the Catholic League, the Roman pontiff, and the king Spain. Chandieu perceived the dramatic turn of events in France with similar joy and concern. In his personal journal, Chandieu affixed a long prayer for Navarre:

"Make him, O heavenly Father, a light for everyone by his piety and justice. Compel him to obey your commandments. Grant to him pious, upright and trustworthy advisors.... Enflame in his soul a burning zeal for the spread of the Gospel.... Break, extinguish and destroy by your powerful strength and very righteous judgment the bloody Guises and their wicked and criminal faction, with all their treachery, ungodliness and fanaticism. Give to Henri IV, king of France and Navarre a prosperous, happy and long reign, for the glory of your holy name and for the

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death arrived in Geneva two weeks later: "Le S^r de la Vyolette estant arrivé de la court & raporté la confirmation de la mort du roy & comme le roy du Navarre luy succédé et a esté installé à la courone de consentement des chefz & de l'armée du feu roy." 25 August/4 September, RC 84, 168^v.

¹⁴⁴"Sunt autem gravissimae causae cur Navarrenum tam mirifica et prorsus modis omnibus admirabili Dei manu, ad Gallici Regni solium evectum, in tantis, quae nunc illum circumstant, difficultatibus, omnes Deo Opt. Max. commendemus. Et quum verisimile sit Pontificem et Hispanum, nihil non expecturas potius quam illum Regnum potiri patiantur, cavendum omnino videtur Regibus, Principibus, civitatibus denique orthodoxis omnibus ne tantae ad compescendam Antichristi rabiem obtatae occasione desint quanta ne optari quidem a nobis potuit." Beza to Christoph Pezel, 22 August/1 September 1589, published in W. Lohmeyer, "Zwei Lippe Bezabriefe aus den Jahren 1588-1589," in *Festgabe für E. F. K. Müller* (Erlangen, K. Moers, 1993), 313.

edification of the Christian Church."¹⁴⁵ Both Beza and Chandieu recognized that the accession of a Protestant king offered great opportunities, but also created new complexities and uncertainties for the Huguenots. The future of the Reformed churches in France was now inextricably bound to the person of Henri of Navarre, with all of his strengths and all of his troubling flaws.

The five years from the death of Anjou to the accession of Henri IV witnessed important changes in the political alignment of the Huguenot movement. The radical policies of the Catholic League as well as Navarre's royal prospects compelled Reformed clergymen in Geneva like Beza and Chandieu to lay aside their reservations and side decisively with the prince. In addition to spiritual counsel, they provided crucial political and financial support, defending the prince's program before the Protestant allies and raising funds and mercenaries for the Huguenot war-effort. Protestant jurists with a Genevan connection such as François Hotman and Innocent Gentillet contributed theoretical support by defending Navarre's legal right to the

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¹⁴⁵ "... fortifie-le par ta vertu , assiste-le de ton secours, de sorte que, escorté par l'armée de tes anges, il march en sûreté au travers des assauts, des pièges, des trahisons, des complots, en un mot au travers de toutes les ruses et de toutes les violences; et qu'il s'employe avec activité, fidélité et succès à l'établissement des Églises évangéliques. Fais, ô Père céleste, roi des rois et seigneur des seigneurs, qu'il soit une lumière pour tous par sa piété et sa justice; sou mets sa conduite à tes commandements; accorde lui des conseillers pieux, droits et sûrs. Allume en son âme un zèle ardent pour la propagation de l'Évangile; suscite, confirme et maintiens des pasteurs fidèles, vertueux, saints, et bénis leurs travaux. Rassemble sous son autorité le royaume de France divisé; apaise les troubles; incline les esprits des hommes pour que tous acceptent ton juste dessein. Brise, éteinds et détruis, par ta force oute puissante et ton très juste jugement, les Guizes sanguinaires, perfides, antichrétiens, acharnés, et toute leur faction impie et criminelle. Donne à Henri IV, roi de France et de Navarre, un règne prospère, heureux et long, à la gloire de ton saint nom, pour l'édification de l'Église chrétienne, pour la ruine de la papauté romaine et de tout ce qui est antichrétien, enfin pour la consolation do tous les hommes pieux, spécialement de moi et do tous les miens." Cited in Bernus, *Antoine de Chandieu*, 116.

French throne, attacking the papal excommunication, and calling for a free religious council in France to settle questions about Navarre's faith. Having once asserted the elective nature of the French monarchy and the right of armed resistance, Hotman and Duplessis-Mornay now became champions of hereditary kingship and civil obedience. However, a note of concern and uncertainty pervades these precise legal treatises and volatile religious pamphlets published by Huguenot authors between 1584-1589. The problem of Catholic conversion and questions about Navarre's religious sincerity evince deep-rooted anxiety about the future of Protestantism in France. If anything, the accession of Navarre in 1589 exacerbated rather than resolved these concerns.

CHAPTER IV

THE 'TEMPTATIONS OF DAVID,' 1589-1593

"Mais c'est à vous, et vrais Rois et vrais Princes,
 Dignes d'avoir royaumes et provinces,
 Qui défendez, sous l'ombre de vos ailes,
 La vie, hélas! de maints povres Fidèles.
 C'est (di-je) à vous auxquels parle et s'adresse
 Du grand David la harpe chanteresse:
 Puisqu'entre tous Dieu vous fait l'avantage
 De bien sçavoir entendre son langage."¹

Between 1589 and 1593, Protestant Geneva and Catholic Paris were cities under siege. Long harassed by the economic blockades and military threats of Charles-Emmanuel, the magistrates of Geneva decided in the early months of 1589 to check once for all the aggressive overtures of their hostile neighbor. In April, a small Genevan army under the command of the French ambassador Harlay de Sancy and reinforced with Swiss mercenaries invaded Savoy with the intent of capturing nearby fortresses and conquering the surrounding territories of Chablais and Gex. Begun with great enthusiasm, the military campaign quickly faltered: in mid-May, Henri III recalled Sancy, who departed for France with most of his mercenaries in tow; a short time later, Bern 'betrayed' Geneva by signing a separate peace with

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¹"Les Psaumes et l'Épître Dédicatoire de Théodore de Bèze," in *Bulletin* 1 (1853): 97.

Savoy.² Geneva was left to fight its bitter enemy alone. For the next four years, the city waged a desperate war of survival, besieged by land and lake, filled with dispossessed peasants. Old and tired, Theodore Beza longed for the quiet of death. "We are now encircled on every side.... If only the Lord would grant to me what he once gave to Augustine, when Hippo was besieged by barbarians."³

The situation in Paris was equally critical. In the months following Henri IV's accession in August 1589, the capital city weathered repeated attacks by royal armies. The harshest period was the siege of the summer of 1590, in which perhaps as many as 5,000 people died in the capital city from starvation and disease.⁴ Hunger and war only galvanized Leaguer opposition to Navarre. The Sixteen continued its reign of terror, purging moderates and suspected 'politiques' from the Parlement and city hall. Leaguer preachers and authors justified resistance, even regicide, against the Protestant king. This protracted violence, Beza believed, was a sign of God's judgment against Paris for the massacres of Saint Bartholomew's day; this insanity "can surely not be cured without the cauterizing iron."⁵ But the 'cauterizing iron' failed

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²For a summary of these events, see Monter, *Calvin's Geneva*, 201-205; Dufour, *La Guerre de 1589-1593* (Genève: A. Jullien, Éditeur, 1958).

³"Nos undique iam circumcingimur.... Utinam id saltem mihi detur, quod olim Augustino, Hippone a barbaris obsessa." Beza to Grynaeus, Geneva, 13/23 September 1589, Basle, Univ. Bibl., Kirchen Archiv, C. I. 2, Bd. II, fol. 139. Augustine died during this siege in 430.

⁴In the "Brief Traité des Misères de la Ville de Paris" an anonymous Huguenot author vividly described the horrors of the siege, estimating the number of victims at 30,000 people and recounting instances of cannibalism. See Goulart's *Mémoires de la Ligue*, IV, 304-317.

⁵"Mallem absque sanguine omnia posse componi. Sed Deum ferre non posse video ut carnificina illa anni 72 abeat inulta. Nec certe sine cauteris curari haec insania poeterit. Beza to Grynaeus, 12/22 May 1590, Basle, Univ. Bibl., Kirchen Archiv, C. I. 2, Bd. II, fol. 156.

to do its anticipated work. Unable to capture his capital city by force, Navarre finally acceded to Catholic demands and abjured the Protestant religion at Saint Denis on 25 July 1593.

The years between Navarre's accession to the French throne and his religious conversion have long fascinated historians of early modern France. Scholars have been particularly interested in identifying the motivations underlying Henri IV's conversion and the precise moment that he resolved to take this 'perilous leap.'⁶ In addition, the political activities and social composition of the Catholic League during the first years of Navarre's reign have received careful attention.⁷ By contrast, the developments and tensions within the Reformed movement between 1589 and 1593 have been almost completely neglected, viewed as an unimportant side-show overshadowed by the drama of the king's abjuration.⁸ In this chapter, I will carefully examine the stress-points in French Protestantism during this volatile period and, for the first time, explore the strategies adopted by Theodore Beza and other Reformed leaders to shape royal policy and assure the survival of confessional Calvinism. The specter of a royal conversion--looming large throughout these years--

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⁶See for example Benoît, *Histoire de l'Édit de Nantes*, 54-97; Patry, *Philippe du Plessis-Mornay*, 230-246; and Babelon, *Henri IV*, 525-566. Wolfe's monograph *The Conversion of Henri IV* provides a refreshing exception to this trend.

⁷The recent surveys of Mack Holt and Mark Greengrass provide helpful discussions of the League during this period. See Holt, *The French Wars of Religion*, 134-152; Greengrass, *France in the Age of Henri IV*, 62-72.

⁸The most detailed treatment of the Huguenot movement during this period is found in Benoît's old and highly partisan *Histoire de l'Édit de Nantes* I, 54-97. In Sutherland's otherwise excellent book, *The Huguenot Struggle*, the crucial years from 1589 to 1593 are relegated to four pages. A similar oversight is evident in the monographs of Léonard, Holt, Greengrass and Wolfe.

placed enormous pressure on the Huguenots, creating and exacerbating theological and political rifts that threatened to break apart the consensual foundations of the movement. Aware of these growing divisions, Beza attempted in his correspondence and books to preserve the doctrinal unity of the churches, even as he worked systematically to bolster Henri of Navarre's wavering commitment to the Protestant religion. Political uncertainty in France, combined with a growing crisis in Reformed leadership, left Beza with deep concerns for the future of French Protestantism. It became all the more important, he believed, that those few veterans of the Protestant 'golden age' preserve and defend Calvin's fragile legacy in Geneva and France.

Counsel for a King

Less than a week after the assassination of Henri of Valois, Duplessis-Mornay advised Henri IV, the new king of France: "Win over the Catholics, but do not lose your Huguenots!"⁹ This two-pronged strategy was central to Navarre's political program during the next decade. The most urgent need in August of 1589 was to assuage the fears and win the support of Catholic notables in the royal council and army.¹⁰ On 4 August 1589, Henri IV issued a "Declaration" at Saint Cloud in which he promised to maintain and preserve the Roman Catholic religion without innovation,

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⁹"Gagnés les catholiques, mais ne perdez pas vos huguenots." Duplessis-Mornay to Henri IV, 1 September 1589, in *Mémoires et correspondance* IV, 407.

¹⁰For a provocative discussion of the political *and* religious issues involved in Navarre's accession, see Ronald S. Love, "Winning the Catholics: Henri IV and the Religious Dilemma in August 1589," *Canadian Journal of History* 24 (1989): 361-379.

to fill vacant offices with Catholic candidates, and to abide by the restrictions that recent edicts of pacification had placed on the exercise of the Reformed faith. In addition, Navarre repeated his desire to be "instructed by a good, legitimate and free general or national council," vowing to convene such an assembly within six months if possible.¹¹ By encouraging Catholic hopes for his conversion, Henri IV was at least partially successful in stemming the disintegration of the royal army and winning support from Catholic Loyalists like the marshal of Matignon and the baron of Biron.¹² In the confusing morass of French politics during the early 1590s, one thing was clear: Navarre would never be embraced as king of the whole of France unless he was first recognized as king of Paris. And to bring his capital city to submission, Navarre desperately needed the allegiance and support of French Catholics as well as Huguenots.

Navarre's concessions at Saint Cloud did not satisfy everyone. For many Catholics in France, the succession of a Protestant prince, indeed a 'relapsed heretic,' was unthinkable given the long-standing tie between the French monarchy and the Catholic religion. They believed that the law of Catholicity, as expressed in the

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¹¹Henri IV promised "à tous nos bons et fidèles subjects de maintenir et conserver en nostre royaume la religion catholique, apostolique et romaine en son entier, sans y innover ni changer aulcune chose, soit en la police et exercice d'icelle, ou aux personnes et biens ecclésiastiques... et que, suivant la déclaration patente par nous faite avant nostre advènement à ceste couronne, nous sommes prests, et ne désirons rien davantage que d'estre instruit par ung bon, légitime et libre Concile général ou national, pour ensuivre et observer ce qui y sera conleu et arresté; qu'à ces fins, nous ferons convoquer et assembler dans six mois, ou plustost s'il est possible..." "Declaration du Roy Henry IV" in Duplessis-Mornay, *Mémoires et correspondance* IV, 381-382.

¹²Holt, *The French Wars of Religion*, 133-134; Wolfe cites Auguste Poirson, who estimates that more than one-third of the Catholics in the royal army abandoned the new king Henri IV after the regicide. *The Conversion of Henri IV*, 56-68.

formula *un roi, une foi, une loi*, took precedence over every other law of succession. Catholic writers disagreed, however, as to whether Henri's exclusion from the throne was irremediable. Apologists of the Catholic League appealed to the sacral nature of the French monarchy to show that a 'relapsed heretic' could never receive the holy unction of kingship. The solution to France's crisis was not to convert Navarre, but to fight him and exterminate the pernicious heresy that he defended. Following the regicide of 1589, Leaguer cities continued to defy royal authority, throwing their support behind Navarre's aged uncle, Charles, Cardinal of Bourbon. When this 'surrogate' king died in May of 1590, Leaguer assemblies laid aside the principle of hereditary succession altogether and became increasingly tantalized by a Spanish proposal to place the son of Guise and the daughter of Phillip II on the French throne. More moderate Catholics--often described as the 'Third Party'--rejected this 'Spanish' option but remained unwilling to support a Protestant prince under the ban of the Roman church. Some members of this Third Party advocated the royal claims of the nephew of Charles of Bourbon, the Cardinal of Vendôme. Others attempted to pressure Navarre to abjure the Protestant religion and become a Catholic king. His conversion, they believed, was necessary for civil order and would serve as an important first step toward achieving religious unity in the kingdom.¹³ Thus, while Leaguers and the Third Party were united in their opposition to the Protestant prince, they proposed quite different solutions to the French political crisis.

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¹³Wolfe, *The Conversion of Henri IV*, 33-34.

Henri IV's enemies were not only Catholic. Even before his accession, the prince had faced increasing opposition from French Protestants who questioned his religious sincerity and chafed under his authority. In a Huguenot political assembly at La Rochelle at the end of 1588, representatives upraided their 'protector' for his private immorality, careless military strategy, and moderation toward Catholic opponents.¹⁴ The assembly reviewed--and criticized--the account books of Navarre's household and placed new restrictions on the prince's political power, even reorganizing his council and requiring him to swear an oath of allegiance to the Huguenot cause. Following this humiliation, Navarre complained: "If I had to face another assembly, I would go completely crazy!"¹⁵

Henri's "Declaration" at Saint Cloud eight months later did nothing to alleviate Huguenot concerns. Angered by the king's conciliatory tone toward the Catholics, the Protestant chief La Trémoille abandoned his support of Navarre and withdrew his soldiers from the royal army. The powerful aristocrat Henri, Vicomte of Turenne, long jealous of Navarre, also refused his military assistance.¹⁶ Duplessis-Mornay attempted to heal these growing rifts between Navarre and the Huguenot magnates,

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¹⁴See Anquez, *Histoire des Assemblées Politiques*, 38-51; Babelon, *Henri IV*, 411-414.

¹⁵"Vraiment, s'il se faisait encore une assemblée, je deviendrais fou." Cited in Anquez, *Histoire des Assemblées Politiques*, 51.

¹⁶Claude de La Trémoille, duke of Thouars, was the brother-in-law of Henri, prince of Condé. His base of power was in the Poitevin marshes and southern Brittany. Henri, Vicomte of Turenne (from 1591, the duke of Bouillon) was seigneur of upper Limousin and, after Navarre, the Protestants' most powerful leader. These men were kinsmen by marriage, each having married a daughter of William the Silent. For more information on these two Protestant princes, see Sutherland, *The Huguenot Struggle*, 287-291; Greengrass, *France in the Age of Henri IV*, 95-96.

recognizing that such rivalries only pushed the king toward the Catholics.¹⁷ The extent of Huguenot distrust was demonstrated in the political assembly at Saint Jean d'Angely in September 1589, in which delegates debated whether to seek a new protector for the Reformed churches.¹⁸ Many Huguenots complained that their position in France had become more precarious under Navarre than when the Catholic Henri III had been on the throne. Hearing about this assembly, the king protested bitterly to his councillor Duplessis-Mornay, arguing that the assembly's actions were illegal and based on lies. Navarre pointed out that while Huguenot nobles questioned his religious sincerity and bemoaned their legal status in the kingdom, he continued resolutely to fight a desperate war, beset by ferocious enemies, seditious Catholic preachers, and untrustworthy allies.¹⁹ Nonetheless, Huguenot complaints ultimately forced Henri to risk Catholic disapproval and grant concessions. In July 1591, after restating his desire to be instructed by a religious council, the king issued the edict of Mantes which revoked the Leaguer edicts of 1585 (Treaty of Nemours) and 1588 (the Edict of Union), thereby restoring the Huguenot's legal standing in the kingdom to

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¹⁷"Seulement vous dirai je, monsieur, que je voudrois ... que vous fussiés maintenant près du roy. Considerés que la couronne lui est plustost tombée sur la teste, qu'escheve paisiblement; et partant qu'il y a plus de quoi l'estourdir, que de quoi l'honorer à ces commencemens. Vous n'ignorés point aussi les tentations des ungs, et les importunités des aultres.... Qui est cause qu'il est necessaire que chacung mette la main à cette couronne d'espines, si on veult qu'ell se tourne en fleurs de lis." Duplessis-Mornay to Turenne, 18 August 1589, in *Mémoires et correspondance* IV, 402.

¹⁸Anquez, *Histoire des Assemblées Politiques*, 52; Elie Benoît, *Histoire de l'Édit de Nantes*, 60-68.

¹⁹See Henri IV to Duplessis-Mornay, 7 November 1589, in *Mémoires et correspondance* IV, 426-430.

what it had been in 1580 after the peace of Fleix.²⁰

The Genevan clergy had more confidence in the French king. Although the Savoyard blockade made communication difficult,²¹ Henri nonetheless maintained his Genevan ties. He corresponded frequently with Beza and the magistrates of Geneva, assuring them of his good-will and promising his military support once Paris was brought to submission. Royal councillors, ambassadors, and generals showed a similar concern for the plight of the city.²² During the first years of Henri's reign, Beza continued to receive an annuity from the king, and actively promoted the king's interests before the city's magistrates and in his correspondence with foreign friends. At the reformer's urgings, the Small Council sent Paul Chevalier as a resident ambassador to Henri's court in the spring of 1592.²³ These points of contact with Navarre and his councillors helped sustain Beza's confidence in the sincerity and

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²⁰See Sutherland, *The Huguenot Struggle*, 296, 368-369; Greengrass, *France in the Age of Henri IV*, 97-98. The treaty of Fleix had confirmed the Edict of Poitiers(1577) which gave the Protestants the rights to worship in one place per bailliage, on the estates of Protestant notables, and in eight fortified cities. The regional parlements in France refused to promulgate the Edict of Mantes, rendering it almost completely ineffective.

²¹"De rebus Gallicis, non dubito quin isthic plura pene quam nos frequenter audiatis, sic nobis interclusis per Burgundiam itineribus, ut quam paucissimi, vel a Rege ad nos, vel ad Regem a nobis non sic commeant." Beza to Dürnhoffer, 12/22 June 1590, Paris, Bibl. Ste. Geneviève, ms. 1455, fols. 201-201^v.

²²Among these royal officials, we find the councillors Duplessis-Mornay and François de La Noue; the deputies Nicolas Brulart, seigneur of Sillery and Philippe Canaye, sieur Du Fresne; and the military captains François de Bonne, duke of Lesdiguières, Jean de Chaumont, seigneur of Quित्रy, and Guillaume de Clugny, baron of Conforgien. For information about these officials, see De Crue, *Henri IV et les Députés de Genève*, 51-56.

²³Beza had first encouraged a permanent ambassador at the royal court in 1589. On 12/22 March 1591, Beza again urged the magistrates to establish formal diplomatic ties with Navarre. See RC 86, 57. Due to limited finances, Paul Chevalier departed Geneva only in May 1592. See De Crue, *Henri IV et les Députés de Genève*, 36.

reliability of the Protestant king. The reformer was not oblivious to the temptations that the king faced: surrounding himself with Catholic advisors, Henri was too willing to listen to evil counsel and too indulgent toward his enemies.²⁴ Nonetheless, the reformer believed that Henri was God's chosen instrument to resolve the French crisis. To allies in Switzerland and Germany, as well as to the Reformed in France, Beza defended Navarre's character and extolled the prince's providential role to restore the kingdom and protect the true religion.²⁵ Thus, in the epistolary preface to his sermons on Christ's passion (1592), addressed to the pastors, elders and deacons of the French Reformed churches, Beza insisted: "Just as God brings light from the darkness, so he has miraculously used an unfortunate, abominable, and, to say it in a

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²⁴"Idem vides ipsi Regi in Gallia hoste patientia ipsius et clementia abutente evenisse." Beza to Grynaeus, 17/27 November 1590, Basle, Univ. Bibl., Kirchen Archiv, C. I. 2, Bd. II, fol. 170. "Nec aliam esse puto certiore causam, cur Gallicae istae tempestates tam lente componantur, quam quod pati non possit Deus, ut cum istis desperatissime sceleratis tam clementer agatur, quam Rex ille noster optavit et studuit; cuius tamen virtutes, ac speciatim clementiam ipsi etiam hostes pertinacissimi coguntur praedicare." Beza to Constantin Fabricius, 18/28 December 1590, Paris, Bibl. Ste. Geneviève, ms. 1455, fols. 38-38^v. "Et quod ad me attinet, multo magis vereor, ne Cacolycorum, quibus Rex circumcingitur, consiliis mala et infida pax ineatur, quam ut Rex armis vincatur." Beza to Grynaeus, 16/26 May 1592, Basle, Univ. Bibl., Kirchen Archiv, C. I. 2, Bd. II, fol. 196.

²⁵"Illud tamen certum est, tam rara felicitate adhuc omnia novo nostro Christianissimo et summis heroicis multis virtutibus ornato, ipsius denique Dei manu evecto Regi, ex animi sententia successisse, ut illum admirari, et eius vere generosum animum laudare hostes etiam ipsi cogantur." Beza to Dürnhoffer, 12/22 June 1590, Paris, Bibl. Ste. Geneviève, ms. 1455, fols. 201-201^v. "Rex interim, singulari Dei beneficio, ita fortiter simul, et tum prudenter, tum moderate se gerit, ut sese reddat ipsis hostibus magis ac magis admirabilem..." Beza to Rudolf Stumpf, 2/12 January 1592, Zurich, Staatsarchiv, E II 368, p. 156-157. "... et illum re ac nomine christianissimum Regem certo audemus nobis polliceri, si Dominus, quod brevi futurum speramus, facultatem egregiae ipsius in nos voluntati respondentem ipsi concesserit, suis adversus communem hostem promissis minime defuturum." Beza to Gregorius Tribelius, 20/30 May 1592, Paris, Bibl. Ste. Geneviève, ms. 1455, fols. 65-66. "... vous avez embrassé la iuste defensive du Roy très-Chrestien, que Dieu a comme envoyé du ciel de sa propre main comme pour ressusciter la splendeur de ce grand Royaume vostre voisin, & spécialement les povres Églises réformées en icelui..." Beza to the Christian Estates of the Provinces of Holland, Zeeland..., 1/11 January 1593, dedicatory epistle to *Sermons sur l'histoire de la résurrection*, ¶¶. vii^v.

word, completely monkish assassination to raise up--or rather to send from heaven--Henri of Navarre." The French king was like a "pilot and captain," called by God to rescue a kingdom "on the verge of shipwreck, or about to fall into the hands of pirates and buccaneers."²⁶ Despite the temptations besetting the king, Beza was convinced Navarre would remain firm.

In the first weeks of 1590, Beza and Chandieu received letters from Henri²⁷ and resolved anew to encourage and do everything possible to help his cause. "We have received the best reports about the king from people whose judgment I trust greatly, in as much as they are not flatterers but are good judges of character. But since a myriad of disasters afflict this prince both from the right and left, he desperately needs the prayers and sound advice of all good men. Thus, Chandieu and I will do what we can, although we are far away."²⁸ During the next three years, Beza wrote Navarre frequently, exhorting him to spiritual constancy and updating him

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²⁶"D'autre part considerant le grand miracle de Dieu ayant vrayement tiré la lumière des ténèbres, quand d'un si malheureux, abominable, & pour dire tout en un mot, vrayement monachal assassinat, il a fait sourdre, ou plustost, comme envoyé du ciel, conformément aux loix du Royaume, un tel pilote & gouverneur du navire tout prest à faire naufrage, où à tomber entre les mains de tels pyrates & escumeurs de ceste mer..." Beza, letter-preface (dated 24 June/4 July [1591]), *Sermons sur l'histoire de la passion*, ¶. v^r.

²⁷Although neither letter appears to be extant, Chandieu expressed his delight in his journal: "C'est ici la première lettre que j'ai reçu de *Henri IV, roi de France et de Navarre*. Protège-le, Père tout puissant, à l'ombre de tes ailes, et affermis son âme dans la vraie religion." Cited in Bernus, *Antoine de Chandieu*, 116.

²⁸"De Rege, optima quaeque nuntiantur ab iis quorum testimoniis multum tribuo, utpote quos noverim neque adulescentes esse, neque imperitos rerum istarum aestimatores. Mitto etiam ad te privatim scriptas ipsius ad me literas. Sed quum huic Principi, si ulli unquam alii, gravissimae et ad dextram et ad sinistram incumbant tempestates, bonorum omnium precibus et fidis consiliis illi opus est: qua in re Sadeel [Chandieu] noster et ego praestamus quod possunt qui procul absunt." Beza to Grynaeus, 15/25 January 1590, Basle, Univ. Bibl., Kirchen Archiv, C. I. 2, Bd. II, fols. 151-151^{bis}.

on Geneva's perilous military situation. In addition, about the time of Navarre's accession, the Genevan pastor penned a detailed position paper in which he advised the king on how to manage his royal council and personal affairs. This precious document demonstrates the extent to which Beza perceived himself as both Navarre's spiritual councillor *and* political advisor.²⁹

In seventeen points, Beza's treatise addressed the king's personal conduct, the execution of justice, and the nature and function of the royal council. Navarre should continually seek God's wisdom in prayer, guarding his conscience from stain and protecting his ears from blasphemies, filthy language, and cursing. Promises should be made cautiously, and kept scrupulously. As a good judge, he must punish quickly and severely those crimes and wicked deeds considered intolerable by both religions; impious persons who profess neither Protestantism nor Catholicism and were

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²⁹This document, written in Beza's hand, specifies neither the recipient nor date. Although internal evidence makes clear that this work was intended for Henri of Navarre, scholars have suggested very different dates for its composition. In his eighteenth-century biography of Beza, Schlosser suggested that this document was probably written shortly after Henri converted to Catholicism (272). This hypothesis is decisively undercut by the fact that Jean Casimir—whom Beza assumes to be alive—died more than twenty months before the abjuration of Henri at Saint Denis. Moreover, Beza would hardly be counseling the king on the nature and composition of his small council four years after his accession to the throne. By contrast, Bretschneider proposed that this document should be dated shortly after the death of Jeanne d'Albret (May 1572), at which time Henri began to rule Navarre. This proposal is equally untenable, given that Beza's sample prayer in the document is for the kingdom of France, not of Navarre. It is better, therefore, to date this piece from the months immediately following Navarre's accession (1 August 1589), but before Beza had knowledge of the death of the regent of the Palatinate, Jean Casimir on 16 January 1592. The reformer's warning that Navarre avoid councillors who seek to separate him from "Monsieur le Prince" raises difficulties, in that the prince of Condé was assassinated more than eighteen months before Navarre's accession. Thus, it is best to take this as an allusion to Condé's infant son, born on 1 September 1588. See Aumale, *Histoire des Princes de Condé* II, 222. Beza's position paper to Navarre is found at the Forschungsbibliothek in Gotha, ms. A 404, fol. 165-167. It is published in Gottl. Bretschneider, ed., *Johannis Calvini, Theod. Bezae, Henrici IV regis, aliorumque illius aevi hominum litterae quaedam nondum editae* (Lipsiae, 1835), 175-179.

unwilling to stand correction should be banished, lest they bring great misfortune to the kingdom.³⁰ Beza addressed the nature of Navarre's royal council in greater detail. Henri must avoid councillors who were wicked or who attempted to pull him from the French Reformed churches and his other Protestant allies.³¹ Members of his small council should be chosen on the basis of wisdom and experience, rather than status or wealth, and if possible should include an equal number of Catholics and Protestants.³² He must be careful not to create jealousy among his advisors by preferring those of one religion over the other. Council meetings--which Navarre must regularly attend--should be opened with a brief prayer,³³ and council decisions recorded in a closely-guarded register. Finally, Henri must promote the free and legitimate assembly of

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³⁰"... d'avoir surtout l'honneur de Dieu en telle recommandation que ceux qui monsteroient par leur propos ou par leur vie, qu'ils sont entachés d'impiété, et qui ne feront vraye profession de l'une ou l'autre religion, soyent sans aucune exception, s'ils se rendent incorrigibles, pour le moins déchassés au loing, non seulement comme inutiles à tout bien, mais aussi comme causes de toute malheureté." Bretschneider, *Johannis Calvini, Theod. Bezae, Henrici IV regis...*, 178-179.

³¹"De prendre garde de près à ceux, qui lui tiendroient propos tendans à le desioindre d'avec Monsieur le Prince, messieurs de Monmorenci, et surtout des églises, et en général avec ceux l'union, desquels est l'appui de son parti après Dieu, tenant toute fois telle mesure en cest endroit, qu'il ne croye légèrement un rapport contre-ceux, qui auparavant se seront monstrés gens de bien et ses fidèles serviteurs, et ne mesprise aussi cela de quoy gens dignes de foy l'avertiront." Bretschneider, *Johannis Calvini, Theod. Bezae, Henrici IV regis...*, 176-177.

³²"D'eslire un conseil secrèt, certain et ordinaire, regardant non point tant aux qualités ou richesses, qu'à la sagesse, prudence et expérience des personnes. Et que s'il est possible il y ait nombre égal des deux religions." Bretschneider, *Johannis Calvini, Theod. Bezae, Henrici IV regis...*, 177. Beza was no doubt referring to the king's small council--known as the *conseil étroit, secret*, or *des affaires*--that normally consisted of between five to eleven councillors and was responsible for high policy. See Salmon's discussion of the different royal councils, *Society in Crisis*, 65-66.

³³Beza offered a sample prayer for these occasions: "Seigneur nostre Dieu, qui es auteur et donneur de toute sagesse et prudence, estans ici assemblés pour adviser à ce qui appartient à ta gloire, et à la tranquillité de ce pauvre et désolé royaume de France, nous te supplions qu'il te plaise avoir pitié de nous, et nous enseigner les consels utiles et nécessaires, et les a heureuse issue, pour ton honneur et bien public d'icelui, au nom du père, du fils et du saint esprit. Amen." Bretschneider, *Johannis Calvini, Theod. Bezae, Henrici IV regis...*, 177-178.

the Estates General which, far from detracting from royal grandeur and freedom, rendered kings and princes "peaceful and at ease in their consciences, loved and honored by their subjects like a father his children, dreaded by their enemies, and blessed by God and man."³⁴ If Henry followed this counsel, Beza wrote, he would gain God's favor and would have a prosperous reign.

These recommendations provide important insights into the reformer's expectations for the kingdom of France at the time of the king's accession. In arguing for a balance of power of Catholics and Protestants on the king's small council, Beza recognized, and at least provisionally accepted, the existence of two religions in the kingdom. Henri should be the king of both confessions. This concession probably reflected more Beza's pragmatism than any new-found irenicism. Following the "Declaration" at Saint Cloud, Henri's small council became so dominated by Catholic advisors that by the fall of 1590, Duplessis-Mornay was the only Protestant in the king's inner circle.³⁵ Rather than a compromise, therefore, Beza's call for confessional parity in Henri's small council was instead an attempt to ameliorate the Huguenots' growing disadvantage. These insights force a modification

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³⁴"D'escouter encores moins les flatteurs, qui le voudroyent desgouster de l'assemblée libre et légitime des estats, comme si cela dérogoit à la grandeur et liberté des Royes et princes; estant au rebours une telle assemblée bien réglée, le vray moyen de rendre les Roys et princes paisibles en leur conscience et à leur aise, aimés et honorés de leurs subjects comme un père de ses enfans, redoutés de leurs ennemis, benicts de Dieu et des hommes." Bretschneider, *Johannis Calvini, Theod. Bezae, Henrici IV regis...*, 178.

³⁵Patry, *Philippe du Plessis-Mornay*, 194-195. See also, Wolfe, *The Conversion of Henri IV*, 100-101. Wolfe points out, however, that despite Catholic dominance at court, Henri frequently relied on a 'shadow cabinet' of Huguenot advisors, including Sancy, Duplessis-Mornay, François de La Noue and Jean de Serres.

in a recent monograph that asserts that Beza viewed Navarre's reign as a key step toward the evangelization of France.³⁶ It is true that the reformer anticipated that the Bourbon king would grant legal protection to French Protestants and create a political climate in which the Reformed religion could prosper and grow.³⁷ Less than six months after Henri's accession, Beza stated this expectation explicitly: "If the king perseveres strongly--which I am completely confident will happen by God's grace--and guarantees liberty for our Reformed churches, then the darkness will give way to more light than any synod could yield through his initiative..."³⁸ But given the political realities of the late 1580s and early 1590s, Beza was hoping, not for a Protestant France, but for a pacified kingdom in which the Reformed churches coexisted with a less dogmatic, Gallican Catholicism. He envisioned, not the complete evangelization of France, but religious liberty and political security for the Reformed religion.

Beza's political advice to Navarre shows that confessional rivalries were not the only object of the reformer's concern. His warning against 'impious' people who

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³⁶Wolfe, *The Conversion of Henri IV*, 32.

³⁷"C'est la prière que nous faisons pour vous, Sire, jour et nuict, envers celuy qui ceint le bandeau aux Roys, à ce qu'il luy plaise parachever son grand et admirable ouvrage, qui est la restauration de sa povre Église en vous et par vous, sur lequel seul vray et ferme fondement si vous bastissez ce qui concerne le repos public de vostre Royaume, ne vous laissant destourner ni à droict ni à gauche, vostre M. ne doit aucunement douter que quelques difficultés qui se présentent, l'issue n'en soit heureuse et mesmes glorieuse pour vous devant Dieu et devant les hommes." 18/28 June 1590, Geneva, Archives Tronchin à Bessinge, f. Bèze, vol. 2, no. 16.

³⁸"Sed si modo, quod omnino futurum, Deo favente, confido, tum Rex ipse fortiter perstiterit, tum libertas secure nostris concedatur, tenebrae, sponte sua potius quam ulla Synodo, ad solis exorientis lucem evanescent..." Beza to Grynaeus, 15/25 January 1590, Basle, Univ. Bibl., Kirchen Archiv, C. I. 2, Bd. II, fol. 151-151'.

rejected *both* the Protestant and Catholic religions points to his alarm--voiced also in his sermons--that the long years of warfare in France had unleashed a new spirit of 'atheism' and 'libertinism' threatening to destroy religion altogether.³⁹ The 'atheists,' Beza believed, were the "largest sect that rules today throughout the Christian world."⁴⁰ Moreover, the Genevan reformer may well have been referring to the looming threat of royal absolutism in his criticism of certain 'flatterers' who decried the Estates General as being antithetical to the grandeur and freedom of the king. Such opposition to absolutism, as we have seen, was a prominent theme in Beza's *Du droit des magistrats*, in his sermons and exegetical works. These dangers of 'atheism,' 'libertinism' and political 'absolutism' may well have made Beza more responsive to a political settlement in France between Catholics and Protestants.

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³⁹Scholars continue to debate whether one can already use the term 'atheist,' strictly defined, for the sixteenth century. Nonetheless, both Catholic and Protestant authors at the end of the century--among whom we can include Beza--were alarmed by a perceived growth in heterodox views that questioned central tenets of the Christian faith and advocated moral license. Thus, for example, Louis de Mayerne de Turquet wrote in his *Épître au Roy*: "... l'athéisme ... est nourri parmi nos contentions, & est desia grandement creu entre le peuple" ([Genève: J. de Tournes], 1590). See CDM, 128. François de La Noue offered a similar argument: "Aussi, qui voudroit conter les Athéistes et Libertins que la guerre a formés, ils peupleroyent deux provinces, et trois ne contiendroyent pas ceux qui, par faute d'instruction, cheminent ingoramment hors de la voye." In "Lettre de Monsieur de La Noue," *Bulletin* 36 (1888), 319. For a general discussion of the problem of 'atheism' in the last decades of the sixteenth century, see Venard, in *Histoire de la France religieuse*, II, 313-316.

⁴⁰"... n'y a-il point aujourd'hui des Chrestiens Stoïques, Aristoteliques, Platoniques, Averroïstes, auxquels estans adioustés les Épicuriens & Athéistes, qui sont la plus grand secte qui regne aujourd'hui en ce reste de Chrestienté, & puis estans adioincts à ce nombre les povres idiots & superstitieux, hélas!" *Sermons sur l'histoire de la résurrection*, 416-417.

Mirrors for a Prince

Henri IV's accession in 1589 prompted other Huguenot leaders to provide literary counsel to the new king. Although these treatises addressed a wide range of political, military and religious topics, nonetheless two themes stand out in importance and frequency: the question of the king's conversion, and the biblical ideal of kingship.⁴¹ These themes taken together provide important insights as to how Huguenots attempted to fashion the religious convictions of Henri of Navarre as well as the strategies they proposed for resolving the religious crisis and pacifying the kingdom.

Two of the most prominent Huguenot authors who addressed the question of Henri's conversion were Jean de Sponde⁴² and François de La Noue.⁴³ Both were responding to Catholic treatises that posited the king's abjuration as a necessary step for the pacification of the kingdom.⁴⁴ In his *Advertissement au Roy* (1591), Sponde

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⁴¹For a partial list of French political pamphlets between 1589-1593, see Robert O. Lindsay and John Neu, eds., *French Political Pamphlets 1547-1648. A Catalog of Major Collections in American Libraries* (Madison, WI: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1969), 96-125.

⁴²Trained at Basle, Sponde was a noted Hellenist, humanist and poet in the circle of Henri of Navarre. In 1592, the king named him lieutenant-general of the senechal of La Rochelle. Shortly after Henri IV's conversion in the summer of 1593, Sponde followed his patron's example and abjured the Protestant religion. See *FP IX*, 315-316 as well as François Ruchon and Alan Boase, *La Vie et l'Oeuvre de Jean de Sponde* (Genève: éditions Pierre Cailler, 1949), 13-81.

⁴³A renowned Huguenot general, La Noue was the protégé of Coligny, a councillor of Alençon, a one-time governor of La Rochelle, and a friend of Geneva and Beza. He died at the siege of Lamballe in August of 1591. See *FP VI*, 280-296, and F. E. Sutcliffe's introduction to La Noue's *Discours politiques & militaires* (Genève: Librairie Droz, 1967), i-xxviii.

⁴⁴One of the most important of these Catholic treatises was Jacques Davy Du Perron's *Discours sur une question d'Estat de ce temps. Questions: Que le Roy ne se faict il catholique? S'il se faisoit catholique son Royaume seroit incontinent en paix...* (n.p., 1591). For a discussion of this work, see Corrado Vivanti, *Lotta politica e pace religiosa in Francia fra Cinque e Seicento* (Torino:

argued that contrary to the assurances of Catholic opponents, a royal conversion would ruin Henri IV's reputation, jeopardize his political prospects, and ultimately endanger the kingdom.⁴⁵ His argument, as the author readily admitted, was based on political considerations rather than theological conclusions. Navarre had won glory throughout Europe as a courageous soldier, a moderate prince, and a committed Protestant. If he betrayed the Huguenots and converted to Catholicism, his religious zeal would be questioned by everybody. He would appear to be more the disciple of Machiavelli than a follower of Christ.⁴⁶ Likewise, such a perilous step would not improve his political position in France, since Huguenots would certainly abandon him, and Catholics would continue to distrust him. Even if he attended all the masses celebrated in France, he could not expect any better treatment from his Catholic enemies than his predecessor Henri III, who had been assassinated by a monk even though he was a devout son of the Roman Church.⁴⁷ It was far better for Catholics to

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Giulio Einaudi editore, 1963), 205-207. For a discussion of other Huguenot responses to Du Perron's work, see F. Schickler's article "Hotman de Villiers et son Temps," in the *Bulletin* 17 (1868): 468-472.

⁴⁵*Advertissement au Roy, où sont deduictes les raisons d'estat, pour lesquelles il ne luy est pas bien sçant de changer de religion* (n.p., 1589). This work is found in Alan Boase, *Jean de Sponde, Oeuvres Littéraires* (Genève: Librairie Droz, 1978), 301-328.

⁴⁶"... votre réputation, Sire, recevra une tache signalée d'inconstance, que chacun croit très aisément qu'il ne logea jamais zèle quelconque de Religion dans votre âme, que vos déportemens passés n'ont été qu'hypocrisie pour établir vos affaires particulières dans votre parti, que vous avez été nourri aux blasphèmes détestables des Machiavelistes qui se masquent de toutes sortes de Religions favorables pour regner, qu'il ne vous chaut en fin nullement de Dieu, lequel vous servez à la poste des hommes, et de vous-mêmes, comme par risée, et mocquerie de chose que vous ne croïez point." Sponde, *Advertissement au Roy*, 303.

⁴⁷"Croyez-vous que ces desesperés, ces acharnés, se puissent plus émouvoir de quelque aiguillon de repentance en votre endroit, quand vous auriez dévoré toutes les Messes de la France, qu'en l'endroit de votre prédécesseur, qui n'avoit jamais eu faute de cette dévotion?" Sponde, *Advertissement au Roy*, 326.

see Navarre persevere in the Reformed faith, than for Huguenots to witness a sudden abjuration.⁴⁸ Finally, Sponde argued that a royal conversion would intensify rather than put an end to the civil wars in France. Leaguers would not be satisfied with Navarre's conversion, but would demand that he confirm his volte-face by fighting the Protestants. To prove his sincerity, the king would be forced to follow this bloody path, becoming the executioner rather than the physician of the afflicted kingdom.⁴⁹ Sponde concluded, therefore, that it was far better for the king to remain a Protestant and, in doing so, to preserve his royal dignity and authority, than, through a hasty conversion, to risk alienating his friends and ruining his reputation.

While repeating several of Sponde's arguments, François de La Noue's "Letter" refuted at length Catholic claims that the king's conversion would assure the peace of the kingdom.⁵⁰ The members of the League have boasted that they act on religious principle, but in fact they were motivated by ambition, vengeance, and greed. Because they were on the Spanish payroll, they would continue to preach

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⁴⁸"N'est il pas plus tolérable aux Catholiques de vous voir persévérez en votre Religion, qu'aux Huguenots de vous voir si précipité au changement?" Sponde, *Advertissement au Roy*, 320.

⁴⁹"Mais quoi! Sire, que trouvez-vous à votre avenement à la Couronne, sinon que Dieu vous a établi pour rétablir ces misérables ruines, au lieu de les ammonceler? sinon qu'un corps ulcéré comme celui-ci ne se guérira jamais par nouveaux ulcères? Que vous lui êtes donné comme médecin et non pas comme bourreau?" Sponde, *Advertissement au Roy*, 323.

⁵⁰In 1589, La Noue wrote an untitled treatise (apparently never published during his lifetime) on the question of the king's conversion. This document is found in "François de La Noue et la Conversion du Roy," *Bulletin* 36 (1888): 311-323. For a discussion of this work, see Vivanti, *Lotta politica e pace religiosa in Francia*, 207-209.

sedition and regicide, even if Navarre converted.⁵¹ Regardless of whether the king was a Catholic or Protestant, the League would never submit to him or lay down its arms. But one might ask, if conversion was not a viable option, should Navarre perhaps abstain from attending Reformed services so as to silence his opponents? La Noue discounted this proposal as well, recalling that when William, the prince of Orange, attempted to appease his Catholic subjects by abstaining from public worship, within three or four months they were accusing him of being an atheist and libertine.⁵² Thus, the solution to France's miseries would be found not in the conversion of Henri IV nor in the cloaking of his religious convictions, but in the humble obedience of true French men and women. Recognizing Navarre's divine call and the basic Christian tenets on which they agreed, Catholics and Protestants must seek forgiveness from one another, rally behind their rightful king, and together expel the foreign mercenaries and Spanish influence from France. With peace reestablished, the king could finally summon the long-promised national synod to address the religious differences between the parties and reestablish the unity of the French

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⁵¹"Vous, cependant, hommes sanguinaires, estans bien à vos aises, sans péril et sans peine, voyez jouer cest piteuse tragédie, visans tousjours à ce but de jeter vostre païs sous le joug de l'Hespagnol, à qui pour un vil prix vous l'avez vendu." La Noue, "Lettre," 316.

⁵²"Feu Mons^r le prince d'Orange ... fut conseillé, pour les moins effaroucher et les attirer à soy, de s'abstenir pour quelque temps de l'exercice public de sa religion, réservant de faire les prières en sa chambre, ce qu'il pratiquoit journellement. Mais au bout de trois ou quatre mois, sans attendre davantage, les catholiques ses ennemis disoyent que c'estoit un Atheïste qui ne se soucioit d'aucune religion. Les autres catholiques de son party, quand ils prenoient un malcontentement, l'appeloient libertin; et le vulgaire des huguenots ne se pouvoit garder de dire que ceste sagesse mondaine periroit..." La Noue, "Lettre," 317-318.

Church.⁵³ La Noue's vision for religious concord stood in sharp contrast to Sponde's political realism. Nonetheless, both men agreed that the king's conversion would endanger Navarre's future without stemming the ambitions of the Catholic League.

In addition to warning Henri IV against conversion, Huguenot intellectuals attempted to instruct the new king on the qualities of a godly ruler. The assumption underlying this literature was that only a righteous prince, called by God, could resolve the political and religious troubles plaguing the French kingdom. The biblical example of King David was frequently held up as a model illustrating the nature of 'Christian kingship.'⁵⁴ In his *Méditation sur le Psalme Cent-Un*, dedicated to Henri IV, Duplessis-Mornay discussed at length how the example of David ought to provide

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⁵³"... apres, requerir un concile général, et, au refus, en tenir un national, faire entendre au Roy le mérite de la religion catholique, à luy incogneue, par des bons et sçavans Évesques et docteurs, n'ayans pour fin que la gloire de Dieu et le salut des âmes; luy représenter quelle a esté l'Église primitive, luy faire considérer les opinions des saints pères qui ont luy au monde comme pierres précieuses, conferer amiablement et sans contention avec les autres théologiens qui se trouveront en ces publiques convocations; et ne faut douter, si Dieu répand sa bénédiction sur la paix, qu'il ne bénisse aussi la concorde de l'Église, et que sa Majesté ne donne contentement à ses subjects, le salut et le bien desquels elle a en recommandation autant que le sien propre." La Noue, "Lettre," 321.

⁵⁴In addition to the two works examined below, note the vivid use of David-imagery in the anonymous treatise "Discours au Roy par un Sien Sujet et Serviteur": "L'exemple en est en David, et en beaucoup d'autres.... Le règlement de la réformation d'une maison doit commencer en la personne d'un père de famille. Quelle honte, quel reproche, quel opprobre, si on voit un Roy de la Religion Réformée, en ses moeurs y'estre semblable? Vous permettez aux Catholiques Romains de conserver leur religion, et vous devez avoir soin de conserver la vostre. Aussi ie croy qu'ils ne s'en attendront d'oresnavant à votre vigilance. David, que volontiers ie vous proposeray pour exemple et miroir, dit que le zèle de la maison de Dieu l'a bruslé, cette maison est l'Église de Dieu. Depuis vostre advènement à la Couronne, quelle preuve avez vous donné de vostre ardeur à l'avancement de vostre Religion? car si vous avez creu iusques icy que la vostre est la vraye, pourquoy en l'exercice d'icelle vous montrez vous si froid et si remis? .... David avoit failly lourdement, il vous a laissé le patron de sa repentance en sept ou huit de ses Pseaumes et en l'histoire de sa vie, il dit luy mesme qu'il n'a point plüst confessé à Dieu son forfait que par sa bonté vray pardon ne luy ait esté fait: faites de mesme, et le mesme vous aviendra, la faveur de Dieu estant éclipsee, elle paroistra dès l'heure que vous la chercherez avec amendement de vostre vie et résolution de suivre son conseil." Published in *Bulletin* 1 (1853): 105-112, 155-158.

the pattern for the king's personal life, courtly behavior, and political policies.⁵⁵ Just as people look into a mirror to compose their faces, so "kings who wish to order their lives find an excellent mirror in the person of David, who was both a king and prophet."⁵⁶ There were many parallels, he believed, between the life of David and that of Henri: both were born of a noble house yet called "from the desert" to be kings; both overcame the threats of evil men and mounted their thrones without bloodying their hands.⁵⁷ Now, if Navarre served the Lord faithfully like David before him, he too would pacify his kingdom and enjoy a prosperous reign.⁵⁸

What then were the qualities that made David a godly king? Duplessis-Mornay highlighted several traits: David was bold and courageous. In public affairs he balanced justice with mercy, and had nothing to do with wicked men. In his personal life, he conducted himself according to God's law, guarding his eyes, ears, and lips from sin. David's life, Duplessis-Mornay argued, belied the popular proverb

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⁵⁵This work was written in 1590 and appears in the second edition of Duplessis-Mornay's *Les Méditations chrestiennes sur plusieurs Psaumes* (1590). See Patry, *Philippe du Plessis-Mornay*, 284. I have used a later edition of this work, found under the title *Méditation sur le Psalme Cent-Un* (dated 1596) in the BPU of Geneva, without publisher or place of publication listed. See CDM, 130.

⁵⁶"Les hommes, qui veulent composer leurs visages, & leurs contenance, vont aux mirouërs: Les Roys pour dresser leurs actions, ont un excellent mirouër en David; Roy & Prophete." *Méditation*, 7.

⁵⁷"Tous deux nez de race Royale, mais appelez à estre Roys du fonds des deserts, & des montaignes. Toux [sic] deux montez sur leur Throne, par dessus le ventre de leur ennemis. Mais par une spéciale grâce de Dieu; sans avoir souillé en leur sang, ny leurs consciences, ny leurs mains." *Méditation*, 8.

⁵⁸"Mais David, victorieux de tout cela, par la crainte de Dieu qui l'asseuroit de toutes craintes. Qui aujourd'huy, en la personne de son David, SIRE, vous promet victoire; vous donne caution d'un règne très-paisible; si vous le servez sincèrement, & si vous pensez vrayemnt régner en le servant." *Méditation*, 8.

'A bad man makes a good prince.'⁵⁹ Henri IV, then, should pattern his personal life and public policies after this great Jewish king. Rather than amusing himself with courtly activities, Henri must seek a higher kind of pleasure, emulating David and Solomon who delighted in the restoration of the temple of God and the reestablishment of pure worship. This, then, should be Navarre's chief passion and goal. Today, in France, "all the people sigh under the weight of calamity and groan for some type of reformation, for an improvement in their condition. Think of what love a king would receive from his contemporaries, what glory from posterity, and what joy in his soul to have rebuilt the temple of the Lord, re-erected its altars, and restored its worship! Think of the benefits if, in the same way, he healed the schisms, divisions, and factions in the Church and State!"⁶⁰ More important than statecraft, Henri's primary task must be to restore the French churches fallen into disrepair; like David, he must "cleanse and reform the city of his God."⁶¹ Behind this vision, however, Duplessis-Mornay communicated a subtle admonition: a righteous king must carefully pick godly advisors and have nothing to do with flatterers and other wicked men. Indeed, Navarre's reign would be blessed of God only in so far as

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⁵⁹"Leçon fort contraire aux cours de nostre temps, qui ont passé en article de constume ce proverbe, De mauvais homme, bon Prince." Duplessis-Mornay, *Méditation*, 31.

⁶⁰"Tous souspirans sous le faix de la calamité, tous respirans après quelque réformation, quelque meilleur estat. Pensez quel amour acquerroit ce Roy-là envers son siècle, quelle gloire à la postérité, quelle ioye en son âme, d'avoir rebasti le temple du Seigneur, redressé ses autels, repurgé son service, d'avoir par mesme moyne soudé les schismes, les divisions, les partialitez, en l'Église, en l'Estat?" *Méditation*, 49.

⁶¹"Mais, comme David, pour repurger, pour réformer la cité de son Dieu, non tant pour régner, dit il, paisiblement, & à son aise, que pour faire régner l'Éternel en son Estat, pour le faire saintement servir en son Église." Duplessis-Mornay, *Méditation*, 94.

his councillors and officers were righteous, free from passion and faction.⁶² What began as a treatise praising Henri's Davidic character ended with an implicit warning against the king's advisors. If Navarre were to follow in the footsteps of the biblical king and rebuild his kingdom, he must not only watch his morals, but cleanse his royal council.

The Reformed minister Pierre Merlin offered Henri IV a different kind of 'mirror' or vision of godly kingship.⁶³ His published sermons on the book of Esther (1591), dedicated to the French king, contain many political observations and practical insights for righteous rule.⁶⁴ Merlin was particularly concerned to warn Navarre against wicked councillors who, like the villain Haman in the book of Esther, usurped royal power and sought to persecute the people of God. Kings often elevated to positions of honor wicked men who fed their vanity with honeyed words and pandered

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⁶²"Un Roy, pour iuste & bénin qu'il soit en soy, n'est iuste & bénin, s'il est tout seul. Il faut qu'il soit assisté de Conseillers & d'Officiers, qui luy ressemblent." Duplessis-Mornay, *Méditations*, 76.

