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Geneva and Scotland: the Calvinist legacy and after

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I Scotland and Geneva

The relationship between Scotland and Geneva is interesting in part because it altered so greatly between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries. Indeed, it is not far from the truth to say that while Geneva was the lodestar for religious politics in Scotland in the sixteenth century and after, by the end of the eighteenth century Scotland had become a source of inspiration for future-minded politicians. For John Knox, during his Marian exile from 1554, Calvin's community of Protestants at Geneva was "the most perfect school of Christ." Geneva taught how to maintain both church and civil discipline, how to combat idolatry most effectively, and produced the Bible subsequently adopted by the Church of Scotland. The Genevan model of worship inspired clandestine sects across the British Isles, and especially in Scotland, where Knox defined the lairds as magistrates whose duty was to foster the true religion, even against the regent Mary de Guise.[1] The sense of Geneva as a source of Protestant doctrine and centre of Protestant learning remained, and the connections established were maintained over the following generations. An international Protestant movement continued to be identifiable into the eighteenth century and Geneva remained a necessary place of visitation for every Protestant traveller.[2]

At the same time Geneva was in decline. Despite general economic health, the repulsion of the attempt by the Duke of Savoy to take the city by force in 1604, and good relations with most of the Protestant powers of Europe, Geneva suffered from the growing power of France.[3] Threatened during the wars of Louis XIV, when many observers expected the city to become a victim of Gallican Catholicism, Geneva's survival relied upon increasingly positive relations with the French court. Such relations entailed allowing the leading French diplomat in the city, the *résident*, to celebrate the Catholic mass. It equally led Geneva to limit its involvement in Protestant causes. Geneva's response to the Huguenots fleeing persecution in France was modest in consequence. Pursuing a largely tolerant and cautious form of Calvinism became a political necessity.[4] This influenced Genevan-Scottish relations. Signs of a changing relationship can be seen in the fact that Jean-Alphonse Turretini, the great Genevan theologian of the early eighteenth century, developed far stronger epistolary relations with Anglicans rather than Scottish Calvinists, as Maria-Cristina Pitassi shows in her article and through her remarkable inventory of Turrettini's correspondence.[5]

If the significance of Geneva as a theological centre for Scottish Presbyterians was on the wane, Genevan interest in Scotland became more marked during the eighteenth century. The reason was the union with Britain in 1707. As Geneva suffered periodic political crises, many of which resulted in popular violence, speculation increased about the surest means of maintaining a tiny Protestant walled city within the orbit of Catholic France. The solution favoured by the leading families of Geneva, and especially by the nouveau riche banking dynasties, was closer ties with Paris. The apex of this policy was reached when Jacques Necker, trained in the bank of the

Genevan Vernet family, rose to become Louis XVI's directeur générale des finances. Critics, including Jean-Jacques Rousseau, undoubtedly the most notorious Genevan of the century, held that liaisons between Paris and Geneva were bound to lead to closer cultural ties, and the latter, entailing the introduction of luxury and loose morals to Geneva, threatened both religion and national independence. This was made clear in Rousseau's *Lettre à d'Alembert sur les spectacles* of 1758, in response to the *philosophe's* article on Geneva in the *Encyclopédie* of the previous year, which recommended the import of French philosophy as a solvent to barbaric Calvinism. Rousseau was interested in the means of maintaining small republics like Geneva in the modern world. Adam Ferguson, James Hutton and many other Scots shared Rousseau's passion, and became interested in Geneva in consequence, although none could find a strategy for survival both convincing and practical. The most direct Genevan responses were developed after the French led invasion of Geneva in 1782 put down a popular rebellion against the Francophone magistrates. It was then that Genevan authors such as Jean-Louis De Lolme speculated that Geneva might follow the Scottish survival strategy of union with a larger state while maintaining a separate religious and cultural identity. Genevan interest in Scotland was then marked up to the time of Geneva's own version of 1707, the union with the Swiss cantons in 1815. Understanding all of the relationships that the various connections between Scotland and Geneva entailed is beyond both this introductory article and this special issue. Rather, the articles aims to explain why Geneva continued to be of interest to commentators on religious and politics across Europe both before and during the enlightenment era, and how Scottish Calvinism changed during the turbulent eighteenth century.