⁶³Merlin studied theology at Geneva under Theodore Beza, before becoming a chaplain of Coligny in the early 1560s. As we have seen, he found temporary refuge in Geneva after the massacres of Saint Bartholomew's day. In the following years, Merlin was the chief pastor of the church of La Rochelle, and elected moderator of the National Synods of Sainte-Foy (1578) and Vitré (1583). See *FP* VII, 387-390.

⁶⁴Pierre Merlin, *XXVI. Sermons sur le livre d'Esther* (La Rochelle: Hierosme Haultin, 1591). This work was translated into Latin and published two years later under the title *Petri Merlini homiliae XXVI. in lib. Esterae* (Genevae: Franciscum Le Preux, 1593). See CDM, 138. A letter from Duplessis-Mornay to Merlin on 1 July 1591 makes it clear that this sermon collection was forwarded to the king: "M. Merlin, votre fils, m'a aussi envoyé votre Esther, que je lis avec profit et plaisir, et l'ai mis es mains de M. des Reaux, nostre ami commun, pour le présenter au roy..." *Mémoires et correspondance* V, 48.

to their sensual lusts.⁶⁵ These flatterers encouraged kings to exact heavy taxes on their poor subjects and encouraged them to believe that they were above the laws of the kingdom.⁶⁶ Once entrusted with political power, these sycophants frequently plotted against the true Church, seeking to silence and even destroy innocent Christians. Merlin argued that this was exactly what had happened during the reign of Henri III: having won the ear of the late king, the duke of Guise and the Catholic League undertook a desperate conspiracy to exterminate the Reformed religion from France. Henri of Navarre, therefore, must pay careful attention to these lessons from biblical and recent history. He should diligently enforce the laws of the kingdom and never think it below his majesty to obey them. He must avoid councillors who were flatterers, ambitious, avaracious and vindictive, seeking instead wise advisors who would warn and even rebuke him if necessary. Like king David, he should govern with justice and clemency.⁶⁷ Finally, Navarre must turn a deaf ear to those calumniators who blamed France's problems on the Huguenots. "The experience of

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⁶⁵"Un petit plaisir reçu voire en chose dés-honneste, un conseil donné pour establir la tyrannie, & croistre les impôts, la recherche de quelques nouvelles voluptez, une flaterie extrême, seront souvent aux Roys suffisantes causes pour avancer en honneur les plus meschans, les tenir pour leur plus chers amis & favoris, iusques à faire tout & conduire tout par leur advis & conseil." Merlin, *Sermons sur le livre d'Ester*, 108.

⁶⁶"Ainsi les Roys souvent font de bonnes loix, mais ils ne se soucient de les garder, & pensent que c'est chose indigne de leur maiesté d'obeir aux loix qu'ils ont faites. Ce qu'aussi leurs flateurs leur preschent sans cesse: mais c'est pour néant qu'ils font de bonnes loix, s'ils ne les autorisent par leur exemple." Merlin, *Sermons sur le livre d'Ester*, 39.

⁶⁷"... sages aussi & heureux sont les Roys & gouverneurs, qui sçavent conduire & gouverner leurs peuples en toute droicture & clémence à l'exemple de David, auquel on void que ce n'est pas assez à un Roy de faire bonne chère à ses suiets, mais il est requis qu'ils apportent une science de iustice & clémence pour les bien gouverner." Merlin, *Sermons sur le livre d'Ester*, 33.

all the ages has shown and continues to show that the cause of troubles is not the true religion, but rather the malice of those who cannot endure the truth."⁶⁸ Merlin's blueprint for peace and prosperity, therefore, pictured a merciful and just king, subject to law, ruling with the assistance of wise councillors. Behind this vision, however, were real fears about Henri's advisors and concerns about the growing influence of absolutist theories of monarchy. While not completely despairing of the king's religious constancy, Huguenot authors like Merlin, Beza, La Noue, and Duplessis-Mornay understood the pressures that Henri IV faced, and worked strenuously to prevent his conversion. The royal council, they recognized, had become the chief battleground for the king's conscience.

Old Problems, New Fears

In June 1590, the Genevan minister Simon Goulart noted in his journal: "Monsieur Beza is beginning to decline."⁶⁹ The weight of ministerial duties and the physical ailments accompanying old age were exacting their toll on the septuagenarian reformer. Increasingly feeble, partially deaf, afflicted by arthritis and occasional bouts of vertigo, Beza yearned for rest. But the needs of the French churches and the relentless demands of his ministry in Geneva--to say nothing of the Savoyard war--made retirement impossible. To a friend in Breslau, the reformer wrote: "Remember

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⁶⁸"Mais l'experience & l'usage de tout temps a monsté & monstre encores, que la vraie religion n'est la cause des troubles, ains la malice de ceux qui ne la peuvent souffrir." Merlin, *Sermons sur le livre d'Ester*, 129.

⁶⁹Cited in Geisendorf, 378.

to pray more and more for your friend Beza as he looks down the final stretch of his course. Although I am worn out, the Lord has never before given me a heavier load to carry."⁷⁰ In the fall of 1590, the old minister asked the Company of Pastors to release him from his duties.⁷¹ The Genevan clergy agreed to relieve him of his week-day preaching, but insisted that he continue his lectures at the Academy and his Sunday sermons. Geneva had too few ministers and professors to permit the old reformer a respite.

Beza's physical discomforts were exacerbated by growing financial difficulties. Although born into the French lesser nobility, Beza had given up most of his rights of inheritance when he fled to Geneva in 1548.⁷² Now, forty years later, the financial demands of a large household and the erosive effects of inflation had almost

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⁷⁰"Memineris magis ac magis reliquum sui curriculi conspicientem Bezam tuum Domino commendare, idque eo magis, quod nunquam gravius, quam ipsi iam effoeto, impositum fuit onus: a Domino certe." Beza to Jacob Monau, 14/24 December 1589, in B. F. Hummel, *Epistolarum historica ecclesiasticarum seculo XVI a celeberrimis viris scriptarum semicenturia* (Halae: Ioannis Iac. Gebaveri, 1778), 92.

⁷¹"Ce jour mesme [25 September/5 October 1590], M. de Bèze, n'ayant peu se trouver en la Compaignie, nous pria de nous assembler à une heure en sa maison. Ce qu'estant fait, il nous fit entendre son indisposition et comme doresenavant il ne pourroit faire ce qu'il avoit fait, non pas faute de bonne volonté, mais de force. Et pourtant requeroit qu'on y eut esgard. La Compaignie luy fit response en luy donnant courage qu'on se contenteroit pourveu qu'il preschast seulement la dimanche et qu'il fit ses leçons ayant esgard à l'Eschole; que du reste on le deschargeroit." *RCP VI*, 51.

⁷²A notarial document entitled "Donation réciproque d'entre vifz faicte et passée entre Noble et Spectable Théodore de Besze et dame Claude Desnos sa femme" (dated March of 1579), reveals that Beza had chosen not to pursue either his paternal or maternal inheritance rights, given that he was childless and that his brothers and sister had many children. Thus, "il n'en a iamais reçu que environ mil livres tournois qui n'est la dixième partie de ce que feu son seigneur et père luy devoit dallievre..." Geneva, MHR, Archives Tronchin 4, no. 10.

completely depleted his resources.⁷³ Moreover, after 1590 the Genevan reformer frequently did not receive his annuity from Henri of Navarre; occasional gifts from the royal administrator Sancy only partially covered the shortfall.⁷⁴ It became impossible to support his wife, step-daughter, servants and many guests on his annual pastoral salary. By the spring of 1592, he had only 200 écus to his name, not including the value of his furniture and books.⁷⁵ In the years that followed, the city magistrates made gifts of money and food to the reformer from time to time, recognizing that "Monsieur Beza is in some need..."⁷⁶ Likewise, wealthy friends in France, Germany and Eastern Europe sent him monetary gifts, sometimes offering additional assistance if needed.⁷⁷ The sale of his library to a Czech nobleman in 1599

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⁷³Given inflation, Jean-François Bergier calculates that real clerical salaries in Geneva decreased by half between 1567 and 1592. See "Salaires Des Pasteurs de Genève," 176.

⁷⁴"De laquelle pension [i.e. from Navarre] ledit de Besze a esté payé du vivant dudit Sieur de Clervant, et depuis encores par le moyen de ses bons amys, et fraichement encores de six années qui ne luy avoyent esté payée, il en a reçu trois par la souvenance et bienveillance de Monsieur de Sancy et d'autres ausquels ledit de Besze est trèsgrandement attenu..." Beza to Antoine de La Faye, 6/16 April 1596, Geneva, Archives Tronchin à Bessinge, f. Bèze, vol. 4, fol. 58.

⁷⁵"A esté icy raporté par M^r le premier Syndique que M^r de Bèze luy avoit délivré dix escus sol pour la contribution declairant que tout son biens consiste en 200 escus, qu'il a de reste outre ses meubles et livres. A esté arresté qu'attendre sa bonne volonté & ce peu de moyens qu'il ha que on les luy rendu." 30 May/9 June 1592, RC 87, 108.

⁷⁶See 21/31 December 1591, RC 86, 235^{r-v}.

⁷⁷In 1593, for example, Madame Duplessis-Mornay and other friends in France sent money to Beza through the intermediacy of Jean-Baptiste Rotan. Acknowledging the receipt of this gift, Rotan wrote: "... j'ai reçu les cinquantes escus qu'il vous a pleu me faire délivrer pour M. de Bèze. Je les lui ai envoyé par lettres de change avec cent aultres qui m'ont esté baillés par quelques seigneurs de ces quartiers, et je m'asseure qu'il les recevra dans ung mois ou six sepmaines pour le plus tard.... je vous remercie très humblement de ceste charité que vous avés faite en son endroit..." Rotan to Madame Duplessis-Mornay, 30 May 1593, in *Mémoires et correspondance* V, 439-440. For other contributions made to Beza, see Venceslas Lavinus to Beza, 1 August 1590, in F. Hruby, *Étudiants tchèques aux écoles protestantes de l'Europe occidentale* (Brno: Université Purkyne, 1970), 161-162. Beza to Grynaeus, 26 September/6 October 1593, Basle, Univ. Bibl., Kirchen Archiv, C. I. 2, Bd. II, fol. 10.

for the price of 600 gold crowns was prompted by his acute financial situation.⁷⁸

Despite these efforts, Beza's monetary woes continued throughout his final years.

As Beza struggled against the weariness and poverty of old age, he continued to watch with sadness the passing away of a generation of influential friends and reformers. In February 1590, François Hotman—"that old and constant friend and companion of my exile"—died in Basle.⁷⁹ In the next two years, the Reformed churches lost the Huguenot captain François de La Noue, the antistes of Zurich Johann Stumpf, the Bernese pastor Abraham Musculus, the Neuchâtel minister David Chaillet, and the count of the Palatinate, Jean Casimir. For Beza the greatest blow was the unexpected death of his close friend Antoine de Chandieu in March of 1591. Reporting this death to the Vicomte of Turenne, Beza expressed his deepest pain: "In his righteous wrath, God has been pleased to draw to himself that great man Monsieur Chandieu, who died very happily on the twenty-third of last month... One could create a stream with all the tears that have been shed in Geneva and elsewhere by those who understand the consequences of such a gaping wound. As for me

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Manfred Balbani to Beza, 18 August 1597, Geneva, MHR, Archives Tronchin 4, fol. 68.

⁷⁸"Offero igitur pro illo quod petis, sex centos coronatos, quos statim ad nundinas ex puro auro solvam, nam citius magnam istam summam ad peregrinandum destinatam accipere nolo propter magnum lucrum quod mercatores petunt. Neque tamen ita debet esse soluta Bibliotheca: sed plura a nobis intelligas." John Paludius to Beza, [1599], Geneva, MHR, Archives Tronchin 5, fol. 278.

⁷⁹"Ergo praeiit nobis noster quoque Hotomannus in beatas illas sedes, idque eo tempore quo patriae et Ecclesiis Gallicis maxime profutura videbatur ipsius opera, si nobis Dominus eam, quam speramus, instaurationem rerum Gallicarum concesserit. Sed age, hic quoque acquiescamus in Optimi Patris et Servatoris nostri voluntate. Ego veteri et perpetuo amico et exili mei socio, quanquam ille me, licet aetate posterior biennio pietatis zelo antevertit, his, quos ad te mitto, versiculis parentavi." Beza to Grynaeus, March 1590, Basle, Univ. Bibl., Kirchen Archiv, C. I. 2, Bd. II, fol. 154. Hotman was, in fact, five years Beza's junior.

personally, I have lost a friend for whom I would sacrifice my life--even many lives--if I could. But because this is the will of God, may his name be praised."⁸⁰ The death of Chandieu could not have come at a worse time. Tossed to and fro by persecution and political uncertainty, the French churches desperately needed a formidable captain like the gifted Chandieu.⁸¹ In addition, Beza may well have hoped that his younger protégé would one day succeed him at the Academy. Chandieu's decease--indeed the deaths of all these leaders--had left the Christian flock destitute of much-needed ministers and was a clear indication, Beza believed, of God's anger against the Reformed churches.⁸²

The attrition in leadership caused deep concern about the future of the French Reformed movement. In France, too many Protestant churches had to survive without ministers.⁸³ Even the Genevan pastoral corps was seriously understaffed after

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⁸⁰"Il a pleu à nostre Dieu justement courroucé, de retirer à soy feu ce grand personnage Monsieur de Chandieu, qui décéda très heureusement quant à luy, le 23 du passé, mais nous laissant très juste occasion de regretter une si grande perte surtout au temps auquel sa présence pouvoit tant servir. Si les larmes qu'on en a espandue pardeça, et qui s'en espanderont ailleurs par ceux qui peuvent savoir et appréhender ce qu'emporte une telle playe, estoient jointes ensemble, il en pourroit naistre un ruisseau et Dieu veult bien aussi qu'on sente ses coups, et je puis dire quant à moy que j'ay perdu celui que je voudrois pouvoir racheter de ma vie, voire de plusieurs vies, si j'en avois plusieurs. Mais puis qu'il a pleu à Dieu qu'ainsi fust, son nom soit benist." Beza to Turenne, 9/19 March 1591, published in *Bulletin* 1 (1853): 279.

⁸¹Chandieu's death occurred "eo tempore nobis sublato quo multo magis quam unquam alias, fluctuans illa Gallicarum praesertim Ecclesiarum cymba tali tantoque nautero indigebat." Beza, in the name of the Company of Pastors, to the Church of Zurich, 23 February/2 March 1591, published in *RCP* VI, 191.

⁸²"... aussi est-ce un signe, ou plustost un effect de son terrible courroux, quand il luy plaist en destituer ses povres brebis." Beza in the name of the Company of Pastors to the Classis of Neuchâtel, 2/12 March 1591, published in *RCP* VI, 195.

⁸³See the comments of the Company of Pastors in letters to the churches of Neuchâtel, Basle and Zurich on 14/24 October 1589, published in *RCP* VI, 158-160.

1591 due to the departure of the ministers Jean-Baptiste Rotan and Jean Jaquemot, as well as the advanced age of Beza and Jean Trembley.⁸⁴ In the meantime, the magistrates continued to have little success attracting to Geneva a churchman of international stature to assume Beza's duties.⁸⁵ From the reformer's perspective, this crisis of pastoral leadership represented a troubling flaw in Geneva's reformation. Whereas the Swiss evangelical cities had succeeded in raising a generation of native clergy, the city on the shores of Lac Léman remained dependent on foreign churchmen. As early as 1584 Beza had complained about the paucity of native ministers: "I congratulate your church," he wrote to Gwalther in Zurich, "not only do you not have to borrow pastors and doctors from elsewhere, but you have a surplus and help out other cities.... The opposite is the case here in Geneva, where if it had not been for foreigners, either the sheep would have been without shepherds and the schools without teachers, or God would have had to do something extraordinary." The blame for this deplorable situation, Beza believed, should be placed squarely on the shoulders of Geneva's citizenry.⁸⁶

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⁸⁴See the complaint of Beza and La Faye to the Small Council in 1592: "Ilz considerent seulement un point, que ceste Église a esté quelque fois plus chargée que maintenant, qu'on est déchargé de deux, assavoir M^r Rotan et M^r Jaquemot." 19/29 December 1592, *RC* 87, 245. Rotan, in the summer of 1589, accompanied the French ambassador Sancy to France and served as his chaplain for several months. Thereafter, he became a popular minister in La Rochelle. Jaquemot was originally loaned for three months to the church of Neuchâtel in the summer of 1591, a tenure that was thereafter extended indefinitely.

⁸⁵In 1594, Jacques Chouet, a minister of the French church at Basle, declined an offer from the magistrates to come to Geneva and assume Beza's position. See *RCP* VI, 131-132.

⁸⁶"Vestrae vere Ecclesiae, mi frater, valde gratulor, cui concessum video divinitus, ut non modo aliunde mutuari Pastores et Doctores non cogamini, verum etiam vobis suppetat, quod aliis largiamini: magnum est, et pene dixerim singulare istud Dei beneficium, quod utinam vobis perpetuum

The problem of native leadership did not improve in the following decade. In 1591, all of the eight clergymen working in Geneva's parishes were expatriate Frenchmen; even Rotan, at that time on loan to the church of La Rochelle, was from the Grisons not from Geneva. In two sermons from the early 1590s, Beza criticized harshly his congregation for neglecting the pastoral ministry. Even though the ministerial vocation was "more necessary than the air we breathe," nonetheless it was the "most despised profession today."⁸⁷ Parents encouraged their sons to pursue other professions rather than embrace this high calling. As a result, the Genevans continued to be taught by French refugees, despite the fact that churches from the far corners of Europe had drawn their doctrine, professors and ministers from the city's Academy.⁸⁸ It was shameful that "in Geneva we still borrow foreigners to be ministers of the Word of God, whereas we should be supplying the rest of the world."⁸⁹

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esse velit Dominus. Nobis hic certe contrarium accidit, ubi deessent extranei (quod ego saepissime nostris, id est civibus Geneve[n]sibus, exprobo) necesse fuerit, aut gregem esse sine pastoribus et schola et sine magistris, aut Deum extra ordinem aliquid moliri." Beza to Rudolf Gwalther, 3/13 June 1584, Zurich, Stadtbibl., ms. F 37, fols. 71-72.

⁸⁷The Christian ministry is "... la vocation la plus mesprisée qui soit aujourdhuy, & toutesfois plus nécessaire encores que l'air que nous humons, & que le souffle duquel nous respirons." *Sermons sur l'histoire de la passion*, 784.

⁸⁸"... qu'il faille que le lieu duquel il se peut dire (la gloire en soit à un seul Dieu) que tant d'Églises, voire de nations, & bien eslongnées, ont puisé de nostre temps, & la doctrine & les docteurs: soit encores aujourdhui enseignée de Pasteurs d'autre nation." *Sermons sur l'histoire de la résurrection*, 419.

⁸⁹"... estant chose très-honteuse qu'il faille qu'en ce lieu on emprunte encores des estrangers pour estre ministres de la Parole de Dieu, au lieu qu'on en devroit fournir une grande partie du monde." *Sermons sur l'histoire de la passion*, 784. Evidently, for Beza, a 'foreigner' was anyone from outside of Geneva.

In retrospect, what Beza attributed to the hard-heartedness of the Genevan citizenry was as much the result of religious, social and economic factors at the foundations of the Genevan reformation. Unlike Zurich and Berne, where most of the Catholic clergy had embraced the reformation and become the first generation of Protestant pastors, Geneva's priests and monks in 1536 had rejected Protestantism and left the city en masse.⁹⁰ To replace them, Calvin had recruited foreign ministers almost exclusively from among the city's French refugee population, men who were often of noble birth, well-educated, dedicated, and loyal.⁹¹ Subsequently, as Calvin and Beza looked beyond the walls of the city to the needs of churches in France and throughout Europe, they paid little attention to the task of training and employing native Genevans in the ministerial profession. The city council accepted this arrangement, given that these well-trained pastors frequently had other sources of income and were thus willing to accept parsimonious wages.⁹² As a result, the city that prided itself on being a 'refuge' for exiles, a 'nursery' for French pastors, and a 'seminary' for the Reformed clergy of Europe became dependent on these resident aliens. At the same time, low salaries and the perception that the pastoral vocation was for well-placed 'foreigners' may well have discouraged Genevan boys from

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⁹⁰See Bernard Vogler, *Le Monde Germanique et Helvétique à l'Époque des Réformes, 1517-1618*, II (Paris: Société d'Édition d'Enseignement Supérieur, 1981), 467-468.

⁹¹See Naphy's helpful discussion of the social and national origins of the Genevan clergy during Calvin's lifetime, in *Calvin and the consolidation of the Genevan Reformation*, 44-75.

⁹²The pastors of Geneva complained frequently about their low salaries, and many struggled financially. See Naphy, *Calvin and the consolidation of the Genevan Reformation*, 62. Henri Meylan confirms the impression that, compared to teachers and ministers elsewhere, the Genevan clergy were in fact underpaid. Cited in Bergier, "Salaires des Pasteurs de Genève," 174-175.

pursuing the ministerial profession.

By the end of the sixteenth century, Geneva was gradually losing its place as an intellectual leader of French Calvinism. Not only the poor salaries, but also intermittent warfare with Savoy made it difficult to attract and keep the brightest professors and pastors. Beza and Jean Trembley were aging; Chandieu was dead. The paucity of home-grown talent only exacerbated this gradual 'hemorrhage of talent.'⁹³ In the meantime, the international stature of the Genevan Academy had been eclipsed by Reformed universities at Heidelberg and Leiden. The crisis of leadership in Geneva during the last decades of the sixteenth century heightened Beza's fears for the future. It became all the more important, he believed, for experienced churchmen--veterans of the "golden age"--to protect true doctrine, maintain discipline, and preserve the increasingly threatened legacy of the French reformation.⁹⁴ Never had his daily prayer been more appropriate: 'Protect what was, control what will be!'

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⁹³For this appropriate term, see Gillian Lewis in *International Calvinism, 1541-1715*, ed. Menna Prestwich (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985), 39-70.

⁹⁴Note, for example, the letter from the Company of Pastors to the Classis of L'Albigeois in 1593: "... si ceux qui restent du siècle doré [i.e. d'or] ne se resveillent et ne s'employent courageusement contre leur dessein [i.e. the ambition of a renegade minister named Gaspard Olaxe], guieres de temps ne passera qu'au lieu de la pure et syncère confession signée par le sang de tant de martyrs, on en verra naistre une douzaine, et au lieu d'un si sainte discipline, il n'y aura si petite assemblée qui ne se gouverne à son appetit..." 8/18 May 1593, *RCP* VI, 303-304.

No Middle Ground

Despite the difficulties of old age and the dangers of the Savoyard war, Beza watched closely the unfolding of events in France. In Paris, the Catholic League continued to defy the armies of Henri IV. Royal victories at Arques (September 1589) and Ivry (March 1590), as well as the siege of Paris in the summer of 1590 were unsuccessful in forcing the capital city into submission. In the next two years, Navarre's military situation steadily worsened as Spanish armies invaded Languedoc and Brittany, and the duke of Savoy attacked Huguenot cities in Provence. At the battle of Aumale in February of 1592, the king was wounded in the back by a bullet from an arquebus.⁹⁵ Unable to win the kingdom by force, Navarre was compelled to negotiate more seriously with his enemies. Impatient with Henri's repeated, yet still unfulfilled promises to be instructed by a general or national council, Catholic Loyalists put increasing pressure on the king to abjure the Protestant religion. In a desperate attempt to buy time, woo Leaguers, and placate Loyalists, Duplessis-Mornay agreed in April 1592 to a proposal made by a Catholic deputy of Mayenne that contained not only the king's promise to receive instruction but added that it was his "desire and intention to unite himself to the Catholic Church."⁹⁶ Although Henri's motivations are impossible to determine, the strategy of his Huguenot advisor

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⁹⁵Babelon, *Henri IV*, 503-504, 519.

⁹⁶The text of this proposal, known as the 'expedient,' is found in Duplessis-Mornay's correspondence: "Le roy promettra son instruction dans ung temps préfix, avec désir et intention de s'unir et joindre à l'Église catholique, moyennant ladicte instruction faite comme il convient à sa dignité." *Mémoires et correspondance* V, 270. For a discussion of these negotiations, see Patry, *Philippe du Plessis-Mornay*, 217-219, and Babelon, *Henri IV*, 531-532.

Duplessis-Mornay is clear: if Henri could negotiate a truce as a precondition for his conversion, he would successfully extricate the Catholic League from Spanish control and would have greater latitude to resist the demands made on his conscience.

Duplessis-Mornay was confident that, should the religious issues ever be debated in a national council, the Reformed would command the intellectual advantage and be able to dissuade the king from abjuring the Protestant religion.

While Duplessis-Mornay played this dangerous game, other Protestant intellectuals searched for a solution to the crisis that would pacify the French kingdom, heal the deep wounds between Catholics and Protestants, and make a royal conversion unnecessary. A number of Huguenot moderates—called '*moyenneurs*' or 'compromisers' by their detractors—decisively rejected the option of a bi-confessional France and promoted instead a united Gallican church founded upon a general Christian creed. A national church council was needed, they believed, not to battle over the king's conscience, but to establish a broad doctrinal consensus between the Catholics and the Reformed. These 'moderates' shared the basic assumption that the two religious confessions in France, despite their obvious differences, were members of the same Christian Church; so too, they shared the hope that, in a friendly church council devoid of factionalism and Roman interference, the two parties would make reciprocal concessions, agree on certain shared doctrines and thus find a basis for reconciliation in a Gallican Church cleansed of superstition and abuse. In many ways, this was the dream of the Colloquy of Poissy reborn. Thirty years of religious slaughter and political instability had made this irenic vision both more compelling

and far more elusive.

Huguenot thinkers who subscribed to this program of conciliation did not form a coherent party, but shared a common dream that found expression in their writings and correspondence.⁹⁷ François de La Noue was one of the first Huguenot authors to propose the path of religious compromise and reconciliation following Navarre's accession. In his public "Letter" examined above, La Noue recommended the convening of a national synod at which Catholic and Protestant theologians, in the presence of Henri IV, might discuss "in a friendly manner and without contention" the nature and doctrine of the early church, trusting that God would bless such discussions and bring about the harmony of the warring factions.⁹⁸ Henri IV was attracted to such programs of confessional reunion. In 1591, he employed the eminent François du Jon, former student at Geneva, now professor of the University of Leiden, to revise the French Confession of Faith, hoping thereby to moderate the more controversial aspects of Reformed doctrine and open the door to religious consensus. Although this effort achieved nothing, Beza never completely forgave du

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⁹⁷The best discussion of this 'moderate' wing of the Huguenot movement in the early 1590s is found in F. Schickler, "Hotman de Villiers et son Temps," *Bulletin* 17 (1868): 97-111, 145-161, 401-413, 464-476, 513-533 and Vivanti, *Lotta politica e pace religiosa in Francia*, 189-245.

⁹⁸"Il faut aussi ... requérir un concile général, et, au refus, en tenir un national, faire entendre au Roy le mérite de la religion catholique, à luy incogneue, par des bons et sçavans Évesques et docteurs, n'ayans pour fin que la gloire de Dieu et le salut des âmes; luy représenter quelle a esté l'Église primitive, luy faire considérer les opinions des saints pères qui ont luy au monde comme pierres précieuses, conferer amiablement et sans contention avec les autres théologiens qui se trouveront en ces publiques convocations; et ne faut douter, si Dieu répand sa bénédiction sur la paix, qu'il ne bénisse aussi la concorde de l'Église..." La Noue, "Lettre de Monsieur de La Noue," 321.

Jon for his complicity in the project.⁹⁹

Nicolas Séguier, a Reformed minister in the Vaudois city of Payerne and later a professor at the Academy of Lausanne, proposed another plan for reconciliation in his treatise *Response à la supplication adressée au Roy pour se faire catholique* (1591).¹⁰⁰ He argued that Catholics and Protestants shared the same Christian faith, recognized a common baptism, read the same holy Scriptures and recited the same Lord's prayer. Hence, although the fabric of the French Church had been torn in two, there was yet hope to sew the pieces together again.¹⁰¹ Reconciliation could be achieved, Séguier argued, through a national church council in which theologians from the two religious parties clarified and agreed upon the ceremonies and doctrines

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⁹⁹Du Jon regretted his involvement in Henri's revision of the Confession of Faith: "Quant à la confession dont vous escrivez, je voudroye que ceux que s'en sont formalisez eussent esté en ma place (car je ne fis jamais voyage tant à regret que cestuy là) et qu'ils sceussent la demande du roy, l'avis que je luy donnay et le moyen qu'y ay tenu. Somme, ce sont thèses que le roy meit alors en avant comme de son particulier pour acheminer une conférence amiable et ouyr la dessus l'un et l'autre parti.... Dieu me face la grâce de ne rien fere plus legièrement en ma vie que cela n'a esté faict, et à tous ensemble de ne rien juger legièrement." Du Jon to Beza, 10 December 1593, published in De Vries, *Genève pépinière du calvinisme hollandais*, II, 55-56. Beza's displeasure with du Jon was evidenced six years later when the Genevan reformer opposed the choice of du Jon as his replacement: "Qu'on communiquera avec Monsieur de Bèze et de là avec Messieurs pour pouvoir avoir ici Monsieur Du Jon pour professeur en théologie s'il se peut faire par voye légitime, ce que Monsieur de Bèze n'a approuvé et cecy a esté du tout laissé." 19/29 October 1599, RCP VII, 181. For more information about du Jon, see FP IV, 382-391, OER II, 360, and W. Cuno, *Franciscus Junius der Ältere, Professor der Theologie und Pastor (1545-1602)* (Amsterdam: Verlag von Scheffer & Co., 1891).

¹⁰⁰For information about Séguier, see Vivanti, *Lotta politica e pace religiosa in Francia*, 210-214, and FP IX, 214.

¹⁰¹"... finalement nous pouvons dire, et vous et nous, que nous avons une mesme creance, nous sommes marquez de mesme cachet, nous ne sommes point aultrement baptisez que vous; nous lisons une mesme Escriture Sainte, nous avons une mesme oraison dominicale; mais la division entre nous est comme d'une habillemeent déchiré, dont les pièces pendent l'une d'un costé, l'autre d'un aultre: pour les rejoindre il ne les falloit que recouldre." Séguier here was quoting a fourth-century Donatist bishop named Ottato Afro da Milevi. Cited in Vivanti, *Lotta politica e pace religiosa in Francia*, 211.

of the Christian Church up through the ninth century. On the basis of this consensus, the embattled churches could be reunited into a single Gallican Church, cleansed of the abuses and errors introduced by Rome.¹⁰²

Jean Hotman, the eldest son of François Hotman and an advisor to Henri IV, corresponded frequently with Séguier and shared his friend's vision for a united Gallican Church.¹⁰³ More vocal and less cautious than Séguier, Hotman's dream of religious reconciliation was a life-long passion, winning him both friends and enemies. "I know," he once commented, "that even if I was the most skilled theologian of this century, I would nevertheless be accused of being a compromiser, a peacemaker, a reconciler, a mediator and a mixer of truth--today, all of these words carry the same abuse."¹⁰⁴ In numerous letters and treatises, Hotman espoused a program of religious compromise that he hoped would heal the confessional wounds in France. In his *Avis et dessein nouveau sur le fait de la religion en l'Église gallicane* (1592), he scolded both parties for their censoriousness, reminding them

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¹⁰²In a position paper entitled *Poincts principaux tendans à l'union des Chrestiens qui doibvent estre examinés et mis en délibération en ung Concile national de l'Église Gallicane*, Séguier summarized this proposal: "Que le seul moyen d'appaiser et assoupir les oppinions discordantes est de se départir de part et d'autre de toutes Cérémonies et doctrines nouvelles et restabilir l'ancienne forme extérieure de l'Église Gallicane selon qu'elle a commencé du temps des Gaulois et premiers François, jusques au siècle de Charlemagne et de ses enfans." Cited in Vivanti, *Lotta politica e pace religiosa in Francia*, 214.

¹⁰³For information about Hotman, see Schickler, "Hotman de Villiers et son Temps," Vivanti, *Lotta politica e pace religiosa in Francia*, 189-245, and *FP* V, 539-540.

¹⁰⁴"Je sais, par l'exemple de quelques autres, que quand je serais le plus habile théologien de ce siècle, je ne serais pourtant hors du hasard d'être appelé moïenieur, pacificateur, réconciliateur, appointeur et brouillon (car aujourd'hui ce sont injures synonymes)..." Cited in Schickler, "Hotman de Villiers et son Temps," 411.

that they shared the same fundamental Christian truths. "The Romans are members of the Catholic church because they have the Word of God, the sacraments, and the ministry. They are our Christian brothers, and thus are neither infidels nor unbelievers."¹⁰⁵ Like Séguier, Hotman believed that theological harmony between Catholics and Protestants could be achieved by a national church council reflecting on the practices and beliefs of the early Church. He recognized, however, that this journey *ad fontes* would not only jeopardize some of the ceremonies of Rome, but also some of the distinctive teachings of Geneva. "If we consider Calvin's writings and teachings to be the Word of God, and assert that it is impermissible to change or innovate anything, then we will soon be guilty of the same blame that we have heaped on the Roman Church which teaches that papal decrees are the Word of God. I believe that if Calvin were still living, he would disagree harshly with people who make such claims and would teach instead, as he always did, that in debates and religious controversies, the names of 'authorities' have no doctrinal standing."¹⁰⁶

Sensitive to Genevan criticism, Hotman wrote directly to the city's ministers to

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¹⁰⁵"Les romains sont membres de l'Église catholique puisqu'ils ont la Parole de Dieu, les sacrements et le ministère; ils sont chrétiens, ils sont nos frères, et par conséquent ils ne sont pas infidèles ni mécréants..." *Avis et desseins nouveaux sur le fait de la religion en l'Église gallicane, pour être proposé au prochain concile national ou autre assemblée des prélats, pasteurs et docteurs de ladite Église gallicane*, cited in Schickler, "Hotman de Villiers et son Temps," 520.

¹⁰⁶"Que si l'on tient ce que Calvin a écrit et ordonné pour parole de Dieu, et qu'il ne soit licite d'y rien changer ou innover, nous voilà tantôt coupables du blâme que nous avons tant donné à ceux de l'Église romaine qui disent qu'il faut tenir les ordonnances du pape pour parole de Dieu. Je crois que si ce bon personnage était encore vivant, il tancerait ces gens-ci bien aigrement et enseignerait comme il a toujours fait, qu'en disputes et autres différends qui surviennent en la religion, il ne faut point que le respect des personnes porte préjudice à la vérité; et qu'au changement d'iceux il ne faut apporter l'autorité ni de Céphas, ni d'Apollon, ni de Calvin, ni de Luther." Cited in Schickler, "Hotman de Villiers et son Temps," 522.

defend his program and solicit their support. In his *Projet de réponse à quelques ministres de Genève*, he argued that it was time for the Reformed to preach repentance, charity and concord. Religious compromise was necessary, not only to heal confessional differences, but also to reduce the pressure on Navarre to abjure the Protestant religion.¹⁰⁷ If the Reformed did not take conciliatory steps toward moderate Catholics, Hotman argued, they might well lose their Protestant king and the chance for peace in France.

The projects of conciliation proposed by Huguenot leaders like La Noue, Séguier, and Hotman caused grave concerns in Geneva. The Company of Pastors feared that, in their eagerness for peace, these 'moyenneurs' were in danger of compromising the doctrinal foundations of the French Reformed churches. So too, there was concern that these moderate voices, by minimizing the differences between the two religions, might inadvertently induce Henri IV to convert to Catholicism. After all, why should Henri risk his political future defending the interests of a minority religion if, upon closer analysis, their doctrines were not significantly different from those professed by their opponents? The Genevan clergy first confronted this threat in the final months of 1589 when disturbing rumors arrived in the city about their colleague Jean-Baptiste Rotan. Having accompanied Sancy to the

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¹⁰⁷"... il est temps plus que jamais de prêcher la repentance, la charité, l'union et la concorde, il est temps de penser aux moyens comme nous y pourrions parer, quand ce ne serait que pour obéir au roy, pour seconder sa bonne volonté et pour le soulager aux importunités qu'on lui fait journellement d'aller à la messe." *Projet de réponse à quelques ministres de Genève*, cited in Schickler, "Hotman de Villiers et son Temps," 516. It is unclear when this exposé was written or if it was ever actually sent to the pastors of Geneva.

French court earlier in the year, Rotan was now reported to be advocating a plan for the unification of the Reformed and Catholic churches.¹⁰⁸ At the insistence of Beza and his colleagues, the Small Council demanded that the minister return immediately to Geneva. When Rotan refused to obey the Council's injunction, Beza wrote directly to Henri IV, explaining that the minister was being recalled for imprudent remarks made at the royal court concerning "some of the chief points of doctrine contained in our confession of faith."¹⁰⁹ Despite the efforts of Beza and the Genevan magistrates, Rotan remained in France for the next decade and refused to submit his conscience to the judgment of the city's ministers.¹¹⁰

During the next three years, Beza remained acutely concerned about the threat posed by 'moderates' within the Huguenot movement. The Protestant reformation had decisively dissipated the spiritual darkness of medieval Catholicism; now, these

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¹⁰⁸"Le vendredi 29, M. de Bèze advertit la Compaignie de certaines lettres qu'on avoit reçues d'Angleterre et par lesquelles les frères de l'Église de Londres faisoient entendre qu'il seroit à désirer que M. Rothan fut rappelé de la cour où il estoit allé pour quelque sien affaire particulier. La cause estoit qu'on se craignoit qu'il ne parlast de la réunion de noz Églises avec l'Église romaine, faisant quelque préjudice aux Églises réformées. L'advis fut qu'on manderoit audict Rothan qu'au plustost il eut à s'en retourner à son Église, et qu'il y avoit cause contraingnoit de luy mander telle chose." 29 November/9 December 1589, *RCP* VI, 29. The substance of Rotan's controversial statements is not known. His general position regarding the unity of the church is suggested by two letters that he sent to Jean Hotman in 1595 and 1597, published in the *Bulletin* 17 (1868): 540-542.

¹⁰⁹"Au reste, Sire, je prendray la hardiesse de supplier très humblement Vostre Majesté de commander qu'un de mes compagnons en l'oeuvre de Seigneur ... soit expédié pour s'en revenir à sa charge. Il se nomme Baptiste Rotan.... son absence est trèsdommagable à nostre Église Italienne, de laquelle il a charge particulière. Mais oultre tout cela, à qui nous a esté rapporté de quelques propos qu'on dit avoir esté semés par luy en Vostre Court, touchant certains poincts, voire des principaux de la doctrine contenue en nostre confession (chose dont nous serions trèsdesplaisans)..." Beza to Henri IV, 18/28 June 1590, Geneva, Archives Tronchin à Bessinge, f. Bèze, vol. 2, no. 16.

¹¹⁰Rotan's reputation in the French church did not appear to have been diminished by this incident. Thus, at the Synod of Montauban (1594), he was one of twenty Reformed ministers appointed to debate Catholic opponents. See Aymon, I, 185.

so-called moderates "dream that they are able to discover a way to harmonize light and darkness."¹¹¹ The pure doctrine and discipline of the Reformed churches--defended courageously against the harshest attacks for over fifty years--were in danger of being betrayed overnight. Beza stated these concerns in a passionate letter to the French Reformed churches. Some people, whether due to fear of persecution, poor instruction, or spiritual inconstancy were being deceived to accept peace at any price. Certain 'moyenneurs' pressured them "to harmonize light and darkness, and to find a middle way where none exists, nor will ever exist." The French confession of faith and discipline were given to the Reformed by God, confirmed by their synods, and sealed by the blood of faithful martyrs. Thus, the pastors, elders and deacons of the Reformed churches must carefully protect their flocks from these 'moderates' and permit no innovations in doctrine or discipline.¹¹² In matters of faith, there was no

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¹¹¹"Duo sunt autem in primis, quae me sollicitum habent, quorundam videlicet, alioqui optimo zelo praedictorum, imprudentia nimium properans, et huic contraria carnis prudentia, nihil providentiae et promissis Dei tribuens, pessimum denique illud hominum genus, qui rationem invenire se posse somniant lucis cum tenebris conciliandae." Beza to Grynaeus, 15/25 January 1590, Basle, Univ. Bibl., Kirchen Archiv, C. I. 2, Bd. II, fol. 151-151^{bis}.

¹¹²"... autres finalement ayans leur esprit frétilant, & se faisans maistres devant qu'avoir esté bons disciples, ne se laissent esblouir par ce beau & tant souhaitable nom de paix à quelque prix que ce soit: en quoy ils seront secondés & favorisés, voire poussés par certains moyenneurs qui se persuadent d'accorder la lumière & les ténèbres, & de trouver un milieu là où il n'y en a point, & n'y en aura iamais.... gardez vous cependant soigneusement, & d'autant que vous aimez vostre salut & de vos troupeaux, de croire ces moyenneurs de doctrine, mais tenez vous fermes entièrement & invariablement la sainte & droicte confession que Dieu nous a donnée, & confirmée par tant de synodes légitimes & Chrestiens, sellée par le sang de tant de frères fidèles martyrs du Seigneur, & laquelle aussi vous saurez trèsbien maintenir & défendre par la pure parole de Dieu en toutes assemblées libres, saintes & légitimes, esquelles vous pourrez estre convoqués. Je di le mesme de la discipline Ecclesiastique établié & pratiquée si heureusement iusques ici par les synodes tant provinciaux que generaux qui ont esté, comme vous sçavez, le nerf & le saint lien par lequel nostre bon Deu & Père vous a conioincts à soy, & entretenu les Églises en paix, nonobstant toutes les persécutions de dehors & infinis assauts par dedans." Letter preface to the Pastors, Elders and Deacons of the Reformed Churches of France, 24 June/4 July 1591, in *Sermons sur l'histoire de la passion*, ¶. vi^v-vii.

room for compromise.

Beza's most detailed discussion of the dangers of this religious *via media* was found in a long public letter to Henri IV in August of 1592.¹¹³ The reformer was clearly sensitive to accusations that his intransigence and dogmatism were fueling the French crisis. He insisted that, contrary to the calumnies of his enemies, he and the Genevan clergy had no desire to govern all of Christendom nor did they wish to introduce a Calvinist 'papacy' into the Church.¹¹⁴ They welcomed theological discussion and yearned for the peace of the French kingdom. Nonetheless, he could not remain silent when his opponents, motivated by ambition and ill-will rather than any true desire for peace, trivialized the work of the early Protestant reformers and attempted to create a new religion by mixing truth and error.¹¹⁵ This had been Satan's strategy throughout the ages: the Jews were repeatedly tempted to mix the religion of Baal with the worship of Yahweh; the councils of the early Christian

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¹¹³This letter was the epistolary preface to the *Traicté des vrayes essentielles et visibles marques de la vray Église Catholique* (La Rochelle: Jerome Haultin, 1592), originally published under the Latin title *De veris et visibilibus Ecclesiae Catholicae notis, tractatio* (Genevae: Eustathium Vignon, 1579). The letter to Henri, dated 12/22 August 1591, appeared for the first time in the French edition. See *Bibliographie*, 175-177; CDM, 93-4, 132.

¹¹⁴"Il y en aura d'autres, peut estre, qui renouvelleront ces tant exorbitantes calomnies, que ceux de Genève, & nommément un certain de Bèze qu'ils appellent le troubleur de la France, & d'autres tiltres tels qu'il leur plaist, veulent gouverner tout le monde, & introduire une nouvelle Papauté en l'Église.... ie croy que Genève en general, ni moi en particulier n'avons besoin de travailler à réfuter telles calomnies si ridicules, ni envers vostre Majesté, Sire, ni envers ceux qui ont quelque bon sens..." *Traicté des vrayes essentielles et visibles marques*, B iiiij^v.

¹¹⁵Some 'moyenneurs' have even dared "parler & iuger par trop induëment de ces grands & vrayement admirables serviteurs de Dieu, qu'il a de nostre temps comme envoyez du ciel, & approuvez par tesmoignages irrefragables de leur doctrine & de leur vie.... Mais cela est encores passable au prix de ceux qui passent bien plus outre, c'est à sçavoir iusques à se forger des moyens de ceste reünion, ou plustost de forger une nouvelle Église à leur fantasie..." *Traicté des vrayes essentielles et visibles marques*, A iiij^v.

church were almost overwhelmed by the teachings of heretics and schismatics; more recently, the Augsburg Interim threatened to pollute the pure doctrine of the German churches.¹¹⁶ Now, in France, Satan "under the pretence of the peace of the church, seeks to establish his kingdom of darkness, and to conquer the Reformed churches by a devious compromise which he could never vanquish by violence and horrible cruelty."¹¹⁷ The amalgamation of the doctrines of Reformed Protestantism and Roman Catholicism would inevitably result in the destruction of true Christianity in France.

Should Henri then abandon his stated intentions to call a national synod to reconcile the religious differences in the kingdom? Here Beza was more tentative. Though he did not rule out such a council entirely, his list of necessary preconditions for such a synod all but rendered it an impossibility: before the convening of the council, the Reformed should meet separately to discuss the points in question; in the synod itself, only issues on indifferent matters (*adiaphora*) could be debated; most importantly, Scripture must be the judge of all theological differences. Given these provisions, Beza recognized that the prospects for a national council, much less for

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¹¹⁶"Et sans rechercher ces choses de plus loin, ç'a esté le chemin que ce grand Empereur Charles cinquiesme a essayé de nostre temps pour réunir les deux Religions en Allemagne, mettant en avant le traicté appelé l'Intérim, d'autant qu'il n'estoit proposé que par manière de provision. Et fut mesmes forgé ce mal-heureux traicté par un ministre Apostat nommé Islebius. Mais la lecture de ce livre ayant fait cognoistre que ce n'estoit autre chose qu'une détestable falsification de la pure doctrine & de l'ordre de l'Église, il fut contredit par les fidèles Pasteurs..." *Traicté des vrayes essentielles et visibles marques*, B iij^e-iiij.

¹¹⁷"Mais c'est ici que Satan employe & emploiera toutes ses cautelles, à sa manière accoustumée, pour sous l'apparence de réunir les hommes avec Dieu, rappeler à soy ceux que Dieu en avoit retirez: & sous le nom de la Paix de l'Église redresser son regne de ténèbres, & gagner par une subtilité de meslinge ce qu'il n'a peu obtenir par aucune violence & toutes sortes de cruauté, voire iusques aux plus barbares, & manifestement contraires à tout droict divin & humain." *Traicté des vrayes essentielles et visibles marques*, A iij^e-iiij.

achieving religious concord, were highly unlikely: "Sire, to my very great regret, I must admit that there is only a very slim hope of obtaining that which is so desirable."¹¹⁸ Nonetheless, the reformer remained adamant: the purity of Christian doctrine and the preservation of ecclesiastical discipline must never be compromised. Indeed, it would be "better to die a hundred times than to back down from a single point."¹¹⁹

Jean Hotman, for one, remained unconvinced by Beza's arguments. Although stung by the reformer's criticisms--both public and private--he continued to defend resolutely the path of compromise and reconciliation.¹²⁰ By the spring of 1593, as

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¹¹⁸"Or nonobstant tout ce que dessus, si on considère qu'elle est la maluevillance des uns contre nous, & l'endurcissement de plusieurs, bref, combien le monde est adversaire de la vérité, estant aussi notamment chose indubitable que l'Évesque de Rome, quand le rest seroit d'accord, remuera plustost ciel & terre que de consentir à une conférence, en laquelle il ne soit iuge & partie ... ie confesse, Sire, à mon très-grand regret, qu'il n'y a que fort peu d'espérance d'obtenir ce qui est tant souhaitable." *Traicté des vrayes essentielles et visibles marques*, C v^{re}.

¹¹⁹"Mais quant à ce qui concerne directement ce qu'on doit sentir de Dieu, & de la pureté de son service, & de l'estat de la conscience, & de l'essence du gouvernement Ecclésiastique, il n'en prend pas comme des différens & procez entrevenans sur les biens de ce monde. Car en tel faict par charité, & pour le bien de paix, on peut & doit mesmes quitter de son droict. Mais qui dispensera de la volonté & du droict du Seigneur, sans en estre désadvoué devant lui? Plustost mourir donc cent fois, que d'en rabatre un seul point." *Traicté des vrayes essentielles et visibles marques*, B vi^{re}-vii.

¹²⁰In a letter to Séguier in March 1593, Hotman complained: "Et m'étonne que sont ceux lesquels en ont l'esprit aliéné, ni pour quelle occasion ils le font, et quelles raisons ils ont. De moi je demeurerai toute ma vie en cette opinion, et m'y emploierai en tout ce qu'il me sera possible, ayant toujours ce but proposé devant mes yeux, de ne céder rien de ce qui appartient au droit de Dieu." Cited in Schickler, "Hotman de Villiers et son Temps," 514. That Beza was among the list of Hotman's critics was clear from Séguier's reply to Hotman two months later: "Monsieur, vos lettres m'ont merueilleusement étonné et eus été bien aise de savoir ceux qui sont si fort offensés contre vous et tous autres qui cherchent la paix et réunion de l'Église. Je crois que vous ne demandez pas autre chose que ce que vous avez vu que je demande par mon écrit, et cependant ayant été vu, voire lorsqu'il était encore en sa première et rude forme, M. de Besze ne m'en a point censuré si rudement; il a seulement marqué quelques points, desquels il m'a mandé qu'il voudrait bien conférer avec moi, et me dissuadait, à cause du temps, de le mettre en lumière, comme aussi ce n'était pas mon intention; mais cependant il ne le blâmait point, ni mon dessein, et, qui plus est, j'ai lettres de lui par lesquelles il est bien aise que je me suis employé à ce sujet, et dit qu'un chacun y doit apporter ce que Dieu lui

Catholic pressure on Henri intensified, Hotman sensed that the opportunity for concord was quickly evaporating. In an impassioned letter to Beza in early May, Hotman restated his hopes for a unified Gallican church and begged the reformer to modify his position and lend his much-needed support. "I plead with you, O excellent man, to allow me to side with those who believe that the French church can be healed. Do not be enraged at me... Do not allow me to despair completely regarding the plight of the French Church!"¹²¹ Hotman was not a 'doctor of evil' as Beza had charged, but a 'humble man' seeking the unity of Christ's Church.¹²² In the past he had exhorted Huguenot leaders inside and outside of France to assist him in healing the confessional divisions that were ravaging their dear country. Now, Hotman again entreated Beza and other prominent Reformed ministers to throw their weighty authority behind efforts for reconciliation: "You have been placed by the immortal God in the seat of Moses, in the seat of the Apostles and of the teachers of the Christian Church... Indeed, you have been established as bishop so that you might heal not only the evils of your own church ... but also the ills of the whole Catholic church.... From whom should we seek and expect support if not from you?

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donnera" (*ibid.*, 517).

¹²¹"Tertium [i.e. the third opinion about the future of France] est genus eorum, qui nullo non tempore nullum non vel animi vitium vel morbum Ecclesiae, si commoda remedia sapienter adhibeas, sanari posse contendunt. Patere me, vir maxime, sentire cum istis, neve mihi, obsecro, succenseas, si patriae labanti ac jampridem ruinam minitanti, serum tamen fortassis auxilium exquiro. Patere, inquam, me de Ecclesiae Gallicanae rebus non plane desperare." [Jean Hotman] to Beza, 1/11 May 1593, Paris, BN, f. Dupuy 268, fols. 200-203.

¹²²"Sit hoc ergo verum: Non idcirco me tanti mali medicum esse profiteor, tantos mihi non sumo spiritus." [Jean Hotman] to Beza, 1/11 May 1593, Paris, BN, f. Dupuy 268, fols. 200-203.

But if you refuse to lend a hand, I do not know how you will be able to defend your dignity before men, or, once dead, to prove before the judgment seat of God that you have piously and diligently fulfilled your office."¹²³ The future of the French kingdom depended on Huguenot leaders like Beza, who must lay down the trumpet of war and, instead, preach the gospel of peace.

Although Hotman did not provide a specific proposal for concord, he did urge Beza to take a more flexible attitude regarding the Reformed Confession of Faith and Discipline. These confessional standards reflected the agreement of private individuals, not the consensus of the entire French Church; hence, they must not be treated as infallible documents immune from revision and change.¹²⁴ Rather, the Reformed should be willing to cooperate with Henri IV as he attempted to settle the doctrinal divisions between the two parties, particularly since the majority of their differences revolved around minor questions of ceremony and ecclesiastical discipline. Even on central points of doctrine, many discerning people thought that the distance between Protestants and Catholics was more the result of "ambiguity and subtlety of

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¹²³"Etenim si sanabilis iste morbus est, vos autem ab immortali Deo in sede Mosis, in sede Apostolorum Ecclesiaeque Christianae Doctorum collocati estis, atque ut unus ex illis aliquando dixit, in solidum Episcopi constituti, ut Ecclesiae non modo privatae vestrae (sic enim interpretor), verum etiam Catholicae malis medeamini, ut ejus saluti fide, labore et vigilantia vestra prospiciatis. A quibus, obsecro, si non a vobis, et expetendum et exspectandum istud auxilium est? Quod si ferre recusatis, nescio quo pacto vel dignitatem vestram tueri apud homines, vel munere isto vestro pie diligenterque esse defunctos olim Deo judici probare poteritis." [Jean Hotman] to Beza, 1/11 May 1593, Paris, BN, f. Dupuy 268, fols. 200-203.

¹²⁴"... formulam hanc quae in coetibus nostris observatur, privatorum potius pactionibus, quam totius Ecclesiae Gallicanae consensu comprobata, firmiatam, receptam esse constar." [Jean Hotman] to Beza, 1/11 May 1593, Paris, BN, f. Dupuy 268, fols. 200-203.

words than of fundamental issues."¹²⁵ Hotman emphasized that he was not alone in his views. Illustrious Protestant leaders like Duplessis-Mornay, Pierre Loiseleur and François du Jon as well as other ministers in France and England shared his passion for reconciliation and peace.¹²⁶ Now, at this critical moment, they and many other French Protestants looked to Beza for counsel and leadership. Hotman concluded with one last desperate appeal: "All eyes are directed at you, and because you are a man endowed with the greatest gifts, the greatest things are hoped from you."¹²⁷

Beza's attitude toward religious reconciliation remained unchanged. From

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¹²⁵"Scio autem Regem ipsum ac multos praeterea viros in Gallia pios ac prudentes in primis optare ut via quaedam ac ratio ineatur componendorum in religione dissidiorum, praesertim circa ritus et cultum, ut vocant, externum. Etenim audiui praesaepe magnos doctrina et iudicio viros cum dicerent, controversiarum multo maximam partem in cerimoniis atque disciplina positam. Sicuti dissentimus in doctrina, hoc magis fieri ex ambiguitate subtilitateque verborum, quam ex re ipsa et sententia: de qua frustra plerumque litigamus." [Jean Hotman] to Beza, 1/11 May 1593, Paris, BN, f. Dupuy 268, fols. 200-203.

¹²⁶"Verum quia in hac mea de pace Ecclesiae sententia magnis hominibus absentior Plessio, Villerio, Baroni, Junio, aliisque ministris et doctis viris permultis Gallis et Anglis, quos mihi quidem adire et audire licuit, Galliae item nostrae proceribus nobilibus viris non paucis..." [Jean Hotman] to Beza, 1/11 May 1593, Paris, BN, f. Dupuy 268, fols. 200-203. Pierre Loiseleur, seigneur of Villiers, studied theology under Beza at Geneva. Following Saint Bartholomew's day, he fled from Rouen to England, where he established a Walloon church. In 1578, he became a chaplain of William of Orange. Toward the end of his career, he wrote a treatise entitled *Petri Villerii et Joh. Taffini responsum de pace religionis cum pontificiis ineunda* (n.p., n.d.). See *FP VII*, 112-113. In addition to assisting Henri IV revise the French Confession of Faith (see note 99 above), François Du Jon published a book entitled *Ειρηνικόν sive de pace Ecclesiae catholicae inter Christianos, quamvis diversos sentiatis, religiose procuranda, colenda atque continuanda* (Genevae, 1593), in which he argued that Protestants and Catholics had issued from the same root and, together, would inherit the kingdom of God. For Reformed concerns about this latter work, note Jean Taffin's comments to Beza in December 1593: "J'enten que l'Eirenicon de Monsieur Du Jon est traduit par lui et imprimé en françois. Je désireroy bien que en ses discours il eust plus expressément déclaré son intention, qu'exhortant ainsi à paix et support, il n'entend point par cela d'approuver, ce qu'il semble qu'on pourra recueillir de son livre." Taffin to Beza, 15 December 1593, published in De Vries, *Genève pépinière du calvinisme hollandais*, II, 362.

¹²⁷"In te omnium oculi coniecti sunt, et quia in te summa sunt omnia, abs te summa omnia exspectantur." [Jean Hotman] to Beza, 1/11 May 1593, Paris, BN, f. Dupuy 268, fols. 200-203.

his perspective, the theological gulf separating Protestants and Catholics was vast, reflecting fundamental differences in their views of authority, justification, and the Christian Church. Huguenot martyrs had died and refugees had fled their homes, not over ambiguities and trifles, but over truths central to Christianity. The religious wars in France reflected, at their heart, a battle between light and darkness, between Christ and Antichrist. While longing for the pacification of their native country, Beza and other Reformed leaders believed that peace purchased at the price of theological compromise was a serious affront to God and posed a grave danger to the Reformed churches.

The Lescaille Controversy

Beza's opposition to Hotman and other 'moyenneurs' demonstrated how difficult it had become by the early 1590s to preserve the doctrinal unity of the French Reformed churches. The volatile political situation placed tremendous pressure on Huguenot leaders to moderate their doctrinal formulae for the sake of peace and to guard the conscience of the Protestant king. From Geneva's perspective, however, any division within the Reformed ranks was a recipe for political disaster: if Catholic and Protestant 'moderates' found common ground, a peace might be brokered at the expense of those Reformed who remained faithful to the Confession of Faith and Discipline. So too, efforts to bridge the theological distance between the Protestants and Catholics might inadvertently provide justification for a royal abjuration, with disastrous political consequences. More than ever before, the

survival of the Reformed churches seemed to demand their doctrinal solidarity. For Beza and his colleagues, therefore, theological innovations of any kind presented a threat to the political future of the Reformed movement in France.

Between 1590 and 1593 the Genevan clergy became embroiled in two doctrinal controversies in the French refugee church at Basle. In each instance, they feared that theological division would spill over into France, causing irreparable damage to the political position and spiritual purity of the Reformed churches. As with the challenge posed by 'moyenneurs,' high theology was inextricably tied to questions of political survival. The first controversy arose in the early months of 1590 over the seemingly innocuous question of whether sermons should be preached at the funerals of French exiles residing in Basle. The Discipline of the French Reformed churches did not explicitly forbid such orations, but subsequent national synods had prohibited funerary prayers and sermons so as to avoid 'superstition.'¹²⁸ The German ministers of Basle had no such compunction and demanded that their French visitors abide by the custom of the host church. In early February, the Genevan clergy received reports that, contrary to the decrees of the national synod, the French church in Basle was being forced to accept grave-side sermons in which ministers consoled the mourners and exhorted them to prepare for death.¹²⁹ Alarmed, the Company of

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¹²⁸The Synod of Orléans (1562) had stipulated that "les Ministres ne seront aucunes prières à l'enterrement des morts, pour obvier à toute superstition." More recently the Synod of Figeac (1579) had ruled that "l'article touchant la Sépulture des morts, qui défend d'y faire des exhortations & des prières, sera observé; & ceux qui y contreviendront, seront censurés." Aymon, I, 26, 143.

¹²⁹"Le mardi 26 janvier [5 February], les frères de France qui estoient en ceste ville se trouverent en nostre Compaignie pour ayder à résoudre une difficulté que le Consistoire de l'Eglise

Pastors urged the refugee church "to avoid all innovations, especially in this time when some impatient people in France are looking for every opportunity to accommodate the two religions."¹³⁰

A week later, Beza wrote directly to the antistes of the Basle church, Jean-Jacques Grynaeus, to outline the Company's concerns in greater detail. The French synods decreed that funerals be conducted with 'a grave and modest silence' in order to avoid the appearance of superstition and out of necessity, given that royal decrees of the past prohibited the Reformed from having their own cemeteries. To force the French pastors in Basle to deviate from this established practice would create a dangerous schism within the refugee church and perhaps destroy it.¹³¹ Moreover, even minor innovations in the French church at Basle could spell disaster for the Reformed in France. For if even the smallest deviation or 'crack' were permitted in

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françoise de Basle proposoit en demandant advis et requérant que lesdictz frères de France fussent avec nous.

La difficulté estoit telle: M. Grynaeus, ministre de l'Église de Basle, requeroit de l'Église françoise qu'en la sépulture de leur mortz, ilz suivissent la coustume de l'Église de Basle qui estoit que, le corps estant porté au cimetière, quelque ministre faisoit une exhortation au peuple qui estoit là, tant pour préparer ung chacun à la mort que pour la consolation de ceux à qui le mort pouvoit appartenir, et mesme on rendoit quelque manière de tesmoignage au deffunt affin que les vivantz, se comportantz tant plus honnestement, se rendissent aussi recommandables." *RCP VI*, 33.

¹³⁰"L'advis de la Compaignie qu'on debvoit advertir les frères de l'Église françoise de Basle de se tenir aux synodes françois et ne rien innover, surtout en ce temps où plusieurs frétilloyent (et) ne demandantz que quelque occasion de pouvoir accommoder les deux relligions..." 26 January/February 5 1590, *RCP VI*, 33.

¹³¹"... si quid in hoc negotio novetur, schisma statim inter suas sibi commissas oves exoriat, unis quidem hoc non improbat, aliis vero usque adeo non assensuris et sive jure sive injuria displicere sibi hanc novitatem testaturis. Cuiusmodi schismata, levioribus etiam occasionibus oblatis, peregrinas Ecclesias Argentinae [1558] et Francofurti [1561] partim concusserunt, partim everterunt, quorum alterutrum tibi praesertim ingratissimum futurum esse novimus." Beza, in the name of the Company of Pastors and the Refugee Pastors, to Grynaeus, 3/13 February 1590, in *RCP VI*, 172.

the doctrine or discipline of French Protestantism, certain 'mediators' would "immediately rush into the most sacred room of the house of God with all of their perversions." They preached this 'middle way' for different reasons: some had grown tired of suffering for the truth; some were motivated by wickedness; others were attempting to win the king's favor or protect his conscience. Nonetheless, these so-called 'mediators' polluted the purity of the French Confession of Faith and, under the guise of concord, posed a deadly threat to the Reformed churches.¹³² Beza concluded his appeal by pressing Grynaeus to grant latitude to the refugees in Basle, at least until the question of funeral sermons could be reexamined by a French national synod. In the end, however, the Swiss ministers were obliged to obey the statutes of their city. At the funeral of François Hotman several weeks later, the burial was conducted according to the practice of the Basle church.¹³³

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¹³²"Hoc enim non tantum conjicimus, sed etiam ex certis nunciis et plurimorum fratrum literis intelligimus, tres nunc esse in Gallia infelicitum istorum mediatorum species.... si vel levissima rima patefiat, dubium non est quin statim in ipsa domus Dei penetralia cum omnibus corruptelis irrumpant. In hoc numero sunt imprimis quos tam diuturnae crucis taedet, cuius nullum finem perspiciunt, nisi quaedam adversariis largiantur, tum [ii qui] peccantes nesciunt quid petant, tum etiam ii qui regis quidem gratiam vel conscientiae suae periculo student redimere, sed mediam quandam viam quaerunt, qua rebus quoque suis consulant, qui, siquid tale vel apud vos vel alibi factum intelligant, quaerent scilicet num alii istis sint eruditiores vel sanctiores et num magis sapiant Ecclesiae Gallicae quam Germanicae ac tandem etiam, nisi Deus avertat, episcopale regnum Gallicis Ecclesiis obtrudent, unde mox Gallicarum Ecclesiarum eversio horribilis, a parvis istis initiis exorta, necessario consequeretur." Beza, in the name of the Company of Pastors and the Refugee Pastors, to Grynaeus, 3/13 February 1590, *RCP* VI, 172.

¹³³Grynaeus wrote Beza on 5/15 April [1590]: "Quum nuper sepeliendum esset D. Hotomanni corpus, aliquid, mihi crede, dandum fuit nostris legibus et institutis, quum ille pro cive haberetur. Quicquid autem factum est, citra praeiudicium decreti Gallicae Synodi factum est, nec in exemplum trahetur. Non queror: tantum nolim te, qui nobis omnibus obsequio et officiis exhilarandus es, tristitia affici mea causa. Confido fore ut fratres ipsi Galli agnoscant, hoc a me agi, ut per omnia sint *συγκοινωνοι* in templis, coemeteriis, vita et morte. Fortassis tempus meum factum purgabit. Hoc ago, ut in Domino, nostris hominibus gratiosi vel acceptissimi sint exules Galli." Geneva, MHR, Archives Tronchin, f. Bèze, vol. 5, fol. 276. This citation forces us to revise the assertion of Junod (and the

No sooner had the conflict over funerary orations died down than a second, more serious, controversy racked the French church in Basle. At the center of this uproar was a merchant named Antoine Lescaille, who, as an elder in the refugee church, challenged the Protestant doctrine of justification by faith.¹³⁴ Whereas historians have recognized the theological issues at stake, most have not appreciated, as did Beza, the dangerous political and religious implications of this controversy for the Huguenot churches. Once again, a spark in Basle threatened to ignite a disastrous conflagration in France. In the summer of 1590, the French minister Léonard Constant stated in a sermon at which Lescaille was present that the scriptural text 'God will render to each person according to his works' applied only to the reprobate.¹³⁵ Works could never save a Christian, but only damned the wicked. Lescaille took exception to this 'human gloss,' and in the following months publicly asserted that the pastor was a false prophet and corruptor of the Word of God. On October 23 he presented Constant a written statement explaining his own views:

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editors of the *RCP* who follow him) that the Basle ministers allowed the refugee church to follow the French practice of burial. See L. Junod, *Histoire de l'Église Française de Bâle* (Lausanne: Imprimerie Georges Bridel, 1868), 6; *RCP* VI, 174, note 13.

¹³⁴The various stages of this controversy are described by the French ministers Jacques Couet in his *Responses Chrestienes aux doctrines non Chrestienes, contenues és libelles diffamatoires d'Antoyne Lescaille* (Genève: Iacob Stoer, 1593) and Léonard Constant, in his *Remonstrance Chrestienne de Léonard Constant, ministre de la parole de Dieu à Anthoine Lescaille* (Genève: Iacob Stoer, 1593). For a helpful discussion of this affair, see Junod's *Histoire de l'Église Français de Bâle*, 7-11; and Bietenholz, *Basle and France*, 99-104.

¹³⁵Or, at least, this was Lescaille's accusation. Constant clarified his position in his *Remonstrance Chrestienne*: "... les meschans seuls recevront ce qu'ils auront mérité par leurs oeuvres & selon leurs oeuvres, c'est à dire, selon qu'ils auront tesmoigné leur infidélité par leurs meschantes oeuvres: mais les fidèles & enfans de Dieu recevront ce que Dieu leur a promis, & leur donnera gratuitement, pour l'amour de son Fils Jésus Christ, selon le tesmoignage de leur foy, qu'ils auront rendu par leurs bonnes oeuvres" (16).

Christians were justified before God, he argued, not on the basis of faith alone, but on the basis of those good works that sprang from faith. Thanks to regeneration, believers obtained an inherent righteousness capable of performing good deeds necessary for salvation.¹³⁶ The French ministers Constant and Jacques Couet saw Lescaille's formulation as a clear departure from the Protestant doctrine of justification espoused by Luther and Calvin, and suspected that the merchant had drawn his 'heretical' views from the books of the Lausanne professor Claude Aubery, whose ideas had been condemned at the Synod of Berne two years before.¹³⁷ Alarmed that the 'leaven' of the Auberian 'heresy' had spread all the way to Basle, the ministers took decisive steps to correct their wayward elder.

In the following months, the French ministers met privately with Lescaille on

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¹³⁶Lescaille summarized his argument in a letter to Henri IV in 1593: "Qu'il nous faut entrer au royaume des cieux, par les oeuvres que Iésus Christ a faites & souffertes en sa propre personne pour nous: & par celles que nous faisons & souffrons par la conduite du Saint Esprit, depuis nostre régénération." Later in this letter, he clarified this proposition: "... il nous faut entrer au royaume des cieux, par plusieurs tribulations, c'est à dire, par les bonnes oeuvres que nous faisons & souffrons, par la vertu du Saint Esprit depuis nostre régénération..." In *Lettres envoyées au roy très Chrestien* (n.p., 1593), A₂r-v, 6.

¹³⁷For biographical information about Aubery, as well as a detailed description of Beza's role in the 'Synod of Berne' (1588) that decisively condemned Aubery's formulation of justification, see Henri Meylan, *Claude Aubery: l'affair des 'Orationes'* (Lausanne, 1937). See also Geisendorf, 357-359 and *FP* I, 156-157. Beza's refutation of Aubery's doctrine is found in a position paper, dated 21/31 May 1587, entitled "Exhortatio D. Bezae ad Dominum Alberium, super ipsius scripto." Geneva, BPU, ms. fr. 410, fols. 100-103. As with the Lescaille controversy, Beza was particularly concerned that Aubery's ideas would win a hearing at the French court (see Beza to Grynaeus, 8/18 January 1591, Basle, Univ. Bibl., Kirchen Archiv, C. I. 2, Bd. II, fol. 174). Philippe Canaye's letter to Beza on 8/18 April 1591 demonstrates that Aubery's ideas did, in fact, win the approval of some advisors in Henri IV's inner-circle: "Quant à Monsieur Alberius, j'eusse désiré et désire encore qu'on eut suivy la douce voye qu'aviez comencée. Il m'a faict entendre la façon dont on l'a traicté, que ie trouve bien rude, veu qu'on ne le sçaueroist convaincre d'avoyr rien faict contre les articles des accordés à Berne. Je n'entre point au mérite du faict.... Mais en ce peu que j'y compren, ie n'y voy rien qui mérite tant d'animosité, veu mesme sa modestie.... Il semble que nous n'ayons pas assez d'ennemys si nous ne nous deschirons les uns les autres." Gotha, Ms. Bibl. Gotha, cod. chart A 405, fol. 463.

seven different occasions, seeking to dissuade him from his views but without success. Despite the mediation of Grynaeus and the threats of the city's magistrates, Lescaille became more resolute and more inflammatory in his opposition. He likened the sermons of the French ministers to 'raw beef,' far inferior to the 'well-cooked spiritual partridges' served from Christian pulpits elsewhere.¹³⁸ Likewise, Lescaille lashed out against the Reformed practice of ecclesiastical discipline, accusing the ministers of establishing a 'Spanish Inquisition' in the church and of tyrannizing the souls and consciences of innocent people.¹³⁹ Threatened with the ban of excommunication in the summer of 1591, Lescaille travelled to Geneva in the hopes of winning the support of Beza and his ministerial colleagues. Beza, who had been well-apprised of the controversy by Grynaeus, urged the merchant to abandon his errors and reconcile himself with the French clergy in Basle.¹⁴⁰ In addition, the reformer accused his visitor of publishing the censured writings of Aubery under his own name, something Lescaille profusely denied.¹⁴¹ Nonetheless, the interview

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¹³⁸According to Couet, Lescaille asserted in a book that "ce que nous preschions n'estoit que des gloses semblables à de la chair de boeuf malcuite, au lieu que ce qu'on preschoit ailleurs estoit comme des chapons & perdris spirituelles bien lardeés & bien rosties..." In Couet, *Responses Chrestienes*, 224.

¹³⁹According to Couet, the merchant asserted that "nostre discipline est une invention humaine, une inquisition Espagnole, une gehenne & tyrannie des ames & des consciences..." Couet, *Responses Chrestienes*, 187.

¹⁴⁰Beza wrote a letter to Grynaeus on 3/13 August 1591 describing the interview of the Company of Pastors with Lescaille. See Basle, Univ. Bibl., Kirchen Archiv, C. I. 2, Bd. II, fol. 183.

¹⁴¹Lescaille later admitted having read and benefited from Aubery's work: "Or sachez que ce mien escrit, dont vous me monstrastes la copie, est un enfant dividu, & par conséquent peut avoir plusieurs pères. Partant, combien qu'il y ait des choses, que i'ay autresfoys ouyés & apprisés, tant de la bouche du docteur Auberi, que de ses escrits, & d'autres auteurs: si ne pourra on iamais conclurre avec Vérité, que ce soit l'escrit dudit Auberi." Lescaille to Beza, 2/12 January 1592, published in

confirmed Beza's worst fears: Lescaille "subverts the chief foundation of the Christian religion" by questioning the Protestant doctrine of justification by faith alone. The merchant was even so brash as to claim that "the doctrine concerning the imputation of Christ's righteousness is not found in holy Scripture, but was invented fifty years ago."¹⁴² Lescaille returned to Basle, unwilling to submit to Beza or the French ministers. Later in the fall, in violation of a magisterial proscription, he published at Strasbourg tracts in German and French attacking the 'tyranny' of the Reformed churches in Switzerland. In the meantime, Beza threw himself into the controversy, urging Grynaeus and the civil authorities of Basle to search Lescaille's home for censored books, and if necessary, to imprison this 'stupid' and 'impudent' man.¹⁴³

Finally, in the spring of 1592, the magistrates of Basle took decisive action against Lescaille. Judged to be in conflict with the confessions of the churches of France and Basle, the stubborn merchant was ordered to admit his error or face heavy fines and banishment. Lescaille refused to change his opinions and departed the city,

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Déclaration et confession de foy d'Antoine Lescaille sur les points qu'il a esté calomnié et condamné par ses adversaires (n.p., n. d.), A₂.

¹⁴²"Erit autem vobis, sat scio, animadversio ista permolesta, sed quam facile intelligetis, ut spero, esse pernecessariam, quum in illo scripto impudentissime et falsissime, detortis plurimis Scripturae locis, fundamentum Christianae religionis praecipuum convellatur, et expressis verbis ibi scribatur doctrinam de Iustitia Christi nobis imputata nusquam in sacris literis reperiri, sed ab annis quinquaginta fuisse humanitus exagitam." Beza to Grynaeus, 11/21 August 1591, Basle, Univ. Bibl., Kirchen Archiv, C. I. 2, Bd. II, fol. 185.

¹⁴³See for example Beza to Grynaeus, 3/13 February 1592, Basle, Univ. Bibl., Kirchen Archiv, C. I. 2, Bd. II, fol. 192; Beza to the [Pastors and Doctors of Basle], 18/28 October 1592, Basle, Univ. Bibl., Kirchen Archiv, C. I. 2, Bd. II, fol. 198.

leaving his wife and sons behind. In the next year, from an Alsatian town outside of Basle, he wrote a flurry of angry tracts and books, attacking the errors of Calvinist doctrine and discipline, and decrying the heavy-handed tactics of the clergy of Basle and Geneva. Couet and Constant were 'trumpets of Satan,' 'sowers of discord,' the authors of a new 'tyrannical inquisition.'¹⁴⁴ By discrediting good works and teaching predestination, the 'Covetesque party' was promoting "the most blasphemous, false, pernicious and diabolical doctrine that the Devil has ever forged and disseminated in Christianity since the kingdom of France began."¹⁴⁵ Lescaille was especially angered by the arrogance and heavy-handedness of the Reformed clergy. In an open letter to Beza, he criticized sharply the reformer for suggesting that elders had the right to censure ministers only in their private morality and not in questions of doctrine. Such an assertion, he argued, smacked of papal tyranny and flew in the face of the example of Luther and Calvin who "censured the pope, not only regarding his morals, but also

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¹⁴⁴"Trompettes de Satan! semeurs de discorde & rébellion! renverseurs de police! Ne sçavez vous pas qu'ils seroit plus pernicieux au monde d'estre six iours sans magistrats, que six ans sans prescheurs?" Lescaille, *L'AntiInquisiteur contre les loups, vieux et modernes (soy disans pasteurs) devorans les brebis de Christ: & mettans la Chrestienté en combustion, & cruelle guerre, qui sera perpétuelle, si on les croira* (n.p., 1592), A₇. In a letter to the burghermeister and magistrates of Basle, Lescaille wrote: "Car ie vous proteste que ie n'ay réservé chose quelconque qui ait esté en ma puissance, excepté ma conscience, laquelle ils ont tousiours voulu forcer, & m'assubietir a leur Inquisition tyrannique, qu'ils appellent discipline françoise..." (Dated 24 December 1591/ 3 January 1592). This letter is found in *Déclaration, et confession de foy d'Antoine Lescaille sur les points qu'il a esté calomnié, & condamné par ses adversaires Léonard Constant, & Jaques Couet, ministres françois* (n.p., n.d.), A₇v. For a list of other pamphlets written by Lescaille in relation to this controversy, see Bietenholz, *Basle and France*, 100-101.

¹⁴⁵"... touchant la force de la piété, & du dernier iugement, & de la prédestination, est la plus blasphematoire, la plus faulse, la plus pernicieuse, & Diabolique doctrine, que le Diable ait forgée & semée en la Chrestienté, depuis que nostre trèssainte foy Chrestienne, a esté fondée & établie en France..." Lescaille, *Lettres envoyées au roy très Chrestien* (n.p., 1593), A₂v.

in the things he taught."¹⁴⁶ Lescaille made this same point to Léonard Constant: "You were my pastor, I was your censor. At the same time, you had authority over me, and I had authority over you. You were the minister, and I was the elder, or if you prefer, your priest or your senior."¹⁴⁷ Lescaille's outrage at what he perceived to be an abuse of clerical power fueled his critique of Reformed theology, making him increasingly sympathetic to Lutheran and Catholic doctrinal formulations.

Beza was alarmed by Lescaille's attacks against Calvinist theology and ministerial authority. In February 1592, the reformer published a book in which he carefully explained the Protestant doctrine of justification by faith and refuted point by point the 'very pernicious errors' of this 'anonymous disputor.'¹⁴⁸ In a letter appended to this treatise, Beza defended himself against Lescaille's personal attacks

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¹⁴⁶"... ie vous adverti, que plusieurs trouvent estrange de ce que vous me dites, lors que i'estoie auprès de vous, asçavoir, qu'il n'appartenoit pas à ceux, qui sont en office d'anciens en une église, de censurer les ministres d'icelle, quant à leurs glosses & doctrine, ains seulement quant à leurs moeurs.... I'artant ie vous prie de ne plus parler ainsi, afin de ne vous rendre ridicule: car cela sont trop sa maiesté papale. Et ne condamner plus, par ce moyen, Luther, Calvin, & tant d'autres personnages, qui ont censuré le pape, non seulement en ses moeurs, mais aussi en ses gloses, & doctrine..." Lescaille to Beza, 2/12 January 1592, published in *Déclaration et confession de foy d'Antoine Lescaille*, A₁v.

¹⁴⁷"Vous avez esté mon pasteur, i'ay esté vostre Censeur. Aussi tost, & en mesme instant, que vous avez eu autorité sur moy, i'ay eu autorité sur vous. Vous estiez Ministre, & moy l'estoye Ancien, Senieur ou Prestre, comme on le voudra nommer." *Response d'Antoine de Lescaille, à M. Léonard Constant ministre François, pour l'induire de donner gloire à Dieu* (n.p., 1593), 2.

¹⁴⁸Beza's treatise was published in Latin and French in 1592. The French work was entitled: *Response de Théodore de Bèze. Pour la iustification par l'imputation gratuite de la iustice de Jésus Christ apprehendé par la seule foy* (Genève: Jean Le Preux, 1592). See *Bibliographie*, 206-207, and CDM, 132. In this treatise, Beza argued that salvation had nothing to do with any righteousness inherent in the believer. Nonetheless, as the human affections were gradually transformed by the Holy Spirit, the believer grew in righteousness or sanctification. Hence the believer's good works were not the cause of salvation, but "un certain & asseuré tesmoignage de nostre foy & de ceste parfaicte iustice à nous imputée" (10).

and described the proper basis for censuring a Reformed minister: "Pastors are not subject to the judgments of each individual in their congregation, nor even of every clerical colleague or elder." Rather, only the pastors and elders meeting 'in consistory' have the authority to correct a minister's doctrine.¹⁴⁹ Thus, as an individual, Lescaille had no authority to challenge the teachings of Couet and Constant, or for that matter Beza. The merchant's reaction to the reformer's treatise was predictable: he branded Beza a 'heretic and schismatic,' and claimed that his work was full of errors.¹⁵⁰ Several months later, Lescaille published a detailed response, demanding that Beza meet him in a theological colloquy, harshly attacking the reformer's person and doctrine.¹⁵¹

Beza's worries were compounded by reports that Lescaille's teachings were spreading into France and Germany, winning support among nobles and intellectuals. Noted Protestants like Denis Godefroy, Nicholas Pithou and Jean Hotman showed

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¹⁴⁹"Les Pasteurs ne sont pas ainsi subiects aux iugements particuliers de chascune de leur brebis, ni mesmes de chascun de leurs frères compagnons ou Anciens..." Beza, *Response de Théodore de Bèze*, 264.

¹⁵⁰Lescaille "accuse ledit Bèze d'estre hérétique et scismatique, & d'avoir fait 20 erreurs & plus, en sa response pour la iustification contre mon cercle (selon le jugement de plusieurs trèsdoctes Dialecticiens)..." Lescaille, *Response d'Antoine de Lescaille, à M. Léonard Constant ministre François*, 6.

¹⁵¹The title of Lescaille's response was *Responsio modesta et christiana Marci a Gaulme ad calumnias et invectivas publicatas contra Antonium Lescalleum per M. Theodorum Bezam in libro eius qui Apologia pro justificatione etc. ab eo inscriptus est* (s.l., 1592). The Company of Pastors discouraged Beza from responding to this work: "Le 6 [/16 October 1592], furent apportés à la Compagnie certains livrets faits par L'Escaille, par lesquels il provoquoit M. de Besze à conférence, et dadvantage desgorgioit beaucoup d'outrages tant contre sa personne que contre la doctrine de la justification gratuite. Et sur cela demandoit ledict sieur de Besze advis à la Compagnie. Sur quoy fut advisé de dire à Monsieur de Besze que, n'estans pas les premiers outrages qu'il avoit reçu pour le regard de sa personne et quant à la doctrine, qu'on n'estoit pas d'advise aussi qu'il respondit plus audict de L'Escaille..." In *RCP* VI, 106-107.

varying degrees of sympathy for Lescaille's cause.¹⁵² Likewise, the merchant was winning some followers in Reformed churches at Metz and Frankfurt.¹⁵³ Reports from France indicated that Lescaille's books were being read and discussed in Navarre's court as well.¹⁵⁴ Of particular concern to Beza was a tract addressed to Henri IV, in which Lescaille blamed France's religious unrest on 'rigid' Calvinist theology and discipline, and argued that concord could be achieved in the kingdom by rejecting the 'Covetous doctrine' and, instead, adopting the Augsburg Confession.¹⁵⁵ Beza recognized that his own theology and authority were under direct attack:

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¹⁵²Bietenholz, *Basle and France*, 103. See also the letter from the Company of Pastors to Nicholas Pithou on 10/20 July 1591, in *RCP* VI, 225-227. Jean Hotman, while denying Beza's accusation that he was encouraging Lescaille, nonetheless urged the Genevan reformer to treat his opponent with gentleness: "... me mercatoris [i.e. Lescaille] istius, cuius tu me exemplo mones, ut sapiam, discipulum sectatoremve esse apud te falso criminati sunt, et tu statim fidem illis adhibuisse visus es. Hoc vere tibi sancteque possum adfirmare, totis his mensibus sex, quibus hic sum, ocium mini nullum ad ipsius argumenta legenda cognoscendave fuisse.... Et Senecae: Indulgento quandoque melius quam vindicando peccata corrigi. Ecclesiae certe quies quibusvis redimanda condicionibus videtur, et ovis in ovile non fuste, calce, pugno adigenda, sed humero amanter exemplo Domini, reportanda." Hotman to Beza, 1/11 May 1593, Paris, BN, f. Dupuy 268, 200-203.

¹⁵³Beza reported to Grynaeus on 18/28 October 1592: "Haec autem, ut penitus etiam noris qualis et quanta sit, scito ausum etiam illum et Francfurtenses fratres, et Metenses, ut errorum Bezae fautores similiter, non tamen editis, sed calamo tantum exaratis literis, provocare..." Basle, Univ. Bibl., Kirchen Archiv, C. I. 2, Bd. II, fol. 199.

¹⁵⁴"Audio rabidi illius Lescalii scripta in comitatu Regis fuisse nostris qui illic sunt fratribus ostensa et obiecta, non sine impiarum scurrarum risu. Ad quem enim ille sua non misit? Dignus saltem qui infamium librorum poenas luat, etiamsi regionis ratio non habeatur." Beza to Grynaeus, 13/23 June 1592, Basle, Univ. Bibl., Kirchen Archiv, C. I. 2, Bd. II, fol. 197.

¹⁵⁵The title of this treatise was *Lettres envoyée au roy très Chrestien* (n.p., 1593). Calvinist theology, Lescaille argued, was the "cause de tous les malheurs, misères & calamitez, qui ont esté si long temps, & sont en vostre royaume, & seront si vous n'y pourvoyez" (A₂v-₃r). By contrast, he agreed with those who affirmed the Confession of Augsburg and with Roman Catholics who together believed that "la vie éternelle soit donnée aux régénerez, à cause de fils de Dieu: toutesfois elle est aussi le salaire des bonnes oeuvres. Ainsi que le patrimoine, est le salaire des labeurs du fils, combien qu'il luy soit aussi attribué pour une autre cause.... I'ay dit & escrit, dy & escri, & proteste publiquement que le Dieu que i'adore, est le mesme Dieu, que tout ceux du saint Empire Romain, tant Catholiques que de la Confession d'Ausburg, de Saxe & leurs semblables, adorent & bénissent" (16, 18-19).

Lescaille's tract promised Henri that "France could be reunited and the entire church pacified if the heresies spread by Beza were refuted."¹⁵⁶

Even more damaging was Lescaille's argument that, despite its abuses, the Catholic church in France had always been the true church of Christ and its priests true successors of the apostles.¹⁵⁷ Without the approval of God or the permission of kings, Calvin and his followers had broken away from this true church and formed a rival church in which illegitimate pastors and teachers tyrannized their flocks and taught blasphemous, even seditious, doctrines. Subsequently, these 'heretics' and 'schismatics' had stirred up an infinite number of controversies within the Gallican church.¹⁵⁸ The solution to France's political crisis, Lescaille asserted, was to

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¹⁵⁶Lescaille published pamphlets in which "hanc unam Regi Gallo suos subditos reconciliandi et totius Ecclesiae pacificandae paratissimam esse rationem ait, si sparsae a Beza haereses coarguantur; quod se certo facturum, et quidem perfacile ex Dei verbo pollicetur." Beza to Grynaeus, 18/28 October 1592, Basle, Univ. Bibl., Kirchen Archiv, C. I. 2, Bd. II, fol. 199. Similarly, the Company of Pastors wrote to the Church of Basle: "... scitote illum [i.e. Lescaille] ipsi Gallorum regi scribere ausum havere se certissimam mox pacificandi ipsius regni rationem, si ipsum aversere et audire, suis etiam ministris praesentibus, sustineat." 5/15 January 1593, in *RCP* VI, 289.

¹⁵⁷This argument was found in Lescaille's *Lettres envoyées à tous les trèsillustrés princes ... & principaux seigneurs Catholiques, de toute la sainte église Gallicane* (n.p., 1593).

¹⁵⁸"Parquoy, c'a esté une trop grande présomption, sacrilège, & audace Diabolique, à des particuliers, de s'estre ingérez, sans l'autorité des Roys Trèschrétiens, et des Estats de France, et sans aucune vocation légitime, divine ny humaine, de faire divorce & séparation de mariage, entre nostre Seigneur Iésus Christ & son Espouse Gallicane, sous ombre des abus glissez en icelle: & de l'excommunier & anathématiser entièrement, & la juger & condamner à la mort première & seconde, temporelle & éternelle, sans excepter Roys, Princes, ny autres membres d'icelle. Et quant & quant de remarier nostre Seigneur Iésus Christ, à une autre Église, concevé, forgée, fondée & dressée par eux, en laquelle s'estans constituez seigneurs, Docteurs & Pasteurs, ils ont commandé & tyrannisé à leur plaisir, & enseigné & donné pour pasture, la plus faulse, pernicieuse & blasphématoire Doctrine, que le Diable ait iamais inventé.... Voyla, comment par leur exemple, ils ont ouvert la porte à tous séditions & rebelles, pour aller, quand il leur plaira, fonder, & planter une troisième 4. 5. 6. 7. & infinies Églises & Religions, hérétiques & scismatiques, au Royaume Trèschrétien, malgré les Roys & saints magistrats: & esmouvoir une troisième, 4. 5. 6. 7. & infinies tempestes & orages, les unes contres les autres, & toutes ensemble contre la sainte Naselle Gallicane..." Lescaille, *Lettres envoyées à tous les trèsillustrés princes*, ii^v.

convince the Reformed to "vomit out all this wicked poison of Calvinism and, by their own free will, renounce this false Calvinist church and promise never to return to it."¹⁵⁹ How was this to happen? Lescaille was vague on this point, but again he seemed to argue that moderate Protestants and Catholics should unite around the Augsburg Confession, which, he believed, contained a more synergistic doctrine of justification. So too, magistrates must stop lending their support to the Reformed practice of excommunication. Without such coercion, "Beza and his followers outside of France would have no one to listen to their sermons except the benches, the walls and the stained glass windows in their temples, as well as a few rats and mice."¹⁶⁰ Lescaille's vision for peace in France, therefore, demanded a dramatic departure from the doctrine and ecclesiastical discipline of the Reformed churches. Once again, as at the Colloquy of Poissy thirty years before, the Augsburg Confession was posited as a tempting symbol of reconciliation. The final chapter of the Lescaille controversy was written three years later, when the National Synod at Saumur (1596) rejected his appeal and explicitly condemned his teaching.¹⁶¹ Thereafter, the French merchant

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¹⁵⁹"... vous ferez cesser ceste maudite tempeste & orage, en moins d'un mois, & ferez guérir toutes les brebis Chrestiennes Gallicanes, qui se trouveront infectées de la rongne & poison Calvinique (excepté quelque petit nombre, duquel la rongne pourroit estre devenue lèpre incurable) en sorte qu'elles vomiront tout ce meschant poison, de leur propre & franche volonté, renoncans à ceste faulx Église Calvinique, avec protestation de iamais n'y rentrer." Lescaille, *Lettres envoyées à tous les trèsillustres princes*, iii.

¹⁶⁰"Et n'estoit ledit clayve, il y a desia quelques années, que ledit Bèze & adhérens qui sont hors de la France, n'auroient autres auditeurs en leurs prêches, que les banqs, les murailles & les verrières de leurs temples, & quelques rats & souris s'il y en a." Lescaille, *Lettres envoyées à tous les trèsillustres princes*, iiiii^v.

¹⁶¹"Les Thèses d'Antoine de Lescaille aiant été présentées à la Compagnie, & examinées diligemment, elle declare qu'elles contiennent plusieurs Points de Doctrine erronée, & contraire à

converted to Catholicism and disappeared almost entirely from view.¹⁶²

In retrospect, the case of Lescaille and the 'moyenneurs' provides important insights into the tensions faced by the French Reformed movement at the end of the sixteenth century. The deepening political crisis accompanying Henri IV's accession forced Protestants in France to weigh distinctive and even cherished aspects of their confession against the political survival and religious harmony of the kingdom. For Protestants like Hotman and Séguier, the vision of a renewed, unified Gallican Church warranted doctrinal compromises and demanded the redefinition of what elements were foundational to historic Christianity. Implicit in this program for reconciliation was the conviction that Reformed 'orthodoxy,' as delineated in the French Confession of Faith and Discipline, was too dogmatic, or at least too restrictive to form a basis of doctrinal unity within the Gallican Church. Religious charity and concord were every bit as important as theological precision.

Lescaille made explicit and radicalized these criticisms of French Calvinism, attacking Reformed pastors like Jacques Couet and Beza for defending a 'harsh' and 'rigid' creed that was divisive and intolerant. For Lescaille and his sympathizers, the

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l'Analogie de la Foi, spécialement sur la manière de la Justification. A raison de quoi ledit Lescaille aiant été interrogé s'il vouloit recevoir Instruction sur ce Point, qu'on jugeoit contraire à la Confession de Foi des Églises Réformées de ce Roiaume; a déclaré qu'il ne se vouloit point soumettre au jugement de ce Synode, ni recevoir ses Instructions, mais seulement demander qu'on approuve ses Thèses.... C'est pourquoi la Compagnie lui aiant gravement remontré son opiniâtreté & ses fausses opinions, a ordonné que cette Procédure sera inserée dans les Actes de ce Synode, afin que les Églises Réformées de ce Roiaume soient averties de se garder de la fausse Doctrine dudit Lescaille, qui est aussi condamnée par les Églises de Suisse..." Aymon, I, 206.

¹⁶²Junod, *Histoire de L'Église Française de Bâle*, 11. Several years later, Lescaille published yet another treatise, entitled *Avertissement aux Français et aux Suisses de la religion protestante prétendue réformée* (Paris, 1604).

pacification of France could be achieved only once the Reformed were cleansed of such 'heretical' doctrines as predestination and ecclesiastical discipline, and induced to accept a more works-oriented and inclusive theology. In addition, the case of Lescaille reveals continued tensions within French Protestantism over the question of ecclesiastical authority. Like Pierre Ramus and Jean Morély before him, the merchant of Basle questioned, and then bitterly attacked Reformed ecclesiology that seemed to place pastors beyond lay correction, yet endowed them with extensive disciplinary power over the actions and consciences of their congregations.¹⁶³

Whatever the source of Lescaille's 'egalitarianism,' the fact that he was a long-time elder in the Reformed church made the ministers' rebuff all the more difficult for him to accept. The frustrations of this single elder may well have been indicative of a larger problem. During the final decades of the sixteenth century, the percentage of lay (elder) participants in the national synods of the French Church was consistently below the rate stipulated by synodical decrees, suggesting a pervasive clericalism (or perhaps lay indifference?) in the life of the Reformed churches.¹⁶⁴ The Lescaille controversy, therefore, betrayed tensions at the foundation of late sixteenth-century Reformed Protestantism, revealing disagreement over the limits of clerical authority,

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¹⁶³See above, pages 46-48.

¹⁶⁴The Synod of Figeac (1579) had stipulated that "les Pasteurs viendront toujours accompagnés chacun d'un Ancien dans ces Assemblées Ecclésiastique; si on les envoie seuls, on n'aura point d'égard à leurs Mémoires, ni pareillement à ceux des Anciens, s'ils y viennent seuls." Likewise, the Synod of La Rochelle (1581) enjoined that "A l'avenir on y enverra [to the national synods], autant qu'il sera possible, deux Ministres et deux Anciens de chaque Province." Aymon, I, 140, 151. In fact, as Léonard shows, in the final five national synods of the sixteenth century, elder delegates constituted only between 30%-44% of the total number of participants. See Léonard, *Histoire Générale du Protestantisme* II, 127-128.

the desirability of ecclesiastical discipline, and the validity of distinctive Calvinist doctrines. In the volatile political and religious climate accompanying Henri's accession to the throne, theological issues like these took on enormous significance. From the perspective of Beza and the pastors of Geneva, theological 'heterodoxy' jeopardized not only the confessional unity of the Reformed movement, but the very survival of the Protestant churches in France.

The Sins of David

During the final months of 1592, Henri IV began to make perceptible moves toward Catholic conversion. In October, Navarre sent two delegates to Rome to assure the new pope Clement VIII (1592-1605) of his devotion and filial respect.¹⁶⁵ The following January, the duke of Mayenne convened an Estates General at the Louvre, attended by Leaguer delegates intent on electing a Catholic king. While condemning this assembly in public, Navarre permitted Loyalists from his court to begin negotiating with Third Party Catholics of the League, addressing issues related to peace, Catholic reunion, and the king's conversion. In the meantime, Henri IV attended two public debates at Mantes between the bishop of Évreux, Davy Duperron and the Reformed divines Jean-Baptiste Rotan, Jean de Morlas and Michel Béraud.¹⁶⁶

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¹⁶⁵Babelon, *Henri IV*, 534.

¹⁶⁶Interpretations of this theological conference differ markedly. Pierre Bayle (*Dictionnaire historique et critique*, XII, 637) followed the account of D'Aubigné who had asserted that Rotan and Morlas intentionally ceded the debate to Duperron so as to encourage Henri IV to convert to Catholicism. Palma Cayet also ascribed victory to Duperron, claiming that Henri IV was so impressed with his arguments that henceforth he doubted only the Catholic doctrines of the invocation of the

Finally, in mid-May, Henri sent his assurances to Leaguer delegates at the Conference of Suresnes that he was willing to set a date to begin Catholic instruction, given that he was "already in his heart a Catholic."¹⁶⁷ Despite their continued suspicions, Henri's promise undercut Leaguer proposals to give the crown of France to Charles of Bourbon, the Cardinal of Vendôme, and the *infante* of Spain. In the days that followed, the date of the catechism was fixed for July 20, and invitations were sent to prominent Catholic clergymen to assist in the king's instruction. Contrary to the expectations of Huguenots, this was not to be the long-awaited national synod at which the two religious confessions would debate their differences in the presence of the king. The time for theological dispute was over. Unable to conquer Paris as a Protestant, Henri had resolved to become the Catholic king of France.

In Geneva, Theodore Beza remained hopeful that the king would not abjure the Protestant religion or abandon his Huguenot allies. The reformer was well-aware of the pressures that Henri faced. But swayed by personal loyalty and the bonds of friendship, he retained confidence in Navarre's spiritual steadfastness, even in the face of growing evidence to the contrary. In part, Beza seems to have been a victim of his own panygeric. Convinced of Navarre's providential role in France, the

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saints, auricular confession, and papal primacy. See Wolfe, *The Conversion of Henri IV*, 125. Benoît claimed, by contrast, that Duperron terminated the debate when it became clear that Rotan would not cooperate with him. See *Histoire de l'Édit of Nantes* I, 112. The National Synod of Montauban (1594) approved the actions of Rotan and Béraud: "Le présent Synode remercie Monsieur Béraud, Monsieur Rotan, & les autres Pasteurs de tout ce qu'ils ont fait pour maintenir la vérité dans la Conférence tenue à Mantes, avec le Sieur du Perron ... & il aprouve aussi entièrement la conduite qu'ils y ont tenue, & ratifie les ofres qu'ils ont faites de continuer ladite Conférence, sous le bon plaisir & le commandement de Sa Majesté..." Aymon, I, 185.

¹⁶⁷Wolfe, *The Conversion of Henri IV*, 130.

reformer extolled the Protestant king as a new 'David,' sent by God to pacify the kingdom and restore the true religion. Echoing themes found in Duplessis-Mornay's *Méditation* on Psalm 101 and in his own *Paraphrases* on the Psalms, Beza in his correspondence drew frequent parallels between the life of the biblical king David and Henri of Navarre. Like the Jewish king, Henri was a great warrior, chosen by God to rule. Even as David had defied Goliath, so Henri now opposed the schemes of Satan and the boasts of the Roman Antichrist. Like his biblical predecessor, Navarre had not been able to claim his throne immediately, but had to struggle to defeat his enemies and pacify his kingdom.¹⁶⁸ In reading contemporary history back into the biblical account of David, Beza inadvertantly created--and, it seems, largely believed--an idealized image of Navarre that distorted his perception of events in France. It was only with Henri's dramatic abjuration at Saint Denis in July of 1593 that this Davidic image was decisively and permanently shattered.

Beza alluded repeatedly to the person of David in his correspondence with Henri of Navarre in 1592 and 1593. The letter-preface to his treatise on the marks of

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¹⁶⁸"Et certe si Domino visum fuerit Davidem illum suum nuper in Gallia divinitus excitatum eo usque manu sua tutari ut pacare regnum illud possit, magna ac pene certa spes est fore ut cristas erigere desinat Satan, et cogatur ipse Antichristus cum suis quamplurimum de arrogantia illa sua remittere." Beza to Anton Weiss, 29 April/9 May 1590, Paris, BN, f. Dupuy, vol. 103, fols. 123^v-124; "Ad istas calamitates quotidie augescentes illa vel maxima accedit quod Davidem nostrum audimus cogi de summa rerum rursum dimicare, tantum abest ut tam procul nos iuvare possit." Beza to Grynaeus, 21/31 July 1590, Basle, Univ. Bibl., Kirchen Archiv, C. I. 2, Bd. II, fol. 159; "Tribuat igitur nobis Deus Opt. Max. eam constantiam, qua in extremis angustiis opus est, et eum praesertim spiritum Regi largiatur, quem olim Gedeoni adversus Madianitas pugnanti, et Davidi post Saulis mortem in bello adversus Hisc-Boscethum gesto." Beza to Grynaeus, 12/22 March 1591, *ibid.*, 181; "De rebus Gallicis, nostro quidem alteri Davidi omnia mirabiliter succedunt. Sed incredibilis est in patriam et in sese coniuratorum pervicacia, saepe mihi in memoriam revocans tristissimum illud septennium et amplius, a quo David apud Hebronem regnum suum est auspicatus. Qua de re, ipsum quoque Regem nominatim iampridem admonui." Beza to Grynaeus, 27 July/6 August 1591, *ibid.*, fol. 182.

the true church (dated August 1591) was a virtual guidebook detailing how Henri should establish and protect the 'true' religion in France. It seemed, noted Beza, that God had chosen Henri as "a new David to set right His house" after many years of turmoil.¹⁶⁹ As such, Navarre must be zealous for God's truth and protect it assiduously from any mixture or corruption. Although the king had been tested by many hardships for a long time, God had blessed and assisted him in numerous ways. Thus, like David of old, Henri could sing: "The Eternal God is my light and my salvation, and the strength of my life." God, in turn, answered Henri: "Wait on the Eternal One, and hold fast, and he will strengthen your heart! Indeed, wait on the Eternal One!"¹⁷⁰ Through the person and psalms of David, Beza encouraged Navarre to be zealous in restoring the Reformed churches of France, even while waiting patiently for the divine victory over the League.

The image of David reappeared in December of 1592. The reformer had heard rumors--which he did not believe--that Navarre had already been won over to the Catholic faith. Beza stated in a personal letter to Henri IV his confidence that the king would persevere. But as the political and military difficulties multiplied, and as Navarre was tempted by false promises of peace, he must follow all the more

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¹⁶⁹"... si le Seigneur fait paroïr, comme nous espérons, qu'il vous a choisi comme un nouveau David pour redresser sa maison, après tant de confusions, par lesquelles il a chastié les uns par les autres..." Beza to Henri IV, letter-preface in *Traicté des vrayes essentielles et visibles marques*, B vi.

¹⁷⁰"Aussi avez vous expérimenté par sa grande bonté qu'il vous a tousiours accompagné, vous faisant sentir infinies assistances vrayement extraordinaires, pour les vous faire tant mieux recognoistre: de sorte que vous pouvez bien dire hautement avec David, 'l'Éternel est ma lumière & ma délivrance, & la force de ma vie': surquoy il vous respond, 'Atten toy à l'Éternel, & tien bon, & il fortifiera ton coeur, voire, atten toy à l'Éternel.'" Beza to Henri IV, letter-preface in *Traicté des vrayes essentielles et visibles marques*, A ij^v.

carefully the example of King David: "I doubt, Sire, that since David there has been any king in the world through whom God has more clearly displayed his providence than through you. Guard carefully this precious treasure found in the example of David, who never waned in his commitment to the public worship of God, but worked tirelessly to restore it from the beginning of his reign to the end."¹⁷¹ While David's religious zeal should be emulated, Beza nonetheless warned Henri against the grievous sins that the Jewish king had committed. For despite his spiritual devotion, David had committed adultery with the beautiful Bathsheba and ordered a census of his people that brought God's wrath upon the entire nation. Navarre must carefully avoid such wicked actions, and should quickly repent when he fell into sin. "I remind you, Sire, that even though everybody sins, for people to continue in such sin is far worse because little by little it draws them so far off the right path that they are never able to find it again. Furthermore, the sacred history of David and others shows us that the single fault of one person has often stirred God's terrible vengeance against an entire nation."¹⁷² In a single frame, Beza presented the negative and positive

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¹⁷¹"Je ne say, Sire, si depuis David il se trouveroit avoir esté quelque Roy au monde en qui Dieu ait vérifié ceste providence plus manifestement qu'en vostre personne. Gardez dont précieusement ce thrésor à l'exemple de David, qui n'a jamais décliné quant à ce qui concernoit directement le service de Dieu, mais a commencé et achevé son regne par le restablissement d'iceluy." Beza to Henri IV, 3/13 December 1592, Geneva, MHR, Archives Tronchin, f. Bèze, t. 2, fol. 17.

¹⁷²"Et quant aux infirmités [of David], voyre faultes bien grandes qui luy sont advenues entre ce sien commencement et sa fin, Dieu vous face la grâce, Sire, tant de n'y tomber pas, que d'estre autant et plus prompt à vous relever si vous y tombez ... et vous souvenant entre autres choses, Sire, sur ce point que pescher est une chose humaine, mais que continuer seroit une chose trop pire, et qui peu à peu esloigné tellement les hommes du bon chemin, qu'ils ne le retrouvent pas quand ils veulent. Et qui plus est, l'histoire sacrée de David et d'autres nous monstre que la seule faulte d'un particulier a bien souvent causé terribles vengeance de Dieu sur toute une nation." Beza to Henri IV, 3/13 December 1592, Geneva, MHR, Archives Tronchin, f. Bèze, vol. 2, fol. 17.

images of the biblical David. Even while flattering Navarre by affirming his likeness to the courageous warrior and godly king, the reformer gently but firmly reproved Henri for sins past and present. The example of David bore a solemn warning for Henri: if he betrayed the Reformed religion and committed spiritual infidelity, he and the whole of France would suffer the harsh judgment of God. In Beza's hands, the image of the biblical David had become unexpectedly ambiguous and threatening.

Clearly, Beza had not abandoned hope for Henri of Navarre. In the fall of 1592, the French monarch sent his greetings to Beza and requested his prayers, something which no doubt confirmed the reformer's views.¹⁷³ Early in 1593, Beza still described Henry as "that very Christian king whom God has sent as from heaven from his own hand to revive this great kingdom ... and especially the poor Reformed churches within it."¹⁷⁴ A short time later, the reformer reported in glowing terms how the king, while present at the wedding of a Huguenot noble, attended Reformed sermons on eight consecutive days and served as a godparent at the baptism of several infants.¹⁷⁵

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¹⁷³Henri told the Genevan ambassador Paul Chevalier: "... assurez vos Seigneurs que si dieu me donne moyen, je leur feray cognoistre que je leur ay esté & seray amy, et comme roy de Navarre et comme roy de France. Dites en de mesmes à M^r de Bèze & qu'il prie dieu pour moy, de vray la nécessité est telle que souvant les gentilhommes me servans en court n'ont pour vivre. J'ay espérance que les Églises feront quelque chose." 3/13 November 1592, RC 87, 219^v.

¹⁷⁴"... du Roy très Chrestien, que Dieu l'a comme envoyé du ciel de sa propre main, comme pour ressuciter la splendeur de ce grand Royaume vostre voisin, & specialement les povres Églises reformées en icelui..." Beza to the Christian Estates of the Low Countries, 1/11 January 1593, letter-preface in *Sermons sur l'histoire de la résurrection*, 111, vii^v.