II Calvinism at Geneva

The founder of Genevan Protestantism was Guillaume Farel, a nobleman from Daupiné, who lectured on the need for a reformed Christianity across France and Switzerland, converted the pays de Vaud, and joined with Pierre Viret, a native of Orbe in Bernese territory whom he had met while studying at Paris; both drew crowds in lectures condemning Catholicism across the Swiss territories. Farel and Viret were instrumental in persuading the people of the small walled commercial city of Geneva to renounce their Bishop and embrace the reformed religion from 1532.[6] Viret and Farel were involved in the abolition of Catholic mass at Geneva in August 1535, after which the entire population of the city was excommunicated. On 21st May 1536 the decision of the Genevan populace was announced to “live henceforth according to the law of the gospel and the word of God, and to abolish all papal abuses.”[7]

In August 1536 Farel persuaded Jean Calvin from Noyon, who had recently published his *Institutio Christianae Religionis*, to remain at Geneva, a stopping point on his way to Strasbourg; Calvin’s route had been circuitous to avoid battles between the troops of the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V and Francis I of France. Calvin became a minister at Geneva in September 1536 and before January 1537 he and Farel had formulated a plan for a new church government.[8] Farel and Calvin left the city because the syndics at Geneva followed Bern in separating religion and politics. Calvin returned in September 1541 to combat Cardinal Sadoleto’s entreaties to the Genevan people to return to Rome. He then composed the Ecclesiastical Ordinances. Four categories of ministers of the faith were established. First were the doctors whose knowledge of scripture contributed to the theology of the church. Second were those who preached and administered the sacraments. Third came the deacons, who

were elected annually, whose central role was charitable, and especially to alleviate the condition of the poor and the sick. Fourth came the elders, also annually elected, who oversaw public morality; their role was to ensure that the flock were aware of their duties and exercised them. Every pastor was provided with a modest salary. The Councils of the Genevan state, and above all the Council of Two Hundred, elected the elders. Calvin's Consistory or ecclesiastical court, comprising all of the pastors and the elders, was created in 1542. By this time Calvin was becoming "Patriarch of Geneva, and Architect that framed all their State and Discpline."[9] The "discipline of Geneva" was everywhere associated with a clear set of rules that were meticulously enforced:[10]

> Both the clergy and laity of Geneva engaged themselves to a perpetual observance of the new institution made by Calvin, whose inflexible severity, in maintaining the rights of his consistory, raised him a great many enemies, and occasioned some disorders in the city. However, he surmounted all opposition, and also governed the Protestants in France, who almost all held the doctrine of Calvin, and received ministers from Geneva, who presided in their congregations.[11]

Despite such influence, Calvin was never a citizen because he was a "habitant," someone resident at Geneva but not born there. Calvin was granted "bourgeois" status in 1559, which was citizenship of the second rank, preventing him from being a magistrate in state councils.

Peter Heylyn, the Laudian polemicist and critic of puritanism, writing in 1652 supplied a useful overview stating that the “sum of the device” was the equality of ministers, all of whom embraced the ministry for life, two lay men working in conjunction with every minister, lay elders being selected annually, and the whole body uniting together in a Consistory with “power of Ordination, Censures, Absolution, and whatsoever else was acted by the Bishop formerly.”[12] The “Company of Pastors” or “Venerable Company” met quarterly to address the religion wellbeing of the polity.[13] The Consistory or “standing ecclesiastical court” ensured the health of popular mores, the key to which was acknowledged to be that “the Christian religion be purely observed.”[14] Luxury goods were forbidden, modes of dress regulated, dancing and non-religious music censored, marriage forbidden between Catholics and Protestants, and the debts of any father had to be repaid if necessary by his sons.[15] One Scots traveller commented upon the “strict discipline” that characterised the manners of the people when he visited the city in the second half of the seventeenth century:

> A Catholic if a craftsman they suffer him to exercise his trade three month; they let him stay no longer. If a man swear there, he’ll be laid in prison, lay there 24 hours without meat or drink. A man cannot speak with a woman on the street without giving scandal. The Sabbath is kept as we do, nothing to be sold there on it, as through France it is the greatest market day of the week, the peasants bringing in all they have to sell in abundance.[16]

Since, as one traveller put it, “There is no play-house, nor any public amusement in the city of Geneva; and reading is the only resource against ennui,” many deemed the

philosophical fame of the city to be directly tied to its austere mores.[17] Such mores were deemed equally vital to ensure zeal against Catholic attempts to re-conquer the diocese. Henri IV's Edict of Nantes of 1598 permitted the reintroduction of Catholicism into the Pays de Gex, and after the Revocation the Jesuits from Ornex were particularly active, aided by the establishment of a seminary at Annecy from 1663.