¹⁷⁵"Et quum Carnutum nuper ad celebrandas [?] cuiusdam ex suis proceribus nuptias venisset [i.e. Henri IV], in quibus maleferiati [?] nonnulli fore sperabant ut de vero Dei cultu quidpiam saltem remitteret, ille e contrario per totum octiduum frequentissimas audivit suorum pastorum conciones,

In May, however, Paul Chevalier, Geneva's ambassador at the French court, began to send the city's magistrates unsettling news. Rumors from the Conference of Suresnes indicated that the king was planning to convert to Catholicism.¹⁷⁶ On May 25, Chevalier sent a long letter in code to Geneva describing Navarre's situation in detail. Catholic princes in Italy had offered Navarre three million pieces of gold if he agreed to convert and waged war against their enemy, Philip II of Spain. Similarly, the Leaguer Estates General in Paris had promised to recognize Henri as monarch if he embraced the Catholic religion; if he refused, however, the Estates were prepared to elect a new king. In response to these threats, Chevalier learned, Navarre had agreed to receive instruction at a religious assembly at Mantes on July 20, to which delegates from both religions would be invited. Several days after receiving these disturbing reports, the Genevan ambassador had obtained a private meeting with the king.¹⁷⁷ After listening to Chevalier's concerns, Navarre assured the ambassador of

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aliquot etiam infantibus, ibidem, ipsomet adstante, baptisatis." Beza to Jean-J. Grynaeus, 6/16 January 1593, Basle, Univ. Bibl., Kirchen Archiv, C. I. 2, Bd. II, fols. 205-206.

¹⁷⁶In a letter dated 6 May 1593, Chevalier wrote that "... on tient s'il se fuit quelque chose que ce sera aux despens de ceux de la religion, de façon qu'il est à craindre d'un changement comme je vous diray a mon retour, cela me fait opiniastres en ceste poursuyte crainte de changement de temps." 22 May/1 June 1593, RC 88, 79.

¹⁷⁷"Icy ont esté veues les lettres escrites la plus part en chiffre par M^r Chevalier de Mantes de [25] du May dernier, envoyées par un laquais exprès, par lesquelles il donne avis que plusieurs princes tant d'Italie que autres sollicitent le roy de France à faire une paix avec ses subiets, luy offrant trois millinos d'or tour. faire le guerre à l'Espagnol au cas qu'il se voulust renger au party Catholique. Que les Estats assemblés près Paris offrent de recogre le roy pourveu qu'il se face catholique, à quoy poussent les gens du conseil catholique d'iceluy. Que le cardinal de Bourbon & le duc de Soissons negocient avec les Estats ligueurs & quelques Catholiques royaux pour eslire premier un roy, tellement que le roy s'est veu en danger de perdre son estat et paravanture sa vie, quoy obvier son conseil luy a donné par avis qu'il permette de s'instruire & à cest effect assembler des Évesques & gens d'église. Ce qu'a esté signé par luy, d'où sont procédés plusieurs bruits divers que sa majesté se catholisoit, qui esmeut ledit S^r Chevalier de se présenter devant le roy avec telles ou semblables paroles." 18/28 June

his spiritual constancy and his affection for Geneva, promising that "he would do nothing prejudicial to the glory of God and the peace of the Church." The conference at Mantes was intended, he insisted, only for his instruction and to seek a means of pacifying his kingdom.¹⁷⁸ Despite Navarre's assurances to the contrary, reports of the king's intended conversion continued to circulate at court. From Chevalier's perspective, Henri's abjuration was all but a certainty.¹⁷⁹

Shocked by the dispatches, Beza wrote Henri of Navarre a long letter in June to warn and advise him about the assembly being convened at Mantes.¹⁸⁰ The king

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1593, RC 88, 92^v.

¹⁷⁸In Chevalier's private conference with Navarre, the king noted that "... j'ay veu ces jours passez moy & mon estat en peril imminent pour lequel prévenir j'ay advisé avec mon conseil de tenir une assemblée. Asseures vos seigneurs de mon affection entière envers eux, & que je ne feray chose qui puisse tourner au préjudice de la gloire de dieu, du bien & repos commun & de leur estat particulièrement." Later in the day, at a meeting of his council (to which Chevalier was invited), Henri gave further assurances to the Huguenots: "... le roy fit une plainte de la doute que se faisoit de luy de sa constance comme si elles estoit esbranlée pour ne continuer le secours des églises qu'il avoit cy devant apporté, les asseurant qu'il ne fera jamais rien de préjudiciable à la gloire de dieu & repos de l'église. Qu'il a assigné une assemblée générale au 20^{me} de Julliet prochain des ecclésiastiques de deux religions pour adviser aux moyens d'establir une bonne assurance en son pays & royaume & n'avoir rien promis sinon d'estre instruit, les asseurant qu'il ne changera jamais d'affection à la religion & conservation des églises..." 18/28 June 1593, RC 88, 93^{r-v}.

¹⁷⁹In a letter dated 1 June 1593, Chevalier "... donne avis de la résolution prise par le roy d'aller à la messe, le qu'on tient pour certain..." 10/20 July 1593, RC 88, 106^v.

¹⁸⁰This letter is published in *Bulletin* 1 (1853): 41-46. At about the same time, the Reformed ministers Gabriel d'Amours and Jean de L'Espine sent letters to Henri employing many of these same Davidic themes. D'Amour, likening himself to the prophet Nathan, reminded Henri: "Si vous faisiez comme David, après que le prophete Nathan lui eust remontré (comme V^{re} Ma^{te} scait que Dieu m'a faict la grâce d'avoir eu ceste hardiesse plusieurs fois de lui remonstrer, lesquelles remonstrances vous aves fort bien prises comme de V^{re} très humble très fidelle subject serviteur et pasteur lequel vous affectionnes) je m'assure que Dieu vous seroit grâce et miséricorde. Mais vous continues à ce que nous disent tous ceux qui viennent de la cour.... On dict par deça que vous estes près de faire comme Salomon qui se destourna à l'idolatrie: les femmes en furent cause, on dict que vous avez promis d'aller à la Messe, ce que je ne croy nullement et en combatroy tousiours en ung duel pour maintenir le contraire.... Mais aujourd'hui si vous oyès sa voix, n'endurcissez pas vostre coeur car c'est une chose horrible de tomber entre les mains du Dieu vivant, c'est ung feu consumant ce sont les ardeurs éternelles, prions le avec David ps. 51 ...." D'Amour to Henri IV, 20 June 1593, published in *Bulletin*

should enter "this spiritual combat" with godly councillors nearby, armed with the Scriptures that are the touchstone of the Christian faith. Henri must do nothing that violates his conscience, nor agree to any settlement that benefits his own estate at the expense of the churches. Many people had their eyes focused on the king, whom God had sustained thus far and had destined "to make his grace shine throughout the world." Alluding to David's penitential prayer in Psalm 51, Beza urged the king to humble himself and ask God for "a truly contrite and broken heart, so that having obtained forgiveness for all those things in which you have knowingly offended him ... he might not take his Spirit away from you." Without this divine Spirit, "it would have been much better if you were simply a private person rather than a king or prince; indeed, it would be better if you had never been born at all than for you to live under God's condemnation."¹⁸¹ After reminding Henri of the treachery of Saint

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1 (1853): 280-285. Similarly, L'Espine wrote: "Et pour vous confirmer en cela, représentés vous, Sire, je vous supplie, l'histoire et l'exemple de David, lequel avant que de parvenir au Royaume que Dieu luy avoit destiné, et en estre paisible possesseur, a esté tanté de Dieu par mil et mil traverses, Saül et tous ses partisans luy ont dressé mil et mil embusches, de sorte qu'il n'y avoit aucun lieu de seureté en tout le Royaume d'Israël pour sa personne. Après la mort de Saül toutes les nations circonvoysines comme les Iduméens, les Philistins, Les Moabites, les Ammonites, les Siriens et Assiriens, se liguerent et conspirèrent ensemble pour empescher par tous leurs moyens qu'il ne parvinst à la couronne, et ne fust couronné Roy paisible en Israël. Depuis encore son fils Absalon avec dix des lignées du peuple, et les Princes se soulevèrent contre luy, pour lui faire un affront, et le desposséder de son siège: Toutefois il ne fut en leur puissance d'exécuter ce malheureux dessein, Dieu soustenant toujours de sa main son fidelle serviteur, et le couvrant de sa faveur ainsi que d'une targe, jaçoit que quelquesfois il soit arrivé à tel destroit qu'il se trouvoit despourveu de conseil, et du tout destitué d'espérance de pouvoir eschapper la main de ses ennemis.... vous vous devrez asseurer à l'exemple de ce bon Roy, encore que tout le monde vous eust abandonné, que Dieu sera pour vous quoy qu'il en soit, et qu'il prendra vostre cause en main pour la deffendre contre tous vos adversaires, par lesquels il vous livre maintenant plusieurs rudes assaux et furieuses tentations." L'Espine to Henri IV, [1593], published in *Bulletin* 1 (1853): 449-456.

¹⁸¹"Considerant donc ce point et spécialement combien de personnes ont l'oeuil jetté sur vous, comme leur estant envoyé de Dieu entres en vous mesme à toutes heures et vous représentant la face de Celui qui vous a tant honoré jusques icy, et qui vous a destiné à faire reluire sa grâce partout le

Bartholomew's day and the shining example of his mother, the reformer again turned to the image of David. Just as God had miraculously raised David to the royal throne through a thousand dangers, and armed him with patience for the space of seven years of civil war, so now Beza prayed that this same divine grace would be manifested toward Henri, for the profit of the kingdom of France and the peace of the Church. But Henri must be patient; he must wait for God's deliverance rather than attempt his own solution. In conclusion, Beza exhorted Henri to read, hear and meditate on Psalm 101 frequently, that he might be able "to surpass even David, guarding [himself] from David's faults and imitating his virtues."¹⁸²

The example of David did not inspire Henri sufficiently to deter him from conversion. On July 15th, several dozen Catholic clergymen conducted the royal catechism; Huguenot ministers were not permitted to attend. Ten days later, after a tearful meeting with his Reformed chaplain Antoine de La Faye, Henri IV departed

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monde, humiliez-vous jusques au fond de vostre coeur pour luy demander un esprit vraiment contrit et froissé, afin qu'ayant obtenu pardon de tout ce en quoy vous sçaurez l'avoir offensé, estant homme comme vous estes, il ne retire de vous son esprit sans lequel il vaudroit trop mieux n'avoir esté que simple personne privée que Roy ny Prince, voire n'avoir jamais esté né, que de vivre en attirant sur soy sa condamnation d'autant plus aspre qu'on a plus reçu de grâces du Créateur." *Bulletin* 1 (1853): 44.

¹⁸²"... nous prions l'éternel qu'ainsy que de nostre temps il luy a pleu nous représenter en vostre personne ce que jadis il a fait pour son peuple, en son David, l'ayant miraculeusement eslevé au thrône royal au travers de mille morts, puis armé de singulière patience par l'espace de sept ans et six mois en Hebron, en guerre civile, devant qu'estre mis en possession entière de son royaume, il veuille aussi continuant ceste mesme faveur envers vous pour toute la France, et spécialement pour la tranquillité de son Église, vous affermir a toujours par son bras d'en haut en toutes difficultés, renverser par dedans et par dehors tous mauvais conseils de vos ennemis et les siens, vous remplir tant en vostre particulier qu'en toute vostre administration royale de la sapience et de la crainte de son saint nom, en la pratique de cest excellent Pseaume cent et uniesme lequel vostre Majesté ne sçaurait trop souvent lire, ouir et mediter pour surmonter mesme David, vous garder de ses défauts et l'imiter en ses vertus..." Beza to Henri IV, June 1593, in *Bulletin* 1 (1853): 46.

for the church of Saint Denis where, kneeling, he presented his abjuration and requested absolution.¹⁸³ La Faye reported the shocking news to Beza on the same day, signing his letter: "At Saint Denis, this 25th day of July, 1593. An unforgettable and terrible day for all people who fear God."¹⁸⁴ When Beza received word of Henri's conversion several weeks later he was stunned.¹⁸⁵ He assured the ministers of Zurich that he had fulfilled his duty to Henri IV to the very end, "knowing from experience that my words would have some weight upon the mind of the king, who lent his ear to me in many less important issues."¹⁸⁶ But whether due to the slowness of the courier or the condition of the roads, Henri of Navarre never received this last letter before he departed for the church of Saint Denis. The final appeal to David did not find its target.

In the four years between Henri IV's accession at Saint Cloud and abjuration at Saint Denis, the French Protestants encountered intense internal pressures that threatened to break apart the unity of the movement. While some Huguenots like

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¹⁸³Wolfe, *The Conversion of Henri IV*, 150-151.

¹⁸⁴"A Saint-Denys ce 25 de juillet 1593, jour mémorable et lamentable à tous les gens de bien et craignans Dieu." Antoine de La Fay to Beza, 25 July 1593, in *Bulletin* 5 (1857): 27.

¹⁸⁵The first official report of Henri's conversion appears in the minutes of the Small Council on August 6/16. Summarizing a letter from Chevalier, the secretary concludes: "Le reste desdits lettres n'est que un discours des procédures tenues à la diversion du Roy que s'est fait catholique et cérémonies tenues quand il est allé à la messe, ensemble des 22 articles de la trefve publiée à St. Denis le dernier du juillet pour trois mois." RC 88, 118'.

¹⁸⁶"Ego cujus literas scio alicujus nonnunquam ponderis nonnullis in rebus multo minoris momenti atque adeo in hoc ipso negotio fuisse apud illum eram expertus, officio meo non defui. Sed ejus tarditas cui perferendas literas commiseram, vel itinerum difficultas prohibuit ne satis tempestive ad illum usque pervenirent." Beza to the Pastors of Zurich, 9/19 1593, in *Bulletin* 5 (1857): 28.

Rotan, Séguier and Hotman defended programs of religious reconciliation, Beza and the majority of Reformed leaders strenuously opposed these 'moyenneurs,' fearful that theological compromise would betray scriptural truth, and might encourage Henri to abandon the Protestant religion. The ministers of Geneva treated religious controversies in the French church at Basle with similar alarm; any deviation from the Confession of Faith threatened religious *and* political disaster. Between 1589 and 1593, Beza recognized the temptations that Henri IV faced, and attempted to bolster the king's spiritual resolve through regular letters and several treatises. Like Merlin and Duplessis-Mornay, the Genevan reformer frequently employed the image of David, hoping to inspire and warn the king through this biblical example. Nonetheless, Beza was so convinced of Navarre's privileged place in God's design for France that he continued to trust in the king's spiritual resolve, even when confronted with evidence to the contrary. As we shall see, the 'perilous leap' at Saint Denis did little to diminish Beza's affection for Henri and did not alter his confidence in the king's good intentions toward the Reformed in France.

CHAPTER V

THE PATH TO NANTES, 1594-1598

"Henry, Roy des francs lis, lassé de la toumente
 L'oppressant jours & nuicts au navire gaulois,
 Des grands vents, des hauts flots, & des cruels abois,
 De lamer accablé, sur l'onde véhémence
 Nous semble esvanoui. quoy? nul ne le fomenté?
 Son timon est il cheut? lui & les saintes loix
 Seroyent ils dépeschez ensemble à une fois?
 Las! le Pilote dort, son navire lamente.
 O seul maistre des eaux & des vents furieux,
 Appaise ceste mer par ton Christ glorieux,
 Réveille l'endormi, le trèsbuché releue.
 Fai sonner en son coeur sa cheute & son meschef,
 Augmente lui la foy, béni le derechef,
 Fay qu'avec tous les siens il t'adore & t'esleve."¹

Several months after the abjuration of Henri IV at Saint Denis, a superintendent in the Protestant church of Poland wrote Theodore Beza: "It is reported that your 'David'--so you called him in your last letter to me--has degenerated most miserably into a Saul."² If the Huguenots were no longer able to liken Henri to the righteous King David, should they then regard him as an apostate King Saul? In the five years following Henri's 'perilous leap,' the Reformed were deeply divided as to whether they should trust their former protector. Some

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¹"Prière pour le roy de France & ses sujets" (1593), in Benoît Alizet, *Second livre de la Calliope Chrestienne* (Genève: Jacob Stoer, 1594), 37-38.

²"Dicitur enim ille vester David (ut eum in tuis ad me nomines) miserrime in Saulem degenerasse." Simeon Turnovius to Beza, 20 November 1593, Geneva, Archives Tronchin à Bessinge, p. Bèze, vol. 5, fol. 79.

Protestant leaders like Beza and Duplessis-Mornay were confident of Navarre's good will and encouraged their co-religionists to wait patiently for a royal edict that would guarantee Reformed worship. Protestant nobles such as Turenne (since 1591, the duke of Bouillon), La Trémoille and Lesdiguières were less sure of Henri's intentions and, at the same time, eager to exploit Huguenot fears of the king in order to extend their political influence. Other Reformed intellectuals, most notably Jean Hotman and Jean de Serres, remained committed to plans of religious reconciliation, encouraging the king to establish a single, reformed Gallican Church. Finally, a handful of influential Protestants—including Jean de Sponde, Jean de Morlas, Pierre 'Palma' Cayet and Nicholas of Sancy—followed Henri's example and converted to Catholicism. Possessing different visions for the future and varying degrees of suspicion of Henri, the Reformed churches struggled between 1594 and 1598 to obtain from the king a religious settlement that would assure their institutional survival and preserve 'true' doctrine in France.

These divisions within the Reformed movement, as well as the profound anxiety and disappointment of the Protestant leadership between 1594 and 1598 have not been carefully studied by scholars of late sixteenth-century France. Frequently, the years between the king's conversion and the Edict of Nantes (April 1598) are treated cursorily or ignored entirely as an unimportant 'parenthesis' in the life of Henri IV and in the formation of French absolutism.³ Even when scholars have

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³This is true of even the best surveys of the period. Thus, both Léonard and Greengrass devote only two pages to the years 1594-1598. See Léonard, *Histoire Générale du Protestantisme* II, 144-146; Greengrass, *France in the Age of Henri IV*, 100-101.

examined this period carefully, they have usually interpreted it through the lens of Nantes and the 'triumph of tolerance.' Convinced that "the Protestants' survival was never threatened by Henri IV," historians have overlooked the deep anxiety and successive crises that afflicted French Protestantism during this period.⁴ I will explore in this chapter the most important of these 'pressure-points' and 'cracks' within the Reformed movement, documenting how the ministers combatted conversions, dissolved projects of religious reconciliation, and confronted a new generation of Catholic apologists. Indeed, a series of religious and political setbacks between 1594 and 1598 fostered a growing sense of loss and disappointment among Reformed leaders, the recognition that a 'golden' opportunity for reform had been tragically missed. Despite his advanced age and growing frailty, Theodore Beza played a crucial--though largely forgotten--role in the French church during these years, defending the doctrinal unity of the Reformed churches, battling for the faith of Catherine of Bourbon, and reassuring his co-religionists of Henri IV's good intentions toward them. Once a 'trumpeter of war,' the old reformer had now become a vocal advocate for peace.

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⁴Sutherland, *The Huguenot Struggle*, 312.

Standing in the Breach

Henri's momentous 'fall' at Saint Denis forced the Huguenots to redefine their relationship to the French monarchy as well as to reformulate their political strategy. Despite Navarre's repeated assurances, many French Protestants remained suspicious of this Catholic king who had so 'suddenly' and 'unexpectedly' renounced the Reformed faith. Their fears were hardly alleviated by the royal coronation in February 1594, at which Henry pledged, like other Catholic kings before him, to expel from France "all heretics condemned by the Church."⁵ So too, the king's efforts to reconcile with Rome and receive papal absolution were viewed as a direct threat to the survival of the Protestant movement in France. In the months following Henri's abjuration, Theodore Beza played an important role in strengthening the ties between the king and his Protestant subjects, counseling the Huguenots to eschew resistance and trust royal promises to protect their interests.

Henri's abjuration had come as a horrible shock to Beza. Although Geneva's ambassador Chevalier had repeatedly warned of the likelihood of such an event, the reformer had never lost hope in the king's religious constancy. Such dogged confidence, however, was largely crushed in the summer of 1593. The day after receiving the dramatic report from Saint Denis, Beza expressed his anguish to Grynaeus: Henri of Navarre had "offended God and the angels" by "openly polluting himself in going to the abominable sacrifice of the mass, having rejected the

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⁵The coronation oath included the statement that "je tâcherai à mon pouvoir en bonne foy de chasser de ma juridiction & terres de ma sujettion tous Hérétiques dénoncez par l'Église." See Benoît, *Histoire de l'Édit de Nantes*, 117.

arguments, advice, prayers and entreaties of many godly people."⁶ Two weeks later, Beza was still numb from the news: "How seriously we have been shaken by that completely unexpected and dangerous fall of the king, from whom we were expecting the best things."⁷ Nonetheless, Henri was more to be pitied than despised: "Let us have sympathy for this unhappy prince who, as a man, has fallen so seriously, but not without having battled every kind of temptation for a very long time." The Reformed should earnestly pray "that God might raise him up and have pity on him in this horrible situation."⁸

In the months that followed, Beza and other Huguenot leaders clung to the slim hope that the royal 'lapse' at Saint Denis might be a temporary compromise rather than a permanent decision.⁹ Friends in France encouraged the reformer not to

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⁶"Haec ad te scribo, mi suavissime frater, in maxima non quidem perturbatione, Deo sit gratia, sed angustia animi, cogitantis quam graviter Deum et angelos et pios omnes per universum orbem terrarum offenderit Rex ille de quo tanta nobis non temere pollicebamur, ut qui palam, die superioris mensis Julii 25, qui nobis est 15, abominando Missae sacrificio solemniter polluere sese, piorum omnium rationes, consilia, preces et obtestationes aspernatus, non dubitavit." 7/17 August 1593, Basle, Univ. Bibl., Kirchen Archiv, C. I. 2, Bd. II, fol. 209. The report of Henri's abjuration probably arrived in Geneva the day before, when a letter from Chevalier (dated July 25) was read in the meeting of the Small Council. The secretary summarized this important news with uncharacteristic brevity: "Le reste desdits lettres n'est que un discours des procédures tenues à la diversion du Roy qui s'est fait Catholique et cérémonies tenues quand il est allé à la messe..." 6/16 August 1593, RC 88, 118v.

⁷"Ad res nostras quod attinet, satis intelligis quam graviter iste tam inexpectatus et tam gravis lapsus illius Regis commoverit, a quo summa omnia expectabamus." Beza to Constantine Fabricius, 22 August/1 September 1593, Nuremberg, Staatsarchiv, E. Laden Akten, no. 279.

⁸"Miserum hunc Principem, ut hominem gravissime quidem lapsum, sed non nisi omni tentationum genere diutissime oppugnatum, commiserantes et Deum totis animis precantes ut, si fieri potest, lapsum illum erigat et in tam gravi calamitate suorum saltem misereatur." Beza to the Ministers of Zurich, 9/19 August 1593, published in *Bulletin* 5 (1857): 29.

⁹Duplessis-Mornay expressed this hope in a letter to Henri IV three days after the king's abjuration: "... je me veulx confier en Dieu, que l'éclipse ne sera pas longue..." 28 July 1593, published in *Mémoires et correspondance* V, 500.

despair entirely of the Bourbon prince.¹⁰ In early October, Beza confided to a friend: "I still have not completely abandoned hope for the king." Henri's conversion seemed to be one of appearance rather than reality, motivated more by his desire to pacify the kingdom than by any substantial spiritual change.¹¹ Wicked councillors had fooled him to believe that "no other way was possible to save France" than to return to the Catholic mass.¹² In a long letter to Grynaeus, Beza likened Henri to the biblical character Sampson, a comparison evincing both his reservations and continued admiration for the wayward king¹³: "Concerning the fall of that Sampson of ours, what godly person can approve of such a deed?" As with Sampson, the Bourbon king had yielded to the wisdom of the flesh and turned his back on the true religion. But rather than being an act of blatant apostasy, Henri's abjuration might have been a sacrifice "to guarantee some peace and liberty for the churches." Even as Sampson

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¹⁰"Ad res Gallicas quod attinet, iubent me fratres ne de Rege quidem ipso desperare." Beza to Grynaeus, 9/19 October 1593, Basle, Univ. Bibl., Kirchen Archiv, C. I. 2, Bd. II, fol. 211.

¹¹"Plane igitur adhuc incertissimus est rerum Gallicarum status, ut Rex ipse, de quo adhuc bene sperare non desino, tandem re ipsa damnare carnis prudentiam doceatur." Beza to [Grynaeus], 26 September/6 October 1593, Basle, Univ. Bibl., Kirchen Archiv, C. I. 2, Bd. II, fol. 210. "De rebus nostris, etsi nos non prostravit, nec de constantis animi gradu deiecit, tamen vehementer commovit illa tam repentina, & tam inexpectata Regis illius mutatio, seu vera, quod Deus avertat, seu, quod adhuc arbitror, in speciem, & ex carnis consilio facta..." Beza to Jean Piscator, 16/26 October 1593, published in Cyprian, *Catalogus codicum manuscriptorum bibliothecae Gothanae*, 64-65.

¹²"Rex ipse etsi in illo minime sane recto consilio pergit, a nonnullis persuasus aliter Galliam salvam esse non posse, tamen ea prudentia et moderatione utitur..." Beza to Grynaeus, 8/18 March 1594, Paris, Bibl. Ste. Geneviève, ms. 1455, fols. 108^v-109.

¹³Aubert's transcription dates this letter from 1595. In fact, internal evidence demonstrates conclusively that it was written in 1593: a three month truce had recently been issued; Lyon had not yet capitulated to the king; and the Leaguers in Paris were debating whether to recognize Henri as the rightful monarch of France. Beza to Grynaeus, 25 August/4 September 159[3], Basle, Univ. Bibl., Kirchen Archiv, C. I. 2, Bd. II, fols. 225-226.

layed down his life to defeat the Philistines and restore peace to Israel, so Henri IV was perhaps sacrificing his soul, albeit ill-advisedly, for the peace of France.¹⁴

During the last decade of his life, Beza continued to view Henri as a 'tragic hero,' not entirely beyond spiritual restoration. The bonds of friendship, patronage and patriotism were too strong for the old reformer to break decisively with the Catholic king.

Other Huguenot leaders were not as confident of Henri's intentions. The three-month truce that the king had brokered with the duke of Mayenne in July of 1593--which included Savoy and Geneva--provided little long-term security for the Protestants. With Henri now in the Catholic camp, the Huguenots had little influence at court, subject to the whims of an unreliable king and vulnerable to the hostility of Catholic opponents. Duplessis-Mornay expressed the concerns of his co-religionists in a position paper that he sent to the king in September 1593. After fighting by Henri's side for many years, the Huguenots now found themselves in a worse position than under the previous Catholic king. Their pastors had been excluded from the court and their nobles were unfairly deprived of royal honors and civil offices. Despite the protection guaranteed by royal edicts of the past, the Huguenots were

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¹⁴"De Simpsonis illius nostri lapsu, quis pius possit factum illud non improbare.... Primum enim credibile est Regem diffidentia et carnis prudentia lapsum, non religionis spontanea abiectio, ad quam etiam accessisse oporteret illius Satan[ea]m prorsus odium. Deinde, etiamsi Pharaonis animum illi induisset, tamen, si propositum illi est (sicuti certe est) bellis civilibus finem imponere, necesse est, si regnare vult, ut Ecclesiarum pace et alicui libertati caveat.... Et haec sane sunt quae Simpsonem illum nostrum, sapientem huius seculi consiliis obsecutum, in hun scopulum perpulerunt." Beza to Grynaeus, 25 August/4 September 159[3], Basle, Univ. Bibl., Kirchen Archiv, C. I. 2, Bd. II, fols. 225-226.

"daily in danger of being wounded or killed, without any hope of comfort or even any assurance of burial."¹⁵ Given these injustices, Henri should not be surprised that some French Protestants wished to elect a new protector. Duplessis-Mornay concluded by advising the king that the best way to quiet the voices of discontent and win the Huguenot's continued support was to provide them with the religious liberty and security so long promised.¹⁶

Similar grievances were voiced in the Huguenot political assembly that convened at Mantes in November 1593.¹⁷ In a petition (*cahier*) sent to the king, the delegates demanded the free exercise of the Reformed religion, legal guarantees to ensure the safety of Huguenots and their possessions, the assurance of impartial justice, and appointments to judicial and civil offices. The king rejected these requests, offering the Reformed instead the formal annulment of the Leaguer edicts of 1585 and 1588, the reestablishment of the Edict of Poitiers of 1577 (as interpreted

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¹⁵"Exilé mesme de vos armées, afin de les reculer de vostre service, et conséquemment des charges et honneurs; car quel homme de bien y pourra subsister, en danger tous les jours d'estre blessé, d'estre tué, sans espoir de consolation, sans assurance seulement de sépulture? Qu'on minute d'exclure tous ceulx de la religion des principales charges de l'estat, de la justice, des finances, de la police, dont selon leur modestie et patience ils prennent à tesmoing vostre majesté, qu'ils ne l'ont gueres importunée.... Et combien, disent ils là dessus, nous estoit il plus tolérable de vivre sous la trefve du feu roy, ennemi toutesfois de nostre profession, qui par icelle nous consentoit l'exercice de nostre religion en son armée et en sa court..." In "Lettre de M. Duplessis au Roy," *Mémoires et correspondance* V, 542-543.

¹⁶"Sire, voulés vous bien leur oster l'envie d'un protecteur? ostés en la nécessité.... Vous sçavés ce qui leur nuit, ce qui leur duit, les requestes que vous présentiés pour eulx aux roys prédécesseurs, pour leur liberté, leur seureté, leur dignité, rapportés les vous à vous mesmes. Elles n'ont certes depuis ce temps rien rabatteu de leur droicture; elles l'ont comblée depuis de bons services, et doibvent avoir gagné en vostre auctorité..." In "Lettre," *Mémoires et correspondance* V, 544.

¹⁷See Sutherland, *The Huguenot Struggle*, 301-303; Anquez, *Histoire des Assemblées Politiques*, 54-55; Patry, *Philippe du Plessis-Mornay*, 253-255.

by Nérac and Fleix), and the freedom to worship in cities obedient to the king, in the royal army, in the court of Catherine of Bourbon, and in the households of Bouillon, La Trémoille and Duplessis-Mornay.¹⁸ The assembly refused these royal concessions because they did not provide adequate security or judicial remedies for the Protestants. Despite the deadlock, Henri IV attempted to assure the Huguenots at Mantes of his good will and commitment to protect the Reformed religion. Appearing before the assembly on December 12, the king promised the delegates that "my conversion has not changed my affection for you.... I desire nothing more than to see a good union between all my good subjects, Catholics as well as the Reformed."¹⁹ Despite these reassuring words, the Assembly of Mantes concluded without achieving an accord with the royal court. Henri was more concerned to avoid alienating Rome than to appease Protestant grievances. The Protestant delegates, on the other hand, were in no mood to accept 'concessions' that had been granted them sixteen years earlier by a king who had been their sworn enemy.

In the months immediately following his abjuration, Henri IV's political and military prospects had brightened considerably. By bringing his religious commitments into line with the traditional Gallican vision of monarchy--*un roi, une*

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¹⁸Patry, *Philippe du Plessis-Mornay*, 254.

¹⁹"Messieurs je vous ay mandé pour trois raisons. La première pour vous faire entendre de ma propre bouche que ma conversion n'a apporté aucun changement a mon affection envers vous.... Au reste vous croirez qu'il n'ay rien plus à coeur que de veoir une bonne union entre tous mes bons sugetz tant Catholiques que de le Religion." This citation appears in a manuscript found among Beza's papers, entitled "Ce que le Roy a dit aux Députés des Églises reformées assemblez à Mantes le XII de X^{bre} 1593." Geneva, Archives Tronchin, vol. 8, fol. 111.

foi, une loi--Henri preempted Leaguer plans to elect a rival king and thereafter secured the support of Third Party Catholics and many Leaguers wearied by long years of civil war. Offering the carrot of appeasement rather than the stick of brute force, the Bourbon king quickly won over important Leaguer cities, including Meaux, Orléans, Bourges, Amiens, Rouen, and Lyon.²⁰ With Reims remaining under control of the Catholic League, Henri rewrote royal tradition by celebrating his coronation at Chartres in February, being consecrated with the oil of Saint Martin rather than oil from the Holy Ampulla.²¹ A month later, on 22 March 1594, Henri IV rode into Paris without resistance, entering the very gate through which Henri III had fled six years before.²² The converted king made lavish display of his clemency and religious zeal: during holy week he worshipped in every parish church in the city, pardoning Leaguers, visiting the sick, and touching for scrofula. After four long years, Henri could rightfully be called the 'very Catholic king of France.'

In Geneva, Beza carefully followed Henri's progress toward Paris. The reformer could scarcely contain his excitement as Leaguer cities capitulated one after another: "Hardly a day passes by in which we do not receive a report concerning cities, people, and nobles surrendering to the king!"²³ The submission of nearby

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²⁰Patry, *Philippe du Plessis-Mornay*, 255-256.

²¹For a detailed discussion of this event, see Holt, *The French Wars of Religion*, 158-159.

²²See Wolfe, *The Conversion of Henri IV*, 177-180.

²³"Ab eo tempore, nullus paene dies abit, quin nuntios accipiamus de civitatibus, populis, et nobilibus Regi se tradentibus..." Beza to Grynaeus, 20/30 March 1594, Basle, Univ. Bibl., Kirchen Archiv, C. I. 2, Bd. II, fol. 217.

Lyon was particularly dramatic: without warning, the citizens layed down their weapons, doffed their hats to the king, and, in a display of relief and joy, threw Leaguer military insignia and badges into bonfires built to celebrate the event.²⁴

When news of the surrender of Paris arrived in Geneva in early April, the magistrates ordered that cannons be fired and church bells rung to express gratitude to God.²⁵

These dramatic successes, however, did not mitigate Huguenot resentments or allay their fears. Many French Protestants were increasingly embittered by the king's policy of appeasement toward his Leaguer enemies. While Henri won over opponents with lucrative gifts, the king continued to exclude his former co-religionists from royal honors and offices. It seemed that the Leaguers were taking advantage of the king's clemency and kindness. Even the circumscribed freedoms granted in the Edict of Poitiers of 1577 were not enforced in many parts of the kingdom.²⁶ Whereas

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²⁴Beza reported this news to Grynaeus on 8/18 March 1594: "Lugdunenses etiam audivisse vos opinor, uno tantum ex Hispanogallis in tumultu trucidato, et quatuor vulneratis, quum alioqui cives in quatuor factiones essent divisi, et undique essent districti gladii, repente summo longe maioris civium multitudinis consensu, sublati manibus et apertis capitibus in Regis obedientiam consensisse, quinque ex suis quos vocant Scabinis (qui magistratus illic summus urbanus est), quod coniuratis illis favere viderentur, exauthorasse, et accensis compitatum testandae laetitiae gratia ignibus, coniurationis illius insignia quibus milites alii ab allis discerni consueverunt, iniecisse, totam quam vocant Liguam et suam stultitiam execratos. Quod exemplum magna est spes reliquam Galliam brevi secururam." Basle, Univ. Bibl., Kirchen Archiv, C. I. 2, Bd. II, fols. 215-216. On the capitulation of Lyon, see Wolfe, *The Conversion of Henri IV*, 177.

²⁵On 29 March/8 April 1594, the Small Council received a letter from the French ambassador to Switzerland reporting "les bonnes nouvelles de la réduction de Paris" which had been "réduicte en l'obeissance de sa maiesté le 22^{me} de Mars sans aucune effusion du sang..." The magistrates decided "que on en rende aujourd'huy grâce à Dieu solemne [?] au son de la grosse cloche, et des mesmes qu'on tire l'artillerie partout ... en sons de resjouissir." RC 89, 43^v.

²⁶In a letter to the king on 4 April 1594, Duplessis-Mornay expressed many of these concerns: "... supplierai je très humblement vostre majesté de prendre en bonne part que je lui die que le refus qui se fait par tout de vérifier vostre édict, et la rigueur que tiennent vos courts de parlement contre ceulx de la relligion presque partout, aigrit fort les esprits de plusieurs; mesmes quand ils voyent que

Protestants were ordered to permit the restoration of the Catholic religion in cities under their control, Reformed worship continued to be proscribed in many Catholic cities. Rumors of royal plans to persecute the Protestants further heightened the climate of suspicion.²⁷

In an attempt to defuse Huguenot discontent, Henri IV looked again to Geneva and Beza for assistance. In February 1594, the king sent Beza a letter written in his own hand, thanking him for his continued support, and expressing his affection for the old reformer.²⁸ During the spring, Beza was in contact almost weekly with the French ambassador to Switzerland, Nicholas Brulart of Sillery; in May, he even made the long trip to Solothurn to meet with the ambassador face to face.²⁹ In addition to

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ceux de la Ligue sont reçeus alaigrement aulx plus grandes charges, et qu'ils sont si indignement exclus des plus petites. A quoi je sçais bien que vostre majesté a intention de remédier, et en asseure ceulx qu je puis; mais il n'est estrange que mes paroles soient plus foibles que ces effects." Published in *Mémoires et correspondance* VI, 42. See Patry's helpful description of Huguenot discontentment, in *Philippe du Plessis-Mornay*, 332-335.

²⁷These rumors appear from time to time in Chevalier's dispatches to Geneva. On 13 October 1593, for example, Chevalier reported in code: "... le roy a promis de suyvre en tout & par tout l'advis qui viendra de Rome, quand mesmes il faudroit faire la guerre à ceux de la religion & faut attendre bien tost un trouble." 15/25 October 1593, RC 88, 154^v.

²⁸"Intellexi, clarissime D. Beza, magna cum animi mei voluptate constantem tuam erga me benevolentiam, qua de causa nullum tempus occasionemne commodis et saluti mei consolendi pratermissis. Quotina magnus indies ad pristinum meum erga te amorem accedit cumulus, ita ut nihil mihi prius sit et antiquius, quam ut cum non verbis tantum, sed etiam reipsa atque factis declarare possim." Henri IV to Beza, 9 February [1594]. This epistle is a Latin translation of a French original, found in a letter from the Zurich minister William Stucki to Conrad Ulmer. Although Stucki's letter itself is not dated, it contains a second transcribed letter (from Catherine of Bourbon to [Beza?]) that is dated 2 February 1594. Schaffhausen, *Ulmeriana*, vol. 5, fol. 115. The following month, Beza reported the receipt of this letter to Grynaeus: "... et alteris rursus literis sua ipsius manu scriptis me compellare dignatus est, cum minime vulgari suae in me privatae benevolentiae testificatione." 8/18 March 1594, Paris, Bibl. Ste. Geneviève, ms. 1455, fols. 108^v-109.

²⁹"Hoc ad te scribo Soloduro, quousque utrumque mihi pergratum fuit comitari, oblata mihi simul salutandi Regii legati occasione, ex quo cognovi res Gallicas magis ac magis feliciter..." Beza to Grynaeus, 28 April/8 May 1594, Basle, Univ. Bibl., Kirchen Archiv, C. I. 2, Bd. II, fol. 213.

apprising the reformer of political developments in France, Sillery urged him to use his weighty authority to "temper the passions" of disgruntled Huguenots.³⁰ The royal deputy Joseph du Chesne, Sire of Violette repeated this appeal when he visited Geneva in early June: the king explicitly asked Beza to use his influence to restrain Huguenots who were causing trouble in Languedoc, promising that "when he had gained full control of the kingdom, he would fulfill his duty to the Protestants."³¹ Henri's efforts to win Beza's confidence and assistance were a complete success. Twenty years earlier the reformer had advocated armed resistance against Henri III; now, in 1594, Beza proved to be a prominent advocate for moderation and peace, urging the churches in France to trust Navarre's promises and eschew violence. As long as Huguenot consciences were permitted a measure of freedom, "even the

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³⁰"Je vous diray franchement que la plus grande consolation qui m'en demeure est de voir reconnoistre, voire par les plus contraires cet oeuvre estre de sa seule main, qui me fait espérer qu'il réussira à sa gloire, et que celui qui a donné le commencement conduira l'ouvrage à sa perfection, nonobstant les pratiques et puissances du monde, qu'il monstre aux plus incrédules sçavoir bien dissiper quand il luy plaist. Je suis marry comme vous de ces mouvemens contraires qui paroissent en quelques uns, mais j'espère qu'ilz seront tellement reprimez par la sagesse du Roy et par les gens de bien de part et d'autre, qu'ilz demeureront sans efficace, et pense vous pouvoir assurer de la résolution de tous ceulx que je congnois de nostre part. Je sçay combien les grâces et l'auctorité que Dieu vous a donné parmy les autres ont de pouvoir pour tempérer ces affections. Je m'assure qu'elles seront employées pour le salut et repos de la France contre tous ceulx qui en sont ennemys, lesquelz sans doute avec leur autheur jettent maintenant leurs derniers effortz pour s'opposer au lieu qu'ilz voient preparer et que Dieu conduira s'il luy plaist jusques à le fin." Sillery to Beza, 14 April 1594, Geneva, BPU, ms. lat. 118B, fols. 261-262.

³¹Violette reported that "... il [Henri IV] luy dit aussy qu'il savoit que ceux de Languedoc faisoient quelque chose et le [i.e. Violette] prioit de dire à M^r de Bèze qu'il face qu'ilz ne le troublent point mayz qu'il soit establi, il fera ce qu'il devera." 22 May/1 June 1594, RC 89, 77^v. Violette also told the magistrates that the king was "... n'affectoit rien plus la conservation de la ville de Paris et Lyon que de Genève..." *ibid.*, 77.

harshest conditions would be better than a renewal of war."³² Behind such moderation lay the reformer's firm confidence in the person of Henri of Navarre. Whatever the king's religious convictions, he could be trusted to protect the Huguenots and restore peace to the kingdom. Beza's comments to a friend in Germany were indicative of his enthusiasm for the French king: "Henri has asserted yet again that he wishes to be king of the Catholics as well as of the Protestants and that he wants both to be his servants. I do not know whether a more humane and clement king has ever lived!"³³

Beza's confidence in the Bourbon prince was most dramatically evident in the counsel that he provided the Reformed churches in preparation for the National Synod at Montauban in the summer of 1594. In the months preceeding the synod, the churches of La Rochelle petitioned the reformer's advice on subjects of utmost importance for the welfare of the Protestants in France. Four questions were of particular concern: 1) Should the Reformed accede to royal demands and permit Henri II, Prince of Condé, the heir-apparent to the throne, to be raised in the Catholic

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³²"Rex autem totus in eo est, ut quoquo modo ἀμνηστία constituta, convulsum ab ipsis fundamentis Gallicum Regnum restauretur; quod certe nunquam fiet, nisi concessa piorum conscientiiis libertate, si non quali et quanta merito desideratur, at certe tolerabili, et in qua nostri merito acquiescant, quos ego, quidem ad durissimas etiam conditiones, salva conscientia permanente, potius quam ad bellum renovandum, cohortari non desinam." Beza to [Grynæus], 20/30 March 1594, Basle, Univ. Bibl., Kirchen Archiv, C. I. 2, Bd. II, fol. 217.

³³"Nam quod ad religionem attinet, aut prorsus me fallunt omnes coniecturae, aut ipsa quoque necessitas asperrimos etiam quosvis veritatis hostes, tot tantisque civilium bellorum calamitatibus, quarum longe maximam partem senserunt, attritos coget conterraneos et concives suos ferre, aperte quoque Rege, quo nescio an humanior et clementior ullus unquam Rex extiterit, non semel professo sese, sicut utrorumque Regem, utrosque servatos velle." Beza to Constantine Fabricius, 25 August/4 September 1594, Nuremberg, Staatsarchiv, E. Laden Akten, no. 279.

religion? 2) How should the Protestants respond if a future edict of the king ordered them to relinquish their fortified cities? 3) If Henri granted the Reformed free exercise of religion but provided neither security nor access to civil offices, would it be permissible for them to take up arms against him? 4) Finally, should the Huguenots resist Henri IV if he commanded them to restore Catholic worship in their cities without providing commensurate religious freedoms to the Reformed?³⁴

In late May or early June, Beza sent to the French churches a long "Mémoire" in which he outlined his opinion on these important questions and defended passionately civil obedience and patience. Neither the Bible nor the history of the Christian Church suggested that it was praiseworthy "for subjects in good conscience to extort the exercise of true religion from their sovereign rulers by means of force." Instead, Christian subjects must bear patiently under persecution, trusting in God's justice and providential care.³⁵ The miraculous rebirth of the Gospel in France

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³⁴"Qu'il plaise aussy aud. sieur de Bèze envoyer son advis à la quatre questions: 1. Advenant qu'on veuille contraindre ceux de la Religion de remettre Mons^r le Prince de Condé pour estre instruit en la Religion Romaine que cest qu'on aura a faire 2. Si on vouloit oster les villes que ceux de la Religion tiennent et qui ont esté données par le feu Roy ou qui ont esté conquises par ceux de la Religion soubz la conduite du Roy lors Roy de Navarre comment on aura à se comporter 3. Si on octroie le libre exercice de la Religion ou bien ainsy quil est sans admettre ceux de la Rel^m aux dignitez et sans vouloir octroier aucune ville de seureté. Sil est loisible (salva conscientiae pace) de prendre les armes 4. Cas advenant qu'on ne veuille octroier une entière liberté à ceux de la Religion ou mesmes la liberté concédée par l'Édit 1577 que ceux de la Rel^m n'ayent au préalable restabli l'exercice de la Religion Romaine aux villes quilz tiennent; et dont ilz long bannié, coment on aura a se gouverner[.] Et sil est loisible à ceux de la Religion d'user de quelque resistance." Churches of the region of La Rochelle to Beza, [May-June 1594], published in *Bulletin* 113 (1967): 481-482.

³⁵"... je n'ay point encor appris par la parole de Dieu ni par les exemples de toute la vraye Église chrestienne depuis le commencement du monde qu'il soit loisible aux sujets en bonne conscience d'extorquer de leur souverain magistrat l'exercice de la vraye religion par la voye des armes, mais qu'en tel cas il faut, en ne laissant de servir à Dieu et le plus prudemment que le temps le pourra porter, combattre et vaincre par chrestienne patience, invincible sous la croix, ne souffrant jamias l'Éternel protecteur de ses enfants que la verge des iniques demeure à toujours sur le dos de ses

between 1521 and 1561 offered an important example: the churches were planted and grew, not by means of the sword, but through faith, patience, and suffering.³⁶ Now, after more than thirty years of blood-shed, the Reformed should return to this *via pacis*. Beza urged his co-religionists to turn a deaf ear to those violent men who "under the pretext of full and complete religious liberty hide their own desire for vengeance..."³⁷ Instead, the Huguenots should support Henri IV who, having been raised as a Protestant, desired to find a fair settlement for the Churches and could be trusted to show clemency and kindness toward his Reformed subjects.³⁸ As long as they were guaranteed freedom of conscience and at least minimal rights to exercise their religion, the Huguenots must not reignite the flames of war but should seek to "render good for evil" and, following the example of Christ, win over their "greatest

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bien-aimés, ni que l'épreuve surpasse la force qu'il donne aux siens, comme il l'a expressément promis en sa sainte parole..." Beza, "Mémoire," published in *Bulletin* 21 (1872): 29.

³⁶"C'est le moyen par lequel les Esglises françoises en la renaissance miraculeuse de l'Évangile en France, depuis l'an 1521, sous le roy François le Grand, jusques à l'Édict de janvier 1561, sous le roy lors mineur Charles neuvième, ont esté dressées et plantées au milieu des plus grands coups, assavoir par le seul glaive spirituel de la parole de Dieu, ayant peu à peu et par tels degrés qu'il luy a pleu modéré les persécutions, comme l'histoire véritable en peut fair foy..." In "Mémoire," *Bulletin* 21 (1872): 30.

³⁷"... nous demourant sauf le principal, qui est de n'estre aucunement forcé à rien croire ni faire, contre nostre droite conscience, et la liberté d'estre enseigné et de servir à Dieu, encore que ce soit avec plusieurs incommodités, laissant à part ceux qui pourroient se trouver au milieu de nous couvrant sous le manteau de pleine et entière liberté de notre religion leurs désirs de vengeance ou autre folle passion." In "Mémoire," *Bulletin* 21 (1872): 34.

³⁸"... le Seigneur a donné à la France un roy doué de beaucoup de singulières grâces et spécialement qui sait et congnoit l'intention sincère des Églises, et qui a dès son enfance expérimenté en soy-mesme les misères et calamités de ces guerres civiles, il ne faut aucunement douter qu'il ne face, Dieu aidant, sincèrement et de tout son pouvoir observer le reiglement raisonnable qui aura esté établi, estant par manière de dire comme impossible qu'il départe tant de clémence et de douceur à ceux qui luy ont esté si opiniatrement rebelles, qu'il oublie nostre bonne et juste cause, les services si fidèlement et si longtemps continués de ses vraiment loyaux et fermes subjects et serviteurs au milieu de ses plus grandes afflictions." In "Mémoire," *Bulletin* 21 (1872): 33.

enemies by a good and peaceful coexistence."³⁹ For Beza, then, the time of warfare and resistance was over. For the sake of the French kingdom and the future of the churches, the Reformed must now obey the king and "submit themselves completely to the providence of God, who has never failed to bless the patience of his children."⁴⁰

The Genevan reformer turned next to the specific questions raised by the French churches. Regarding the education of Henri II of Condé, Beza expressed horror at the prospect that the young prince might be delivered into the hands of Catholics, or even the pope, as security for the royal conversion. Such an act would represent an enormous insult to the French crown. Nonetheless, if Henri IV proved unyielding, the Reformed should hand Condé over to the Catholics, entrusting the matter completely "to the providence and mercy of God."⁴¹ In reply to their second

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³⁹"Finalement, en une telle si déplorable et comme dernière désolation de nsotre commune patrie, la religion dont nous faisons profession ne requiert elle pas de nous préparer à souffrir toutes incommodités, voire à rendre le bien pour le mal et à gagner nos plus grands adversaires par toute bonne et paisible conversation, suivant l'exemple de nostre Sauveur, duquel nous sommes surnommés chrestiens, et de tous les vrais et plus excellents serviteurs de Dieu, qui ont esté depuis le commencement du monde jusques à présent, plus tôt que de rallumer directement ou indirectement le feu de la guerre, inséparable d'avec tant de calamités et destructions, afin que les François, s'ensevelissent les uns sur les autres sous les cendres de leur povre patrie?" In "Mémoire," *Bulletin* 21 (1872): 34-35.

⁴⁰"Pour conclusion donc, que mon advis est, puisqu'on me l'a demandé, que les Églises, suivant le mesme chemin, réquièrent à leur vray Roy de France et de Navarre, Henri quatriesme, paisiblement et en toute révérence due à sa royale majesté, un tolérable règlement pour le repos de leur conscience et pour l'exercice de la religion, supportant toutes leurs incommodités particulières et se soumettant du tout à la providence de Dieu qui n'a jamais failly de bénir la patience de ses enfans." In "Mémoire," *Bulletin* 21 (1872): 33.

⁴¹"... et si d'aventure, comme on en fait quelque bruit, on prétend d'envoyer ce tout jeune Prince hors du Royaume, voire mesme de le livrer entre les mains du Pape, pour ostage de la conversion du Roy, outre la plus énorme indignité que recevrait la couronne de France, à quoy doivent bien penser les plus catholiques mesme, il me semble que Sa Majesté doit estre de bonne heure et bien

question, Beza encouraged his co-religionists to petition respectfully Henri IV to maintain their fortified cities. But even if he refused, the reformer was confident that the king would have the authority and will necessary to assure the security of the Protestants without such cities.⁴²

Beza's trust in Henri of Navarre was further evinced in his response to the third and fourth questions of the French churches. Because access to royal dignities and offices was guaranteed to the Reformed by the Edict of 1577, Beza saw little reason for them to worry about this. Likewise, if the king commanded the restoration of Catholic worship in cities that they held, the Protestants must immediately comply. Rather than a threat, the integration of the two confessions was absolutely necessary for the pacification and restoration of France.⁴³ Beza hastened to add, however, that

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vivement advertie de bien considérer de près d'où peut procéder ce conseil... Mais si tout cela ne peut empêcher un tel acte, quelque grief et lamentable qu'il soit, si ne vois-je point qu'on puisse passer outre ce que dessus, et pourtant se faudra contenter de cela, pour délivrer sa conscience envers Dieu, et toutes gens de bon jugement, en recommandant le tout à la providence et miséricorde de Dieu." In "Mémoire," *Bulletin* 21 (1872): 29. In fact, in return for his absolution from the pope in the summer of 1595, the king promised to assure the Catholic education of Condé. In the fall of that year, the young prince was brought to Saint Germain, where the cardinal Pierre of Gondy commenced his Catholic education. On 24 January 1596 Condé attended his first mass. As an adult, the prince became a vociferous opponent of the Protestants. See Aumale, *Histoire des princes de Condé* II, 232-238.

⁴²"Mais si cette remontrance [i.e. for the preservation of their fortified cities] n'a point de lieu, je ne suis toutesfois nullement d'avis qu'on se formalise trop sur cela, estant, comme j'ai dit ce desdessus, très vraysemblable que Sa Maïesté par bon conseil, Dieu aidant, saura pourvoir sans cela à la formation de son édict, et à la seureté de ses plus fidèles sujets et serviteurs." In "Mémoire," *Bulletin* 21 (1872): 35.

⁴³"... quant à restituer ceux de l'Église romaine aux lieux dont ils ont esté déchassés, je ne vois point qu'on ne puisse ni doive en bonne conscience refuser cela au roy le demandant et le commandant, ne que sans cela, une vraye paix puisse estre establee en France, mais au contraire, il me semble que si on se sait et veult bien gouverner les uns avec les autres ès affaires de la vie présente et nous surtout, suivant ce que nostre religion nous commande de garder charitablement envers tous, voire jusques à nos plus grands adversaires, ce sera un moyen de se réunir et lier les uns avec les autres..." In "Mémoire," *Bulletin* 21 (1872): 35-36.

he was endorsing the peaceful coexistence of the Reformed and Catholic churches, not the 'union' or 'theological mixing' of the two religions. The striking irenicism of Beza's "Mémoire" therefore, reflected his enthusiasm for Navarre as well as his weariness of war. Thirty years of civil violence had brought the Reformed churches little good and much harm. In spite of his confessional lapse, Henri IV possessed the military strength to pacify the kingdom and could be trusted to deal fairly with the Protestants.

It is unclear what impact Beza's advice had at the National Synod of Montauban in late June 1594, given that the issues raised in his "Mémoire" found no place in the written 'Acts' of the assembly. The ministers at Montauban did exhort their colleagues to make public prayers "for the conservation, prosperity, and conversion of the King." Likewise, the synod urged those Reformed clergy who found themselves at court in the future to warn Henri about his need of salvation.⁴⁴ The Huguenot political assembly meeting at Saint Foy at the same time was more hostile toward the king.⁴⁵ Several delegates, including the duke of Bouillon, again called for the election of a protector for the Reformed churches. The assembly continued to judge the terms of the Edict of Poitiers an insufficient basis for

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⁴⁴"Tous les Ministres seront exhortés de prier Dieu publiquement pour la conservation, la prospérité & la conversion du Roi. Quand ils se trouveront à la Cour, auront accès auprès Sa Majesté, ils feront ensorte de lui remontrer vivement son devoir en tout ce qui concerne son salut." Aymon, I, 180.

⁴⁵For an overview of this assembly, see Léonard, *Histoire Générale du Protestantisme* II, 145; Sutherland, *The Huguenot Struggle*, 302-303; Patry, *Philippe du Plessis-Mornay*, 335-336; Benoît, *Histoire de l'Édit de Nantes* I, 123-130.

agreement with Henri, noting that Catholic parlements throughout France still refused to register it. Finally, Saint Foy tightened the political organization of the Huguenot movement--the so-called state within a state--, establishing a 'general council' to oversee financial and military affairs in the provinces, maintain contact with foreign governments, and negotiate treaties with the king. Instead of trusting in Henri IV's good will, as Beza had counselled, the Huguenot political leadership increasingly employed hard-bargaining and political threats to wrest from the king a satisfactory peace. The Edict of Nantes would ultimately be extracted by political pressure rather than granted by royal clemency.

The Great 'Apostasy'

In the aftermath of Saint Denis, Beza and other Huguenot leaders were particularly alarmed that the king's abjuration might trigger wide-spread conversions among Protestants in France and throughout Europe. As in the prophecy of Daniel, it was feared that the king's foolish act would cause many "stars to fall from the heavens."⁴⁶ The lieutenant-governor of La Rochelle, Jean de Sponde was the first Huguenot notable to renounce the Reformed religion in the fall of 1593. A second

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⁴⁶"Si omnino ita est ut scribis, mi observande frater, tantus iste et tam inexpectatus, hoc praesertim tempore, tanti Regis casus, merito vereris ne non modo Regnum illud suum amplissimum, sed etiam plurimas alias regiones eadem secum ruina involvat; Quod divinus ille Daniel de illa per Antiochum invecta in populum Dei clade significavit per ipsarum e caelo stellarum lapsum.... Constat enim Rege templum idolorum ingrediente, nullum prorsus ex nostris, uno duntaxat excepto [i.e. Jean de Sponde], qui sese Basileae aliquando impurissime gessit, illum esse intro usque subsecutum. Et amicissimus quidem mens, datis ad me ex Aula funesto illo vicesimo quarto Augusti nostri die literis, diserte et totidem verbis haec scribit: Rex sua illa, ut Pontificii loquuntur, conversione, neminem ex nostris adhuc convertit." Beza to Heinrich Wolf, 8/18 September 1593, Zurich, Stadtbibl., Ms. F. 37, fol. 65.

Protestant from the royal court, Jean de Morlas, followed the example of Sponde a short time later.⁴⁷ After Clement VIII granted Henri absolution in September 1595, other prominent Huguenots converted to the Catholic faith, including Palma Cayet⁴⁸, minister in the court of Catherine of Bourbon, the royal administrator Nicholas of Sancy, and Charlotte de Trémoille, princess of Condé.⁴⁹

Beza reported these conversions with a mixture of concern and contempt. The language he and his colleagues employed to describe these confessional changes was dramatically different than that used to describe the royal conversion: whereas Henri's momentous decision was a 'change,' 'fall,' or 'conversion' (*changement*, *lapsus*, *chute*, *conversio*, *mutatio*), the volte-face of other Protestants was described variously as a 'revolt,' 'apostasy,' or 'defection' (*revolte*, *αποστασια*, *defectio*). Beza likened these 'apostates' to dogs returning to their vomit or pigs seeking out filth.⁵⁰ Some of these conversions he undoubtedly viewed as personal betrayals. The reformer had once numbered Jean de Sponde among his friends; Palma Cayet had attended his theological lectures at the Genevan Academy; Nicholas of Sancy had

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⁴⁷See *FP* VII, 509-510.

⁴⁸On Pierre Victor Cayet--known as Palma Cayet--see *FP* III, 293-299 and Jacques Pannier, *L'Église Reformée de Paris sous Henri IV* (Paris: Librairie Ancienne Honoré Champion, 1911), 52-66.

⁴⁹For details about Charlotte de Trémoille, widow of Henri, prince of Condé and mother of Henri II, prince of Condé, see Aumale, *Histoire des Princes de Condé* II, 241.

⁵⁰Hence Beza penned a poem to describe Cayet's apostasy: "In repetitos Romanos Apostatas. / Ad nostros Roma Cahierus transiit olim, / A nostris Romam nunc Cahière, redis: / Sic vomitum canis, et repebit lutum amica luto siis, / Cognita divinis victima neutra sacris. / At tu, quo fiunt porcique canesque magistro, / Christi habitae sancto de grege nuper oves / Quum bis Romanus sic fiat apostata duplex, / Poena et par sceleri debeat esse scio...." Beza to [Grynaeus], 26 January/5 February 1596, Basle, Univ. Bibl., Kirchen Archiv, C. I. 2, Bd. II, fol. 235.

been a frequent visitor in his home. Now, unexpectedly, these 'apostates' had openly displayed their moral perversion, hypocrisy and political ambition by betraying the true religion. As painful as it was, Beza took comfort from the fact that God had exposed these false Christians and, in doing so, had protected his flock from the spiritual pollution of the world.⁵¹

The conversions of Sponde and Cayet were particularly troublesome for the Reformed. In 1594 Sponde penned a treatise in which he explained and defended his decision to embrace the Roman Church.⁵² Shortly thereafter, he began a detailed refutation of Beza's *Traicté des vrayes essentielles et visibles marques de la vraye Église* (1592), a book left unfinished at his death in March 1595.⁵³ To Beza, the sudden death of Sponde--as well as the unexpected decease of Jean de Morlas in the same year--was a clear sign of the judgment of God. He predicted that Cayet would soon suffer a similar fate.⁵⁴ In fact, Cayet lived for another fifteen years, becoming

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⁵¹Note the conclusion of Beza's poem against Cayet: "Scilicet ut Romam porcis canibusque fugatis, / Munidities mundo sit sua salva gregi." Beza to Grynaeus, 26 January/5 February 1596, Basle, Univ. Bibl., Kirchen Archiv, C. I. 2, Bd. II, fol. 235.

⁵²This treatise is entitled *Déclaration des principaux motifs qui ont induit le Sieur de Sponde ... à s'unir à l'Église Catholique, Apostolique et Romaine* (Melun, 1594). Part of this work is published in Sponde, *Oeuvres littéraires*, 337-358.

⁵³Sponde's book was published posthumously by Florimond de Raemon, under the title *Réponse au traité de Théodore de Bèze intitulé 'Des marques essentielles de l'Église'* (Paris, 1596). Beza's work is the French translation of a treatise originally published in Latin under the title *De veris, et visibilibus Ecclesiae Catholicae notis, tractatio* (Genevae: Eustathius Vignon, 1579). See *Bibliographie*, 174-177 and CDM, 93-94, 132.

⁵⁴"Sed illum [i.e. Cayet] procul dubio Dominus vix diutius feret quam alios duos illos, Spondanum videlicet et Morlazium, quem utrumque veluti sua ipsius manu coelitus resecuit." Beza to Grynaeus, 26 January/5 February 1596, Basle, Univ. Bibl., Kirchen Archiv, C., I., 2, Bd. II, fol. 235; "Ex tribus autem illis famosissimis in Gallia apostatis, duo, Spondanus videlicet et Morlazi, Deo sic Ecclesiae suae paci cavente, in locum suum abierunt. Superest tertius Cahierus, illos suo tandem

one of the most prolific and virulent opponents of the Protestants in France. In addition to writing a defense of his Catholic conversion and a well-regarded history of the reign of Henri IV, Cayet authored more than forty treatises and pamphlets, attacking Protestant theology and churchmen, extolling Henri IV, and urging his former co-religionists to abjure the Reformed religion.⁵⁵ More a controversialist than a careful apologist, Cayet took particular delight in publicizing the scandalous rumors and exposing the internal controversies of the Protestants in France. Almost overnight, Palma Cayet became a "new champion of the Roman Church."⁵⁶

How did Sponde and Cayet explain their Catholic conversions? In their written apologies, both men refuted the charge of political opportunism, arguing instead that their confessional change resulted from a diligent search for the true Christian Church. For Sponde, a debate with Davy Du Perron had forced him to abandon many of his cherished arguments and to explore anew the basis of Christian authority and the nature of the true Church. The Protestant doctrine of *sola scriptura* left him with a host of unresolved problems. Without the witness of Catholic tradition, the Protestants had no certain way to determine the canon of Scripture or to evaluate contradicting theological interpretations espoused by a myriad of sects.

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tempore sequuturus." Beza to Jacob Monau, 9/19 May 1596, Mss. Bib. Gotha, Cod. Chart. A 404, fols. 198-199.

⁵⁵For a bibliography of Cayet's work, see *FP* III, 296-299 and Pannier, *L'Église Réformée de Paris*, 52-53.

⁵⁶Jean-Baptiste Rotan describes Cayer as "ce nouveau champion de l'Église Romaine" in the introduction of his book *Response à la copie d'une lettre missive de M. Pierre Cayer apostat: en laquelle il rend raison de sa prétendue conversion* (La Rochelle: Hierosme Haultin, 1596), 5.

Likewise, despite their commitment to scriptural authority, the Reformed espoused doctrines that were nowhere taught in holy writ, including infant baptism, ecclesiastical discipline and the perpetual virginity of Mary. The only solution to this epistemological quandry, Sponde concluded, was to be found in the authority and tradition of the Catholic Church. Jesus had promised his disciples that he would give the Holy Spirit to his Church in order to instruct and protect her from error. On the basis of this promise, the visible Catholic Church together with her sacraments had been preserved by means of apostolic succession through subsequent centuries; she alone possessed priests and doctors who were the legitimate heirs of Peter and Paul. Having existed prior to Scripture, the Catholic Church with her traditions remained the infallible interpreter of the holy writings. Hence, the Church created purity of doctrine, not vice versa.⁵⁷ Sponde claimed that it was this discovery of the universal, visible Christian Church that compelled him to abjure the Protestant religion. For the Reformed to argue that the visible Church had fallen into corruption and disappeared for several centuries only to reappear again in Geneva during Calvin's lifetime was not only the height of presumption, but reflected disbelief in God's firm promise to preserve his Church.⁵⁸ Rather than abandoning the Roman Catholic Church, Sponde

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⁵⁷"Encores direz-vous, que c'est la pureté de la doctrine qui faict l'Eglise, et non pas les mœurs. Mais au contraire, pour parler proprement avec vous, c'est l'Eglise qui faict la pureté de la doctrine: Car l'Eglise a esté plustost au monde que la doctrine comme une matière plustost que la forme." Sponde, *Déclaration des principaux motifs*, 354.

⁵⁸"Il falloir, il falloir crier à haute voix, C'est à Genève qu'est l'Eglise, ou pour le moins un membre de l'Eglise. Puis que vous ne voulez point qu'elle à Rome, où depuis quinze cens ans on a toujours creu qu'elle estoit, dites-nous maintenant où vous l'avez emporté? Rome n'est plus que son tombeau, monstrez-nous donc où elle s'en est allée, après que vous luy avez redonné sa vie." Sponde, *Déclaration des principaux motifs*, 358.

concluded, Calvin and the Protestants should have attempted to repair it.

Palma Cayet's apology for his conversion repeated many of Sponde's epistemological and ecclesiological arguments.⁵⁹ As a young man, Cayet had converted to the Reformed religion in order to learn the biblical languages and achieve professional advancement.⁶⁰ Nonetheless, during more than thirty years of ministry—including fourteen years as a minister in Navarre's court—he had never ceased to believe that the Roman Church was the 'mother and mistress of all the other Churches' and that a reunion of the religious confessions in France was desirable. In recent years, he had even defended these opinions before Henri IV himself, demonstrating that "it was possible for all of us to be good Catholics, even Roman Catholics, without superstition or idolatry."⁶¹ Thus, over time, Cayet became

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⁵⁹Cayet's defense of his Catholic conversion appeared in his *Copie d'une lettre de Maistre Victor Pierre Cayer cy devant ministre, à présent ferme Catholique, Apostolique & Romain, à un gentilhomme sien amy le Sr. Dam. encores à présent ministre. Contenant les causes & raisons de sa conversion à l'Église Catholique, Apostolique & Romaine* (Paris: Jean Richer, 1595). He provided additional justification in a second work entitled *Responce de Maistre Victor Pierre Cayer au livret intitulé, Advertissement au fidelles, &c. Où sont réfutée les calomnies qu'on cuide mettre sur sa vraye & volontaire conversion à la vraye Église Catholique, Apostolique & Romaine* (Paris: Jean Richer, 1595).

⁶⁰"... ie regrette, que dez ma ieunesse aagé de treze ans au plus, encore pas, ie seroye tombé en cest erreur de me départir de l'Église.... Le désir que i'avoye de sçavoir quelque mot de grec & d'hébreu, & l'occasion d'avoir rencontré certains grands Seigneurs, pour leur servir en l'instruction de leurs enfans; qu'il ny eust que des gens de là l'eau, qui fussent papistes, comme on parloit lors, tout cela m'offusqua mon pauvre petit iugement." *Responce de Maistre Victor Pierre Cayer*, 98-99.

⁶¹"En général, ie monstroye par cest escrit que nous pouvions estre bons Catholiques voire Romains, comme à présent ie suis, par la grâce de Dieu, sans superstition ny idolatrie. l'avoye apertement tenu ces mesmes propos à son Altesse à un souper dans Pau, présens feu Monsieur de la Motte Gondrin & autres Seigneurs Catholiques, dont lors son Altesse me dit, que c'estoit beaucoup dit, & en voulout sçavoir les raisons: le luy en dis une seule qui la contenta, à sçavoir comme Saint Paul escrit aux Romains, Et qu'en ceste qualité la mesme Église Romaine estoit la mère & la matrice de toutes les autres Églises." *Responce de Maistre Victor Pierre Cayer*, 12-13.

convinced that the the moral flaws and slight doctrinal errors of the Catholic Church did not warrant the Protestant revolt from Rome. Instead, by renouncing the Catholic, Apostolic and Roman Church, the Protestants had abandoned the true Church, thrown away their salvation, forfeited the legitimate ministerial vocation, and lost any hope of finding theological certainty. The Reformed in France were a counterfeit church, boasting fake sacraments, false teachers, and pretended truths.⁶² The church of Saint Peter, by contrast, had "never vacillated or bent" and had "faithfully guarded the doctrine of the doctors and honored religiously the relics of the martyrs."⁶³ In light of this, Cayet reported, several well-known Reformed ministers were contemplating Catholic conversion; indeed, even Beza now recognized that the break with Rome had been a mistake and was quietly counseling a gradual rapprochement with the Catholics.⁶⁴ Cayet concluded his defense by encouraging his

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⁶²The Reformed were "comme le faux monnoyeur qui a emporté les coings de la monnoye." *Copie d'une lettre de Maistre Victor Pierre Cayer*, 5.

⁶³"... la foy de S. Pierre n'a jamais vacillé ny fléchy.... or depuis ces deux temps, des Martyrs & des Docteurs, l'Église a tousjours gardé fidèlement la doctrine des Docteurs, & honoré révéremment les reliques des Martirs." Cayer, *Copie d'une lettre de Maistre Victor Pierre Cayer*, 15-16.

⁶⁴"Plusieurs des plus apparens ministres m'ont dit que leurs gens n'avoyent que faire de remuer tant de besongnes, & aucuns ont passé plus avant parlant avec moy, que mesmes ce qui semble superstition ne l'est pas, si on recerche l'origine. Théodore de Bèze a dit, il y a quelque temps, à homme d'honneur, & de sa profession, qu'ils estoyent tombés d'une extrémité en l'autre, parlant d'avoir laissé l'Église, & d'estre dénués de cérémonies, mais qu'il se falloir r'approcher peu à peu. Autres ministres plus de douze, sans compter d'autres gens à leur suite, m'ont dit en Synode estre de mesme désir de la réunion en tout & par tout que moy: sauf quant à la puissance du Pape." *Copie d'une lettre de Maistre Victor Pierre Cayer*, 18-19. Cayet repeated this latter assertion several years later: "En outre il [the minister Monsieur de Vaux] a dit plusieurs fois que T. de Bèze luy a dit ces mots. Nous sommes tombez d'extrémité en extrémité, mais il nous faut rapprocher & nous reünir. Mais il faut que cela se face par les Princes, & ne se peut faire autrement, disoit Bèze." Cayet, *Remonstrance et supplication très-humble à Madame, Soeur unique du Roy, Princesse de Navarre & de Lorraine, Duchesse de Bar & d'Albret &c. Pour vouloir recognoistre nostre mère Sainte Église*

former co-religionists to renounce their errors and convert to Catholicism, assuring them that "thanks to God, I have never had such contentment in my soul."⁶⁵

Huguenot authors responded quickly and forcefully to the apologies of Sponde and Cayet, combining careful refutations with broad personal attacks. The anonymous author of the *Réfutation ... de tous les argumens contenus en un libelle intitulé, DÉCLARATION du S. de Sponde* (1595) argued that Sponde had abandoned the Protestant religion because of his unruly passions, desire for worldly rewards, and fear of persecution. His life and conscience made him ill-suited to serve as an "example and patron of piety."⁶⁶ Criticisms of Palma Cayet were far harsher. Jean-Baptiste Rotan accused Palma Cayet of ambition and greed, suggesting that he had 'revolted' in the hopes of winning a bishop's mitre.⁶⁷ The anonymous author of the *Réponse d'un gentilhomme Catholique aux lettres d'un sien ami* (1595) provided additional examples of Cayet's flawed character.⁶⁸ As a Reformed minister, Cayet

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Catholique, Apostolique & Romaine (Paris: Guillaume Binet, 1601), 14.

⁶⁵"... quant à moy je n'eus jamais un tel contentement en mon âme, j'en rends grâces à Dieu." Cayet, *Copie d'une lettre de Maître Victor Pierre Cayer*, 23.

⁶⁶"... sa conscience, & sa vie estant trop mal ordonnée & mal réglée pour servir d'exemple & patron de piété...." G.L.V., *Réfutation, par textes exprès de l'Escriture & passages des Pères, de tous les argumens contenus en un libelle intitulé, DÉCLARATION du S. de Sponde; par lesquels il prétend rendre raison des motifs qui l'ont induit à se séparer de l'Église Réformée, pour s'unir à l'Église Romaine* ([Genève]: [Ant. Blanc], 1595), 8. See CDM, 145.

⁶⁷Cayet possessed "une âme ambitieuse & avaricieuse." Indeed, members of the royal court mocked him for his presumption, "comme si par sa révolte il eust prétendu mettre sur sa teste quelque mitre ou chapeau." Rotan, *Response à la copie d'une lettre missive de M. Pierre Cayer Apostat*, 5.

⁶⁸*Réponse d'un gentilhomme Catholique aux lettres d'un sien ami; sur la conversion de Maître Cahier, ci-devant Ministre de l'Église prétendue Réformée*, in [Simon Goulart], *Mémoires de la Ligue*, VI (Amsterdam: Arkstée & Merkus, 1758), 319-347.

had argued frequently with his colleagues and had been rebuked on several occasions by the consistory.⁶⁹ He was known to have used alms intended for the poor to buy food for his horse. Even more shamefully, shortly before his claimed conversion, Cayer had been deposed from his ministerial charge for authoring a scandalous book in which he defended by means of Scripture brothels, prostitution and fornication.⁷⁰ His conversion, therefore, had been motivated by revenge and ambition rather than by any desire to find the true Church. Huguenot critics agreed that the conversions of Sponde and Cayet betrayed deep-seated moral deficiencies rather than religious sincerity.

Notwithstanding these *ad hominem* attacks, Huguenot apologists took very seriously the problems raised by Sponde and Cayet. In response to Sponde, the author of the *Réfutation* admitted that human fallibility made the interpretation of Scripture difficult. Nonetheless, when people sought the truth without prejudice--

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⁶⁹"En sa charge, il n'y a celui qui ne sache ses déportemens, avec combien de rancune, d'envie, d'aigreur, il a vécu avec les Ministres ses confrères. L'opinion qu'il avoit de lui-même, lui élevoit le coeur, & le rang qu'il tenoit, le rendoit insupportable, dont par plusieurs fois il a été repris au Consistoire." *Réponse d'un gentilhomme Catholique*, 322.

⁷⁰"Mais comme l'impiété ne se peut longuement cacher, il a déployé aux yeux de tout le monde, un témoignage inexcusable de sa vie; car depuis quelques mois en ça, il a été si effronté de mettre entre les mains du sieur E. un livre par lui fait & composé ... par lequel en somme il s'efforce de prouver, que par la Loi de Dieu, la paillardise n'est point défendue, que *sola masturbatio inhibita*, que la fornication simple n'est point péché, que les bordeaux abolis par nos Loix & Ordonnances, doivent être rétablis. Y a-t-il homme au monde portant le nom de Chrétien, qui ne condamne telles propositions, comme damnables?" *Réponse d'un gentilhomme Catholique*, 323. Beza made a similar accusation in a letter to Grynaeus on 7/17 September 1595: "Tertius iam alius [i.e. a third apostate], quum ministeris apud Regis sororem fungeretur, compertus pacisci cum adversariis heroïna illius defectionem, et mox ab illa pulsus, magnum praebuit multis offendiculum, licet iam antea a fratribus non semel ut garrulus et superbus notatus. Ad quae illud etiam scelus nunc accessit, quod admirabili Dei providentia factum est, ut sit deprehensum ipsius scriptum (quod etiam clam edere constituerat), in quo licita esse lupanaria contendit, et simplicem (quam vocant) fornicationem inter peccata non esse numerandam." Basle, Univ. Bibl., Kirchen Archiv, C. I. 2, Bd. II, fol. 227.

employing a spirit of piety rather than passion—they could distinguish truth from error.⁷¹ Moreover, with respect to the central doctrines of the faith, all Christians agreed on the truths contained in the Apostles Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Decalogue.⁷² In addition, both Rotan and the author of the *Réfutation* argued that the differences separating the Protestant churches were not as great as Sponde and Cayet maintained. The *Harmonia confessionum fidei*, compiled by Beza and four French colleagues in 1581⁷³, demonstrated the close agreement of the Reformed Churches in France, Scotland, Switzerland, the Low Countries, Scandinavia, and Germany.⁷⁴ The

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⁷¹"Le Moyen & le Juge [of Scripture] se trouve aisé à ceux qui désirent suivre la vérité sans préjugé, & s'en informer, d'un esprit plein de piété & vuide de passion." On questions central to Christianity, we have "une reigle plus ferme, plus certaine, plus ancienne, & à laquelle tous Chrestiens condescendront: C'est le Symbole des Apostres, le formulaire de la prière Dominicale, & le Decalogue." *Réfutation... de tous les argumens contenus en un libelle intitulé, DÉCLARATION du S. de Sponde*, 33.

⁷²"Le moyen & le Juge [of Scripture] se trouve aisé à ceux qui désirent suivre la vérité sans préjugé, & s'en informer, d'un esprit plein de piété & vuide de passion." As to the foundations of the Christian religion, the Church has "une reigle plus ferme, plus certaine, plus ancienne & à laquelle tous Chrestiens condescendront: C'est le Symbole des Apostres, le formulaire de la prière Dominicale, & le Decalogue." *Réfutation ... de tous les argumens contenus en un libelle intitulé, DÉCLARATION du S. de Sponde*, 33.

⁷³For a description of this important document, see Geisdendorf, 337-339 and Francis Higman, "L'*Harmonia confessionum fidei* de 1581," in *Catéchismes et Confessions de foi* (Montpellier: Centre d'histoire des réformes et du protestantisme de l'Université de Montpellier, 1995), 243-262. The joint effort of Jean-François Salvat, Beza, Chandieu, Daneau and Goulart, this *Harmonia* brought together eleven Protestant confessions of faith, including: Augsburg (1530), Tetrapolitana (1530), Basle (1531), the First Helvetic Confession (1536), France (1559), the Second Helvetic Confession (1566), the Low Countries (1566), and Bohemia (1573). The *Harmonia* was conceived by French churchmen as an answer to the Book of Concord, framed by gnesio-Lutherans in 1580. Higman describes the *Harmonia* as "... le premier monument de l'oecuménisme moderne" (*ibid.*, 245).

⁷⁴"Qu'on lise toutes les confessions de foy, qui ont esté publiées de nostre temps par plusieurs nations, & la belle harmonie qui en a esté dressée, on trouvera qu'il y a un saint accord en la doctrine des Églises vraiment Chrestienes, que nous nommons réformées, de manière que, par la grâce de Dieu, nous avons la vraie unité de foy aux pointcs fondamentaux." Rotan, *Response a la copie d'une lettre missive de M. Pierre Cayer Apostat*, 147. See also the *Réfutation... de tous les argumens contenus en un libelle intitulé, DÉCLARATION du S. de Sponde*, 75.

doctrines that remained in contention among the Protestants were nonessentials (*adiaphora*) and subject to Christian liberty. Rotan pointed out, furthermore, that the Roman Church herself was riddled by divisions, evinced in the bitter disputes between Realists and Nominalists, Scotists and Thomists, Sorbonnists and Jesuits, Conciliarists and Papalists.⁷⁵ Despite the theological differences among Protestants, the doctrine of *sola scriptura* remained a trustworthy guide to discern divine truth.

The ecclesiological problems raised by Sponde and Cayer received similar attention from Huguenot apologists. Rotan and the author of the *Réfutation* argued that the Christian Church was distinguished through the centuries by faithfulness to apostolic teaching rather than by any external form of succession. True doctrine existed prior to the Church and made the Church "as a cause preceeds its effect."⁷⁶ Thus, when the visible church at Rome fell into manifest error, the true Church survived and flourished 'invisibly' among those Christians who continued faithfully to preach the Gospel and administer the sacraments. Like the sun, the Church "is not always within our horizon; but when it is hidden from us, it continues to shine on other people whom we do not know."⁷⁷ In a similar way, true Christian ministers were to be identified, not by episcopal ordination, but by their faithfulness to the

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⁷⁵Rotan, *Response à la copie d'une lettre missive de M. Pierre Cayer Apostat*, 155.

⁷⁶"Mais puis que la doctrine donne le commencement & le progrès à l'Église, & que ceste doctrine fut rédigée par escrit, & depuis l'Église s'est conduite par ces escrits; il s'ensuit que la doctrine va devant, mesmes en temps; & que c'est elle qui fait l'Église, comme la cause précède son effect." *Réfutation... de tous les argumens contenus en un libelle intitulé, DÉCLARATION du S. de Sponde*, 51.

⁷⁷The Church is not always "un lustre magnifique visible." Like the sun, it 'n'est pas toujours en nostre Horizon; quand il nous est couché, il luit ceux que nous ne cognoissons pas." *Réfutation... de toutes les argumens contenus en un libelle intitulé, DÉCLARATION du S. de Sponde*, 64.

teaching of Scripture. Having rescued biblical truth from Roman superstition, the Protestant churches now possessed a legitimate ministry, practiced the sacraments in their purity, and proclaimed the true path of salvation. Finally, Rotan described Cayet's assertion that Beza and other Reformed ministers were contemplating Catholic conversion as a 'Jesuit-like ruse,' intended to disparage faithful servants of God. Beza--that great man--had made his position very clear in his book on the marks of the Church. In sum, the Reformed were committed to the union of Christians under the headship of Christ, not under the yoke of Rome.⁷⁸

The Age of Iron

The 'apostasy' of prominent Protestants was only one of several factors that contributed to the anxiety and disillusionment of the Reformed leadership. Between 1594 and 1596, a series of religious, political, and military setbacks further alienated the Huguenots from Henri IV and his court, intensifying their sense of insecurity and deepening their suspicions of royal promises. For a number of Reformed leaders, these difficulties fostered an accute sense of loss and disappointment, a recognition that long-cherished dreams of Protestant ascendancy in France were no longer

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⁷⁸"De ce qu'il dit ici des ministres les plus apparens, de douze ministres en un Synode, auxquels ie ne say comment il s'est advisé d'adiouster M. Théodore de Bèze, n'est qu'une ruse lésuitique, afin de rendre suspects ceux qui ont heureusement travaillé en l'oeuvre du Seigneur.... Mais il y a grande différence d'estre réunis à Christ, ou d'estre assuiettis au Pape: d'avoir communion avec l'Église catholique, espars par le Monde universel, ou de communiquer aux traditions d'une Église particulière, corrompue & abastardie, telle qu'est la Romaine, en quelque sorte qu'on la vueille prendre. Pour le regard de ce qu'il obiecte à M. Théodore de Bèze, il descouvre, ou son ignorance, ou sa malice. S'il a leu ses escrits, il doit avoir cognu ce, que ce grand personnage enseigne de l'Église, & des marques d'icelle, qui ne se rapporte en aucune manière à ce qu'il lui impose malicieusement." Rotan, *Response à la copie d'une lettre missive*, 58-59.

realistic. The king would remain Catholic and the Reformed churches would continue to be a minority, struggling on the margins of French society.

Religious developments in France in the mid-1590s were particularly ominous. In December 1594, Henri IV was stabbed in the mouth by Jean Châtel, a young student from the Jesuit college at Clermont. In response, the Parlement of Paris ordered that all Jesuits leave the kingdom within fifteen days.⁷⁹ Beza was overjoyed by the news, ascribing the deliverance of the king and the banishment of the Jesuits to the "incomprehensible providence of God."⁸⁰ Nonetheless, any hope that this violent act might encourage Henri IV to re-think his religious commitment was crushed nine months later when Clement VIII granted absolution to the French king. The terms of the absolution caused grave concern among the Protestants in France: in addition to agreeing to build monasteries, attend mass daily, and commune at least four times a year, the king promised to seek the registration of the canons of the Council of Trent in France, and to raise Henri II, prince of Condé, in the Catholic religion.⁸¹ At least with respect to the young prince, Henri was true to

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⁷⁹The Jesuits were forced to abandon their schools in cities controlled by the king. However, in regions where the Catholic League remained strong (e.g. Toulouse and Guyenne), parlements refused to register the royal edict and the Society was able to continue its activities. See Piaget, *Histoire de l'Établissement des Jésuites en France*, 208-220. In the fall of 1603, Henri issued an edict authorizing the Jesuits to return to the kingdom (*ibid.*, 259-276).

⁸⁰"Spero vos autem iam pridem de Regis vulnere nuntium accepisse, quem plane admirabiliter adversus sicarium Jesuitam Deus est tutatus. Hoc facinus ita nostros etiam adversarios commovit, ut Senatus consultum ab iis extorserit, cuius exemplum ad te mitto, ut mecum incomprehensibilem illam Opt. Max. Dei nostri providentiam in hoc etiam negotio agnoscas et adores." Beza to Constantine Fabricius, 21/31 January 1595, Nuremberg, Staatsarchiv, E. Laden Akten, no. 279.

⁸¹Thus, Duplessis-Mornay wrote Rotan on 9 October 1595: "Monsieur, vous aurés sçeu l'absolution du pape. Les conditions sont: le messe en Béarn, la nourriture de M. le prince à la

his word. In December 1595, Condé was brought from St. Jean d'Angely to Paris and placed under the watchful eye of the Catholic marquis of Pisani.⁸² Beza was horrified by the royal submission, believing that the king had "surrendered himself completely to the Anti-Christ" of Rome.⁸³ So too, by commanding the young Condé--who was presently heir to the throne--to be educated in the Catholic religion, the king effectively crushed Huguenot hopes for the future succession of a Protestant king.

Political developments in France were equally grim for the Reformed. In successive political assemblies at Saumur (February-March 1595), Loudun (April-October 1596) and Vendôme (November 1596-February 1597) Huguenot delegates became increasingly impatient with Henri's insistence to negotiate on the basis of the Edict of Poitiers, viewing such royal 'concessions' as insignificant given their long-time service to the king.⁸⁴ Duplessis-Mornay complained: "In vain I urge the

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romaine, la publication du concile de Trent, nouvelle et solennelle abjuration, etc." *Mémoires et correspondance* VI, 360. For a fuller discussion of the papal absolution, see Babelon, *Henri IV*, 613-618. The decrees of the Council of Trent were not promulgated in France until 1615, five years after Henri IV's death.

⁸²Aumale, *Histoire des Princes de Condé* II, 231-237.

⁸³The king "sese totum Antichristo dediderit." Beza to [Grynaeus], 4/14 February 1596, Basle, Univ. Bibl., Kirchen Archiv, C. I. 2, Bd. II, fol. 236.

⁸⁴These Huguenot assemblies are described well by Sutherland, *The Huguenot Struggle*, 306-311 and Patry, *Philippe du Plessis-Mornay*, 339-351. Beza was far more willing to accept the Edict of 1577 as a basis for pacification: "Addo etiam & illud, in eodem Parisiensi Parlamento promulgatum esse & autoritate Regia (ut loquuntur) publicatum, vel potius renovatum Edictum iam olim, id est anno 1577 sancitum, in quo nostris Ecclesiis cavetur, ne quis adversus suam conscientiam quidquam agere cogatur, & tum verbi divini praedicatio, tum Sacramentorum administratio cum matrimoniorum celebratione & reliqua Ecclesiastica nostra disciplina conceduntur, certis quidem locis et legibus & conditionibus adstricta, sed quae si (quod futurum confidimus) sincere observentur, magnum ac pene certum nobis aditum ad aequa omnia, absque tumultu obtinenda patefaciant, nisi peccata nostra cursum diurnae istius in Galliam clementiae inhibeat." Beza to Constantine Fabricius, 7/17 March 1595, Nuremberg, Staatsarchiv, E-Laden Akten, no. 279.

Huguenots to be patient. They reply that they have waited patiently for seven years since Henri became king, only to see their situation become worse by the day."⁸⁵ Negotiations almost broke off entirely in the spring of 1596 when the king treated harshly deputies from Loudun and ordered the assembly to disband. Only quick action by Duplessis-Mornay and other moderates prevented the Huguenot delegates from crossing the Rubicon by adopting proposals to resist the king by force.⁸⁶ When the Huguenot delegates reassembled in Vendôme in the fall of that year, they found the king only slightly more conciliatory. Chevalier's report to the Genevan magistrates captured the situation succinctly: "The churches have obtained no resolution to their demands. The king speaks to them with gentle words, although he occasionally interjects loaded statements, such as the claim to be an absolute king."⁸⁷

In the meantime, Henri IV had crossed a Rubicon of his own. In January 1595, amidst rumors of an imminent Spanish invasion of northern France, Henri declared war on his perennial enemy Philip II, hoping to rally national support, divert the war to Spanish territories, and unmask the political motives of the League once

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⁸⁵"En vain leur presche on patience. Ils repliquent qu'ils l'ont eue en vain, qu'il y a sept ans que le roy regne, que leur condition empire tous les jours..." Duplessis-Mornay to La Fontaine, 3 March 1596, published in *Mémoires et correspondance* VI, 468.

⁸⁶"... ces gens, rebutés de la court, sont résoleus de chercher les remèdes en eulx mesmes, sont auctorisés à cest fin, et par des actions qui ne les semblent pas mener tout droict, se trouveront avoir passé le Rubicon fort gaiement. J'en ai adverti à temps. C'est tousjours nostre coustume de laisser ainsi pourrir nos playes." Duplessis-Mornay to the duke of Bouillon, 19 June 1596, published in *Mémoires et correspondance* VI, 504. See Patry's helpful discussion of this crisis, *Philippe du Plessis-Mornay*, 347-349.

⁸⁷Chevalier wrote: "... les églises n'ont pareillement obtenu aucune résolution sur leurs demandes, le roy leur parlant doucement et y entremeslant des mots picquants, comme qu'il est roy absolu, etc." 12/22 November 1596, *RC* 91, 226^v.

for all. After an impressive victory near Dijon in June, the tide turned against the Bourbon king. Even with the support of the duke of Mayenne--who had rallied to Henri's side following the papal absolution in the fall of 1595--the towns of Picardy were at the mercy of the enemy. When Cambrai fell to Spanish armies in October, many people blamed the defeat on the half-hearted support of the Protestant duke of Bouillon. Angered by such criticisms, Bouillon and La Trémoille withdrew their soldiers from the royal army, jeopardizing Henri's siege of La Fère and hastening the fall of Calais to Spanish forces the following April.⁸⁸ Though concerned by the growing rift between Henri and the Protestant nobles, Beza suspected that the king's military difficulties were largely of his own making: God's righteous anger had begun to burn hot against the Bourbon king.⁸⁹

These religious, political and military set-backs fueled the fears of French Protestants and accentuated divisions within the Reformed movement. Rumors continued to circulate that the king intended to persecute his Protestant subjects, or even join forces with Spain and impose the Roman religion on England.⁹⁰ In this

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⁸⁸See Sutherland, *The Huguenot Struggle*, 310-311; Babelon, *Henri IV*, 607-618.

⁸⁹"Rex ipse idem esse pergit. Hispanos certum est, ut Regem omittere La Ferae obsidionem cogerent, Caletes recta cum non contemnendis copiis contendisse. Hinc statim sparsus est in vicina nostra rumor tanquam certissimus, captos simul et obsessos fuisse Caletes, quod tamen falsissimum esse adhuc arbitror, quanvis nihil non metuam, Dei furore iustissime adversus Regem accenso." Beza to Grynaeus, 24 April/4 May 1596, Basle, Univ. Bibl., Kirchen Archiv, C. I. 2, Bd. II, fol. 239.

⁹⁰In the final weeks of 1596, for example, Chevalier wrote the Genevan magistrates: "Les députés de la religion sont encor par deça. Que le roy n'est pas bien avec eux, Dieu vueille qu'il n'en devienne persécuteur..." Read in the Small Council on 10/20 January 1597, RC 92, 8°. Several months later, Chevalier sent a coded message to Geneva reporting that "[n]ous entendons que le pape a escrit & donné advis au roy, que le roy d'Espagne consent de faire trêve avec le roy pour 3 ou 4 ans, pendant lesquels on pourra adviser des moyens de paix, consent aussi de luy remettre les places qu'il a

tense climate, cities under Huguenot control weighed the political costs of resisting the king. Thus, in October 1595, the magistrates and ministers of the Huguenot fortified city of Montpellier requested Beza's advice on whether they were obliged to accept the Catholic governor whom the king had appointed, and whether they should submit to the royal command to permit Catholic deputies on the city council.⁹¹ Beza and the Company of Pastors urged the city to use moderation and submit to the will of God rather than rely on physical force.⁹² Nonetheless, even some of Geneva's ministers had lost patience with Henri of Navarre. In August of 1595, Simon Goulart sharply condemned Henri IV and his 'whore,' Gabrielle d'Estrées, from the pulpit of the temple of St. Gervais, claiming that their liaison would bring God's wrath upon the king and his kingdom.⁹³ When questioned by the city magistrates, Goulart

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conquises sur luy, mais c'est à la charge qu'il joigne ses forces avec celles d'Espagne pour faire la guerre à l'Angleterre, occuper le royaume, y establir la papauté. Et en ce cas que le royaume se partagera esgalement entr'eux ou bien qu'ils en donnerent à ce que le pape & le concistoire en ordonnera." 8/18 March 1597, 37^v.

⁹¹This letter is dated 17 October 1595, and is found at Geneva, BPU, ms. fr. 197^a, fols. 256-257. The ministers and magistrates of Montpellier believed that the king's order was unjust for two reasons: "Pour le premier, d'autant que c'est une ville d'hostage et de seurté, ainsi mesmes qu'il a esté freschement accordé par le Roy; que par cy devant la ville a demeuré en l'estat qu'elle est à présent; d'ailleurs qu'aux villes catholiques, ceulx de nostre religion ne sont admis ny au consulat, ny au conseil, est notoire que sur cette plandre on fera dès aussy tost passer toutes noz autres villes. Pour le second, à cause que par le XXXIII^e article des articles secretz il est porté que le Roy ne pourra prouvoir de gouverneur aux villes de seurtés, et par l'article suivans, que le Roy de Navarre luy en fera la présentation et nomination, c'est assavoir comme représentant les églises, ainsy que nous l'interprétons, et comme est la vérité."

⁹²See *RCP* VII, 22-23.

⁹³"A esté rapporté icy par M^r le premier Syndique & a esté avéré par plusieurs conseillers de ceans que ledit Goulard en preschant hyer à St. Gervais.... auroit parlé du Roy de France & de la marquise de Mouceaux par trop audacieusement & séditionneusement disant qu'on faisoit en une ville proche [i.e. Lyon] de ceste cy de grande preparatifs pour recevoir un roy & que sa putain marche sus un eschafaut dont l'ire de Dieu s'embrace et sus le roy & sus son royaume." 15/25 August 1595, *RC* 90, 154^{r-v}. Goulart frustrations were fueled, in part, by his disapproval of the Council's actions in the

expressed his deep sorrow to see Christians in France being deceived to think that under this prince they were going to live "in a golden age."⁹⁴ If some Protestants in the mid-1590s trusted Navarre and anticipated a period of prosperity under his reign, others like Goulart harbored deep suspicions of him, fearing a renewal of persecution and war. Beza recognized that the patience of many of his co-religionists was wearing thin: "Tired of endless injuries, our Huguenots are now inclined to meet force with force rather than endure the cross any longer."⁹⁵ The future of the Reformed churches in France seemed to be very bleak.

The writings of Beza and other Protestant leaders during the mid-1590s reflect this disappointment and discouragement. As during the previous decade, the Genevan reformer was deeply concerned about the paucity of trained ministers in the French church. This leadership vacuum, combined with the deaths of many 'veterans,' left

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civil case between Madames Juranville and Martin. Receiving word of the minister's harsh words against the king, the French ambassador Sillery sharply rebuked the city magistrates: "... l'ambassadeur a esté fort fâché & irrité ayant sçeu le presche sédicioux que M. Goullard avoit faict ou il a taxé le Roy & autres grandes personnes. Que ce n'est à M. Goullard de prendre compte sur les faicts & actions de sa Maiesté & aultres grands personnages qui ne sont sous sa charge de pasteur. Qu'il se doibt contenter de reprendre les vices qu'il peut apercevoir en la ville & terres..." 7/17 October 1595, RC 90, 178^v-179.

⁹⁴A record of this examination is found in the Archiv d'Etat de Genève, *Procès criminal*, #1798. It is summarized in *RCP* VII, 17.

⁹⁵"... deinde prorsus is aduc est Gallicarum Ecclesiarum, immo totius ipsius regni status, ut nisi me (quod sane vehementer optarim) conjecturae fallant, plurimae ad bellum potius, quam ad firmam aliquam pacem, omnia videantur inclinare, adeo quidem, ut etiam verear, ne quorundam ex nostris expugnata tandem patientia perpetuis et intolerabilibus adversariorum injuriis, de vi per vim repellenda potius, quam de perferenda diutius cruce cogitetur..." Beza to Count Sayne-Witgenstein, 10/20 October 1596, published in Friedlaender, 200. A year later, the Genevan deputy Jacques Lect voiced similar concerns following a journey to France: "L'on voit une extrême rigueur proche contre ceux de la religion en france, lesquels (comme est à craindre) ne pouvans plus patientes, viendront aux armes." 29 June/8 July 1596, RC 91, 124^v.

the Reformed particularly vulnerable to Satan and his minions, who were poised to crush the truth in many places. Beza scolded his co-religionists for their complacency; there remained too few "workers to cultivate the vineyard of the Church of God."⁹⁶ Despite Beza's consistent condemnation of eschatological speculation, the spiritual apathy in Europe as well as the continued machinations of the Roman 'Antichrist' caused the old reformer to suspect that Christ's second coming might be near at hand. The 'time of the Gentiles' was nearly over; now, more than ever before, the God's people needed to be alert and prepared. But, Beza wondered, voicing the words of Scripture (Luke 18.8), "when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?"⁹⁷

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⁹⁶In praising the theological writing of a friend, Beza emphasized how important such works were "... hoc praesertim tempore, in quo propter tantam operariorum in excolenda ecclesiae Dei nostri vinea raritatem, et paucissimos ex veteranis illis exercitatissimis superstites, triumphare iam sibi de oppressa veritate Sathan cum suis videbatur." Beza to John Johnston, 1/11 November 1596, published in J. K. Cameron, ed., *Letters of J. Johnston and Robert Howie* (Edinburgh: Olivier-Boyd, 1963), 331-334. Beza expressed his deep concern about the leadership vacuum in the Reformed movement in other letters as well: "Addam tamen istud, quanvis minime tibi gratum futurum, ereptus est etiam Gallicis Ecclesiis Lambertus ille Daneaus noster, quo tempore maxime fuit necessaria in Occitanis praesertim Ecclesiis confirmandis auctoritas et opera, et paucissimi ex veteranis supersunt." Beza to [Grynaeus], 13/23 December 1595, Basle, Univ. Bibl., Kirchen Archiv, C. I. 2, Bd. II, fol. 230. "Au reste, nous desirons que vos Églises et autres, s'il plaist à nostre Seigneur supporter en quelque repos le royaume de France, ayez soin de choisir et faire estudier quelques escoliers, qui ayent moyen de se façonner auprès des doctes théologiens qui restent en quelque lieux, pour estre propre à maintenir la vérité contre tant d'adversaires qui l'assaillent de toutes parts car, s'il n'y a point de pepinières ou séminaires, il est à craindre que nos successeurs ne souffrent beaucoup à cause de nostre nonchalance." Beza, in the name of the Company of Pastors, to the Church of Millau, 1/11 December 1598, published in *RCP* VII, 352. "Quant à ce tant malheureux meurtre commis en la personne de feu nostre frère de très heureuse mémoire, monsieur Tourtelon, comme oultre l'acte si meschant c'est une perte lamentable advenue à toute l'Église de Dieu, surtout en ce temps auquel il se trouve si peu d'ouvriers en ce bastiment de la maison du Seigneur." Beza, in the name of the Company of Pastors, to [Paul] Maurice, 8/18 January 1600, published in *RCP* VIII, 289.

⁹⁷"Quid enim hodie videmus, quocumque loco versemur; quid audimus ex ulla huius mundi regione, quod in nobis non accendat dimissionis illius desiderium, quam sanctus ille senex Simeon, cycneo illo cantu sibi gratulatur? Ut mihi quidem cogitanti, et cum praesente rerum statu comparanti quae noster Paulus de plenitudinis gentium vaticinatur, pro foribus nobis adesse tempus illud videatur,

The French exile Daniel Toussain expressed similar disappointment with the fruit of the French Reformation in his treatise *L'Arche de Noé* (1596).⁹⁸ In the early days of the evangelical movement, countless people had been hungry for biblical truth, eager to leave behind the darkness of 'Egypt' in order to pursue the light of spiritual renewal. In those golden days, French men and women had exchanged their blasphemies for prayers and singing of the Psalms, their sexual license for pure marriages, their indulgent habits for lifestyles characterized by discipline and generosity. "At that time, one could recognize followers of the Reformed religion from twenty yards away because of their attitudes, as well as their words and actions.

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quod praedicens Servator ille noster: 'Num,' inquit, 'Filius hominis cum venerit, reperturus est fidem in terra [Luke 18.8]?' Sed bene est quod idem ille dies nobis caelum aperiet, et istorum Gigantum furoribus optatum nobis finem imponet. Det nobis Dominus ut nos vigilanter et lampadibus accensis, sponso illi nostro advenienti occurrentes ante fores, paene iam maxima ex parte occlusas excipiamur." Beza to Caspar Peucer, 24 August/3 September 1593, Paris, Bibl. Ste. Geneviève, ms. 1455, fol. 593. For Beza's aversion to millennial speculation, yet suspicion that biblical prophecy was being fulfilled and that the end of human history was near, see his extensive letter to Wenceslas Budowicz: "Ad istos autem arcanorum Dei scrutatores et renovatos Chiliastas quod attinet, et quos saltem veterum aliquot alioqui magnorum etiam virorum exemplo, quo ipsum tempus coarguit, illorum preposterum studium admoneri oportuit, ut a simili, vel potius longe maiore audacia sibi caverent, quid aliud censuerim quidem ego, quam istos christianorum omnium principum autoritate coerceri iam pridem oportuisse. Et cum tantum absit, ut id fiat, ut e contrario quidvis, cuius de quovis loqui ac etiam scribere liceat, sapientissime facere, qui, omissis istis, minime velint istis deliriis sese cum illis vel levissime immiscere, in id potius intenti, ut tot saeculorum signis etiam plane extraordinariis, ac praesertim romanae tyrannidis a Paulo tam expresse predictae subversione, et in illius imperii imaginem ad Romanae meretricis iugum devoluti transformatione, quam ipsis oculis cernimus admoniti, semel omissa ista annorum mensium, et dierum supputatione, quam ipse idem Christus testatur Patrem sibi uni reservasse, ipso demum rerum exitu patefaciendam, diligenter etiam atque etiam caveant ne, sicuti illi quondam in diluvio, ita ipsi in hoc tam horribili incendio imparati deprehendantur. Huc enim certe omnes illae praedictiones spectant, non autem ut sese quisque in illis inaniter scrutandis arcanis, et ipsius Dei maiestatem laedat, et tum sese, tum alios frustra fatiget." 15/25 December 1597, Paris, Bibl. Ste. Geneviève, ms. 1455, fols. 248^v-250^v.

⁹⁸This treatise is found in Simon Goulart's *Mémoires de la Ligue* VI, 368-426. Daniel Toussain was a son of the reformer Pierre Toussain and one of the first ministers in the church of Orléans. After Saint Bartholomew's day, Toussain fled France and became a well-known professor and court preacher, first at Neustadt and later at Heidelberg. He was a close friend of Beza's and figured prominently in his correspondence. See *FP* IX, 400-409; and *OER* IV, 164-165.

Indeed, God blessed them so much that a small flock of twenty Reformed men and women was able to shake up an entire city filled with senseless idolatries."⁹⁹ But the French civil wars had changed all of that. Toussain described how social violence had scattered the Reformed churches, destroying religious discipline, corrupting good morals, and causing several to 'retreat' or 'revolt.' Without an adequate supply of ministers, the churches had trusted in human alliances rather than in divine deliverance, and had indulged in all sorts of vices and corruption. Even in times of peace, they had preferred to rebuild their own homes rather than repair the temple of the Lord. As a result, God had punished the Reformed by sending "that horrible wake-up call (*réveille-matin*) on Saint Bartholomew's day." But even these massacres had failed to bring France to repentance. Instead, Saint Bartholomew had been "the beginning of the mortal illness that is leading France little by little to the grave."¹⁰⁰

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⁹⁹"Je viens à ce qui est de notre temps, & depuis que les Églises ont été ouvertes, & qu'on a commencé à parler plus-librement de réformation évangélique, à savoir depuis l'an 61. C'étoit bien triomphe au commencement; & faut confesser, combien qu'il y eut plusieurs hypocrites mêlés parmi le troupeau, qu'il y avoit une infinité de bonnes âmes affamées de la pâture de vie, enuïées des ténèbres d'Égypte, désireuses de lumière & de réformation, laquelle aussi reluisoit en plusieurs, qui changeoient leurs blasphèmes en prières & chants de Pseaumes, leurs paillardises & dissolutions, en chastes mariages, leurs excès en habits & banquets, en une vie retirée & bien ordonnée, & en aumônes envers les pauvres. On remarquoit pour lors à vingt pas, par manière de dire, une personne de la Religion Réformée à sa contenance, & puis en ses propos & actions. Et de fait Dieu y étendoit tellement sa bénédiction, qu'une petite troupe de vingt hommes de la Religion, faisoit trembler un Ville pleine d'Idolâtres insensés." Toussain, *L'Arche de Noé*, 378.

¹⁰⁰"Et pource qu'il n'y avoit des Ministres à suffisance, ni aussi partout personnages si suffisans, qu'il eut été à désirer; le mal se rengregeoit, & s'endormoit si bien chacun sur sa lie & sur une paix & alliance charnelle, que Dieu juste juge & punisseur de nos offenses, envoïa cet épouvantable réveille-matin au jour de la Saint Barthélemi, l'an 1572. Depuis lequel temps, à cause des barbares cruautés des ennemis, & de l'impénitence des nôtres, le Dieu des armées n'a cessé de foudroier sur la France, tant sur les uns que sur les autres. Car ç'a été si peu de chose des Trêves & Édits de Pais, bâtis depuis & traversés tout aussi-tôt en mille sortes, qu'on peut bien compter la journée Saint Barthélemi pour le commencement de la maladie mortelle, qui conduit la France petit-à-petit au cercueil." Toussain, *L'Arche de Noé*, 380.

The only hope for the Reformed in France, Toussain concluded, was found in the example of the biblical patriarch, Noah. Like Noah, they must resist compromise, ignore the scorn of the world, and instead, flee to the 'ark' of God, which is the true Church: "There is no chance or hope of escaping the flood of God's wrath unless we enter into the ark of Noah and separate ourselves from the corruptions of the world and listen attentively to those who are calling us to repentance."¹⁰¹ Through contrition and holiness, not by force of arms or political alliances, the Reformed churches would rediscover the blessing of God.

Jean-Baptiste Rotan issued his call for Protestant renewal in the final pages of his treatise against Palma Cayet. While this 'miserable century' indulged in lies and blindness, the Reformed should take pleasure in the truth and in the light of the Gospel. While the Catholics in France dozed comfortably in spiritual adultery and injustice, French Protestants must "wake up to the cry of holy exhortations and to the blast of the trumpet of God's Word," choosing to live "soberly, justly and piously in this present century, enduring the cross and disgrace."¹⁰² Rather than being

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¹⁰¹"C'est donc ce que nous chante toute l'Écriture, c'est ce que tous les bons Serviteurs de Dieu & vrais Chrétiens ont tenu pour certain, & pour tout résolu de tout temps, qu'il n'y a point de moïen ni d'apparence d'échapper le déluge de l'ire de Dieu, si on ne se retire avec Noé dans l'arche, si on ne se séquestre des corruptions du monde pour prêter l'oreille à ceux qui nous appellent à repentance..." Toussain, *L'Arche de Noé*, 386.