Up to five percent of the population were called to the Consistory to face accusations of immorality in the first years of its existence.[18] As Andrew Mercier noted:

> There is no place under the sun where people have more opportunities to learn and grow in religion than the people of Geneva. For there are prayers or sermons or both every day, in one or the other of the churches. Children are catechised carefully, and their prayers and sermons begin at give of the clock in the morning, every day except Lord's Day, especially for the benefit of servants and workmen, that rise early. Their Ministers preach three or four times a week…Besides occasional visits to their people, they once a quarter visit every family to tell them of their duty, to advice them or censure them as they see occasion for it. If any one giveth any offence and leads an irregular life, he is presently called before the Consistory and sharply reprimanded, and sometimes suspended from the Lord's Supper, which must needs be a great grief to those that have any regard for the Institutions of Christ.[19]

By the 1760s, when the libertine Robert Covelle refused to bow before the pastors to request forgiveness, and was supported by a large body of the populace in consequence, it was reported that "the Consistory has become a useless tribunal."[20] Despite such challenges the Consistory remained conjoined with Genevan life and politics. This was why Voltaire bitterly attacked Calvin as the "vile interpreter of holy Paul" who "stamped austerity on every face."[21]

III The Calvinist international mission and the independence of Geneva

Calvinist missionaries from Geneva founded congregations abroad from the 1550s, and succeeded across the German states, in Britain and in Eastern Europe.[22] The "Geneva forms," Calvin's church government, were especially influential in Scotland.[23] Strong links were established with Protestant states throughout the seventeenth century. Genevans were proud to provide a home for refugees, and a regular stream of visitors made Genevan the capital of Calvinism.[24] The Genevan Academy, established in 1558 with Theodor Beza the first Rector, contributed to the prominence of Geneva internationally. It soon became one of the most significant training regimes for Protestant ministry and education. Teaching was led by professors of Greek, Divinity, Hebrew, Philosophy, Church History, Geography, Law, Eloquence, Civil History, and Oriental Languages.[25] The Academy was not slow to innovate where necessary. Bénigne Mussard in Law taught Grotius' *De Jure Belli ac Pacis* for the first time at the Academy in 1703. A chair of natural law was then created in 1719, with Bénigne's son Pierre Mussard the first holder. In 1722-3 two chairs of jurisprudence were established to teach natural and civil law and the law of nations, and were held by Jean Cramer and Jean-Jacques Burlamaqui.[26] By 1760 there

were eleven professors, each elected by the Venerable Company of Pastors: three of theology and ecclesiastical history, one of oriental languages, two of natural and civil law, one of German law, two of philosophy, one of mathematics and one of belles letters.[27] The culmination of the year was an oration by the Rector each June, in which he emphasised the theocratic nature and godly mission of the city, and described the state of Geneva as key to the future of European Protestantism. Andrew Le Mercier recalled the then Rector Benedict Pictet declare “A godly wish for the welfare of the Protestant Interest” in Britain, Switzerland, the Dutch Republic, the German states and Geneva itself.[28] According to Le Mercier the Academy “hath spread the name and fame of Geneva all over the world, whereas it was before that, hardly known beyond the limits of Switzerland and Savoy…and it has a very good influence over the citizens of the Republic.” Calvin, being “conscious that religion derives support from every branch of knowledge, liberally promoted the cultivation of science, and the study of elegant literature.”[29]