¹⁰²"Ce misérable siècle se plaist au mensonge, & en son aveuglement; nous au contraire, prenons plaisir à la vérité, & nous esgayons en la lumière céleste de l'Évangile. Ceste nation perverse & adulteresse, ne demande que des coussins & accoudoirs, pour s'endormir de plus en plus en ses iniustices & énormités; nous au contraire, resveillons-nous au cri des saintes exhortations, & au son de la trompette de la parole de Dieu, pour vivre en ce présent siècle, parmi la croix & l'ignominie, sobrement, iustement & religieusement, attendans la bien-heureuse espérance & apparition de la gloire de nostre Sauveur Jésus Christ." Rotan, *Response à la copie d'une lettre missive de M. Pierre Cayer apostat*, 214-215.

discouraged by continued persecution and hardships, the Reformed must embrace them as their birthright.¹⁰³ Rotan summarized this 'Gospel of suffering' by paraphrasing the words of Tertullian: "Christians of all generations, and especially today, lead lives not of gold, but of iron; not with pleasures and conveniences, nor with the lustre and splendor of physical ornaments, but with the dishonor of tortures. God has prepared martyrs' robes for them, borne by angels who hold them ready in heaven."¹⁰⁴ After years of disappointment and difficulty, Rotan called his co-religionists to revise their expectations and accept willingly the suffering promised to Christ's followers. True Christians were promised, not the 'gold' of prosperity and peace, but the 'iron' of suffering and shame.

The Affair of de Serres

For Henri IV, the traditional formula of 'one faith' represented not simply a religious ideal, but a *political* strategy aimed at maintaining control of the Reformed

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¹⁰³"Plustost nous devons estre consolés & fortifiés, lors que par de tels iugeme[n]s du ciel, la vérité de la doctrine de l'Évangile, à laquelle nous avons creu, est confermée de plus en plus. Nous sommes aussi advertis, que c'est par plusieurs oppressions qu'il faut entrer au royaume de Dieu [Acts 14.22]; que tous ceux qui voudront vivre selon piété en Jésus Christ, sousfriront persécution [2 Timothy 3.12]..." Rotan, *Response à la copie d'une lettre missive de M. pierre Cayer apostat*, 213.

¹⁰⁴"Et de fait, la croix, les oppressions, la persécution, les opprobres, sont l'enseigne que nostre Roy & Redempteur desploy en son Église. *Tempora Christianorum semper, & nunc vel maxime, non auro, sed ferro transiguntur; stolae martyriorum praeparantur, Angelis baiulis sustinentur* [Tertullian, *De cultu foeminarum*, II.13.6]. Le temps & la condition des Chrestiens se passe tousiours, & maintenant sur tout, non avec l'or, ains avec le fer, non avec les plaisirs & commodités, avec le lustre & la splendeur des ornemens corporels; mais avec la croix & les tormens, avec l'opprobre des supplices; les robes du martyre sont apprestées, elles sont soustenues comme pendantes du ciel, les Anges en estans les porteurs." Rotan, *Response à la copie d'une lettre missive de M. Pierre Cayer apostat*, 214. Rotan was citing the same passage to which Beza referred a decade earlier. See note 145 on pages 186-187 above.

minority in his kingdom who, in their political assemblies, continued to pose a dangerous challenge to his sovereignty. Theological debates between Catholic and Protestant divines were thus closely linked to larger concerns for social harmony, national unity, and royal authority. In the years following his absolution, Henri IV attempted to achieve religious concord--and political peace--in his kingdom through two related, yet different strategies. On the one hand, the king attempted to convert his Reformed subject through royal gifts and theological debates. He encouraged notables in his court to embrace Roman Catholicism, authorizing a pension for the newly converted.¹⁰⁵ So too, royal presses produced hundreds of religious tracts and treatises that defended Catholic truth and prepared the soil for Protestant conversion. Henri also sponsored theological disputes in an effort to convince and convert the Protestants. When Davy Du Perron 'vanquished' Duplessis-Mornay in a religious conference at Fontainebleau in 1600, Henri boasted that he could win more Protestants to the Catholic religion in twelve months than had converted in the previous fifty years.¹⁰⁶

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¹⁰⁵Babelon, *Henri IV*, 679-680. Thus, the Protestant noble Lesdiguières reported to the Small Council in 1600 that Henri "... sollicite des plus grands à se revolter." 12/22 May 1600, RC 95, 69'.

¹⁰⁶The anonymous Catholic author of the *Bref et véritable discours de la conférence de monsr. l'Évesque d'Evreux, avec le sieur du Plessis Mornay, & de ce qui s'est passé en la première journée assignée devant le Roy, pour les faussetez qui se trouvent és livres dudict Sieur du Plessis* (Poitiers: Jehan Blanchet, 1600) included a letter of the king written to the duke of Épermon, dated 5 May 1600: "Mon amy, le Diocese d'Evreux à gagné celui de Saumur. La douceur dont on y a procédé a osté l'occasion à quelque Huguenot que ce soit, de dire que rien y ait eu force que la vérité.... Certes c'est un des grands coups pour l'Église de Dieu qui se fist il y a long temps. Suyvant ces erres nous ramenerons plus de séparez de l'Église en un an, que par toute autre voye en cinquante" (20). This conference took place in response to Du Perron's assertion that he had found more than 500 errors in Duplessis-Mornay's book *De l'institution, usage et doctrine du saint sacrement de l'Eucaristie* (La Rochelle: Pierre Haultin, 1598). In the meeting that took place on 4 May 1600 in the presence of the

In addition to Catholic conversion, Henri IV showed interest in several projects of religious reunion proposed by 'moderates' in the royal court. As long as the Huguenots' legal status in the kingdom was unclear, the prospect of a single, Gallican Church, framed around a general creed and built on theological compromise remained a vital--if somewhat far-fetched--dream.¹⁰⁷ In the immediate aftermath of Henri IV's abjuration, Palma Cayet and several ministerial colleagues at the royal court were among the most vocal proponents of religious reconciliation. Cayet published a Latin treatise entitled *Consilium pium componendo religionis dissidio* in which he attempted to find consensus between the Protestants and Catholics on the doctrines of justification by faith, the Eucharist, and ecclesiastical authority.¹⁰⁸ Likewise, Protestant clergy within the shadow of the royal court encouraged religious conferences with the Catholics to resolve the theological points separating them and recommended that the Reformed join French Catholics to protect the freedoms of the Gallican Church against papal encroachment. The National Synod of Montauban

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king, Du Perron demonstrated that nine passages from the book contained inaccurate citations, truncated quotations, or misleading conclusions. The commissioners who heard the case--including three Catholics and two Protestants--sustained Du Perron's accusation. See Patry's *Philippe du Plessis-Mornay* for a Protestant interpretation of this event (389-396).

¹⁰⁷Cayet reported that, before his conversion, Henri had frequently declared "... son intention estre de réunir ses sujets en une mesme confession, s'il plaisoit à Dieu, adioustant qu'il estimerait faire le plus grand coup, que tous ses prédécesseurs ayent peu en leurs temps." *Responce de maistre Victor Pierre Cayer*, 20.

¹⁰⁸The Latin edition of this work is listed neither in the catalogue of the Bibliothèque Nationale, nor in the National Union Catalogue. In 1596, Cayet published a French translation of this work, entitled *Advertissement sur les poincts de la religion, pour en composer les differents* (Paris: Jean Le Blanc, 1596). In a letter-preface to Henri IV attached to this second edition, Cayet noted that he had learned "par personages de qualité: & appercevant aussi en vos actions, que Dieu vous a donné ce saint désir de réunir tous vos sujets, à une mesme dévotion..." (Aii).

(June 1594) strongly censured the ministers of the Île-de-France for such proposals and ordered an inquiry into Cayet's doctrine.¹⁰⁹

Following his conversion in 1595, Cayet continued to urge the Reformed to reconcile with their Catholic opponents. Now, however, 'reunion' and 'reconciliation' were synonyms for Catholic conversion. In a booklet addressed to Huguenots of the Third Estate, Cayet claimed that a sizeable minority of the Reformed were eager to "see a good reunion of the religious differences that have occurred in France."¹¹⁰ Many Protestants, he believed, had become disillusioned with the divisive spirit and arrogance of their clergy, and resentful of the heavy-handed and intrusive nature of ecclesiastical discipline.¹¹¹ The Reformed should ignore the demands of their ministers and return to the arms of their 'mother' Church; to refuse

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¹⁰⁹"Ceux de l'Isle de France seront vivement censurés de ce qu'ils ont proposé à cette Compagnie s'il seroit bon d'agir politiquement contre le Pape avec ceux de la Religion Romaine de ce Roiaume, pour maintenir les Libertés de l'Église Gallicane. Il sera écrit auxdits Sieurs que leur Proposition a été jugée indigne d'être mise en délibération. Ils seront censurés tant de ce qu'ils demandent des Juges compétens de l'une & de l'autre Religion pour décider les points qui sont en controverse, que de ce qu'ils requierent qu'on ne tienne pas des Synodes Provinciaux & Nationaux sans de grandes raisons, & que ce soit rarement.... & quant au Sr. Cayer, qu'il lui sera écrit, au nom de cette Assemblée, qu'il ait à se trouver au Synode de ladite Province de Xaintonge, laquelle est chargée de l'entendre & de juger de ce fait, par l'autorité du présent Synode." Aymon, I, 199. See also Benoît, *Histoire de l'Édit de Nantes* I, 125-126.

¹¹⁰Cayet reported that a Protestant friend from the Third Estate had told him "... combien estoit vostre desir de voir une bonne réunion, en la France sur les différens, qui sont survenus en la religion." *Admonition à messieurs, messieurs du Tiers Estat de France, que ne sont de l'Église Catholique Romaine* (Paris: Philippe du Pres, 1596), Aii.

¹¹¹"Je say aussi la diversité de leurs [i.e. Reformed] opinions, les uns approuvent leur discipline; les autres dans le Béarn la reientent totalement & y en à dans Paris qui appellent les disciplineurs *Consistoriaux* par mocquerie & mespirs.... Il y en à qui m'ont dit à Paus qu'en général Luther, Calvin & les autres ont eu grand tort de troubler l'Église..." *Admonition à messieurs ... du Tiers Estat*, 10.

would be both impious and seditious.¹¹² Cayet repeated these themes in a treatise to the Huguenot nobility in the fall of 1596, shortly after the National Synod at Saumur had deposed him for apostasy.¹¹³ The ministers, he asserted, had defied Henri's desire to reunite his subjects by obstinately prohibiting the Reformed from all debates with the Catholics and demanding that nothing be taught except Calvin's *Institutio christianae religionis* and Beza's *Confession de la foi chrétienne*.¹¹⁴ He proceeded to enumerate the ills and abuses of Reformed discipline: consistories invaded peoples' privacy and publicly embarrassed those suspected of minor offenses; so too, they proscribed dances, censured women's fashions, and imposed 'savage' names on children at the baptismal font.¹¹⁵ The case of Antoine Lescaille--whose appeal the

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¹¹²"C'est donc un impiété manifeste contre Dieu & une rebellion seditieuse contre les Magistrats souverains de ne recognoistre l'Eglise Romaine qui & est Catholique & Apostolique." *Admonition à messieurs ... du Tiers Estat*, 23.

¹¹³*Remonstrance Chrestienne et très utile. A messieurs: messieurs de la Noblesse Françoisse qui ne sont de l'Eglise Catholique Romaine* (Paris: Philippe du Pré, 1596). The minutes of the General Synod of Saumur read with respect to Cayer: "Sur les Propositions faites par les Députés de l'Isle de France, touchant M^r Pierre Cayet Apostat, si on le doit excommunier, & si on doit prier M^r de la Planche d'envoyer les Escrits, qu'il a dudit Cayer, à l'Eglise de Paris? Il a été ordonné que son Apostasie sera déclaré dans la Maison & l'Eglise de Madame, & dans l'Eglise de Paris; & on charge en particulier M^r de Serres de répondre aux Escrits dudit Cayer..." Aymon, I, 209.

¹¹⁴"... ils ont ordonné que nul d'eux par ci après, ne traitera plus avec aucun Catholiques, ne conioinctement ni separément. Item que chacun se tiendra à la confession de foy prétenduë de leurs Eglises. Et que nul ne s'ingerera d'enseigner, sinon l'institution de Calvin, & la confession de Bèze." *Remonstrance ... A messieurs de la Noblesse Françoisse*, 5. The minutes of the Synod of Saumur do not support Cayer's first and third assertions. See Aymon I, 194-212.

¹¹⁵*Remonstrance ... A messieurs de la Noblesse Françoisse*, 42-46. Regarding consistories, Cayet wrote: "... ils attribuent aussi aux Anciens de faire les censures ou admonitions par les quartiers, & les chargent d'entrer aux maisons, & voit comment les père & mère traitent leurs enfans, & s'il y a bon mesnage entre le mary & la femme, iusques à s'enquerir de toutes les particularitez dont ils se peuvent aviser. Et say des exemples de personnes fort modestes, qui se sont retirez d'entre eux, pour telles importunitéz, disant qu'ils aymoient encore mieux s'aller confession aux Prestres volontairement, que d'estre contrains d'avoir de tels espieurs de leurs familles, pour leur reprocher quelque parole dite possible brusquement du mary à la femme: Et ce devant tout le monde. Car tout

Synod of Saumur had recently rejected--was indicative of the cruel nature of Reformed discipline and the arrogance of the Protestant ministers. In conclusion, Cayet urged the Huguenot nobles to follow his example and convert to the Catholic religion, assuring them that they would discover a 'marvelous peacefulness in their spirits.' On the other hand, "if you wish to believe your ministers, your children will learn nothing except their catechism and will have no access to the court"; even worse, a poor artisan or common laborer "will be authorized to watch over your souls, to examine your moral condition, to demand your attendance at worship services, in a word, to censure all your actions as if he were your ruler."¹¹⁶

For the Protestants in France, Palma Cayet's conversion made him a most dubious spokesman for religious reunion. He was advocating not compromise, but wholesale theological capitulation. The programs of reconciliation proposed by Jean de Serres between 1594 and 1598 were completely different, coming from a well-respected Huguenot minister and comprising a genuine effort to harmonize the two

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cela est rapporté au Consistoire tellement que c'est une vraie INQUISITION D'ESPAGNE" (42).

¹¹⁶If they converted, the Protestant nobles would receive "une consolation singulière en vos ames; & obtiendrez un repos & tranquillité en vos esprits merveilleuse. Vous disposerez librement de vos enfans; vous serez servis sans division de vos domestiques; vous n'aurez point de suspicion de vos vassaulx; vous serez obéis de vos hommes, chacun en sa terre, continuant tous de bonne vogelie, le service fidèle, que vous avez tousiours rendu a sa Maiesté très-chrestienne; au lieu que si vous voulez croire les Ministres, vos enfans n'apprendront rien que leur Catechisme, vous ne pourrez leur faire voir la Cour; vous serez censurez si vous les envoyez voir les païs; vous n'oserez prendre party pour vos filles qu'au gré des Ministres. Et le plus beau du ieu c'est qu'un pauvre artizan ou brassier sera autorisé de surveiller sur vos âmes; de grabeller vos conditions; de requester vos frequentations; de censurer brief toutes vos actions magistralement." *Remonstrance ... A messieurs de la Noblesse Françoise*, 57-58.

religions.¹¹⁷ Having studied under Calvin and Beza at the Genevan Academy in the early 1560s, de Serres had served almost thirty years as a Reformed minister, first in Jussy near Geneva, later in the churches of Nîmes and Orange.¹¹⁸ His study of French history, his Latin translations of Plato and his books against the Jesuits had won him renown as an historian, theologian and exegete.¹¹⁹ In addition, from 1579, de Serres undertook frequent embassies on behalf of the churches of Languedoc to Navarre's court and to the Protestant allies in Germany. During one of these missions the minister was captured by Leaguer forces, robbed of 10,000 écus, and imprisoned for almost nine months. Following his release in July 1593, he wrote Beza: "In sum, my excellent father, you taught me theology by lecture, and this prison has been another university to teach me by experience. I cannot write these things without tears. But where affliction abounds, the comfort of Christ also

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¹¹⁷For information about de Serres' life and program for religious reconciliation, see Charles Dardier, *Jean de Serres, historiographe du roi, sa vie et ses écrits d'après des documents inédits, 1540-1598* (Paris: Extrait de la *Revue historique*, 1883); Vivanti, *Lotta politica e pace religiosa in Francia fra Cinque e Seicento*, 246-291; W. B. Patterson, "Jean de Serres and the Politics of Religious Pacification, 1594-1598," in *Church, Society and Politics*, vol. 12, ed. Derek Baker (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1975), 223-244; *FP IX*, 263-268.

¹¹⁸De Serres' tenure as pastor at Jussy and Nîmes was not without controversy. In 1572, he was excommunicated, deposed and briefly imprisoned in Geneva for having left his charge at Jussy without permission of the Company of Pastors. See *RCP III*, 84-89 and *passim*. Nonetheless, when he accepted the charge of pastor and professor at Nîmes in 1578, Beza wrote a letter attesting to "la bonne et entière union et fraternité en laquelle il [De Serres] départ d'avec nous pour s'employer en la charge in laquelle il a esté esleu par-delà, ce que n'avons peu ni deu luy refuser." Beza, in the name of the Company of Pastors, to the Church of Nîmes, 21 November 1578, *RCP IV*, 260. A decade later, de Serres was dismissed by the consistory of Nîmes for his frequent and long absences at Navarre's court.

¹¹⁹For de Serres' literary battle with the Jesuits, see pages 173-175 above.

abounds." ¹²⁰

It was in the months following his imprisonment that de Serres began to formulate in writing proposals to heal the religious divisions in France. At the National Synod of Montauban the minister of Orange requested that deputies be appointed to examine a book in process in which he compiled early Christian writings to prove that "our religion is ancient and universal, while the religion of the Papists is new and particular." The synod ordered that before publication copies of de Serres' work should be sent to the churches of Bas Languedoc, Saintonge and Geneva for examination.¹²¹ During the same summer, a second manuscript attributed to de Serres circulated widely among the Reformed, causing commotion in the churches. This anonymous memorandum consisted of 57 propositions detailing a method for reconciling the two religions in France.¹²² The document invited Protestants and

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¹²⁰"En somme, mon meilleur père, vous m'aviez enseigné la Théologie par discours, et ceste prison a esté une autre université pour me l'apprendre par effect. Je ne peux escrire ceci sans larmes. Mais là où l'affliction abonde, la consolation de Christ abonde." Jean de Serres to [Beza], 29 July 1593, Geneva, Archives Tronchin, f. Bèze, vol. 5, fol. 8. For a description of this imprisonment, see Dardier, *Jean de Serres*, 34-36.

¹²¹"Sur la Proposition faite par nôtre Frère Monsieur de Serres touchant des Lettres écrites au présent Synode, par lesquelles on demande que quelques doctes personnages soient députés pour voir le Recueil des Livres des anciens Docteurs qu'il a commencé de faire, pour prouver que nôtre Religion est ancienne & Catholique, & celle du Papisme nouvelle & particulière; le Synode a ordonné que ledit Sieur de Serres fera faire trois Copies de son Recueil, dont l'une sera envoyée au Bas Languedoc pour la faire tenir ensuite à ceux de Haut Languedoc, de la Haute Guienne, & de la Gascogne; l'autre en Xaintonge, pour la faire tenir en Poictou, & de là aux Églises de la Loire; & la troisième pour être envoyée à nos Frères de Genève, afin de leur donner avis de l'impression dudit Livre; & cependant ledit Sieur de Serres ne doit pas, suivant nôtre Discipline, faire imprimer ni publier aucune chose dudit Recueil." Aymon, I, 186-187. In a letter to Beza at the same time, de Serres described this 'Harmonie' as "la fruict de toute ma vie." 21 June 1594, Paris, BN, f. Du Puy, vol. 104, f. 134.

¹²²A copy of this document is found in the BPU of Geneva, mss. Archives Tronchin 5, fols. 32-33^v. At the top of this manuscript, Beza has written "Copie de l'escrit attribué à M. de Serres"; on the back of page 33, the reformer has also written "Articuli cuiusdam mediatoris. D. Covetus misit 12

Catholics to put aside the violence and acrimony of the past and, instead, to affirm the truths that they held in common and search together for trustworthy judges to arbitrate their differences. The truths that the two confessions shared were substantial: "We are all Christian and French. All of us recognize the same God for our father, the same Catholic Church for our mother, and the same Scripture as the infallible rule of truth and the foundation of our salvation. We all desire to be saved at the breast of our common homeland."¹²³ Admitting these similarities, how were the religious parties to heal their differences? The author of the memorandum argued that, as in intestate law, impartial judges were needed to interpret the Scripture (the testament), seeking the original intention of the divine author (the testator).

Christians recognized the apostles and, secondarily, the doctors of the early Church as the judges best qualified to interpret the Christian testament.¹²⁴ Whereas normally this would mean that Scripture would be clarified in light of Scripture, obscure passages could be interpreted by means of three 'indubitable principles of truth': "Antiquity, self-attestation, and perpetual succession of the truth in the Church are the chief

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sept. 94." Dardier's transcription of this document (pages 43-49) is apparently based on a different original, bearing slight discrepancies with the manuscript I have examined.

¹²³"Nos qualités sont-elles pas remarquables? Car nous sommes tous & chrestiens & françois; Nous reconnoissons tous un mesme Dieu pour père, une mesme Église Catholique pour mère; une mesme escriture pour regle infalible de la vérité & fondement de nostre salut. Nous avons tous intérêt de nous conserver dans le sein de nostre commune patrie." Geneva, BPU, Archives Tronchin 5, fol. 32.

¹²⁴"Certes puis que les Arbitres doivent estre advoué et agréés de tous les chrestiens, on n'en pourroit choisir de plus dignes ny plus agréables que les Apostres; et ensuite pour interprètes & expositeurs de leur volonté, que les Docteurs anciens de l'Église ancienne & Catholique, qui aprochant de plus près du temps des Apostres ont esté mieux instruits de leur intention & ont eu tousjours autorité & créance en l'Église." Geneva, BPU, Archives Tronchin 5, fol. 32'.

marks of the true Religion."¹²⁵ On the basis of this hermeneutic, the author of the memorandum argued that a number of Christian doctrines could be held with certainty by both Protestants and Catholics alike. In addition to affirming the truths found in the early creeds, all Christians believed that "we truly eat Christ's flesh and drink his blood" in the Eucharist; that we are "justified and saved by the grace and mercy of God" and that the faith by which we are justified is "necessarily accompanied by good works." Likewise, all Christians should "honor the memory of the saints, both in their holy doctrine and good life," and should fast regularly, eat meat occasionally, dress modestly and respect marriage and the grave.¹²⁶ These, the memorandum concluded, were the central truths of Christianity that should be preached from Protestant and Catholic pulpits alike. The religious parties in France must not permit

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¹²⁵"Les Principes indubitables de la vérité sont les fondemens de la Religion Chrestienne qui sont remarquables par trois qualités: car ils sont anciens, autrement ils ne seroient point principes. N'ont besoin d'aucune preuve, car ils sont si clairs qu'ils portent leur créance par leur propre lumière. Et sont Catholiques, c'est à dire creus par un commun consentement de tous Chrestiens. Ainsi l'Antiquité, la Créance, & la Succession perpétuelle de la vérité en l'Église sont les principales marques de la véritable Religion.... Et aux lieux obscurs ou ambigus prendront le Compas en la certainté de ces principes de la vérité ... et par elle frayeront un beau et asseuré chemin à la concorde des chrestiens." Geneva, BPU, Archives Tronchin 5, fol. 32^v.

¹²⁶"Or ce qui est aux escrits des Apostres, exposé par les Docteurs susdits et compris aux Symboles tant Apostoliques qu'Oecumeniques, n'est-ce pas la Vérité ancienne & Catholique que nous cerchons? De laquelle voicy le sommaire: .... Que sa chair est vraiment viande & son sang vraiment bruvage; Que nous mangeons vraiment ceste chair, & buvons vraiment ce sang; et ainsi que nous recevons en la S. Cène ou S. Eucharistie son corps réelement & non pas par figure, imagination ou fantaisie. Que nous sommes justifiés & sauvés par la grâce & miséricorde de Dieu de laquelle nous jouissons par foy. Que ceste vraye foy par laquelle nous sommes justifiés est operante par charité, & accompagnée nécessairement de bonnes oeuvres; Que la vie éternelle est un don de Dieu; Qu'il faut honorer la mémoire des sants, et leur sainte doctrine & bonne vie. Qu'il faut prier Dieu avec intelligence & droite affection de coeur; Que le jeune est nécessaire pour nous disposer à prier Dieu. Qu'il faut user sobrement des viandes; s'abiller honestement, célébrer le jour du repos; honorer le mariage & les sépultures; et en somme se conduire par ordre en l'Église de Dieu." Geneva, BPU, Archives Tronchin 5, fols. 32^v-33.

controversial doctrines of minor importance to disrupt the peace of the Church and the kingdom, but must instead urge their constituents to "charity, concord, modesty, and all good works."¹²⁷ Peace and harmony were the highest virtues; rebellion against the king was the most dangerous of heresies.¹²⁸

The 57-point proposal for religious reconciliation created a furor in the churches of France and Geneva. De Serres wrote Beza in October of 1594 in an effort to defend himself, insisting that the document being circulated was a falsification of his original manuscript, and complaining bitterly about the rumors that accused him of being a secret Catholic in the pay of the royal court. He remained a faithful disciple of Beza; his sole purpose for writing was "to overturn the papacy."¹²⁹ Beza sharply scolded his former student by return mail. De Serres had no authority to propose such a reunion without the approval of a National Synod. Such far-fetched plans for reconciliation would only create schisms among the Reformed in France,

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¹²⁷"... qu'il faut aussi que ceux qui font profession de prescher en l'Église de part & d'autre, l'annoncent purement & simplement, faisant retentir aux oreilles des Chrestiens, et imprimant en leurs coeurs par assidue & sérieuse prédication Jésus-Christ & iceluy crucifié; exhortans les Chrestiens à charité, concorde, modestie, & à toutes bonnes oeuvres, et n'ayans autre sujet de leurs invectives que les vices & les vicieux trop communs entre tous par la débordée licence & longueur de ces armes furieuses." Geneva, Archives Tronchin 5, 33.

¹²⁸"... il faut que tous les François soient persuadés que la plus dangereuse hérésie est de désobéir au Roy." Geneva, mss. Archives Tronchin 5, fol. 33.

¹²⁹"Et non seulement du bruit sans fruit, mais qu'on tire à occasion de la plus venimeuse calomnie qui ait jamais esté à serviteur de Dieu! Que j'aye appris en la Cour quelque tripotage de Religion? .... Si je suis hérétique ou brasseur de religions, vous me l'avez appris, car je ne crois et n'enseigne que ce que j'ai appris de vous. Je suis des moindres de vos disciples. Ce que j'ai écrit contre les Papistes, sont vos hérésies.... Et ce que je vous ferai bien tost voir, aidant Dieu, vous montrera qu'il n'y a rien impénétrable à la calomnie. Mon but est de renverser la Papauté par elle-mesme." Jean de Serres to [Beza], 20 October 1594, Geneva, mss. Archives Tronchin à Bessinge, f. Bèze, vol. 5, fol. 13-14.

especially in this 'miserable time' when so many, weary of bearing the cross, would be tempted by false promises of peace. Those 'beautiful compromisers' (*ces beaux moyenneurs*) who infest the royal court would undoubtedly seize upon this project and try to harmonize darkness and light, accusing the Reformed who dissent of being enemies of the public peace.¹³⁰ In addition, Beza thought that de Serres had badly overstated the similarities of Catholic and Protestant doctrine. If one carefully examined what the two religious confessions believed on the fundamental truths of Christianity--scriptural authority, human sin, regeneration, sanctification, ecclesiastical government, the sacraments--it became clear that they were affirming completely different things. Even in their interpretation of Christ's atonement, the two parties were as far apart from one another as "the most horrible lie and the purest of truths."¹³¹ In conclusion, Beza urged de Serres to apologize humbly for his errors and

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¹³⁰"A faute de quoy cest escrit et tous autres semblables ainsi publiés, encores que ce ne fust par impression, ne pouvoient apporter moins que schismes et divisions, non seulement entre les pasteurs, qui seroyent de contraire advis les uns aux autres, mais aussi entre les brebis mesmes, qui seroit le plus grand mal qui nous sçauroit advenir, surtout en ces malheureux temps, esquels on sçait assez que trop de gens, lassés de porter la croix de si longtemps et si pesante, gousteroient tellement la douceur de ce beau nom de paix et d'accord, qu'ils se trouveroyent prest de l'accepter aussitost qu'elle leur seroit présentée, surtout si quelqu'un d'entre les pasteurs leur pouvoit servir de quelque fondement, dont il adviendrait, outre ce que dessus, que les mieux advisés qui s'opposeroient à cela, seroyent détestés comme ennemis de repos public, et qui pis est, que la bouche seroit de plus en plus ouverte à ces beaux moyenneurs et plus dangereux ennemis, qui prétendent d'accorder les ténèbres et la lumière (desquels on en sçait que trop, et n'est pas que vous mesmes n'ayez bien apperceu que la Cour est toute farcie)." Beza to Jean de Serres, 31 October/10 November 1594, Geneva, Archives Tronchin à Bessinge, f. Bèze, vol. 5, fol. 11-12.

¹³¹"Pour exemple de cela, si ma mémoire ne me trompe, vous posez que nous disons tous d'un commun accord que nous sommes sauvez par un seul Jésus Christ crucifié ... mais si on vient à l'interprétation de cest axiome comme il y faudroit nécessairement venir si on ne se veut tromper l'un l'autre, je ne puis aucunement voir de ma part qu'il y ait plus d'accord entre nos adversaires et nous, qu'il y a entre un très mensonger mensonge et la très vraie et unique vérité.

Autant en est-il des autres articles de nostre foy, et de ce qui concerne tout la corruption de l'homme que nostre régénération et des fruicts qui s'en ensuivent, comme aussi de la nature et usage

submit himself and his work to the judgment of his ministerial colleagues in France.

During the next several months, de Serres' case was examined by three different ecclesiastical assemblies.¹³² At a special meeting of the colloquy at St. Paul-Trois-Châteaux in December 1594, de Serres continued to insist that the controversial memorandum had escaped from his hands 'as an abortion' and had been revised by his enemies. He submitted a second 'corrected' document that distinguished more clearly between the doctrines held in the Reformed churches and those affirmed by the Roman church. Finally, in April 1595, the provincial synod of Bas Languedoc meeting at Anduze fully exonerated de Serres; in a report to the Genevan ministers, the synod stated that it was "completely satisfied by the declaration of our very dear brother."¹³³ A year later, the National Synod of Saumur demonstrated the extent of its confidence in de Serres by assigning him the task of refuting the calumnies of

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des Sacremens, et mesmes de toute l'essence du gouvernement ecclésiastique, comme je pense avoir spécifié de point en point en ma Confession de foy, et en mes sermons sur le Cantique des Cantiques..." Beza to Jean de Serres, 31 October/10 November 1594, Geneva, Archives Tronchin à Bessinge, f. Bèze, vol. 5, fol. 11-12.

¹³²For a detailed account of the ecclesiastical process against de Serres, see Dardier, *Jean de Serres*, 49-64 and Patterson, "The politics of religious pacification," 233-235.

¹³³"La Compagnie ayant oui le Sieur de Serres nostre trèscher frère a esté entièrement satisfaite de sa déclaration." In "Extrait des actes du Synode provincial des Églises de Bas Languedoc, assemblées en Anduze le douziesme d'Avril mil cinq cents nonante cinq," Geneva, Archives Tronchin à Bessinge, f. Bèze, vol. 5, fol. 16-19. These documents accompanied a letter that the synod sent to Beza on 17 April 1595, *ibid.*, fol. 15 & 20. Following his rehabilitation by the synod of Anduze, de Serres wrote Beza: "... les Synodes de ce Languedoc et de Dauphiné ont cognu et recognu ma patience et le tort qu'on fait à mes labeurs, qui sont soumis à vostre jugement. Si qu'en paix et contentement de mes frères ceste affaire demeure terminée à mon contentement." De Serres signed his letter: "Vostre plus humble, fidèle et obeissant disciple, fils et serviteur." 26 April [1595], Geneva, Archives Tronchin à Bessinge, f. Bèze, vol. 5, fol. 31.

Palma Cayet.¹³⁴

Despite the decision of Anduze, Beza remained suspicious of Jean de Serres. Reports from Paul Chevalier at the royal court only fueled the reformer's concerns: the minister from Orange was spending entirely too much time at court and was associating with dangerous people. De Serres insisted that his presence at court was necessary to recover the money that Leaguers had stolen from him; nonetheless, Beza was concerned lest the minister's fear of poverty and desire for worldly honor distort his good judgment.¹³⁵ Jean Chalas, a leader in the church of Nîmes, voiced similar concerns directly to de Serres: "I must say to you frankly that we do not view positively your long stay in Paris among so many people who are friends with sworn enemies of our ministers and religion."¹³⁶ Nonetheless, de Serres' persistence at the royal court finally paid off: the king reimbursed the minister part of the money stolen from him and, at the end of 1596, appointed him 'royal historian,' a position that

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¹³⁴Aymon, I, 209.

¹³⁵To Paul Chevalier, Beza wrote: "Quant à l'avertissement particulier que en avez donné, c'est chose trop vraie que celui dont il est question a de long temps désiré de ne mourir pauvre, qui est une mauvaise tache en sa vocation, et qui pis est, depuis son retour de la Cour, il a esté trop justement soupçonné d'estre un de ceux qui se vantent d'accorder le feu et l'eau, quoi qu'il s'en soit purgé en plain Synode. Je sçay aussi qu'estant à Lion, il s'est fort approché des plus grands, et non pas des meilleurs. Mais quoi qu'il en soit, je ne puis croire que Dieu l'abandonne jusques à faire une telle faute, dont entre autres les Jésuites feroient bien leur triomphe, comme de celui qui les a plus rudement assaillis que nul autre de nostre langue." 1/11 December 1595, Geneva, Archives Tronchin à Bessinge, f. Bèze, vol. 5, fol. 289.

¹³⁶"... quoique je vous doive franchement dire qu'on ne parle pas bien de vostre si long séjour à Paris parmi tant de privautés avec ceux qui sont ennemis jurez des Ministres et de la Religion." Jean Chalas to Jean de Serres, 1 April 1596, Geneva, Archives Tronchin à Bessinge, f. Bèze, vol. 5, fol. 24. For information about Jean Chalas, see *FP* III, 313-314.

commanded an annual salary of 1,200 écus.¹³⁷ These financial arrangements, along with de Serres' neglect of his ministerial duties, heightened Beza's fears that his French colleague had betrayed the Reformed cause in return for courtly favors.

During the first months of 1597 de Serres published two works that reinforced the suspicions of many Protestants in France. At the request of Henri IV, de Serres wrote a small tract entitled *Advis pour la paix de l'Église & du royaume*, a work that bore striking resemblance to the much-maligned memorandum three years before.¹³⁸ De Serres argued that the solution to France's religious crisis was not to be found in violence, but in rational persuasion. Reason demonstrated that Christianity was the only true religion, and that Protestants and Catholics agreed on the fundamental tenets of the Christian faith as well as on the manner in which such truths were to be identified, namely through antiquity, catholicity and succession.¹³⁹ Given these shared beliefs, the religious parties had no reason to argue over their minor differences, much less to tear each other apart as capital enemies. By agreeing upon a common

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¹³⁷Dardier, *Jean de Serres*, 71.

¹³⁸This rare tract was published by the king's printers Iamet Mettayer & Pierre l'Huillier in Paris. It is found in the BPU of Geneva, Archives Tronchin, vol. 143, no. 10. Jean Hotman reprinted this work ten years later in his *Opuscules Francoises des Hotmans* (Paris: Matthieu Guillemet, 1616), 191-193^v. Under examination of the colloquy of Nîmes in November 1597, de Serres claimed that he published the *Advis pour la paix* "par le commandement du Roy auquel les larmes sortent des yeux lorsqu'on parle de la paix de l'église..." Cited in Dardier, *Jean de Serres*, 77.

¹³⁹"Mon intention donc est de faire voir à l'oeil par preuves infallibles & de commune créance, Que comme nous sommes tous Chrestiens, & qu'il n'y a aucune vraye religion que la Chrestienne; aussi que nous tous ensemble sommes d'accord fondamentalement de ceste vérité, comme de la seule & seure science de salut. & mesme; pour ne laisser aucune doute; Que cest vérité salutaire estre-cognue & advoüée de tous par ses vrayes marques, à sçavoir, *Qu'elle est ancienne & Catholique*, comme aussi elle est creuë & confessée par un commun consentement de tous Chrestiens, en tous temps, en tous lieux, par succession perpetuelle, de père en fils iusques aujourd'huy." De Serres, *Advis pour la paix*, 4-5.

Christian creed, the Huguenots and Catholics could put an end to years of bloodshed and reestablish concord in the Church as well as peace in the kingdom. De Serres admitted in his *Advis pour la paix* that he was providing only a 'first sketch' or 'foundation stone' for religious reconciliation.¹⁴⁰ Thus, later in the year, he published a longer treatise entitled *Apparatus ad fidem Catholicam* in which he defended his views in greater detail, discussing in ten sections the common, indubitable truths shared by Christians in every age and country.¹⁴¹ In addition, he appealed to the king to convene a religious conference of Protestants and Catholics, offering the theological propositions in his treatise as a kind of agenda for such a meeting. Once again, he argued, religious concord was to be found in recognizing the shared beliefs and practices of the separate confessions, not in debating their differences.

De Serres' treatises created yet another uproar among the Reformed in France and Geneva. Not only did he reaffirm a program for reconciliation that had been condemned by the colloquy of St. Paul-Trois-Châteaux, but he had defied the synodical injunction of Montauban by publishing his writings without prior authorization. So too, he had given ammunition to Catholic apologists like Palma Cayet who subsequently condemned more conservative Protestants as intransigent and

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¹⁴⁰De Serres described his tract as the "premier appareil de ce dessein & pierre fondamentale du bastiment." Elsewhere, he writes: "Voici donc un fort léger crayon de ce tant souhaitable remède. La preuve entière duquel sera mise devant les yeux des Doctes en ce grand & illustre théâtre (le Rendez-vous des plus beaux esprits de l'Univers) pour estre par eux examiné & iugé par les voyes ordinaires & légitimes; quand il plaira à sa Majesté en donner le commandement." *Advis pour la paix*, 7-8.

¹⁴¹This work is described by Patterson, "The politics of religious pacification," 237-239.

opponents to peace.¹⁴² By the summer of 1597, Beza was warning friends in France that de Serres was on the verge of converting to the Catholic religion.¹⁴³ In addition, he implored the consistory of the church of Nîmes to initiate action against the minister from Orange.¹⁴⁴ Called before the colloquy of Nîmes in November, de Serres argued that his detractors were blind fools who condemned what they did not understand; the intention of his two treatises had "not been to establish the papacy, but to reverse it."¹⁴⁵ Through his irenicism, he hoped to woo Roman Catholics to the Reformed religion. Nonetheless, the minister remained adamant that the Catholic Church--though afflicted with the 'disease' of the papacy--was a member of the true

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¹⁴²Thus, in 1597 Cayet published *Les moyens de la réunion en l'Église Catholique, par l'avis des plus doctes ministres de la religion prétendüe réformée* (Paris: Philippe du Pré, 1597) in which he included a long letter from an unnamed Huguenot (perhaps Jean Hotman?) to Beza defending de Serres' proposals for reconciliation. This anonymous author described the *Advis pour la paix* as "cet oeuvre tant saint & tant nécessaire" and agreed with its central argument: "nous nous disions tous membres de l'Église Chrestienne & Catholique, avec ceux qui ont mesme fondement de la religion. Calvin en le mesme escrit, de la nécessité de réformer l'Église, ne dy pas que les Papistes nous ayons deux Religions différentes; mais bien que la Religion estoit depravée, & le service de Dieu perverté" (48, 49-50). The unnamed author of this letter accused the Genevans of trying to impose their idea of reformation on the French churches: "Mais c'est bien signé que la réformation de Genève n'est pas un modèle pour toutes les Églises" (38).

¹⁴³Thus de Serres wrote to Beza: "Si Dieu m'a donné grâce envers le Roy pour me rendre justice, et m'a donné accès envers plusieurs pour porter la vérité librement, ne leur estant odieux, ce n'est pas pour quitter la défense d'icelle vérité.... La joye de ceste siene faveur esteind l'ennuy qui m'esteindroit, voyant de vous mesme ce qu'avez escrit à certaines Églises de ceste province, sous certain advis de gens ou malicieux ou fols, que j'estoye sur ce poinct de me révolter." Jean de Serres to Beza, 17 August 1597, Paris, BN, f. Du Puy, vol. 104, fol. 135.

¹⁴⁴In the minutes of the colloquy of Nîmes (November 1597), we learn that "... plusieurs avoient reçu scandale dud. livre et mesmes que Monsieur de Bèze en avoit escrit au sieur de Chalas, laquelle letre ayant esté leue au consistoire de ceste Église de Nîmes a esté raportée en sommaire par le député d'iceluy." Cited in Dardier, *Jean de Serres*, 71-72. Beza's letter to Jean Chalas is no longer extant.

¹⁴⁵"Item a dict led. sieur de Serres que ceux qui reprenoient son opinion estoient folz, insensez et aveugles, reprenant et condamnant ce qu'ilz ne cognoissent pas. Son intention n'estant d'établir la papauté, mais bien de la renverser." Cited in Dardier, *Jean de Serres*, 73.

Church.¹⁴⁶ In the end, the colloquy referred de Serres' case to the National Synod, scheduled to be held at Montpellier the following summer.

Beza made one more attempt to dissuade de Serres from his errors. In February 1598, he wrote his colleague a long letter in which he clearly distinguished the relative importance of doctrinal purity and public order. Although he was willing to make significant political compromises for the sake of peace—as witnessed in his position paper to the National Synod of Montauban—nonetheless he refused to make any theological concessions to his Catholic opponents. Beza began by scolding de Serres for publishing his *Advis pour la paix* and *Apparatus* without the approval of the Genevan clergy, in violation of the synodical decree. Both works, he believed, were fundamentally flawed. De Serres' assertion in the *Advis* that the two confessions were in agreement on the central truths of the faith was sheer nonsense. Did not the pope continue to call the French Protestants 'heretics,' and persecute them with fire and blood? The pure doctrines of the Reformed churches had nothing in common with the false teachings of the Roman harlot.¹⁴⁷ In claiming otherwise, de Serres was in

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¹⁴⁶"Quant à l'Église [de Serres] a dict qu'ele a tousiours esté conservée depuis le commencement du monde une, et qu'il n'y en peult avoir deux. Que la papauté estant survenue à ceste Église comme la peste au corps humain, l'a rendue malade, mais non pas morte. Que ce n'est pas la papauté qui est l'Église, mais l'Église est en la papauté, parmi les confusions de laquelle Dieu a gardé son Église. Que ceste maladie a heu son commencement l'an six cens trente, lorsque le pape de Rome s'estant déclaré Évesque universel, a basti la nouvelle doctrine qui est paille, foin et chaume, qu'ele a depuis heu sa force et a présentement son déclin. Qu'il y a grande différence entre ceux qui sont en la papauté, qui n'ont quité le vray fondement qui est Christ, ses offices et bénéfices, et les Turcs qui n'ont nul fondement." Cited in Dardier, *Jean de Serres*, 75-76.

¹⁴⁷"Mais quand vous osez ainsi prononcer que la doctrine qu'on sçait avoir esté dressée peu à peu en l'Escole de ceste paillarde assise sur les sept montaignes, & celle de nos Églises, fondée sur le vray Jésus Christ, est une mesme & seule vérité en substance, de sort qu'en vain & sans cause ces deux parties ont tant debattu & debattent encores entre elles, qui vous en croira? Ce ne sera pas le

danger of incurring the condemnation of Isaiah 5.20: "Woe to those who call evil good and good evil, who make darkness light and light darkness, who make bitter sweet and sweet bitter."¹⁴⁸ Similarly, de Serres' proposal of the three-fold rule of antiquity, catholicity and succession to interpret difficult points of doctrine was particularly dangerous. Once adopted, such a hermeneutic would erode scriptural authority, causing more damage to Protestantism than had been inflicted by all the cruel and cunning plots of their enemies.¹⁴⁹ In sum, Beza suspected that de Serres had been duped by the royal court, fooled into betraying his co-religionists in return for financial rewards.¹⁵⁰ By vaunting himself in the role of 'intermediary'—a position to which he had not been called—he had endangered the Reformed churches and fueled rumors of his Catholic conversion.¹⁵¹ As a minister of the Gospel, he should

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Pape, ni les siens, qui nous appellent hérétiques, & persécutent nos Églises à feu & à sang." [Beza] to Jean de Serres, 5/15 February 1598, Geneva, Archives Tronchin à Bessinge, vol. 5, fol. 27^v.

¹⁴⁸"Quand di-je vous avez osé affermer une chose du tout trèsfausse, ne vous est-il point souvenu de ce passage tant exprès de Esaye au ch. 5.20, 'Malheur sur ceux qui appellent le mal bien & le bien mal; qui font les ténèbres lumière, & la lumière ténèbres; qui font l'amer doux & le doux amer?'" Beza to Jean de Serres, 5/15 February 1598, Geneva, Archives Tronchin à Bessinge, vol. 5, fols. 27^v.

¹⁴⁹De Serres was in danger of becoming "... un Instrument trèspropre à ruiner par le dedans sans ce beau prétexte d'Antiquité, de Succession, & des bons Pères, tout ce que ni la cautelle, ni la cruauté n'a peu faire iusques icy par dehors..." [Beza] to Jean de Serres, 5/15 February 1598, Geneva, Archives Tronchin à Bessinge, vol. 5, fol. 28^v.

¹⁵⁰"Et que peut-on présupposer par ce que vous avez rapporté de la Cour, que vous appelez en votre lettre trois provisions, deux en contant & une en papier, sinon que cela soit procédé, ou de quelques vostres grands mérites envers tout l'Estat, ce qui a esté ignoré iusques icy, ou bien de quel que promesse procédée de vous, ou qu'auront tirée de vous ceux qui pensent l'estat & commun repos de la France ne pouvoir estre restably, ni subsister que par notre entière ruine?" Beza to Jean de Serres, 5/15 February 1598, Geneva, Archives Tronchin à Bessinge, vol. 5, fol. 29.

¹⁵¹"Toutes ces choses mises ensemble, c'est à vous de considérer de près, non pas simplement le désir que vous aurez peu avoir en vous mesmes de remédier à tels differents, mais par quel chemin vous estes entré, & encores depuis passé si avant en tel affaire; & sur tout qu'elle occasion vous

have been content with pastoring his flock, not currying for favors at court or consuming his energies writing royal histories.¹⁵²

In the months leading up to the National Synod of Montpellier (May 1598), the Genevan Company of Pastors took steps to ensure that de Serre's project of reconciliation would be censured. In April, the ministers wrote to the churches of Bern, Zurich, Schaffhausen, Heidelberg, The Hague and Amsterdam, urging them to send representatives to the Synod, or at least to write letters condemning efforts to reconcile 'Christianity' and 'Papism.'¹⁵³ Several weeks later, the Company wrote Montpellier directly in order to refute a rumor sown by de Serres that all the Genevan ministers--with the exception of Beza--approved of his writings and supported his ongoing attempts at confessional reunion.¹⁵⁴ In the end, Geneva's campaign to silence

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donnez aux Églises de vous advouer pour Entremetteur en ce fait, sans y estre appelé que de vous mesmes, & ce qui trop vray semblablement en adviendrait (voire suis-je content de croire encores contre votre intention mesmes) si Dieu permettoit que les Églises tombassent en tel Inconveniens, dont i'espère que plustost le Seigneur Dieu les préservera." Beza to Jean de Serres, 5/15 February 1598, Geneva, Archives Tronchin à Bessinge, vol. 5, fol. 30.

¹⁵²"Et quant à votre estat d'Historiographe à douze cents escus de gage par an, autant ou plus que n'en reçoivent tous les frères de votre province en leur St. Ministère, pour faire un corps de toute l'Histoire François--jusques au temps présent (charge requerant une infinie diligence & peine assidue pour revoir tant de Chroniques & Registres) iugera-on aisément cela estre compatible avec le S. Ministère?" Beza to Jean de Serres, 5/15 February 1598, Geneva, Archives Tronchin à Bessinge, vol. 5, fol. 29v.

¹⁵³A summary of these letters is found in *RCP* VII, 292. The minutes of the National Synod of Montpellier indicate that Basle, Bern and Heidelberg acceded to Geneva's request and petitioned the synod to condemn de Serres' writings.

¹⁵⁴"Au surplus nous vous prions d'entendre et prendre de bonne part l'occasion qui nous a spécialement esmeus de vous escrire la présente. C'est qu'ayans esté bien et deuement advertis que nostre frère, Monsieur de Serres, a donné à entendre, voire avec assurance que, quant à son entreprise d'appointer les deux religions, sur quoy il a publié son *Apparatus* et autres escrits, il n'y a, en nostre Compagnie de par deçà, que nostre très cher frère, Monsieur de Besze, qui ait trouvé cela mauvais, au lieu que tout le reste de nostre Compagnie, tant ministres que professeurs, l'en ont très grandement loué jusques à estre exhorté par lettres particulières de quelques uns d'entre nous de continuer en son

de Serres proved unnecessary. On May 19, the minister of Orange died unexpectedly after a brief illness. Convened a week later, the synod of Montpellier reviewed and condemned his *Apparatus* and *Advis pour la paix*.¹⁵⁵ Likewise, the deputies censured all attempts to "unite and mix the two Religions," ordering the ministers to warn their flocks that there could be no association "between the temple of God and temples of idols."¹⁵⁶ The ministers of Geneva greeted the report of the synod's decision with relief. For Beza, de Serre's 'opportune' death was an act of divine kindness. In

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dessein, nous sommes esbahis de tel rapport, ne voulans faillir de vous bien et au vray advertir qu'au contraire ledit sieur de Besze et nous n'avons eu et n'avons, grâces à Dieu, qu'un sens et une mesme bouche en tout ce faict, comme vous aurez peu cognoistre amplement par nos lettres communes dressées, escrites et envoyées d'un commun et mesme accord, ce très bien fondé sur justes et bonnes causes, nous esmerveillons que ce personnage, s'entremettant si avant et si confidemment d'accorder tant de centaines d'Églises et de milliers de personnes, ose semer tels propos qui pourroyent estre occasion de mettre quelque desordre ou pour le moins quelque mauvais soupçon entre nous de par deça, qui sommes grâces à Dieu entièrement et sincèrement unis et conjoints tant en la vraye doctrine qu'au saint ministère, auquel il a pleu à nostre bon Dieu et Père nous employer en ceste Église." Company of Pastors to the Synod of Montpellier, 8/18 May 1598, published in *RCP* VII, 297-298.

¹⁵⁵"Sur la Plainte des Églises de Genève, Berne, Basle, du Palatinat & autres, touchant plusieurs Escrits mis en lumière, sous prétexte de la Réunion des Chrétiens en un même Doctrine, au préjudice de la Vérité de Dieu, & entr'autres d'un Ouvrage intitulé, *Apparatus ad Fidem Catholicam*, & d'un autre avec cette Inscription, *Avis pour la Paix de l'Église & du Roiaume de France*; le Synode après avoir lû & examiné lesdits Écrits, & entendu l'Avis du Colloque de Nîmes ... les a condamnés, comme contenant plusieurs Propositions erronées, à savoir que la vérité de la Doctrine a toujours demeuré en son entier entre tous ceux qui se disent Chrétiens, que ceux de l'Église Romaine ont les mêmes Articles de Foi, les mêmes Commandemens de Dieu, les mêmes Formulaires de Prières, le Batême & les mêmes moïens que nous pour parvenir au salut, & que par conséquent ils ont la vraie Église; que la Dispute n'est que de mots, & non pas de choses, & que les Anciens Conciles & les Écrits des Pères doivent être les Juges de nos différens, & que de plus ces mêmes Auteurs citent les Canons de Gratian sous le nom de l'Église Catholique, nous imputant les Schismes & les Guerres survenues en ce Roiaume, & plusieurs autres choses de cette nature..." Aymon I, 222.

¹⁵⁶"Quoi que les Fidèles doivent désirer de tout leur coeur, pour la gloire de Dieu & pour le repos de l'État, la Réunion de tous les subjects de ce Roiaume en une même Religion; toutesfois d'autant qu'à raison de nos péchés, cela est plutôt à désirer, qu'à espérer, & que sous ce prétexte plusieurs malintentionnés font semblant d'unir & mêler les deux Religions, les Pasteurs avertiront soigneusement leurs troupeaux de ne leur prêter aucunement l'oreille, n'y pouvant avoir aucune Communion entre le Temple de Dieu & celui des Idoles.... C'est pourquoi tous ceux qui entreprendront une pareille Réconciliation, soit par leur Discours, ou par leurs Écrits, seront censurés d'une manière très sévère." Aymon I, 219.

seeking to harmonize light and darkness, the minister from Orange had caused a huge uproar in the churches and confused many people.¹⁵⁷

Jean de Serres' program for religious reconciliation must be viewed in light of the larger political context of France at the end of the sixteenth century. The minister's passionate defense of a 'basic' Christian creed--shorn of doctrines both controversial and 'nonessential'--dove-tailed closely with Henri IV's desire to pacify his kingdom and unite his subjects in a single, Gallican church. It is not surprising, then, that during the mid-1590s the king showed a special interest in de Serres and his work. As we have seen, Henri solicited de Serres' irenic treatises, and authorized his printers to publish them. He rewarded the minister's long stay at court with monetary support and a commission as 'royal historian.' Likewise, Henri appointed de Serres to deliver his official greeting to the delegates at the National Synod of Saumur in 1596.¹⁵⁸ The evidence seems conclusive that the king looked to de Serres as a kind of religious mediator, even if the Reformed did not. From this perspective, then, Jean de Serres' death and posthumous censure marked a decisive setback, not simply to

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¹⁵⁷Relieved, Beza reported the death of de Serres in a letter to the evangelical churches of Switzerland: "Ad hoc summum Optimi Maximi Dei et Servatoris nostri beneficium accessit et illud quod peropportune et paucis ante inchoatam synodum diebus, sublatus est e vivis Serranus, ab ipsa quidem pene pueritia in hac Schola ac etiam Lausannensi educatus et multis egregiis donis instructus, sed maximas profecto turbas in Ecclesia sub conciliandae lucis cum tenebris, oblata imperitis hominibus specie, daturus, idque tanta cum fiducia ut et ex nostris nonnullos in aliquam talis concordiae spem erigeret et adversarii Gallicas iam Ecclesias, si non omnes, saltem plerasque ad se transituras confiderent." Beza, in the name of the Company of Pastors, to the Church of Bern, 1/10 July 1598, published in *RCP* VII, 311.