The independence was Geneva, as much as the rigorous mores of its populace, was always recognized to be central to the survival of Calvinism. A large number of commentators reiterated the longstanding claim that “the true era of [Geneva’s] perfect liberty can only be dated from the time of the Reformation, when the Bishop prudently retired and left his authority behind.”[30] Geneva had “jealous and potent neighbours,” and subsisted “like a bone ‘twixt three mastiffs, the Emperor, the French King, and the Dukes of Savoy.” The crucial point was that “neither of them dare touch it singly, for fear that the other two would fly upon him.”[31] By the eighteenth-century it was commonplace to declare that God’s own hand could be seen behind the survival of Geneva.[32] Proof lay in the attempt by Savoy to take the city in 1602, called

the Escalade, following the decision of Charles Emmanuel, son of Philibert the Duke of Savoy, to attack Geneva at night with a body of over a thousand troops, two hundred of whom used ladders (*escalades*) to scale the bastions. The ladders were painted black and a Scots Jesuit, Father Alexander, encouraged the invaders "by promises of both temporal and eternal rewards," underscoring the fact that for Savoy invasion was part recovery of territory and part Counter-Reformation strategy.[33] The Genevan magistrates believed that they were living through a time of external tranquillity, in the aftermath of the Peace of Vervins and of Lyons.[34] Fortunately for the town, an alarm was called. Portcullises closed before the invaders could open the gates with a petard, and the citizens managed to repulse the invasion with courage and self-sacrifice. Sixteen Genevans died in addition to over two hundred Savoyard troops. The thirteen prisoners taken alive were executed, and Blondel, the fourth syndic, or Syndic de la Garde, who was deemed to have acted treacherously, was broken on the wheel. The heads of the dead troops were placed on the ramparts, and their bodies cast into the Rhone. A tradition of republican valour and a reputation for self-defence was thenceforth created, and the Escalade was celebrated every subsequent 11 December. As Misson recalled, "Some body at that time happily enough found out the Word VENGEE [reveng'd] in that of Genève."[35]

After the Escalade Henry IV of France assured the leading magistrates of his protection, and offered to come to the city in person. The Treaty of St. Julian followed on 21 July 1603, guaranteeing peace, free trade and communication between Geneva and Savoy. The Duke vowed to erect no fortifications and to bring no troops within sixteen miles of the city. The aged Rector Theodor Beza had slept through the agitation of the Escalade, but returned to the pulpit on December 12th, and preached a

sermon during which Psalm 124 was sung. The psalm became an emblem of popular patriotism, with its plain message that Genevans had thrown back the invaders because of “the Lord who was on our side.” There could be no more direct example of the beneficial relationship between Calvinism, republicanism and liberty. Calvinism generated patriotism. When fused with republican virtù the survival of the little republic was assured. All citizens and burghers were armed, and could rely on the Protestant canton of Bern to send 40,000 troops at short notice.[36]

In the light of such events Genevans believed in a direct link between Calvinism and republicanism. Beyond the city it was widely disputed, and more especially any correlation between Calvinism and republics where the General Council of all citizens was sovereign. Richard Baxter’s *Holy Commonwealth* was often cited for the argument that because the kingdom of Heaven had one king it was incumbent upon civil authorities to follow this model, for the better preservation of order and Christian worship.[37] Against this, authors read directly from the kind of congregationalism Calvin adopted in his church government to a democratic form of state, although in recent decades Robert Kingdom has revealed the extent to which Beza’s Presbyterianism sought to avoid a large role for elders, on the basis of their ignorance and inefficiency, traditional critiques of democracy.[38] What is unquestionable is that for contemporaries Calvinism was seen to be a challenge to bishops, magistrates and kings because of the role played by lay elders, and the emphasis upon godliness as the prime duty of the citizen.[39] Conciliar leadership enabled the faults of individual members of a council to be cancelled out, by contrast with the arrogance and tyrannical impulses of monarchs.

IV Calvinism and Resistance

Antagonists of the city of Geneva and its religion were convinced that there was a correspondence between Calvinist republicanism and domestic and international upheaval, since "the Genevan Discipline" was "begotten in Rebellion, born in Sedition, and nursed up by Faction."[40] Peter Heylyn stated that Calvin's writings led directly to the view that "Popular Magistrates are appointed and made to moderate and keep in order the excess and unruliness of Kings." The source of such a view was held to be Calvin's *Institutes*, Book 4, cap. 20, section 31:

> Nor may we think because the punishment of licentious Princes doth belong to God, that presently this power is devolved on us, to whom no other warrant hath been given by God but only to obey and suffer. But still I must be understood of private persons. For if there be now any popular officers ordained to moderate the licentiousness of Kings (such as were the Ephori, set up of old against the Kings of Sparta; the Tribunes of the people against the Roman Consuls, and the Demarchi against the Athenian Senate; and with which power perhaps, as the world now goes, the three Estates are seized in each kingdom, when they are solemnly assembled) so far am I from hindring them to put restraints upon the exorbitant power of Kings, as their office binds them; that I conceive them rather to be guilty of perfidious dissimulation, if they connive at Kings when they play the tyrants, or wantonly insult on the common people, in that they treacherously betray the subjects' liberties; of which they knew they were made guardians by God's own ordinance.