¹⁵⁸"Les Lettres du Roi nôtre Sire, écrites à cette Assemblée, présentées par M^r de Serres, du 14 de Mai dernier, ont été lûës, portant assurance de la bonne affection de Sa Majesté à nous maintenir son Édît de l'an 1557 [sic], vû aussi les Lettres de Créance dudit Sieur de Serres..." Aymon I, 201.

one man's dream for religious unity, but to Henri's desire to create a united Gallican Church. While modern studies of de Serres—impressed by the minister's irenic spirit—have overlooked this important political dimension to his thought, Beza and many of his colleagues were acutely aware of the practical dangers. Whether intentionally or not, de Serres' efforts to heal the confessional wounds in France played right into the hands of the Protestants' enemies at court.

The Last Protestant Bourbon

By the late-1590s, old age was exacting its toll on Theodore Beza. In 1594, he was still preaching each Sunday and delivering three theological lectures every other week at the Academy.¹⁵⁹ Over the next three years, however, growing weakness, recurring fainting spells and heart palpitations forced him to relinquish most of his public duties.¹⁶⁰ At the beginning of January 1599, Beza briefly resumed his teaching responsibilities at the Academy, only to retire definitively several weeks

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¹⁵⁹"Ad me vero privatim quod attinet, excepto manus tremore, qui me vix patitur vel lineolam exarare, sic adhuc valeo, singulari Dei beneficio, ut et diebus dominicis concionari, et alternis hebdomadibus possim sine molestia tres theologicas habere praelectiones, auditoris, prout ferunt haec tempora, non prorsus infrequente." Beza to Caspar Peucer, 26 August/5 September 1594, Paris, Bibl. Ste. Geneviève, ms. 1455, fol. 595v-597.

¹⁶⁰Thus, Beza reported: "Accidit enim mihi ipso die Pentecostes veteris nostri calendarii, suggestum mox consensuro et Coenam Domini celebraturo, repentina vertigo, cum quodam totius corporis horrore, qui me domum reverti et lectum petere coegit." Beza to Constantine Fabricius, 18/28 June 1595, Paris, Bibl. Ste. Geneviève, ms. 1455, fol. 121r-v; "Nudiustertius, qui dies Dominicus fuit et huius mensis sextus, quum satis, ut mihi quidem videbar, valens suggestum conscendissem, concionem hora octava habiturus, vix eram preces ingressus, quibus psalmodia excipitur, quum vertigo atque adeo σκοτομῖα me corripuit cum magno totius corporis, ac praesertim pedum ac manuum tremore, ut alii locum cedere me statim oportuerit. Inde domum et in lectum reductum excepit somnus ad duas plus minus horas." Beza to Grynaeus, 8/18 June 1596, Basle, Univ. Bibl., Kirchen Archiv, C. I. 2, Bd. II, fol. 241.

later.¹⁶¹ Increasingly, Beza spent his time quietly at home, working on his *Annotationes*, welcoming guests and writing letters. Cherished memories of friends long dead--Calvin, Bullinger, Martyr, Hotman, Chandieu--comforted him and unleashed intense longings for heaven: "When I look at the present condition of this insane world, hardly anything refreshes me more than the memory of the words and deeds of those great men, for whom the world was unworthy. I am confident that I will soon follow them."¹⁶²

Though looking forward to heaven, the old reformer remained intensely interested in the condition of the Reformed churches in France. During the final years of the century a new generation of Catholic controversialists emerged who were more committed to Protestant evangelization and far more aggressive and systematic in refuting the writings of the Reformed. Apologists like Du Perron, Cayer, and the Jesuit Pierre Coton (1564-1626) had ties with the court and received royal encouragement and financial support. Others, such as François de Sales (1567-1622)

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¹⁶¹The registers of the Company of Pastors reported on 5/15 January 1599: "Le jour d'hier, 4^e de ce mois, M. de Bèze recommença d'enseigner en l'Eschole le sy[n]opsis sur l'esptre aux Romains." *RCP* VII, 134. Beza returned to the lecture hall in order to mediate a theological controversy between Antoine de La Faye and Charles Perrot. See Borgeaud, *Histoire de l'Université de Genève* I, 258-260.

¹⁶²"Intuens enim in hunc praesentem non jam delirantis sed penitus furentis mundi statum vix ulla re magis recreor, quam quum de maximorum illorum virorum, quibus indignus erat mundus, et quos brevi nos subsequuturos confido, tum dictis tum factis cogito." Beza to Caspar, 28 October 1596, published in Bretschneider, *Johannis Calvini, Theod. Bezae, Henrici IV regis ... litterae*, 141-146. Note also Beza's words to Peucer several years earlier: "Et quando vero nos hinc erepti, Deum illum nostrum videbimus, sicuti est, una cum beatissimis illis Angelis et summorum quoque virorum spiritibus, quos vivos coluimus. et quorum nunc mortuorum memoria, scriptis et exemplis erudimus, tantisper dum et ipsi in portum appellamus?" 24 August/3 September 1593, Paris, Bibl. Ste. Geneviève, ms. 1455, fol. 593-594^v.

and the Capuchin Cherubin de Maurienne (1566-1610) pursued missionary activities in Savoy. All of these churchmen aggressively promoted theological dispute as a means to convert the Protestants.¹⁶³ Moreover, these Catholic apologists utilized new methods of argumentation. Instead of merely debating the meaning of particular passages of Scripture, they shifted the focus of discussion to material concerns--such as the reliability of a citation or translation¹⁶⁴--and to questions regarding the sufficiency of Scripture¹⁶⁵, the value of church tradition and the criterion of faith. Utilizing radical skepticism--the so-called pyrrhonical apologetic--Catholic authors such as Du Perron, de Sales, and François Veron attempted to undercut the epistemological certainty of the Protestant doctrine of *sola scriptura*, thereby driving their opponents back to the 'infallible Catholic Church.'¹⁶⁶ In the face of this Catholic

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¹⁶³Thus, for example, in a war of books between Pierre Coton and the Reformed minister André Caille, Coton urged his opponent to meet him in a verbal debate, asserting that they could resolve in one hour what would take twelve in writing. Caille responded: " Craignez-vous d'exposer vostre doctrine à la veüe & à l'examen de chacun? .... je suis content de la mettre par escrit, & de la signer de mon sang, si besoin est." In Caille, *Conférence par escrit, entre Pierre Cotton, Jésuite, & André Caille, ministre du saint Évangile* (n.p., 1599), 53-54.

¹⁶⁴Thus, Pierre Coton argued that he could demonstrate more than fifty errors in the French translation of the Bible published by the Genevan Company of Pastors in 1588. See André Caille response in *Conférence par escrit, entre Pierre Cotton, Jésuite, & André Caille, ministre du saint Évangile* (n.p., 1599), 61. Similarly, Du Perron announced that he had identified over 500 errors in Duplessis-Mornay's *Traicté de l'Eucharist* (1598), and defended his assertion at the famous Conference of Fontainebleau in May 1600.

¹⁶⁵See, for example, Du Perron's treatise *De l'insuffisance de l'Escriture sainte, & de la nécessité & autorité des traditions non écrites* (1598), included in Daniel Tilenus' refutation *Response à un traicté du Sieur du Perron, Évêque d'Evreux, touchant l'insuffisance & imperfection de l'Escriture sainte, & la nécessité & auctorité des traditions non écrites* (La Rochelle: Hiesrome Haultin, 1598).

¹⁶⁶The use of Pyrrhonical skepticism by Catholic authors in France is described masterfully by Richard Popkin, *The History of Scepticism from Erasmus to Descartes* (Assen: Van Gorcum & Comp., 1960), 44-87. An example of this approach is found in François de Sales' *Controverses* (1595): "Si donques l'Église peut errer, O Calvin, O Luther, a qui auray je recours en mes difficultés? à l'Escriture, disent ilz: mays que feray je, pauvr'homme? car c'est sur l'Escriture mesme où j'ay

'offensive,' Protestants in French-speaking Europe were forced to adopt a more defensive posture, recognizing the limitations--and dangers--of theological debate.¹⁶⁷ Increasingly, it seemed that the Protestants had more to lose than to win in such confessional confrontations.

The septuagenarian reformer in Geneva had little strength to enter into most of these disputes and controversies. Instead, he devoted himself to reminding colleagues of the importance of obeying synodical restrictions concerning public debates, warning them to beware of the tricks of Catholic opponents. When the Reformed

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difficulté; je ne suys pas en doute s'il faut adjouster foy à l'Escriture mesme ou non, car qui ne sçait que c'est la parole de vérité? ce qui me tient en peyne c'est l'intelligence de cest 'Escriture" (cited in *ibid.*, 68).

¹⁶⁷Evidence of this growing defensiveness is witnessed in the decree of the National Synod of Gergau (1602) which forbade the Reformed from initiating theological debates with the Catholics, and placed tighter restrictions on public disputes: "Les disputes de la Religion avec les Aversaires seront réglée en telle sorte que les nôtres ne seront point Agresseurs; & s'ils sont engagés en disputes verbales, ils ne parleront que suivant la Règle de l'Écriture Ste. & n'emploieront point les Écrits des Anciens Docteurs pour le jugement & la décision de la Doctrine. Ils n'entreront jamais en Dispute réglée que par des Écrits respectifs donnés & signés de part & d'autre. Et pour ce qui est des Disputes Publiques ils n'y entreront que par l'Avis de leur Consistoire, & celui de quelque nombre de Pasteurs, qui pour ce effet, point aussi en aucune Dispute, ou Conférence Générale, sans l'Avis de toutes les Églises assemblées au Synode National, sous peine aux Ministres, qui y entreront autrement, d'être déclarés Apostat & traités comme violateurs des Loix fondamentales de nos Églises." Aymon, I, 237-238. The Reformed minister Daniel Chamier also indicates that the Reformed were well-aware of the tactical shift in the apologetical method of their Catholic opponents: "[Morlas] avoit accoustumé de dire, que cependant que nous avions tenu roide, pour ne disputer, & n'estre iugés que par l'Écriture, nos affaires s'estoyent assés bien portés, mais depuis que nous avions aussi fait aux Pères l'honneur de les admettre, plus nous allions & plus nous estions desavantagés.... Ces grands Héros, que Dieu a fait lever des le commencement de ceste bien-heureuse restauration de l'Évangile, ont travaillé si avantageusement par l'Escriture, qu'ils ont causé tout ce qui se void aujourd'huy de désespoir en nos adversaires, quand on les attaque par ce coste. Les Eckius, Coklaeus, Roffensis, de Saintes, & semblables, qui estoyent de mesme temps, se portoyent avec quelque apparence de plus de courage, & ne bafouoyent pas l'Escriture comme on a fait depuis. Pourquoi? C'est qu'en ces commencemens, ils n'avoient pas encore senti les forces de la vérité. Mais en leur ignominie, leurs successeurs s'en sont prins garde; & pensans se rendre plus sages, ne parlent aujourd'huy, que de nous barrer les avenues de l'Escriture..." Chamier, *La confusion des disputes Papistes* (Genève: François Le Preux, 1600), 63-65.

minister Théophile Cassegrain initiated a written dispute with Du Perron without the approval of the provincial synod, Beza and the Company of Pastors sharply reproved him, fearful that through his brashness Satan would stir up "a thousand confusions."¹⁶⁸ But Beza was not altogether removed from these confessional struggles in his native France. In the final decade of his life, Beza corresponded regularly with the Protestant sister of the king, Catherine of Bourbon, soliciting her support for Geneva and encouraging her spiritual steadfastness. Likewise, the reformer summoned strength to write two treatises refuting reports that he had converted to Catholicism and countering Jesuit and Capuchin missionary efforts in nearby Savoy.

Beza's relationship with Catherine of Bourbon reflected the reformer's honored place in the French church. Having met Catherine at Nérac in 1560 when she was an infant, Beza had little or no contact with the princess during the next thirty years.¹⁶⁹ After the abjuration of her brother at Saint Denis, Catherine did pen a brief note to the Genevan reformer to assure him of her affection and religious constancy as well

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¹⁶⁸ "Aussi n'ignorez vous pas qu'ès articles de la Discipline il y a quelque ordre estably en tels faicts, esquels il est très grand besoin de tenir quelque ordre pour éviter les embusches de Sathan, espiant telles occasions merueilleusement propres à faire ouverture à mille confusions, si telles conférences s'entreprenent sans commun advis et bonne considération des temps, des lieux et des personnes, quelque bonne intention que peuvent avoir ceux qui sont si prompts à telle procédure." Beza, in the name of the Company of Pastors, to Théophile Cassegrain, 18/28 April 1598, *RCP* VII, 295-296. For information about Cassegrain, see *FP* III, 241-242. Cassegrain's treatise was entitled *Épistre de Théophile Cassegrain, ministre du saint Évangile, adressée à Monsieur d'Evreux avec trois theses en théologie* (n.p., 1597). It was Palma Cayet, not Du Perron, who answered Cassegrain's theses: *L'épistre d'un ministre, de la Religion Prétendue Réformée: desirant se faire Catholique. Addressée à Monseigneur l'évesque d'Evreux* (Paris: Denis Binet, 1598). Following the censure of the National Synod of Montpellier in 1598 (see Aymon, I, 229), Beza wrote Cassegrain several times to comfort him and urge him not to abandon the ministry.

¹⁶⁹ For an account of Catherine's life and the Reformed church in her household, see Pannier, *L'Église Réformée de Paris sous Henri IV*, 40-82, as well as *FP* II, 437-440.

as to request his prayers.¹⁷⁰ In the face of intense Catholic pressure, Catherine not only refused to convert but moved her household to the Louvre and, in April 1594, established a Reformed church in the heart of Paris. Following the 'apostasy' of her minister Palma Cayet in the fall of 1595, the princess wrote Beza once again, assuring him of her intentions to persevere in the Reformed religion and acknowledging him as "one of the oldest friends and servants of our family." In addition, she sent the reformer several religious poems that she had written, asking him to edit them and "freely pick up your pen and demonstrate your friendship to me..."¹⁷¹

Beza readily complied with Catherine's request. In the next five years, he corresponded regularly with the princess, warning her of spiritual dangers and exhorting her to persevere in the true religion. He praised her for enduring so many temptations and difficulties, especially at a time when horrible storms had "cut down

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¹⁷⁰"Clarissime D. redeuntem hunc ad vos Genevam nolui sine mea epistola ad te dimittere, qua tibi constatem meam tui memoriam et amorem testificer, et ut te rogem magnopere, ut mei in piis tuis notis atque precibus nunquam te capias [ ]." Catherine of Bourbon to Beza, 2 February 1594, transcribed in an undated letter from Wilhelm Stucki to Conrad Ulmer, Schaffhausen, Ministerial Bibl., Ulmeriana, vol. V, p. 115. Beza reported to Grynaeus about the same time: "Soror autem ipsius summa cum constantia pergit in integra veritatis professione, alteris etiam suis literis per hunc Legarum nostrum [Chevalier] mihi testata, nunquam sese ab ea in qua educata fuit vera religione, vel tantillum discessuram." 8/18 March 1594, Basle, Univ. Bibl., Kirchen Archiv, C. I. 2, Bd. II, fols. 215-216.

¹⁷¹"J'ay bien voulu vous escrire mesmes par une si bone commodité, comme à celuy que je tiens des plus anciens amis et serviteurs de nostre maison, et aux prières de qui je désire me recommander.... Vous priant de toute mon affection d'y passer librement la plume et me tesmoigner en cela ce que j'espère de vostre bonne amitié, et croire qu'en tout autre endroit je vous rendray preuve de la mienne avec autant de volonté que j'en ay a prier Dieu qu'il veuille." Catherine of Bourbon to Beza, 26 January 1596, Geneva, Archives Tronchin, f. Bèze, vol. 2, no. 24. This letter was dated 1598 by the editors of the *Bulletin* II (1854): 142-144. Contemporary transcriptions of this letter found in the archives of Geneva and Zurich clearly read '1596,' and Beza's response (undated, found in Geneva, Archives Tronchin 5, fols. 305-307) makes clear that it was written shortly after the conversion of Cayet.

even those whom we thought to be the strongest."¹⁷² To withstand future attacks of Satan, she must listen carefully to the Reformed ministers in her household and prayerfully seek God's glory with a pure conscience.¹⁷³ In addition to words of encouragement, Beza looked to Catherine as an influential ally at court, seeking her support for Geneva in the face of ever-present Savoyard threats. Thus, following the Edict of Nantes, the reformer asked the princess to encourage Henri IV to negotiate Geneva's inclusion in the peace treaty between France and Savoy and to insure that "nothing prejudicial be done to the just and holy liberty of this city."¹⁷⁴

In the meantime, the Reformed church in Catherine's household continued to

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¹⁷²"C'est ce que je fais maintenant rendant grâces à Dieu ... de ceste tant grande et spéciale grâce qu'il vous a faite parmy ceste tant rude tempeste qui en a tant abbatu de ceux mesmes qu'on pensoit estre des plus fermes, que Dieu vueille relever, et tant esbranlé d'autres, que Dieu vueille bien raffermir..." Beza to Catherine of Bourbon, [1596?], published in *Bulletin* 2 (1854): 146.

¹⁷³"... vous soiez de plus en plus soingneuse de donner bonne audience à tous bons conseils et exhortations ordinaires et extraordinaires des serviteurs de Dieu pour vostre salut, avec prières assiduelles en toutes vos actions; ce que vous enseignera et dictera vostre conscience tant bien instruite en ce qui plaist ou desplaist à Dieu, et tenant ce chemin parmy tous destroits sans fleschir à droite ou à gauche, ne doutez nullement qu'autant de combats qui vous seront dressés, et auxquels vous vous devez infailliblement préparer, ne soyent autant de victoires dont les anges desjà s'esjouissent là-haut, et auxquelles toutes les vraies Églises d'icy-bas près et loin s'attendent, vous pouvant asseurer que maintenant elles ont leur esprit tendu sur vous en ce hault théâtre auquel Dieu vous a eslevé pour reluyre tant plus loin, rendans grâces à Dieu du passé, et le prians incessamment pour vostre persévérance à l'advenir." Beza to Catherine of Bourbon, [1596?], published in *Bulletin* 2 (1854): 146-149.

¹⁷⁴"... nous prenons la hardiesse de supplier très humblement V. A. qu'il luy plaise seconder de son crédit envers S. M. la affection laquelle de sa grande grâce elle nous a tousjours démontrée très favorable jusques ici, à ce qu'en ceste entrevue d'entre S. M. & l'Altesse de Monseigneur le Duc de Savoye il luy plaise d'avoir eu telle recommandation cest estat de tant temps très affectonné à son service, qu'il ne soit rien préjudicié à la droite et sainte liberté qu'il a pleu au Seigneur donner et garantir à ceste Cité impériale dès les temps des premiers empereurs romains..." Beza, in the name of Small Council, to Catherine of Bourbon, [1600-1601], Geneva, Archive Tronchin, f. Bèze, vol. 2, no. 22.

flourish, even in "the middle of Babylon."¹⁷⁵ By the fall of 1598, as many as 6,000 or 7,000 people frequently crowded into three rooms of the Louvre for worship services, displaying remarkable zeal and devotion.¹⁷⁶ Although Beza did not approve of Catherine's marriage to the Catholic Duke of Lorraine in January 1599, nonetheless he was pleased by her spiritual fortitude. Even on the day of her wedding, this remarkable 'heroine' had attended a Reformed sermon, vowing publicly to persevere in the Reformed faith to her last breath.¹⁷⁷ Beza was so impressed by Catherine's courage and constancy that he circulated copies of her letters to friends in Switzerland and Germany, extolling the princess as a model of piety, a spiritual

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¹⁷⁵"... vueille le Seigneur nostre bon Dieu et Père parmy un bel embrasement préserver les siens par ceste mesme bonté et puissance ce qu'il des ploya jadis sur Daniel et sur ces compagnons, et tant d'autres fois sur toute la pauvre Église, et comme de fraische mémoire il a monsté cela au beau milieu de la Babylon de France, en laquelle au jour de Pasques derniers a esté célébrée la Saint Cène en très grande compagnie dans la grande sale du Louvre sous la faveur de Madame avec pseumes hautement chantés, et le matin et l'après-disnée, sans esmotion aucune, nonobstant les crieries des prescheurs séditeux, chose esmerveillable aux adversaires mesmes." [Beza] to Anonymous, [1597], Geneva, Archives Tronchin à Bessinge, vol. 5, fols. 305-307.,

¹⁷⁶"Le Seigneur sçait ce quy est expédient pour gloire et le bien de son Église, mais selon le jugement humain, le présence de ceste Dame [Catherine] servoit merveilleusement en France, et ceste Église augmentoit tellement que l'on voyoit de six à sept mille personnes assemblées en trois salles de sa Maison, avec ardeur et zèle incroyable, spécialement depuis environ six semaines qu'un Monsieur de la Touche, qui a esté ministre en Poittu, a comencé à prescher..." Manfredo Balbani to Beza, 25 November 1598, Geneva, Archives Tronchin à Bessinge, f. Bèze, vol. 4, no. 66.

¹⁷⁷"Regis autem soror, quam constantissime antehac in media quoque Lutetia puram Religionem eo usque professsa, ut quosvis in arcem Regiam frequentissima multitudo accurrentes patefactis undique foribus ad audiendas sacras conciones suas, imo etiam ad publicam Coenae Domini celebrationem admiserit, eo ipso die, quo ex Regis fratris voluntate Lotharingiae Principi haeredi, bonas et certas puri retinendi cultus divini conditiones pacta, nupsit, mox in frequentissimam nostrorum concionem progressa palam tum sua ipsius tum concionatoris illius suae voce testata fuit, sese, Deo favente, in ipsa quoque Lotharinia perstituram ad extremum usque halitum in vere Christiana Religione, quam Ecclesiae nostrae Galliae profitentur. Dignissima certa heroina, quam omnes Ecclesiae habeant etiam atque etiam in suis tum publicis tum privatis precibus commendatissimam." Beza to Jacob Monau, 15/25 May 1599, published in Gillet, *Crato von Crafftheim und seine Freunde*, vol I (Frankfort: H. L. Grönnner, 1860), 549-550.

champion whose example "sheds light even in many far-off places."¹⁷⁸ Catherine possessed the qualities that Beza had so long desired in her brother, Henri IV. But unfortunately, the king continued to heed the advice of wicked councillors rather than emulate the example of his godly sister.¹⁷⁹

Following her wedding, Catherine faced even more intense pressure to convert. In November 1599, Catherine's husband organized a theological conference at Nancy in the hopes of inducing her to renounce the Reformed religion and attend the mass. Hearing about this conference, Beza wrote the princess an impassioned letter urging her to persevere in the true Church, outside of which she would find no salvation. The most dangerous spiritual tests that Christians faced, he argued, were not those inflicted by enemies with terror and fear, but those brought by well-meaning friends with soft and gentle words.¹⁸⁰ Thus, Catherine must focus upon the actions

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¹⁷⁸"Et cum illi visum sit, inter quam plurimos ex ipsa praecipua nobilitate delectos, illustrissimam ipsius Galliae regis sororem, Catharinam nomine, et Illustrissimi Lotharingiae ducis primogenito (servata publice et pure profitendi Evangelii libertate) nuptam asciscere, quae singulari, praesertim insignis pietatis, exemplo, quam plurimis etiam remotissimis praeluceret, ecce Illustrissime princeps, ultimae ipsius ad me missae epistolae exemplar istis adiunctum volui, additis quoque unius ex domesticae ipsius Ecclesiae ministri literis, ex quibus et quid illic agatur cognosces, et, sicuti spero, magnam magis ac magis divinae implorandae misericordiae, et heroinae illius Deo commendandae sumetis istic nobiscum argumentum." Beza to Janus Radiwil, duke of Birse, 19/29 December 1599, Paris, Bibl. Ste. Geneviève, ms. 1455, fols. 310^v-312^v.

¹⁷⁹"Illam [Catherine] vero audio Dei beneficio non modo permotam hoc offendiculo minime fuisse [i.e. the apostasy of Cayet], verum etiam multo cordatiorem factam, cuius exemplum utinam αυτοκρατως ille tandem sequi mallet, quam in eo quod coepit pessimo consilio perseverare, quamvis non desint quae praetexat." Beza to Grynaeus, 26 January/5 February 1596, Basle, Univ. Bibl., Kirchen Archiv, C. I. 2, Bd. II, fol. 235.

¹⁸⁰"Ce nonobstant, Madame, sachans que les plus dangereuses espreuves ne sont pas celles qui se font à gauche, assavoir par la terreur et crainte de quelque desavantage, lesquelles aussi l'Éternel a fait la grâce à V. A. d'avoir surmontées en beaucoup de sortes; mais plustost celles qui se font à droite, assavoir par toute douceur, mesmement très sincère, et par les meilleurs amis mesmes en affection, mais se trompans les premiers en ce que par faulte d'estre mieux informés il leur advient trop

and teachings of Jesus--the only doctor of truth and life--rather than listen to her husband and other Catholic opponents. By her faithful example, the princess could do more to proclaim the Gospel in France and encourage Protestants throughout Europe "than one hundred ministers in their pulpits."¹⁸¹

Catherine did not disappoint Theodore Beza. In the conference held at Nancy on November 13, Catherine's chaplains (Jacques Couet and Dominique de Losses) debated a Jesuit priest and Capuchin monk on the sufficiency of Scripture, the value of church tradition, and Christ's presence in the Eucharist.¹⁸² In the end, Catherine remained firm, announcing to Beza several weeks later that the 'tricks' of the Catholics had not weakened her faith; instead, she was resolved all the more to endure "all kinds of afflictions rather than change my religious conviction."¹⁸³ But

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souvent de requérir de leurs amis." Beza to Catherine of Bourbon, 1/11 November 1599, Geneva, Archives Tronchin, f. Bèze, vol. 2, no. 32.

¹⁸¹"... demeurant par ce moyen, Madame, comme un vray prescheur du S. Évangile par un tel effect visible et sensible. Et de fait en ce faisant, V. A. fera autant et plus, peult estre que cent aultres prescheurs en chaire, tant pour amener à la cognoissance et crainte du vray Dieu ceux de par delà qui en sont encores esloignés, que pour y confermer de plus en plus ceux que le Seigneur y a desja introduits, et mesmes pour encourager par un tel et si apparent exemple tout ce grand nombre de tant d'Églises estrangères, et près et loin..." Beza to Catherine of Bourbon, 1/11 November 1599, Geneva, Archives Tronchin, f. Bèze, vol. 2, no. 32.

¹⁸²Details of this conference are found in Couet's *La conférence faite à Nancy entre un docteur Jésuite accompagné d'un Capuchin, & deux ministres de la parole de Dieu* (Basle, 1600). Palma Cayet answered Couet's treatise in a work dedicated to Catherine's husband, entitled *Remonstrance et supplication très-humble à Madame*.

¹⁸³"Je me remettray à ce qu'il vous en dira, seulement je vous assureray, que par la grâce de Dieu, les artifices de nos adversaires n'ont peu aucunement esbranler un seul poinct de ma croyance, quoy qu'on esperast beaucoup de changement par ceste conférence... et vous dire que je me sens assistée de une grâce spéciale de Dieu, pour me résoudre plustost à toutes sortes d'afflictions que de changer ma profession." Catherine of Bourbon to Beza, 2 December 1599, published in *Bulletin* 35 (1886): 311. The minister de Losses also reported to Beza the outcome of the conference. See his letter to Beza, 2 December 1599, published in *ibid.*, 311-313.

Catherine's struggles were not over. The following year, Palma Cayet published two treatises in which he urged the princess to renounce the seditious activities and abusive doctrines of Beza and the Reformed churches.¹⁸⁴ Similarly, Du Perron and Pierre Coton met with Catherine in private conferences attempting to sway the resolute princess.¹⁸⁵ In spite of these efforts, Catherine was still a committed Protestant when she died in February 1604 of a stomach tumor, mistaken for a pregnancy. Only weeks before, the princess had excitedly reported this anticipated birth to Beza, asking him to share in her joy as "one of my good friends."¹⁸⁶ With her decease, Beza witnessed the passing of the last Protestant Bourbon. Planted by Jeanne d'Albret forty years before, the evangelical seed had germinated, flourished briefly, but withered suddenly in this royal family.

Stemming the Tide

The battle for Catherine's faith was not the only struggle that Beza faced in the final years of the century. In the summer of 1597, Beza began to receive alarming

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¹⁸⁴In addition to the *Remonstrance et supplication*, Cayet wrote a *Supplication très-humble à Madame, Madame soeur unique du Roy, Duchesse de Bar & d'Albret, &c. Pour sa très désirée conversion à nostre Mère sainte Église Catholique, Apostolique & Romaine* (Paris: Benoist Chalonneau & Silvestre Moreau, 1601).

¹⁸⁵See Pannier, *L'Église Réformée de Paris sous Henri IV*, 80-81.

¹⁸⁶"Je suis icy, Dieu mercy, avec tout le repos que je sçaurois désirer, attendant la jouissance d'un bien que les médecins et les aparences, mais plus la bonté de Dieu me promettent, c'est la venue d'un enfant dont lesdits médecins m'asseurent que je suis enceinte. S'il a pleu à Dieu me faire ceste grâce, j'espère qu'il parachevera. Je vous ay bien voulu mander ceste nouvelle, affin que comme l'un de mes bons amys vous participiez à ma joye, et m'aidiez de vos prières." Catherine of Bourbon to Beza, 6 December 1603, published in *Bulletin* 2 (1854): 155.

reports from correspondents in France, Germany and England that the Jesuits were triumphantly announcing in sermons and published broadsheets that the old reformer, on his deathbed, had converted to the Catholic religion along with the entire city of Geneva.¹⁸⁷ A friend from Germany sent him a copy of one of these broadsheets: "Geneva, hitherto the seat of Satan, has been converted to Catholicism. People from there write that, before he died, Beza renounced his errors and returned to the Catholic religion. It is reported with certainty that following his death the magistrates of Geneva requested Father Puteanus, the Jesuit provincial of France, to come visit them."¹⁸⁸ Beza immediately perceived the danger: not only was his honor at stake, but such a damaging rumor might encourage Protestants in France to abandon the Reformed religion and return to the Catholic Church. Thus, in October, Beza and the

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¹⁸⁷Thus a Reformed minister in Bordeaux requested a letter from Beza "de laquelle ausy je ferois bien mon profit à l'encontre des calompniateurs Jésuites (et à cause d'eulx plusieurs autres) qui n'ont point heu honte de prescher publiquement en chaire vostre mort avant laquelle vous avies fait profesion de la Religion Romaine sur quoy Ilz disoint vouloir anoncer une grande nouvele de Consolation et ce sont les mesme motz." Christofle Forthion, 8 August 1597, Geneva, BPU, ms. fr. 412, fols. 111-112. With anger and horror, Beza reported to friends the substance of the rumors: "Ad meam denique valetudinem quod attinet, cogit me quidem non sane gravis ullus morbus, sed ipsa senectutis imbecillitas a publico pene semper abstinere, sic tamen domi privatis adhuc studiis intentum, ut res ipsa impudentissimos illos Esautas et caetera eiusdem farinae monstra cogat erubescere, si quid adhuc frontis illis superest, qui tam aperte impudente mendacio per orbem pene totum, et interiisse me, et ipsorum impietatem ante mortem amplexatum atque adeo, ne quid ad hoc inauditae pene impudentiae exemplum deesset, Genevam meis adhortationibus persuasam (quod ne cogitare quidem sine horrore possum) ad Papismum reversam esse, sparserunt. Quos ego, Deo favente, edita rursum mea confessione, et ad totam ipsorum pseudocatholicam synagogem transmissa, tanti mendacii convincere conabor." Beza to Joachim de Berg, 5/15 October 1597, Paris, Bibl. Ste. Geneviève, ms. 1455, fols. 234^v-236^v; "Bene habet quod ad caetera ficulnea fulcra ruentis mala caussae, Jesuitae etiam mendacia de te spargere coeperunt. Crede mihi, redibit ex ea re ad nos aliquid boni." Grynaeus to Beza, 26 October/5 November 1597, Geneva, Archives Tronchin, f. Bèze, vol. 5, fol. 273.

¹⁸⁸"Geneva Sathanae hactenus sedes, catholicizat. Extincto Beza (quem quidam revocatis erroribus ante mortem catholice obiisse scribunt) Senatus Genevensis Franciae provincialem Societatis Iesu Patrem Puteanum ad se vocasse certo scribitur." This 'commentum' was published in Beza's treatise *Theodori Bezae ad Ioan. Guil. Stuckium sac. theologiae in ecclesiae Tigurina professorem epistola, Et pastorum ac professorum Genevensium Responsio* (Genevae: Matthaei Berjon, 1597), Ciiij^v.

Genevan ministers published a short treatise entitled *Theodori Bezae ad Ioan. Guil. Stuckium ... Responsio* (1597) in which they refuted these 'stinking and unspeakable' lies of the Jesuits, assuring both friends and enemies that Geneva remained firmly committed to the evangelical faith and continued to detest the idolatry and spiritual darkness of the Roman Church.¹⁸⁹ As for Beza, he was alive and healthy at seventy-nine years old, and many people in Geneva still derived great benefit from his teaching and exemplary life.¹⁹⁰ The following year, the reformer again passionately defended his honor against the 'good-for-nothing' Jesuits in his preface to the final edition of the *Annotationes* (1598). He continued to be outraged that the "terrible mark of Apostasy" had been branded not only on him, but also on "this famous and, by God's grace, completely orthodox city, school, and church of Geneva." In fact, he was still alive and intended to persevere in the Reformed faith until his death: "I am still healthy and, though almost eighty years old, completely sound in mind and body. Having served forty of my eighty years in the army of the ministry, I continue

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¹⁸⁹Beza asked for permission to print this treatise on October 7/17: "Item fut proposé par Monsieur de Besze qu'il avoit lettres de tous costés, et d'Alemagne, de France et d'Angleterre, que les jésuites avoyent presché et escrit sa mort et sa revolte au papisme et, non seulement de luy, mais aussi de toute l'Église de Genève. Et pourtant qu'il avoit delibéré de leur respondre quelque petite chose, si on le trouvoit bon. Et monstra deux escrits, un en latin, l'autre en françois, qu'il avoit dressés. Fut advisé qu'il seroit bon de respondre, mais non seulement ledit de Besze mais aussi toute la Compagnie au nom de l'Église et Eschole... Et fut donnée charge à M. de La Faye de dresser la response au nom de la Compagnie." *RCP VII*, 77-78. This treatise was subsequently translated into German and Dutch, see *Bibliographie*, 212-216. Note that Geisendorf incorrectly ascribed this controversy to the year 1596. See Geisendorf, 399-400.

¹⁹⁰"Illius animum mentemque Beza (quem Dei benignitas viventem, viridique ac vegeta senecta annum lxxix aetatis agentem, & docentem cum gaudio vident & audiunt multi boni) confidit ab eadem Dei benignitate se impetraturum, ut firmiter in agnita veritatis Evangelicae luce perstet ad ultimum usque vitae huius terrenae momentum..." Beza, *Theodori Bezae ad Ioan. Guil. Stuckium*, Cij^r.

to teach the very holy truth of God purely and from his holy Word... and, God willing, I will continue to attack that detestable Roman prostitute seated in the seven-hilled city until my very last breath."¹⁹¹ Even as they fought Catholic disinformation, Beza and the Genevan ministers faced a more serious challenge from Jesuit and Capuchin missionaries in nearby Savoy in 1597 and 1598. During the previous five years, Jesuit priests and Capuchin monks under the leadership of François de Sales had been actively evangelizing the provinces of Chablais and Ternier, Reformed strong-holds in Savoy on the southern shore of Lac Léman (see Figure 5).¹⁹² After several years with little success, the mission began to win converts by aggressively pursuing public debates, distributing tracts, and conducting processions and 'forty-hour' vigils.¹⁹³ In the summer of 1596, three Capuchin friars reestablished the mass

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¹⁹¹"Sed & huic senectam meam, adversus illorum perditissimorum nebulonum, sacrosanctum etiam IESU nomen ementitorum impudentissime confictas calumnias, commendes velim; quibus ausi nuper sunt per totam Europam, tum voce, tum scriptis, non mihi modo (quem etiam ita mortuum esse confinxerunt) verum etiam toti huic inclytae, & vere per Dei gratiam, orthodoxae Civitati, Ecclesiae & Scholae Genevensi, horrendam illam Apostasiae notam inurere. At ego, Dei beneficio, adhuc vivo; adhuc, satis recte, & mente, & corpore, octuagesimum annum ingressus, valeo; adhuc quadragesimum iam octavum annum agens in hac sacri Ministerii militia, sacrosanctam illam veri Dei veritatem, pure, ex sacro Dei verbo, pro meo modulo, docere pergo, ad extremum usque halitum adversus execrandam illam urbi septicolli insidentem meretricem, eundem me semper, eodem favente Deo, praestiturus." Beza to the Christian Reader, 1/11 August 1598, letter-preface to *Iesu Christi Domini nostri Novum Testamentum ... sive Novum foedus ... eiusdem Th. Beza Annotationes* (Genevae: J. des Planches, 1598).

¹⁹²For details about Catholic missionary activities in Chablais during this period, see Paul E. Martin, *Trois Cas de Pluralisme Confessionnel aux XVI^e et XVII^e Siècles* (Genève: A. Jullien, Éditeur, 1961), 73-106; M. Gonthier and M. Letourneau, *Vie de Saint François de Sales, Evêque et Prince de Genève* (Paris: Librairie Victor Lecoffre, 1920), 120-160; RCP VII, passim.

¹⁹³The forty-hour devotion proved to be a particularly effective evangelistic method in Chablais. Formally recognized by Clement VIII in 1592, this devotional practice was a forty-hour period of special prayers, processions, and litanies leading up to the high mass. See *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, vol. 5 (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1967), 1036.

Figure 5: Geneva and Her Neighbors©

From E. William Monter, *Calvin's Geneva* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1967). Used with permission of the author.

in Ternier. On Christmas day of the same year, François de Sales ignored Protestant opposition and celebrated the mass in the parish church of Thonon, the first such service in sixty years. Emboldened by these successes, Jesuit and Capuchin missionaries attempted to initiate theological disputes with the ministers of Geneva. The Capuchin monk Cherubin de Maurienne was particularly active, writing letters to the city's residents and ministers demanding a conference and, when they refused, chiding them for their hesitations. When the Genevan professor Herman Lignaridus visited Thonon in the spring of 1598, Cherubin engaged him in a day-long dispute on the perspicuity and sufficiency of Scripture, and the canonicity of the Apocryphal books.¹⁹⁴ The Company of Pastors, however, wanted nothing to do with such disputes, fearing that the duke of Savoy would use these as a pretext to restore Catholicism in his territories by force. So too, they believed such discussions to be fruitless, given that the missionaries were hardened in their errors and had no interest in the truth.¹⁹⁵

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¹⁹⁴While Cherubin claimed that his opponent had been sent by the Company of Pastors to debate him, Lignaridus insisted that he came to Thonon for a brief vacation and entered the debate with the Capuchin only when urged by the Protestant townspeople. See Lignaridus, *Response de Herman Lignaridus, à certaine lettre imprimée, en laquelle le S. d'Auuly s'est essayé de représenter la dispute entre iceluy Herman & Cherubin, moine de la secte des Capuchins* (n.p., 1598). Palma Cayet publicized this theological conference in two treatises: *La conférence accordée entre les prédicateurs Catholiques de l'ordre des Capuccins, & les ministres de Genève. La où l'on void, comment ceux de Genève désirent d'estre instruits, & revenir au giron de nostre mère sainte Église* (Paris: Denis Binet, 1598); *La suite et conclusion de la conférence tenue à Thonon entre les révérens pères Cappucins, & les ministres de Genève* (Paris: Denis Binet, 1599).

¹⁹⁵On 13/23 June 1597, Beza and several colleagues appeared before the city magistrates to complain that, unbeknownst to the Company, two private citizens had agreed to a theological dispute with Cherubin. They argued that "... d'autant que telles disputes sont infructueuses et que les adversaires encor qu'ils soient convaincus suffissamment ne donnent aucun lieu à la vérité, mais au contraire persistent à leurs hérésies & calumnies, prient d'empescher telles disputes, etc." Under questioning, the two citizens claimed that the minister Simon Goulart himself had written letters to

By the summer of 1598, the Reformed churches in Chablais were in a state of crisis. Protestants were abjuring their religion in large numbers, prompted, in part, by the perception that the pastors of Geneva and Berne had abandoned them. At the end of August, a syndic in Thonon appealed directly to the Genevan magistrates, begging them to send ministers to counter their Catholic opponents.¹⁹⁶ Alarmed, the Company of Pastors petitioned the Church of Berne for advice and offered theological assistance in the event of a debate with the Capuchins.¹⁹⁷ In early fall, the ministers finally agreed to a public disputation with Cherubin, as long as the parties agreed to use the Helvetic Confession as the basis for discussion. This meager effort came too late. During a 'forty-hour' vigil held in Thonon at the end September, several hundred Protestants converted to the Catholic religion. Likewise, in a large assembly on October 6, the duke of Savoy threatened with banishment those who refused to embrace the Catholic religion. All but around forty people complied.¹⁹⁸ Almost over-night, the Reformed churches had been dispersed from Chablais and Ternier. Deeply depressed by this disastrous 'revolt,' Beza compared the 'apostates' of

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Cherubin encouraging a debate. See RC 92, 87.

¹⁹⁶The register of the Small Council reported that the syndic of Thonon "... ayant escrit du jour d'hyer au S^r Jean Serrazin que le capuchin hurle merueilleusement contre les ministres de ceste église par ce qu'ils reculent la dispute qu'il offre de faire pour la religion, occasion dequoy plusieurs dudit lieu de Thonon sont esbranlez. A esté arresté qu'on dit ouvertement ausdits sp. pasteurs que M^{rs} désirent qu'ils envoient quelques uns pour soustenir la vérité de nostre religion..." 29 August/8 September 1598, RC 93, 135^v.

¹⁹⁷See Theodore Beza and Antoine de La Faye, in the name of the Company of Pastors, to the Church of Berne, 16/26 September 1598, published in RCP VII, 322.

¹⁹⁸Martin, *Trois Cas de Pluralisme Confessionnel*, 83. Martin estimates around 2000 abjurations in Chablais during this period, and another 250 in Ternier (92).

Chablais to the inhabitants of Jerusalem during holy week: the very same people who had welcomed Jesus with cheers on Palm Sunday, had shouted 'Crucify him!' five days later. Certainly, this was yet one more sign of God's vengeance upon those who despise his Word.¹⁹⁹ But while Beza blamed those who had converted, other Protestants in Geneva and Switzerland were sharply critical of the ministers for their reluctance to debate the Capuchins and Jesuits. Many felt that the Company of Pastors had failed in their duty to their co-religionists in Chablais, inadvertently contributing to the mass 'apostasy' in the fall of 1598.²⁰⁰

It was in the context of these two crises--rumors of his conversion and Catholic missionary activities in Chablais--that Beza engaged in a final battle of books with his Catholic opponents. Early in 1598, a Savoyard gentleman named Antoine de Saint-Michel, Sire of Avully, published an anonymous treatise in which he answered

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¹⁹⁹"Princeps ille [Savoy] ... nuper Alpes transgressus, duarum vicinarum nobis praefectarum, ipsi a Bernensibus restitutarum, Ecclesias omnes, contra pacta et conventa, rursus ad Antichristum traduxit; aliis, praesentis principis metu territis; aliis animum repugnantem dissimulantibus; plerisque de nulla re minus quam de vera salute sua cogitantibus, exemploque suo tristissimo, iustissima haec esse, contemptum divini Verbi sui ulciscens, numinis iudicia, testificantibus; paucissimis denique, ac pene nullis, constanter perstantibus. Quae res nobis illam ipsius passionis Domini nobilissimam historiam, ipsis pene oculis intuendam subiecit, ex ipso Dei, quod ad nomen attinet, populo, qui advenientem Christum tam faustis acclamationibus exceperat, quinto post die Pilatum ad eum crucifigendum suis vociferationibus adigente; imo etiam paucissimis, et quidem mulierculis exceptis, pendenti quoque in ipsa cruce insultante. Ista vero tam tristitia, quam vix ac ne vix quidem possint absque gemitu audiri, satis intelligis, quanto cum moerore a nobis ex tam propinquo spectentur." Beza to Abraham Schultheiss, 22 October/1 November 1598, Paris, Bibl. Ste. Geneviève, ms. 1455, fols. 266^v-268^v.

²⁰⁰Thus, on 3/13 October 1598, Beza declared to his ministerial colleagues that "... il entendoit que nous estions blasmés et par ceste ville, par les ungs et les aultres, et en France le serions, comme ayans failli à nostre devoir envers noz frères de Thonnon et estans cause de la cheute de ceux qui sont révoltez d'autant que nous n'avons pas accepté la dispute publique contre Cherubin qui l'a demandée." RCP VII, 113. The Company of Pastors sent several ministers to the city council to defend, once again, their reasons for hesitation.

Beza's *Responsio* to Stucki, maligned the reformer's character, and condemned the cowardice of the Genevan ministers for refusing to debate Cherubin and the Capuchins.²⁰¹ Avully argued that the rumors of Beza's conversion and death had been concocted, not by the Jesuits, but by the Genevan clergy themselves. Beza's attack against the Society of Jesus in his *Responsio* was 'pure deception,' intended to "blacken the reputation and renown of the Jesuits that shine so brilliantly in Europe as well as in the new world..."²⁰² Having caused numerous tragedies in France through cruel intrigues, the old reformer was now concluding his life by propagating a ridiculous farce.²⁰³ Avully pointed to Beza's sexual immorality and vanity as proof of the reformer's depraved character. As a young man, Beza had written lascivious poetry and indulged in sexual relations with Claudine Denosse several years before their marriage. More recently, at seventy years of age, the reformer had shamefully married a young woman shortly after the death of his first wife. Moreover, the old reformer's character was marred by vanity and hypocrisy. During a recent visit in Beza's home, Avully had seen paintings of Calvin, Peter Martyr, and Abraham Musculus—as well as two portraits of Beza himself—hanging on his walls. In his

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²⁰¹*Lettre d'un gentil-homme Savoyzien, à un gentil-homme Lyonnois. Sur la fausse allarme que Théodore de Bèze s'est donnée de la nouvelle de sa mort & conversion à la Religion Catholique* (n.p., 1598).

²⁰²Beza "... tasche de noircir leur [les Jésuites] réputation & renommée, qui est trop brillante & esclatante, non seulement en l'Europe, ains au monde nouveau, où au péril de leurs vies ils font retentir le nom de Jésus, & plantent la vraie Religion..." *Lettre d'un gentil-homme Savoyzien*, 10.

²⁰³"Et que de Bèze, qui toute sa vie a joué, & faict jouer un monde de tragédies, par ses cruelles & barbares menées, a voulu sur la fin du ieu introduire cecy pour servir de farce." *Lettre d'un gentil-homme Savoyzien*, 9.

arrogance, Beza wished to "perpetuate the memory of himself," even as he condemned Catholic images and crucifixes.²⁰⁴ The final section of Avully's treatise described the history of the Catholic mission in Chablais and decried the refusal of the Company of Pastors to debate Cherubin. At the beginning of the Reformation, the Protestants had complained loudly if their adversaries refused to meet them in theological disputation. Indeed, Beza himself had once demanded in his *Confession de la foi Chrétienne* (1559): "if the Catholics are so bold as to deny [that they have revolted from Jesus Christ], why then do they refuse to enter into a theological conference with us?"²⁰⁵ Now, Avully pointed out, the shoe was on the other foot. If the Scripture was clear and sufficient for salvation, as the ministers claimed, why then did they forbid the townspeople of Geneva from attending the sermons of Catholic

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²⁰⁴"En une sallette qu'il a pour l'orner de belles & rares images, il y a fait mettre les portraits au vif de son Calvin, Martyr, Muscule, & autres tels personnages, qu'il fait veoir à ceux qui le visitent, pour tesmoigner que leur mémoire est heureuse; mais croyez qu'il ne s'y est ja oublié. Il s'y est fait peindre en deux divers tableaux, l'un en sa morguante ieunesse: & l'autre en l'aage de septantehuict ans, portant un chapeau, les aisles repliées de part & d'autre, affin qu'on ne pensa qu'il eust perdu les oreilles. Je ne trouve cette curiosité trop impertinente en luy. D'autant que la nécessité du vain désir qu'il a d'éterniser sa mémoire, luy apprend qu'elle durera plus en une image... Mais ie trouve mauvais, qu'il nous appelle Idolâtres, & ministériellement nous calomnie, que nous mettons nostre espérance aux créatures, quittant le Créateur, pour tenir en nos chambres l'image du Crucifix, qui nous raffraichit la mémoire de nostre rédemption, & ne peut que retenir nostre trop glissante volonté au mal, iettant les yeux sur un tel exemplaire." *Lettre d'un gentil-homme Savoyen*, 19-20. The two portraits of Beza to which the author alludes are displayed today in the museum of the Bibliothèque Publique et Universitaire of Geneva.

²⁰⁵"Mais voyons les excuses des Ministres. Ils disent que telles disputes sont sans crainte de Dieu ils ont bien corrigé leur thèmes. Au commencement ils ne se plaignoient sinon de ce qu'on ne vouloit conferer avec eux, comme dernièrement mon Curé me le fait veoir en la confession de foy de Théodore de Bèze, où il dit, sur l'explication du cinquiesme point, article 16. *Mais par adventure, que nos adversaires nous taxeront d'orgueil, de ce que nous nous sommes séparés d'avec eux, voyre comme si eux mesmes ne s'estoient pas naturellement révoltés de Jésus-Christ, & de tous les Pères anciens, & s'ils sont si hardis que de le nier, pourquoy donques est ce qu'ils refusent d'entrer en conférence avec nous?*" Avully, *Lettre d'un gentil-homme Savoyen*, 57. Palma Cayet also attacked the Genevan's reticence to debate: "Que dira on, si Genève, l'oracle du Calvinisme, vient à se taire?" *La conférence accordée entre les prédicateurs Catholiques de l'ordre des Capuccins, & les ministres de Genève*, 48.

missionaries and why did they continue to flee a theological conference with Cherubin? By their silence, the ministers were admitting the weakness of their doctrine and depriving the Protestants of Geneva an opportunity to be reconciled to the true Church.

In September 1598, Beza published an anonymous reply to Avully's treatise entitled *Response à la lettre d'un gentilhomme Savoisien* in which he refuted his opponents allegations point by point.²⁰⁶ The reformer denied fiercely the accusation that he had invented the rumor of his own death and conversion. Citing letters from Venice and Florence as evidence, Beza insisted that this caluminous report had been invented by the Jesuit provincial Clemens Puteanus at Nancy, and spread by Jesuits and Capuchins throughout France, Germany and Italy. Indeed, all of the Jesuit colleges in Germany were trumpeting this 'good news' and a priest in Laon had even announced from the pulpit that to rescue from purgatory the tortured soul of the convert Beza it would take 500 masses!²⁰⁷ What more could be expected of those lying monks who encouraged, and even ascribed sainthood, to the assassins of kings,

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²⁰⁶*Response à la lettre d'un gentilhomme Savoisien, ne se nommant point. Par laquelle trèsfaususement il charge les pasteurs de l'église de Genève, tant en général qu'en particulier, de plusieurs trèsimpudentes mensonges* (Genève: M. Berjon, 1598). The registers of the Company of Pastors reported on 22 September/2 October 1598: "Monsieur de Bèze respondra au livre calomniateur intitulé *Du gentilhomme savoisien* et mettra son nom ou le taira, comme il trouvera bon." RCP VII, 108. For information about this treatise, see *Bibliographie*, 216 and CDM 151. Beza apparently chose to publish the work anonymously so that he could defend his honor without appearing arrogant.

²⁰⁷"Mais direz-vous, où sont ces tesmoins? Non pas un, ou deux, ou trois cents, mais toute la France iusques de là mer, tous les séminaires de cest belle société parmi l'Allemagne; & spécialement la Cour de l'Empereur, & des principaux Princes de la Religion Romaine; & toute l'Italie... & en public, & en particulier; voire iusques là qu'en la chaire de Laon, un certain prescheur a estélibéral, au moins de parole, iusques à la somme de cinquante messes, pour délivrer du Purgatoire la pauvre âme rostie de ce pauvre de Besze converti." *Response à la lettre d'un gentilhomme Savoisien*, 10.

queens, and princes? Beza next turned to Catholic missionary activities in Chablais. Neither the ministers nor the magistrates of Geneva had ever promised a theological conference with Cherubin. Lignaridus had agreed to enter into a debate with Cherubin in the spring of 1598 only because of the insistent pleas of several notables in Thonon. Given the stubbornness of the Capuchins and Jesuits, the Genevan ministers believed that theological disputes with them were useless: "The experience of the past eighty years has made clear ... that we cannot expect anything from such disputes, and especially public disputes with people like this, except new troubles and confusions in the entire state."²⁰⁸ After the disappointments of Poissy and Montbéliard²⁰⁹, Beza and his colleagues had become as suspicious of theological debate as they were of efforts to achieve religious reconciliation.

In the second-half of his treatise against Avully, Beza defended himself from the more personal calumnies of his opponent. In many way these pages represent the reformer's final (anonymous) apology of his entire life and ministry. As a young man

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²⁰⁸"C'est assavoir, qu'attendu la conséquence qu'emporte avec soy une dispute publique sur le principal fondement de la Religion, & qu'il constoit l'intention de ce Cappuchin, & de ses semblables, n'estre autre qu'à contredire la vérité par une désespérée opiniastreté, quand mesmes on lui auroit mille fois fermé la bouche; ioinct à cela, que s'il eust esté question d'entrer en tel traicté, il eust falu qu'on y fust deuëment semond & convié par S. Altesse, & non à l'appetit de ce vénérable Cappuchin; ayant aussi l'expérience depuis quatre vingts ans assez monsté, tant és iournées Impériales d'Allemagne, qu'en France, & n'aguières encores à Montbelliard, qu'on ne pourroit attendre de telles disputes, & notamment publiques avec telles gens, autre chose, que nouveaux troubles & confusions en tout l'Estat; on ne pouvoit, ni devoit entrer en ce chemin." *Response à la lettre d'un gentilhomme Savoisien*, 23-24.