Heylyn could not directly link such assertions with the advocacy of popular sedition. After all, Section 31 of the *Institutes* was subtitled "the revenge of unbridled government belongeth not to private men." Calvin called civil magistracy "the most holy, and the most honest of all other in the whole life of men." He praised "the government of the chiefest men" as closest to that of ancient Israel, and warned of the ease of falling "from kingdom into tyranny." The latter was deemed "most easy of all from the peoples' government to sedition." Discipline was both a bridle and a spur to citizens. No one knew whether they were elected to salvation but leading a godly and civic life might be an indication of having been saved.

Calvin drew numerous examples from Mosaic history, and in the *Institutes* used the example of Nebuchadnezzar to "see with how great obedience the Lord willed that cruel and proud tyrant to be honoured, for no other reason but because he possessed the kingdom."[41] The central role of the Christian magistrate began "at religion and the worshipping of God." Calvin's main example of just resistance came from the Book of Daniel (vi, 22) where Daniel "obeyed not the wicked proclamation" against God, which forbade worship for thirty days.[42] Acknowledging that all kings sought "to jostle out God from his government," this was seen by some as "a good plea for [Calvin's] abetting the ejection of the lawful prince of Geneva from his government and prerogative."[43] Heylyn, by contrast, accepted that Calvin advocated the veneration of magistrates and the source of their authority in God, reliance upon God for justice, and never sought for the people to take arms themselves against their rulers. Yet he argued that Calvin's assertion of the significance of popular magistrates in defending rights and liberties allowed his followers to justify rebellion. Examples were drawn from the cases of the Huguenots at Amboise against Charles IX, the Scots

Presbyterians against James VI and Charles I in 1593 and 1637, and the Calvinists generally in Holland in their resistance against Spain.

For Calvinists after Calvin, such as the Scottish humanist George Buchanan, political authority was based on a limited contract and popular sovereignty; it was the duty of the magistrate to resist tyranny of any kind and if necessary to arm the citizenry.[44] At least in the Scottish case, radical politics were not seen to be a natural outgrowth of Calvinism. As Hugh Blair, then the Edinburgh University professor of Rhetoric and Belles Lettres, noted regarding Buchanan:

> Accustomed to form his political notions wholly upon the plans of ancient governments, the feudal system seems never to have entered into his thoughts; and as this was the basis of the Scottish constitution, his political views are, of course, inaccurate and imperfect.[45]

The view that Calvinism was a natural soil for radical ideas was most often found in party-based claims that men such as John Knox had "imbibed those antimonarchical principles" at Geneva.[46] Enemies to Puritanism as it manifested itself during the civil wars in England blamed "Calvinian Doctrines" for the "late unhappy Times," and noted that such ideas continued to be "abused to the worst ends and purposes, persecution, rebellion, blood, contempt of superiors in Church and State."[47] It became a literary commonplace to associate Calvinism with regicide as in "the culpable share which the Calvinists had in the murder of King Charles I."[48] The opposite view, of a relationship between Protestantism, liberty and toleration was equally widely acknowledged in the eighteenth century through various writings of Defoe's and

through *Cato's Letters*.[49] As an English reviewer put it, "there is no place in Europe where the true spirit of religious liberty and toleration is carried further and prevails more, than in Geneva," although this did not extend to Voltaire's writings against "the moral government of the Deity and the immateriality of the soul."[50] The view became widespread in scholarly commentaries of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries that Protestantism was mother to liberty and spread democracy across the Western world, and pointedly in the case of North America.[51] An alternative interpretation associates Calvinism with the rise of the modern state and disciplinary legislation held to accompany it.[52]

V Calvinism at Geneva in the eighteenth century

The form of church and state remained constant at Geneva in the two centuries following the Reformation. Geneva was not technically a theocracy, because the pastors' role was to maintain public morals rather than to execute justice. At the same time the stated role of every member of the state was to dedicate themselves to the maintenance of national sovereignty in order to honour God and defend the Christian religion. Every syndic took an oath to defend "pure religion" first and liberty second, although there was a widespread belief within the city that the two were inseparable and mutually reinforcing. The oath which every elector at Geneva spoke in the General Council each year reinforced these facts:

> We promise and swear before God and before all of the community, to elect and nominate to the office of Syndic, those who we believe to be proper and suited to the office, in order to maintain the honour of God and the honour of

> the Christian Religion in this town, and to guide and govern the people in good order, and to conserve the liberty of the town.[53]

At the same time, the evangelical proselytism of Farel, Calvin, and Beza declined sharply through the seventeenth century, and by the beginning of the eighteenth century numerous commentators addressed the issue of the decline of Calvinism at Geneva, and the rise of more tolerant and ecumenical strands of Protestantism.[54] Terms such as "toleration" and "ecumenical" need to be used with caution because the Genevan pastors remained staunch in their opposition to Catholicism and radical Protestantism. Shifts in theological stance had a great deal to do with international relations. Genevan pastors, led by François Turretini (1623-1687), had been in the forefront of the orthodox response to Arminianism in putting into practice the tenets of the Helvetic *Formula Consensus* of 1675. Turretini, alongside Lucas Gernler and Johann Heinrich Heidegger, rejected Moses Amyraut's "hypothetical universalism," which held that Christ had died for the sins of the entire human race and not only the elect, although only the latter would benefit from Christ's atonement.[55] Amyraut's views had proved influential at the Academy of Saumur in revising the tenets of the Synod of Dordrecht (1618-19).[56]

Amyraut's position appealed to those seeking peace within the Dutch republic and between the various branches of the Lutheran and Calvinist faiths. By contrast, the Helvetic *Formula Consensus* was attractive to the generation of theologians concerned with the rise of a militant Catholicism under Louis XIV, which was tied to remarkable feats of arms that threatened all the states of Europe. Madame de Sévigné's letter to Bussy-Rabutin 1685 is indicative in praising the missionaries sent

to convert Huguenots “into good Catholics.” As she put it, “the dragoons have been very good missionaries so far, and the preachers now being sent will make the work perfect.” Of the Revocation she wrote “Nothing is so fine as everything it contains and no king has ever done nor will do anything more memorable.” Bussy-Rabutin’s reply stated, “I admire the King’s measures to destroy the Huguenots.” [57]

Academies like Sedan and Saumur were closed in 1681 and Louis XIV’s Revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685 promised to imperil European Protestantism more gravely than at any time since the Reformation; many French Protestants who refused to convert were held to have been sold into slavery in Algiers. An argument associated with Pierre Jurieu became popular that holding the line against Pelagian, anti-Trinitarian and Arminian heresies was the surest route to the re-establishment of French Protestantism, and the creation of an international Protestant movement capable of challenging the renewed counter-reformation led by the “Christian Turk” Louis XIV of France.[58] One significant point about Jurieu’s view was that Lockean advocacy of toleration and popular involvement in government was not acceptable because the French populace were deemed to be at one with their king in seeking to root out Protestantism.[59] The influential Pierre Bayle shared the view that combining contractualism and the right to resist was politically inadvisable, but added that only an absolute monarch in France could be persuaded to restore Protestantism, and would only do so if toleration and non resistance was embraced by all parties.[60] Such perspectives were challenged by the rise of a genuine threat to France in the form of the stadholder William of Orange, who organised resistance against Louis XIV in the 1670s, and became King of England as William III, after he was crowned with Queen Mary as a result of the “Glorious Revolution” of 1688/9. The latter event inaugurated

the War of the Grand Alliance (1688-1697), pitting France against the combined forces of England, Holland, Spain, Venice, the Holy Roman Empire and the Papacy. William III, before his death in 1702, then led England and Holland, supported by Portugal, the Holy Roman Empire and Savoy, into the War of the Spanish Succession (1700-1713), which successfully prevented the union of Spain and France under Bourbon kings.