²⁰⁹The Colloquy of Montbéliard took place in 1586 between Beza and the gnesio-Lutheran theologian Jacob Andreae, addressing controverted questions on the person of Christ, the eucharist, baptism, predestination, the nature of grace, and the use of images, organs, and altars. In the aftermath of the colloquy, the prince of Montbéliard, Count Frederick sided with the Lutherans and demanded that the French exiles residing in the territory subscribe to both the Augsburg Confession and the Formula of Concord. See Jill Raitt, *The Colloquy of Montbéliard. Religion and Politics in the Sixteenth Century* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993).

in Paris, Beza had lived in a manner beyond reproach, a friend of the most respected scholars of his day.²¹⁰ In his mid-twenties, he had pledged himself in marriage to Claudine Denosse in the presence of four friends, but had chosen not to publish this betrothal in the Church because "he had already completely renounced the Catholic mass."²¹¹ Several years later, books and treatises of Calvin gave Beza the necessary impetus to break with the Roman Church and flee to Geneva, where he publicly confirmed his marriage to Claudine and disavowed his scandalous *Poemata*. Fifty years had now elapsed since his arrival in Geneva, and more than a thousand people could attest to the fact that his subsequent life and ministry had been conducted with

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²¹⁰ "... qu'estant de là venu à Paris parmi ses amis & ses parents & alliés de bonnes & grandes qualités, il y a vescu, par la grâce de Dieu, non seulement sans reproche aucune, mais au contraire en amitié avec tous les hommes célébrés pour lors érudition..." *Response à la lettre d'un gentilhomme Savoisien*, 49-50.

²¹¹ "C'est de mesme foy que page 13. abusant de la préface adioustée par de Besze à sa confession, il y a trente & huict ans, vous feriez volontiers accroire qu'il a paillardé une espace de temps avec sa feu femme, devant que l'avoir prise en mariage; ce qui est trèsfaux, Dieu merci, & ne se peut recueillir de ladite préface, que par très-malicieuse interprétation, estant tel ce faict que des lors, c'est à dire dès l'an 1560. il l'a descrit, & le testifié encores. C'est assavoir qu'estant iceluy en aage de vingt cinq à vingt & six ans bien empesté, & en beaucoup de sortes, parmi le désert de ceste Église Romaine, & n'estant encores courageux iusques là, de pouvoir, comme il a faict à la fin, couper ce noeud, qu'il taschoit de deffaire peu à peu, les feux bruslans de tous costés, nommément à Paris, où il estoit bien empesché, tant à cause de la Religion, qu'il estoit contraint de dissimuler, que pour la difficulté qu'il sentoît en soy de pouvoir en cest aage, & en telle ville, & avec tels moyens, se porter purement & chastement sans le mariage; le Seigneur, par sa grâce, luy adressa une ieune femme, combien que de petit lieu, toutesfois très honneste, ayant la cognoissance de Dieu, fille de chambre, chez une damoiselle alliée d'icelui, de très-honorable qualité au Parlement de Paris; laquelle il fiança en la présence de personnages honorables, iusques au nombre de quatre, tous lesquels depuis se sont tost après aussi rendu en ceste Église, & y sont décédés, laissant très-heureuse mémoire d'eux; lesquelles fiançailles n'estant possible audit de Besze de solenniser autrement qu'à la Messe, à laquelle, grâces à Dieu, il avoit desia pleinement renoncé, d'autant que pour lors il n'y avoit, ni Pasteur, ni Église aucune dressée en ces quartiers-là, ni peut estre en la France, sinon du tout secrette, cela, & non autre chose quelconques lui fit ratifier pleinement sa promesse de loyal mariage avec la dessusdite, en toute bonne conscience en la mesme susdite compagnie, sous la promesse expresse de l'a mener à Genève, & là y publier derechef en la face de l'Église sondit mariage..." *Response à la lettre d'un gentilhomme Savoisien*, 54-55.

sobriety and holiness.²¹² As for his marriage to Catherine of Piano in 1588, Beza pointed out that Avully had misrepresented the age of his second wife: she was in her forties when they married, hardly a 'young woman.' Finally, Beza turned to the portraits in his home. Whereas religious objects like crucifixes promoted superstition and idolatry, portraits served to remind Christians of faithful men and women of the past, providing encouragement and 'refreshment' through their godly examples.²¹³ Similarly, Beza explained, the two portraits of himself—one painted when he was a young man of twenty-four years, the other when he was seventy years old—served as a constant reminder of how divine grace had transformed his features and station in life. Nonetheless, to silence Avully, Beza had decided to take down the portraits of himself. If the Savoyard gentleman should ever visit him again, he would find the reformer to be a 'living portrait,' walking, speaking, and writing according to the

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²¹² "... en l'aage de vingt & neuf à trente ans Dieu luy fit ceste grâce singulière, de postposer volontairement, au repos de sa conscience au faict de la Religion, avec sa patrie, & son propre père, & autres parents, tant les moyens, qui dès lors ne lui défailloyent, que ceux qu'il avoit trèsgrandes occasions d'espérer, pour se retirer avec sa femme, dont il sera parlé cy après, en ceste Église de Genève, là où estant arrivé, il y a maintenant iustement cinquante ans, il vous produit pour tesmoins de toute sa vie, tant de mille personnes, à la veuë, & au sçeu desquelles il a pleu à Dieu, par sa sainte miséricorde, qu'il ait vescu, exerçant son trèssainct Ministere..." *Response à la lettre d'un gentilhomme Savoisien*, 50. In addition, Beza claimed that he had read the *Institutio christianae religionis* while a student under Wolmar (page 49) and that his conversion had been prompted, in large part, to the writings of Calvin: "... les livres, & lettres [of Monsieur Calvin] duquel il avoit esté vrayement instruit auparavant, & induit à se retirer en la vraye Église" (pages 55-56). Compare this statements with Beza's comments some forty years earlier, in which he gave more credit to Wolmar and Bullinger than to Calvin for his conversion to Protestantism. See notes 29 and 31 on pages 25-26 above.

²¹³ "Car est-il aucunement reprenable, s'il a voulu & veut se rafraischir tous les iours l'heureuse mémoire, non seulement de ces tant excellens personnages que vous nommez, mais aussi d'aucuns Princes & grands Seigneurs, qui luy ont fait cest honneur de le cognoistre & aimer icy bas; avant qu'une mort, autant précieuse devant Dieu & ses Anges, que honteuse devant le monde, qui en estoit indigne, les eust poussés au ciel?" *Response de la lettre d'un gentilhomme Savoisien*, 59.

grace of God, seeking to his very last breath the "advancement of the truth and glory of God" and the destruction of the "false beast seated on the seven mountains."²¹⁴ Although almost an octogenarian, Beza's pen had not lost any of its former vigor.

The Edict of Nantes

By 1597, the Reformed movement in France and Geneva faced a variety of common concerns, disappointments and frustrations. From within, French Protestants were divided over projects of religious reconciliation and shaken by sporadic Catholic conversions. From outside, the Reformed faced a new generation of Catholic apologists who were more aggressive and more successful in refuting Protestant doctrinal claims. At the same time, the war with Spain was going badly. The loss of the strategic city of Amiens in March 1597 came as a terrible shock, threatening all of France north of the Loire.²¹⁵ When Henri IV set siege to Amiens the following summer, the Protestant dukes of Bouillon and La Trémoille refused to send their armies and disregarded the king's subsequent pleas for help. The relationship between Henri and the Huguenots further deteriorated during the Protestant political

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²¹⁴"Et quant à son pourtraict, encores que se voyant peinct en son ieune aage, & se comparant avec sa vieillesse de 76. ans, alors que ce pourtraict luy fut fait & baillé sans le demander, il se souviene trèsvolontiers de la grande grâce que Dieu luy a faite en tel changement, & de visage, & de conditïon; pour l'en remercier de bon coeur; se vous peut-il dire que ceste vanité de se voir en peinture, ne le chatouille non plus que de mirer sa barbe grise en un miroir. Ce neantmoins apprenant par vostre calonnie, que cela peut offenser les yeux de quelcun, s'il vous ouvre encor un fois sa porte, vous ne l'y trouverez plus en peinture, mais bien encores vivant, marchant, parlant, & escrivant, selon la grâce qu'il plaist à Dieu luy continuer, pour l'avancement de la vérité & gloire d'iceluy, contre cest beste, qui est assise sur les sept montaignes; avec espérance d'y persévérer iusques à son dernier souspir." *Response à la lettre d'un gentilhomme Savoisien*, 59-60.

²¹⁵Sutherland, *The Huguenot Struggle*, 318; Babelon, *Henri IV*, 618-620.

assemblies at Vendôme (November 1596 - February 1597) and Saumur (March - May 1597). Royal councillors continued to refuse concessions to the Reformed beyond those stipulated in the Edict of 1577. Disgruntled Protestants, in turn, stopped paying the royal *tailles* and began to seize royal revenues that had been promised to maintain their fortified cities.²¹⁶ Increasingly, as one royal deputy observed, "both sides were baring their fangs."²¹⁷

There was little that Theodore Beza could do as he watched this dangerous situation unfolding. Although Henri IV requested the reformer and the Genevan ministers to intervene on his behalf before the assembly of Saumur, the city magistrates deemed such an action politically unwise.²¹⁸ Nonetheless, Beza feared that, by ignoring the "great and just complaints" of the Huguenot assemblies, the

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²¹⁶Sutherland, *The Huguenot Struggle*, 316; Holt, *The French Wars of Religion*, 162. In a letter from Chevalier (dated 1 March 1597), the ambassador reported to the Genevan magistrates: "Ce samedi 1^e est arrivé nouvelles que ceux de la religion ont arresté des deniers du roy pour payer leurs garnisons, dont le roy & son conseil despitent & disent qu'il les contraindra de faire paix ou trêve avec son ennemi pour rengier ceux de la religion... Ce qu'ilz veulent empescher par ceux de la religion, disent que ce ne sont que menaces & qu'on leur promet d'entretenir leurs garnisons, mais c'est en partie & ils veulent des effects." 8/18 March 1597, RC 92, 38.

²¹⁷"Vous verrés par la despesche du roy, comme il désire que vous preniés le chemin de le venir trouver par Vendosme, où il est nécessaire que vous vous employés, et à terminer cest affaire avec la douceur; car il seroit trop aisé de l'aigrir, chacung monstrant desjà les dents de part et d'autre." Monsieur du Fresne Forget to Duplessis-Mornay, 15 January 1597, published in *Mémoires et correspondance*, VII, 112.

²¹⁸In the same letter cited in note 216 above, Chevalier wrote: "Je sçay que le roy a dit qu'il sçavoit bien que M^r de Bèze ne leur conseilloit cela [i.e. to seize the royal taille in order to finance Huguenot fortified cities] & ne vouloit appeller pour moyenner que l'Église de Genève escrivit à l'assemblée de Saumur à fin de se rengier à la volonté du roy. J'ay en ce cas ma response preste, c'est qu'ils ne nous communiquent de leurs affaires, etc. Car il n'est à propos que nous nous embarassons en leurs affaires pour nous rendre les uns & les autres ennemis & l'Angleterre favorisera ceux de la religion..." RC 92, 38.

Catholics in the royal court were endangering the entire kingdom.²¹⁹ Rumors that the pope was trying to broker a peace between France and Spain--at the expense of the Huguenots--caused additional concerns. Despite these real dangers, Beza believed that the time for armed resistance was over. The Protestants of France should "direct their prayers to heaven, rather than whet their swords."²²⁰

Duplessis-Mornay expressed many of the grievances and frustrations of the Reformed in France in his *Brief discours* (1597).²²¹ From the beginning of the civil wars, the Reformed had faithfully served the kings of France and sought nothing more than the freedom of their consciences and the welfare of the kingdom. They had repeatedly accepted harsh edicts of pacification, often finding themselves "closer to servitude than to liberty out of their desire for peace."²²² The Protestants had stood beside Henri of Navarre in his darkest days and in his most difficult battles--before

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²¹⁹"... c'est au dedans qu'est le mal le plus dangereux, se formalisant fort tant le peuple que la justice de ces grandes et justes plaintes, ce qui fait craindre les plus sages quelque combustion entre le chef mesmes et ses principaux membres, auquel cas sans doute s'ensuivroit une fatale et irrémédiable ruine de tout le corps, ce que le Seigneur nostre Dieu par sa sainte grâce vueille empescher..." [Beza] to Anonymous, [summer 1597], Geneva, Archives Tronchin à Bessinge, f. Bèze, vol. 5, fols. 305-307.

²²⁰"Nihil autem novi nunc habeo, nisi quod mihi magis ac magis suspecta est consilii Regis in Gallia tarditas, Pontifice nihil non tentante, ut vel pace, vel longissimis aliquibus induciis inter Hispanum et Gallum initis syncretismus adversus Gallicas Ecclesias decernatur. Frangat potens ille Deus & Servator noster tam sceleratos impiorum conatus, ad quam rem obtinendam, utinam preces potius intendantur quam ulli gladii acuantur." Beza to Constantine Fabricius, 8/18 March 1597, Nuremberg, Staatsarchiv, E. Laden Akten, no. 279.

²²¹*Brief discours par lequel chacun peut estre esclairci des justes procédures de ceux de la religion Réformée* (Genève, 1597). See CDM, 149. This work is also published in *Mémoires et correspondance*, VII, 257-298.

²²²"Et patienteront tousiours ceux de la Religion en ceste condition, plus proche de servitude que de liberté, pour le désir de paix." Duplessis-Mornay, *Brief discours*, 26.

and after his accession-- , waiting patiently for him to redress their political situation in the kingdom. Even after the king's conversion at Saint Denis, the Reformed had asked for nothing more than "liberty, justice, and security," three things guaranteed to all Christians.²²³ And yet, while Henri had demonstrated clemency and generosity to his Leaguer enemies, he refused to grant any concessions to his loyal Protestant subjects. The Edict of Poitiers--which had been repeatedly violated and left unregistered by most of the parlements in France--did not provide adequate liberties or safe-guards for the Protestants. Thus, after three years of fruitless negotiations, the Protestants were now beginning "to fear more than to hope for action of the royal court."²²⁴ Duplessis-Mornay concluded by insisting that granting liberty to the Protestants would not destroy the kingdom of France. They desired nothing more than to live in peace with their Catholic 'brothers' and to spend their lives serving the king. Henri and his Catholic advisors should heed the wise counsel of Gamaliel (Acts 5.33-34): "Because this work is from God, let us not battle against it. Let us leave

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²²³"Ces requestes, comme quelques autres qui se sont veuë & devant & depuis, ne tendoyent point à partager l'autorité avec le Roy; à demander son Estat, ny son Domaine; à créer en leur faveur des Officiers de la Couronne; à charger de sommes excessives les subiects du Roy, pour récompenser eux ou les leurs. Soit cela donné à la misère du temps, & à la mauvaise influence du siècle: mais bien purement & simplement à obtenir une liberté pour leur conscience, une iustice non partiale pour la conservation de leurs biens, vies & honneurs, une seureté pour leur condition contre la mauvaise foy trop esprouvée; liberté, iustice & seureté qui ne se pouvoit dénier aux Chrestiens, puis que le Pape la donne aux Iuifs; aux François, puis qu'elle est deuë à tous estrangers..." Duplessis-Mornay, *Brief discours*, 54-55.

²²⁴"On commença a plus craindre qu'espérer des remèdes de la Cour: demeurant toutesfois persuadé ausdicts Députez, que le bon naturel du Roy ne pouvoit estre capable de leur mal-vouloir." Duplessis-Mornay, *Brief discours*, 62.

these people alone and grant them peace, lest we fail to crush them."²²⁵

For several years, Henri IV had stated his intention to address the demands of the Reformed churches only after pacifying his kingdom. By the summer of 1597, however, the threat of wide-spread Protestant disaffection forced the king to negotiate more seriously with the Huguenot assembly and make significant concessions. Shortly after the Protestant delegates moved from Saumur to Châtellerault in June 1597, they found the royal commissioner Gaspard de Schomberg willing to discuss terms for a religious settlement on a basis other than the Edict of Poitiers of 1577.²²⁶ In July, the deputies of Châtellerault drafted a series of articles enumerating Protestant demands and sent this document to the court. The king revised these articles and returned them to the assembly in August. Although this document underwent several revisions in the next eight months, it formed the foundation of the religious settlement that was formally approved at Nantes in April 1598. These arduous negotiations, initiated by Protestant threats, were facilitated by the improving military and political situation of the king during the fall of 1597. In September, Henri IV beat back a Spanish army of 21,000 men and recaptured the city of Amiens, a victory that decisively turned the tide of the war.²²⁷ From Amiens, Navarre

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²²⁵"... pour conclurre avec ce prudent Israélite Gamaliel; *Puis que cest oeuvre est de Dieu, ne lui faisons point la guerre, déportons-nous de ces hommes, laissons-les en paix, nous ne les pouvons desfaire: & prenons conséquemment toutes autres résolutions & conseils contraires.*" Duplessis-Mornay, *Brief discours*, 92.

²²⁶The details of these negotiations are described by Sutherland, *The Huguenot Struggle*, 321-328 and Patry, *Philippe du Plessis-Mornay*, 359-370.

²²⁷Babelon, *Henri IV*, 620-622.

marched to Brittany and defeated the last remnants of the Leaguer army under the command of the duke of Mercoeur. Fearful that Henri would negotiate a peace with Philip II at their expense, the Protestants became all the more willing to compromise with the king. With this dramatic turn of events, even the most hostile Huguenot nobles like Bouillon and La Trémoille were forced to accede to Henri's authority and lend their support to the victorious king.

The Edict of Nantes was signed on 13 April 1598, three weeks before the Treaty of Vervins officially concluded the war between France and Spain.²²⁸ The Edict consisted of four parts: 92 general articles, 56 secret articles, and two 'brevets.'²²⁹ The general articles resembled the edicts of Beaulieu (1576) and Poitiers, permitting the Huguenots liberty of conscience as well as the freedom to worship in all cities and towns under Huguenot control in August 1597, in cities permitted by previous edicts, and in the private homes of Protestant nobles. The Reformed were granted full civil rights in access to schools and in the holding of public and royal offices. Bi-partisan courts were to be established to adjudicate cases involving Protestants. In addition, the general articles contained several important concessions to the Catholics: the mass was to be restored everywhere in the kingdom; the

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²²⁸The Treaty of Vervins was signed on 2 May 1598. The text of the Edict of Nantes is found in *FP X*, 226-257. For a description of this important edict, see Sutherland, *The Huguenot Struggle*, 328-332, 370-372; Greengrass, *France in the Age of Henri IV*, 100-106; and especially Holt, *The French Wars of Religion*, 162-172.

²²⁹The 'articles' had to be registered by the French parlements and could only be abridged by a subsequent act of parlement. The 'brevets,' on the other hand, were granted by the prerogative of the king and could be countermanded at his whim and were revoked at his death.

Reformed were required to observe Catholic feast days and pay the ecclesiastical tithe; so too, Protestants were forbidden to sell books outside the areas they controlled.

The 57 secret articles elaborated upon particular clauses in the general articles, listing specific exceptions, and providing a schedule for their implementation. Importantly, these articles granted the Reformed churches royal permission to hold consistories, colloquies, and synods in the towns they controlled, and allowed the Huguenots a political representative at court. The most novel, and controversial concessions that Henri granted to the Protestants were contained in the two 'brevets.' In the first (issued April 13), the king promised to pay the Reformed churches 45,000 écus per year for the support of their pastors. The second brevet (issued April 30) granted to the Huguenots around 100 fortified cities for eight years, and guaranteed 180,000 écus per year for their maintenance. In addition to these fortified cities, the Huguenots were permitted to maintain troops in another 100 towns and cities. As a whole, the Edict of Nantes was a compromise achieved through hard bargaining and political pressure. It did not sanction toleration or envision the religious equality of the two confessions; rather, the Edict granted the Reformed certain basic religious freedoms, circumscribed within narrow geographical boundaries. Thus, while the Edict of Nantes was more generous to the Protestants than the Edict of Poitiers, it did not approach the almost unrestricted 'free, general and public' worship granted by the Edict of Beaulieu.

When he received the report of the Edict of Nantes in late April, Theodore

Beza was thrilled. Twenty years earlier he had counselled the young prince Henri of Navarre to refuse any peace settlement that restricted the freedoms guaranteed in the Edict of Beaulieu (Peace of Monsieur). Now, the old reformer was content with this 'not completely intolerable' peace that provided French Protestants liberty of conscience and physical security. If the king could succeed in compelling the regional parlements to register this edict, the whole of France would cry out: "This has been done by the Lord, and it is wonderful in our eyes!" (Psalms 118.23)²³⁰ In the months that followed, Beza's admiration for Henri IV and enthusiasm for the royal peace only grew. Writing to the Huguenot deputies at Châtellerault in November, the Genevan reformer praised God's willingness to turn Henri's heart to peace, noting that through this humble king God had "changed the horror of civil wars into a true state of peace."²³¹ Confident of the king's continued good-will, Beza urged the assembly to

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²³⁰Beza received a report from Nantes shortly before the edict was signed: "Ad res Gallicas quod attinet, scito tandem, per Dei gratiam, inter Regem et Ecclesias de ipsarum in vero Dei cultu libertate serio convenisse, cuius conditiones audio non esse prorsus intolerabiles, promittente quoque Regis consilio futurum ut, et a Parlamentis edictum istud acceptetur, et meliore quam antea fide observetur." Beza to Grynaeus, 3/13 April 1598, Basle, Univ. Bibl., Kirchen Archiv, C. I. 1, Bd. III, fol. 58. Note also Beza's comments to Wenceslas Zastrisell four months later: "Ad res Gallicas quod attinet, undique intelligimus incredibili cum omnium laetitia exceptam pacem illam inter duos illos reges potentissimos initam, sed et ecclesiis edicto regio concessa tandem est ea conscientiae libertas et hominum securitas, in qua merito conquiescat, si modo, quod rex ipse sese omnibus modis effecturum pollicetur, possit ab adversariis vera illius edicti observatio extorqueri. Denique si nihil hic fraudis subest, merito in hanc exclamationem Gallia tota eruperit. A Domino vere factum est istud et est admirabile in oculis nostris!" 3/13 August 1598, published in Hruby, *Étudiants tchèques aux écoles protestantes*, 327-328.

²³¹"... louant de tout mon coeur notre grand & vray Dieu tout puissant & tout bon, premièrement de ce qu'il a encliné le coeur de celui qu'il a donné pour Roy à la France, à un tel conseil & moyen si convenable pour changer l'horreur des guerres civiles en une vraye tranquillité, conioinctes avec le moyen d'honorer celui qui en est proprement l'auteur & le donneur..." Beza to the Assembly at Châtellerault, 18/28 November 1598, Geneva, BPU, ms. fr. 413, fols. 101-103.

wait patiently and prayerfully for the registration of the edict.²³² When the Parlement of Paris finally promulgated the Edict of Nantes in the early weeks of 1599, Beza's excitement was understandably effusive: in the face of violent Catholic opposition, Henri had fearlessly--and providentially--defended the interests of the Protestants and achieved the peace of the kingdom.

With France finally pacified, Beza had time to reflect on the troubles of the past and the prospects for the future. In the previous five years, some Protestants had renounced the true religion and "returned to their vomit"--but only a few. Now, despite the ragings of the Catholics, God's people throughout the kingdom were flocking back to the Reformed churches. The future would almost seem bright, were it not for the serious shortage of ministers. "If only God might remedy this most serious evil by calling forth laborers to plant and to harvest!"²³³

Beza still held out hope for his friend and patron Henri of Navarre. The old reformer refused to believe that this courageous king was a 'deserter,' lost once for

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²³²"... il despend par vraye conversion & continuelles prières en toute humilité & patience, laquelles par expérience mesmes nous voyons & sentons estre la seule entre toutes les autres vertus Chrestienes par laquelle le Seigneur rend son Église la plus invincible & victorieuse és plus grands assaux & combats qui lui sont livrés." Beza to the Assembly of Châtellerault, 18/28 November 1598, Geneva, BPU, ms. fr. 413, fols. 101-103.

²³³"Ad Galliam autem ipsam quod attinet, affirmo Celsitudini tuae, quamvis magis ac magis illic crescente desperata adversariorum veritatis rabie, tandem tamen obtente Edicti regii promulgatione, qua nostrorum caetuum securitati cavetur, Gallicas Ecclesias nunquam fuisse tum in ipsa fidei verae professione, tum etiam in ecclesiasticae disciplinae accurata observatione coniunctiores. Nonnullis quidem, sed tamen pauculis, ad vomitum reversis, et qui vere ex nostris non essent. Sed e contrariis quamplurimis undique certatim in Dei domum, admirabili plane concursu, confluentibus, adeo ut nulla re magis quam pastorum penuria laborentur; cui maximo malo, utinam is medeatur, cui proprium est operarios ad sationem et messem suam extrudere." Beza to Janus Radiwil, 19/29 December 1599, Paris, Bibl. Ste. Geneviève, ms. 1455, fols. 310^v-312^v.

all from the army of God. Instead, Protestants in France should pray and call Henri "back to the camp of the Lord like a soldier who has exceeded his furlough," for in the codification and promulgation of the Edict of Nantes, he had "set aside his life for the tranquility of the churches."²³⁴ In this dramatic act of self-sacrifice, Beza found reason to hope that the king's perilous leap at Saint Denis had not been final or fatal.

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²³⁴"Ad ipsum autem Regem quod attinet, absit, ut quorundam temere neque sane recto Dei spiritu de rebus tantis et sibi incompetis iudicantium exemplum secuti pro desertore et semel perduto illum habeamus, quem potius oportuit ut emansorem in castra Domini seriis precibus revocare: ut qui certe in hac huius Edicti impetratione et promulgatione, ut et aliis non paucis in rebus videri merito possit suam ipsius vitam postposuisse Ecclesiarum tranquillitati..." Beza to Jacob Monau, 15/25 March 1599, published in Gillet, 549-550.

CONCLUSIONS

On the morning of 5 December 1600, Theodore Beza mounted a horse and rode the short distance from Geneva to Éluiset in occupied Savoy with a rather extraordinary errand to perform: he had been summoned to the royal camp to meet the French king, Henri IV.¹ Afterwards, the substance of this dramatic interview was recounted by Beza and his physician, Isaiah Colladon: Henri, surrounded by courtiers, welcomed Beza warmly, embracing him and calling him his father and friend. They reminisced about days long gone, idyllic days when Henri, as a young prince, had first met Beza at Nérac. They spoke of the French civil wars, spanning more than thirty bloody years, and the ever-present difficulties and dangers Henri had endured because of them. At one point in their conversation the king revealed his attachment to Beza and his future program: "I wish that I could give you my own blood and that you were thirty years younger--then you would see a lot of great achievements!" In response, Beza assured Henri that he too would like to have another thirty years in the king's service, with the opportunity to work on behalf of the churches. Finally, the two men talked about peace, with Beza reminding the king of his duty to enforce the Edict of Nantes. After two hours, the old reformer returned to Geneva accompanied by a royal escort. Three weeks later, Beza still

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¹In 1600, Henri declared war against Savoy and quickly conquered the Savoyard territories adjacent to Geneva. In early December, the magistrates of Geneva travelled to the royal camp at Éluiset to welcome the king. In this interview, Henri asked about the health of Beza and asked to see him: "... et faisant tourner visage à ses gens remonte & interroge Mons^r Roset de la santé de Mons^r de Bèze. M^r Roset dit qu'il estoit vieux mais fort affectionné. Le roy dit 'je désire le veoir, etc.'" 23 November/3 December 1600, RC 95, 203.

could not conceal his delight: Henri of Navarre "is by nature a man of exceptional integrity!"²

In the forty years that separated Beza's and Henri's first meeting at Nérac and their final interview at Éluiset, the prospects for the Protestant movement in France had changed dramatically. In 1560, the Reformed churches were germinating and growing rapidly in many parts of the kingdom, planted by aggressive evangelistic efforts and nourished by Protestant pastors requested from Geneva and Lausanne.

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²"Inter ista vero, quum plenissime et certissime cognovissem regem cupidissime optare mei conspectionem, etsi partim summa virium mearum imbecillitas iustissimam excusationem mihi praebebat, et obstabant multa quae praetereo impedimenta, tamen quum tertio demum a nobis miliari ipse Rex abesset, nostri Magistratus consilio et voluntate ad ipsum accessi. A quo non tantum humaniter, verum etiam amice atque adeo familiariter sum exceptus, et ita postulante me, eodem ipso die dimissus; idque adstante principum procerumque longe maximo coetu, ut si forte istiusmodi fumos captarem, a quibus, Dei beneficio, totus abhorreo, vix quicquam eiusmodi ambire potuerim. Noster autem omnis sermo fuit in mutua communi congratulatione positus, illo quidem me amplexante, neque aliter quam patris et amici nomine compellante. Et ut est profecto per se omnium, ut opinor, regum humanissimus, vetera quaedam repenter priore illo bello civili Gallico, Neraci, ipso adhuc nondum pubere, dicta et gesta; me vero vicissim illi tam prosperam et tam admirabilem ex summis et pene infinitis perculis evasionem, et prosperum in tot difficultatibus ad hunc usque diem successum, ipsius maiestati gratulante; et paucis quidem, sed prout et tempus, et locus, et tantus consessus postulabat, suggerente quibus ad petendum ab uno Deo et recta conscientia tantarum tempestatum felicem exitum, et quidem in primis ad pacificatorii edicti sinceram observationem faciunt, permoveri magis ac magis ipsum posse existimavi. Ad haec autem omnia, sic ille vicissim respondit, ut nisi me prorsus omnes coniecturae fallunt, idem quoque ipse ex animo videatur exoptare." Beza to Stucki, 24 December [1600], Basle, Univ. Bibl., ms. G2, II, 34, fols. 41-44. Isaiah Colladon recorded the event in his *Journal*: "De là, il [Bèze] salua humblement le Roy, qui le receut en toute bènignité, le faisant tenir assis sur un lict nonobstant qu'il fût debout, l'appellant son amy, son père & le baisa par 2. fois luy disant: *Je voudrois avoir baillé un verre de mon propre sang & que vous fussiez plus jeune de 30. ans, vous verriés beaucoup de grandes choses.* Se ramenturent réciproquement le tems qu'il y avoit de 30. & tant d'années qu'ils ne s'estoyent vus. M. de Bèze luy ayant souhaité tout bien & qu'il voudroit être plus jeune de 30. ans pour luy servir (même de laquais), luy recommanda le bien des Églises. Puis le Roy mit ordre qu'on le servît à diner en la chambre dudit seigneur de La Force, où tous les princes & grands seigneurs luy tinrent compagnie, même M. de Guise, qui à Genève avoit dédaigné de l'aller voir .... Après qu'il eut diné, le Roy luy fit demander s'il vouloit s'en retourner ce jour là, & en tel cas commandé que son carrosse soit prêt. Toutesfois ledit S^r de Bèze retourna sur sa monture." Isaiah Colladon, *Journal d'Esaië Colladon, Mémoires sur Genève, 1600-1605* (Genève: Jullien, 1883), 8-9. For other contemporary accounts of this interview at Éluiset, see H. J. Burkhardt to Grynaeus, 28 November/8 December 1600, published in Hruby, *Etudianis tchèques aux écoles protestantes*, 378-379; and Pierre de l'Estoile, *Journal de l'Estoile pour le Règne de Henri VI*, vol. 1, ed. Louis-Raymond Lefèvre (Paris: Gallimard, 1948), 633-634.

The support of powerful notables like Antoine of Bourbon, Jeanne d'Albret, Louis of Condé, and Coligny gave the Protestants additional confidence. When Beza journeyed to Poissy in the summer of 1561, it seemed to many that France was on the verge of turning decisively toward the Reformed religion. Four decades later, however, such optimism was permanently crushed. An age of 'gold,' filled with idealism and hopefulness, had been 'transmuted' into an age of 'iron.'

For Beza and the Huguenots, the successive wars and political set-backs between 1572 and 1598 not only changed their expectations, but also forced them to formulate new strategies to assure the survival of the Reformed movement in France. Horrified by Saint Bartholomew's day, Beza and a 'Genevan triumvirate' put aside Calvin's doctrine of non-resistance and waged an intense propaganda campaign in which they defended limited monarchy and justified political resistance against a tyrannical king. Borne in a volatile social matrix suffused with faith, anger, and fear, these ideas were subsequently acted out in agitation and armed resistance against the Valois monarchs. Beza himself played a more important role in Huguenot resistance activities than generally thought: Condé's invasion in December 1575 was in no small part the result of the reformer's council and intensive diplomatic efforts during the previous eighteen months.

Saint Bartholomew's day changed radically--and in retrospect, decisively--the prospects of the Reformed movement in France. On the one hand, the massacres eliminated almost overnight key religious and political leaders of the movement. Equally disturbing for Beza and his colleagues, the bloodshed of 1572 induced many

to abjure the Reformed religion and to make peace with the old Church.

Contemporary sources make clear that the problem of 'apostasy' was by no means restricted to the months following Saint Bartholomew. During the next twenty-five years, Protestant apologists wrote numerous pamphlets and treatises against 'apostasy,' revealing that conversion represented a real temptation, and a significant problem for the Reformed throughout this period. Though the 'heyday' of Catholic evangelization in France would be in the seventeenth century, I have documented that already in the 1580s and 1590s the Reformed were seriously concerned about the establishment of Jesuit schools, the expansion of Jesuit and Capuchin missionary activities, and the apologetical challenges presented by new modes of Catholic argumentation. In light of these Catholic advances, French Protestants grew discouraged about the state of the Reformed movement, and hesitant to engage in theological disputes that seemed to offer little prospect for success. This discouragement and concern was compounded by a growing shortage of French ministers: as a generation of reformers passed away, Beza and his colleagues worried that there were few trained leaders to pick up the gauntlet and defend the Reformed religion in the future. Although the precise numerical strength of French Protestantism during these years has proven to be impossible to calculate, it is clear that the massacres of 1572 triggered--or at least accelerated--a long-term decline in the number of Reformed churches and adherents. Thus, the National Synod of Montpellier in 1598 listed 763 Reformed churches in France, down from around 1250

churches at the beginning of the French civil wars.³

In addition to numerical decline, the massacres of 1572 radicalized the conflict between the two confessional parties, initiating a new, far more dangerous phase of the French civil wars in which first the Huguenots, and then the Catholic League openly defied their king. Once a champion of armed resistance against the Valois, Beza came to fear even more the consequences of war. A trilogy of evils--the destruction of Reformed churches, immorality in the Huguenot army, and moral decadence in the households of Protestant nobles--was undermining the holy cause of reformation. By the early 1580s, he was calling the Huguenots to desist from armed confrontation, convinced that it was better to suffer 'under the cross' than to be held responsible for the plague of anarchy in the kingdom and dissipation in the churches. Contrary to the conclusion of recent scholarship, Theodore Beza did not altogether abandon his stance on resistance--as did François Hotman and Duplessis-Mornay--when Henri of Navarre became heir-apparent to the French throne in 1584. However, he did refocus his argument, condemning more explicitly those illegitimate acts of violence that threatened France's social stability, harmed the Protestant churches, and jeopardized Navarre's political future.

In the decade following Saint Bartholomew's day, the Reformed searched for a political leader to succeed Coligny and champion their cause. Before 1584, Beza's support for Henri of Navarre was not at all certain. The reformer was wary of

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³See Aymon, I, 226; Léonard, *Histoire Générale du Protestantisme*, II, 147-148; Greengrass, *The French Reformation*, 42-43. Beza had estimated the number of Protestant congregations in France to be about 1500 in the summer of 1561. See note 56, page 36-37.

Navarre's confessional vacillations, suspicious of his advisors, and well-aware that the prince's political interests were incompatible with many of the goals of the Reformed churches. Ultimately, Henri's perseverance in the face of a series of political crises in 1584-1586 (the death of Anjou, the growth of the Catholic League, and the repressive Peace of Nemours) proved to be decisive in winning Beza's confidence. In subsequent years, the Genevan reformer served as the prince's agent and advocate in Switzerland, raising money and mercenaries for the Huguenot war effort against the Catholic League. In return, Beza received an annual stipend from the prince. Unknown hitherto, this financial arrangement serves as an important reminder of the complexity of Beza's role and the degree of his involvement in the French crisis. Religious conviction as well as the bonds of friendship, patriotism and, after 1585, patronage transformed the Genevan reformer into a dedicated supporter of the person and program of Henri of Navarre.

When Henri acceded to the throne in August 1589, Beza regarded the prince as a divine instrument to bring freedom to the Protestant churches and to resolve the French political crisis. At the same time, Beza and the Genevan ministers recognized that Henri faced intense pressure to renounce Protestantism in order to secure the peace of his kingdom. Hence, between 1589 and 1593, they undertook an elaborate campaign to bolster the king's faith and to assure the legal standing of the Reformed religion in France. Beza was so swayed by his affection for Henri, and so convinced of Navarre's providential role, that he did not withdraw his support from the king even after the shock of the royal abjuration at Saint Denis (1593). The reformer's

reservations, yet continued admiration for the wayward king were reflected in the change of biblical images used to describe Henri: the righteous servant of God, king 'David,' had become the inconstant, but divinely-appointed, 'Sampson.'

These dramatic political developments placed enormous pressure on French Protestants, creating and exacerbating theological and political divisions within the movement. During the 1590s, Reformed leaders were particularly alarmed by 'compromisers' (*moyenneurs*) like Jean Hotman, Antoine Lescaille, and Jean de Serres who were willing to sacrifice Calvin's doctrine in an attempt to achieve theological accord with the Catholics in France. What has been overlooked until now, however, is that programs of doctrinal reconciliation constituted a *political* as well as a religious threat to the Protestants in France. The fact that Henri IV lent his support to these proposals made them all the more dangerous. It was only through vigorous effort that Beza and the Reformed leadership were able to silence dissent, thereby preserving the doctrinal unity of the churches and enhancing the political viability of the Huguenot movement.

In the aftermath of the royal abjuration, the Reformed were deeply divided as to whether they should trust and obey Henri IV. Some Huguenot notables proposed electing a military and political leader to protect the Reformed churches from the schemes of the royal court. In this explosive climate, I have shown that Theodore Beza was a prominent advocate for patience and political accommodation. Worn by war and confident of Henri's good will, he urged the Reformed faithful to eschew violence and to trust the king to defend their political and religious interests. By the

mid-1590s, Beza had clearly abandoned any hope for ‘full and complete religious liberty.’ In view of political realities, the Reformed should be satisfied with a royal edict that granted freedom of conscience and guaranteed at least minimal rights to exercise their religion in public. Thus, the Genevan reformer welcomed the Edict of Nantes in 1598 as a tolerable political solution, offering the Reformed churches in France adequate religious freedom and political security. The time of warfare and agitation was over, he believed. For the sake of the French kingdom and for the good of the churches, the Reformed must now honor the king, live peacefully with their Catholic neighbors, and endure suffering patiently, always relying on the providence of God. In many ways, Beza’s meeting with Henri at Éluiset in 1600 symbolized the hopes for the future in France: after more than a half-century, the old Reformed minister had been reconciled to his Catholic king.

In the years following the encounter at Éluiset, Theodore Beza gradually disappeared from public view. Confined to his home by fragile health, he spent his days dictating letters, hosting occasional visitors, and ‘speaking with his books.’ When his health permitted, he attended worship services at Saint Pierre or joined the Company of Pastors in their weekly meetings.⁴ Nonetheless, the isolation of old age was painful for the reformer; on several occasions he urged his colleagues to visit him in order to keep him abreast of important news. His final years were made more difficult by financial concerns. In September 1600, the reformer had to ask friends at

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⁴Details of the final years of Beza’s life are found in the *RCP* VIII (passim), and in the journal of Isaiah Colladon, a doctor and friend of Beza’s who taught at the Genevan Academy from 1593 to 1600 (see *Journal d’Esaie Colladon*, passim).

the French court to intercede with the king on his behalf, seeking disbursement of his unpaid annuity.⁵ When the royal treasurer Sully came to Geneva later in the fall, he brought Beza 500 écus.⁶ Two years later, the reformer requested and received an additional 200 écus from Paris.⁷ These monetary gifts reveal that, even in retirement, Beza was bound to Henri IV by the twofold tie of affection and obligation. To the end of his life, the Genevan reformer interpreted his office as leader of the Reformed movement to include service to the French king.

Old age did not diminish the reformer's sense of duty to the Reformed cause or mellow his fierce opposition to the Roman Catholic religion. With the assistance of his ministerial colleagues, he continued to advise the churches, warning against deviations from the French 'Confession of Faith.' So too, he remained in contact

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⁵"Ce qu'il vous a pleu tellement prendre de bonne part, qui outre cela il vous a pleu aussi entendre un autre certain mien affaire envers Sa dicte Majesté, concernant les arrerages de plusieurs années escheues de la pension de deux cens escus par an à moy de pure libéralité ordonnée par Sa Majesté, me remettant du tout pour une fois à ce qu'il plairoit à Sa Majesté d'ordonner desdicts arrerages, demourant par mesme moyen la dicte pension esteincte. En quoy vous auroyt pleu de vostre bénigne grâce vous employer jusques à en parler à Sa Majesté, laquelle tesmoignant sa bonté accoustumée, vous en auroit fait bonne et gracieuse response." Beza to M. de Rosny [Sully] and Loménie, 4/14 September 1600, Geneva, Archives Tronchin, f. Bèze, vol. 2, no. 42.

⁶Thus M. de Loménie wrote Beza on 4 October 1600: "En bref, Monsieur de Rosny qui faict estat de dornier jusques en vostre ville pour vous veoyr, vous fera tenir cinq cens escuz qu'il [the king] vous a ordonné..." Geneva, Archives Tronchin, f. Bèze, vol. 2, no. 41. Sully accompanied the king to Éluset, and visited Geneva on November 24/December 4. See Colladon, *Journal*, 8.

⁷"Monsieur, je vous escravis il y a quelque temps une lettre que Mons' de Normandie mon frère vous aura fait tenir, par laquelle je vous mandois que je n'avois oublié ce que vous promis à mon despart et à Madame vostre femme, c'est de parler à Monsieur de Sillery pour vostre particulier, à quoy je l'ay tellement disposé (sachant, outre l'affection particulière qu'il vous porte, qu'il faict chose agréable au Roy), que vous pouvez faire estat que je vous porterai deulx cens escutz, Dieu aydant, bien tost que j'espère m'en retourner à Genève. Ce ne pourra estre pour la Cène de Noël, à mon grand regret.... Si cependant vous estes pressé en aulcune manière que ce soit, me le mandant je ne manquerai vous envoyer ou le tout ou une partie par mon homme tout exprèz." Joseph Duchesne de la Violette to Beza, 24 December [1602], Geneva, Archives Tronchin à Bessinge, f. Bèze, vol. 4, no. 64.

with high-placed Protestant leaders in France such as Duplessis-Mornay and Catherine of Bourbon, exhorting them to courage and constancy in the face of Catholic pressure. At the same time, Beza prayed for grace to endure his own trials, determined "to reach that most excellent port without shipwreck."⁸ Although the reformer was willing to condone political concessions for the sake of survival, he continued to be an outspoken foe of the Roman Church. Hence, in 1602, he explained to a dinner guest that the mark of the Beast '666' (Revelation 13) was the sum of the numerical value of the Greek letters EKKLESIA ITALIKA--the 'Italian Church.'⁹ To the end of his life, the Genevan reformer refused all theological compromise: there could be no mixing of truth and error, light and darkness, Christ and Antichrist. Nor could Christians be indolent in defending spiritual truth. In one of his last letters, Beza noted: "True servants of God must die standing before they

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⁸"Ego vero privatim etsi in hac aetate annum videlicet huius vitae 82^{um} ingressus, tranquillam adhuc et a saevissimis illis morbis immunem senectam experior, tamen prae virium ipsius corporis imbecillitate domi me totum continens et totus de hoc uno sollicitus, ut in illum tandem optatissimum portum sine naufragio appellam..." Beza to Georges Sigismond of Zástrizly, 1/11 July 1600, published in Hruby, *Étudiants tchèques aux écoles protestantes*, 350. A year later, he offered a similar assessment to Louis Courant: "Et quant à ma disposition et santé, outre ce que aage de mien année 83 qui commencera, Dieu aidant, dans deux jours après la datte de la présente, me forclost du tout d'estre ni parleur en public, selon la charge de mon ministère, ni auditeur, à cause d'une pesanteur d'oreille, je suis au reste comme confiné à la maison, assis ou bien souvent gisant au lict. Toutes fois tellement en ceste indisposition, que grâces à nostre bon Dieu et Père, en ceste foiblesse je puis encores par intervalles parler avec mes livres et deviser de tout bon propos d'édification et de consolation, tant par paroles et saintes conférences avec mes seigneurs frères et amis, que par lettres avec les absens, selon que ma foiblesse le permet, non sans prières assidueles à ce qu'il plaise à celui qui ne m'a point abandonné iusques à présent, me faire la grâce d'arriver jusques au dernier bout de ma paouvre course, si ce n'est à quelque advancement en son oeuvre, au moins sans scandale ni destourber aucun..." 22 June/2 July 1601, Geneva, Archives Tronchin à Bessinge, f. Bèze, vol. 5, fol. 296-297.

⁹"Le 29 [de mai], je m'allay promener avec M. de Bèze à Bordigny & revins au soir souper avec luy, où, sur la fin du repas, il me fit comprendre comme le nombre 666. de la bête, dont il est parlé au dernier verset du 13. de l'Apocalypse, se trouve exprimé par les lettres de ces 2. mots: ΕΚΚΛΗΣΙΑ ΙΤΑΛΙΚΑ." Colladon, *Journal*, 36.

are seated in heaven..."¹⁰

Theodore Beza died on Sunday morning, 23 October 1605, as the bells of Saint Pierre summoned the people of Geneva to the eight o'clock sermon.¹¹ The next day, the magistrates affixed to the doors of the Academy a brief notice: "Like sailors arriving in port, so is the entrance into another life of those whose death is precious in the eyes of the Lord. Yesterday, a great light in the Church was extinguished."¹² Later that same day, the body of the reformer was carried by students from the Academy and laid to rest in the cloister of Saint Pierre. The old Theodore Beza--pastor, professor, politician--died as he lived, a refugee.

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¹⁰"Les grands serviteurs de Dieu doyvent mourir tout debout pour vivre, et estre à leur tour assis ès lieux célestes, ès maisons et demeurances éternelles qui leur sont aprestées auprès de leur chef." Beza to Anonymous, 18/28 October 1603, Geneva, Archives Tronchin, f. Bèze, vol. 5, fol. 299.

¹¹"Le 13. octobre, jour de dimanche, auquel le soleil entroit au signe du Scorpion, un peu avant les 8. heures du matin, & comme le dernier coup du prêche sonnoit, M. Théodore de Bèze, âgé de 86. ans, 3. mois & 19. jours, décéda; & fut enterré le lendemain à midy au cloitre de S. Pierre." Colladon, *Journal*, 119. For a detailed description of the events surrounding Beza's death, see Geisendorf, 424-429.

¹²"Quod navigantibus est portus, hoc migratio in aliam vitam iis, quorum pretiosa mors in oculis Domini. Quum igitur, hesterna die, magnum illud Ecclesia lumen, R. vir D. Theodorus Beza, annis confectus, ex hac momentanea & arumnosa vita ad illam, in qua est, sine perturbatione, aeterna felicitas, placida translatus sit, hodie vero sepulturae mandandus, rogantur, Pastorum ac Professorum nomine, Illustres ac Generosi Domini Comites, Barones, Nobiles, omnes denique litterarum studiosi, qui in hac Academia versantur, ut hodie, hora duodecima, postremum hunc honorem, tanto viro, ac tam pie defuncto, debitum, tribuant, ut funus ipsius prosequantur...." Transcribed from the original affiche reproduced in Borgeaud, *Histoire de l'Université de Genève*, I, 313.

APPENDIX A

Theodore Beza: A Chronology of his Life and Works

24 June 1519	Theodore Beza born at Vézelay (Burgundy)
1528-1534	Theodore Beza under tutelage of Melchior Wolmar, first at Orléans, then at Bourges
1535	Melchior Wolmar leaves for Tübingen, Theodore Beza returns to Orléans
1539-1548	Theodore Beza resides in Paris
1548	<i>Poemata</i>
October 1548	Theodore Beza and Claudine Denosse flee Paris for Geneva
November 1549	Theodore Beza named professor of Greek at the Lausanne Academy
1550	<i>Abraham sacrificant</i>
1554	<i>De haereticis a civili magistratus puniendis</i>
1558	<i>Confession de la foi chrétienne</i>
October 1558	Theodore Beza arrives in Geneva
June 1559	Theodore Beza appointed rector of the Academy of Geneva
July 1560	Theodore Beza visits the court of Navarre at Nérac
September 1561	The Colloquy of Poissy
January 1562	The Colloquy of Saint Germain
April 1562 - May 1563	Theodore Beza serves as advisor and chaplain for Louis of Condé during the first civil war
May 1563	Theodore Beza returns to Geneva
24 May 1564	John Calvin dies
1564	<i>La vie de Calvin</i>
1571	Theodore Beza chosen as the moderator of the National Synod of Nîmes
1572	Theodore Beza attends the National Synod of La Rochelle
24 August 1574	The Saint Bartholomew's day massacres begin
1574	<i>Du droit des magistrats</i>
Summer 1574- Fall 1575	Theodore Beza serves as advisor for Henri of Condé, formulating Huguenot strategy
1579	<i>Psalmorum sacrorum libri quinque</i>
1580	The Jesuit Luca Pinelli visits Geneva
1580	<i>Histoire ecclésiastique</i>
1580	<i>Icones, id est verae imagines virorum doctrina simul et pietate illustrium</i>

APPENDIX A -- Continued

1583	Theodore Beza makes a final tour of the evangelical cities of Switzerland
1585 or 1586	Henri of Navarre begins to pay Theodore Beza an annuity
1586	<i>Response aux cinq premières ... demandes de F. Jean Hay</i>
1586	<i>Sermons sur le Cantique des Cantiques</i>
April 1588	Claudine Denosse dies. Theodore Beza marries Catherine of Piano four months later
1589	<i>Iobus Theodori Bezae partim commentariis partim paraphrasi illustratus</i>
1589 - 1593	Geneva at war with Savoy
Winter 1590	Crisis of funerary orations at Basle
Summer 1590	The Lescaille controversy begins
1592	<i>Sermons sur l'histoire de la passion</i>
1592	French edition of the <i>Traité des vrayes essentielles et visibles marques de la vraye Église Catholique</i>
1593	<i>Sermons sur l'histoire de la résurrection</i>
Summer 1594	Theodore Beza counsels the National Synod of Montauban to trust Henri IV
1594	Theodore Beza begins to correspond with Catherine of Bourbon
1594 - 1598	The affair of Jean de Serres
1597	<i>Theodori Bezae ad Ioan. Guil. Stuckium ... Responsio</i>
1598	<i>Response à la lettre d'un gentilhomme Savoisien</i>
1598	Final edition of the <i>Annotationes</i>
1599	Theodore Beza sells his library to a Czech nobleman
1600	Theodore Beza meets Henri IV at Eluiset
13 October 1605	Theodore Beza dies at the age of 86

APPENDIX B

A Brief Chronology of France, 1559 - 1598

1559	Treaty of Cateau-Cambrésis
1559	Death of Henri II in a jousting accident
1559	The first National Synod of the Reformed Churches held at Paris
March 1560	The Conspiracy of Amboise
December 1560	Death of François II
September-October 1561	The Colloquy of Poissy
January 1562	The Edict of Janvier
March 1562	Massacre at Vassy
April 1562 - March 1563	First Civil War, concluded with the Edict of Amboise
1563	Charles IX reaches the age of majority
September 1567 - March 1568	Second Civil War, concluded with the Edict of Longjumeau
September 1568 - August 1570	Third Civil War, concluded with the Edict of Saint Germain
1571	Seventh National Synod at La Rochelle
1572	Eighth National Synod at Nîmes
24 August 1572	Assassination of Coligny initiates the massacres of Saint Bartholomew
1572 - 1573	Fourth Civil War, concluded with the Edict of Boulogne (Peace of La Rochelle)
1573	Siege of La Rochelle and Sancerre
May 1574	Death of Charles IX
Fall 1575	Alençon flees the royal court
Fall 1575	Invasion of Condé and his mercenary army; begins the Fifth Civil War
May 1576	Edict of Beaulieu (Peace of Monsieur) concludes the Fifth Civil War
1577	Sixth Civil War, concluded with the Edict of Poitiers (Peace of Bergerac)
1578	Ninth National Synod at Saint Foy
1579	Treaty of Nérac
1579	Tenth National Synod at Figeac
1579 - 1580	Peasant revolts in Provence and the Dauphiné
1580	Seventh Civil War, concluded with the Peace of Fleix
1581	Eleventh National Synod at La Rochelle

APPENDIX B -- Continued

1583	Twelfth National Synod at Vitré
June 1584	The Duke of Anjou (Alençon) dies; Henri of Navarre becomes heir-apparent to the throne
1584	Establishment of the (second) Catholic League
December 1584	Treaty of Joinville between the duke of Guise and Philip II of Spain
July 1585	Treaty of Nemours signed by Henri III and the Catholic League
1585	Eighth Civil War begins, concluded with the Edict of Nantes
Summer 1587	Protestant mercenary army invades France, commanded by duke Jean Casimir
May 1588	Day of Barricades; Henri III flees Paris
July 1588	Edict of Union
December 1588	Henri III assassinates the duke of Guise and other Leaguer opponents
January 1589	Catherine de Médicis dies
August 1589	Henri III assassinated at Saint Cloud; Henri of Navarre declared the king of France
1590	Henri IV besieges Paris
1591	Edict of Mantes grants French Protestants small concessions
25 July 1593	Henri IV abjures the Reformed religion at Saint Denis
1594	Thirteenth National Synod at Montauban
February 1594	Henri IV crowned king of France at Chartres
March 1594	Paris capitulates to the king
August 1595	Pope Clement VIII grants Henri IV absolution
September 1595	Duke of Mayenne submits to Henri IV
1596	Fourteenth National Synod at Saumur
1596	Spanish army seizes Cambrai and Calais
1597	Spanish armies capture Amiens, relinquishing it later in the fall
April 1598	Edict of Nantes ends the Eighth Civil War
May 1598	Treaty of Vervin ends the war between France and Spain
1598	Fifteenth National Synod of Montpellier
1602	Sixteenth National Synod of Gergeau

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