Although Geneva and Switzerland did not take part in these wars as states, many of their citizens served on each side, and the impact at Geneva could be sensed among the generation following François Turretini, which was led by his son and successor, Jean-Alphonse Turretini (1671-1637). Jean-Alphonse became professor of church history at the Genevan Academy in 1697, became Rector in 1701 and professor of theology in 1705.[61] The French were by this time being challenged by Marlborough. This was accompanied by a policy of a more open and latitudinarian Protestantism, promising to maintain the alliance of Protestant powers united in the Nine Year's War (1688-97) and War of the Spanish Succession (1701-1714). The abandonment of rigid Calvinism was exemplified by Jean-Alphonse Turretini when he abrogated the Helvetic Formula Consensus in 1706 and embraced a tolerant and ecumenical form of Calvinism, inspired by the Professor of Theology at the Genevan Academy Louis Tronchin, himself the student of Amyraut at the Saumur Academy.[62] With figures such as Archbishop Tillotson, Jean-Alphonse Turretini was at the forefront of the syncretic movement in the first decades of the eighteenth century.[63] He expressed genuine hopes about uniting the Reformed churches through agreement over fundamental issues of doctrine while sidestepping points of controversy such as the presence of Christ in the Eucharist and predestination.[64] Turretini saw "the coat of

Christ torn to pieces" through war and poverty, causing "the waters of the deluge" to be fast about all Christians. This view was shared by more prominent Protestant theologians such as Samuel Werenfels and Jean-Frédéric Ostervald, for whom "our age is more unhappy than the precedent" because the looseness of manners, ignorance of the gospel, and growth of "heathenism" was "authorized by laws and supported by force."[65] Neo-Augustinianism and neo-epicureanism had to be combated, and in doing so arguments formulated against the widespread religious scepticism of the age. Turretini, Werenfels and Ostervald advocated a primitive Christianity, largely derived from the New Testament, in conjunction with virulent opposition to non-Christians and the severe control of public and private mores. Part of the solution, for Turretini, lay in politics, and it is significant that he especially praised the union of England and Scotland as one means of ending the apparently global war:

> If we turn our eyes upon the present state of affairs in Europe, in what juncture of time, in what age, as far as the memoirs of history reach, was there observed a greater convulsion of the whole world, more revolutions and changes in almost all kingdoms and commonwealths; in a word, have there been more surprising miracles than in this age, which everywhere brings them forth. We see the world engaged in a cruel war of many years continuance, kingdoms exhausted, countries laid waste, one king set up against another, and this though so rare an instance, has happened in several nations; most numerous armies on either side both by sea and at land. Nor has the controversy been, as for the most part formerly it was, concerning some punctilios of honour; not for the advantage of trade, nor whether the sea was free or shut up; not concerning the enlarging or contracting the

> bounds of provinces, but they have fought for empire, and this over the largest kingdoms, so that a principal part, not only of America, but of Europe likewise, has been a long while in suspense and doubt to whose government she must at last fall. And if we cast our minds upon that fortunate island, and princess of all others, Great Britain, what more happy, what more to be wished for, what more to be praised, what better adapted to the security of the kingdom and religion, could happen, than that the union of England and Scotland, a thing so often desired and attempted, should be reserved to the happy and glorious times of Queen Anne?[66]

William Coxe wrote that in the eighteenth century Geneva had become the most tolerant of reformed states in Switzerland, being the only one that allowed the public exercise of Lutheranism: "in this respect the clergy, no less wisely, than suitably to the spirit as well as the letter of the Christian revelation, have renounced the principles of their great patriarch, Calvin."[67] Johann Lorenz Mosheim's *Ecclesiastical History* of the 1720s was among the most succinct attempts to summarise doctrinal developments away from orthodox Calvinism:

> The Reformed church still carries the same external aspect under which it has already been described. For, though there be every where extant certain books, creeds, and confessions, by which the wisdom and vigilance of ancient times thought proper to perpetuate the truths of religion, and to preserve them from the contagion of heresy; yet, in most places no person is obliged to adhere strictly to the doctrines they contain; and those who profess the main and fundamental truths of the Christian religion, and take care to avoid too great an

> intimacy with the tenets of Socinianism and Popery, are deemed worthy members of the Reformed church. Hence, in our times, this great and extensive community comprehends, in its bosom, Arminians, Calvinists, Supralapsarians, Sublapsarians, and Universalists, who live together in charity and friendship, and unite their efforts in healing the breach and diminishing the weight and importance of those controversies that separate them from each other. This moderation is, indeed, severely censured by many of the Reformed doctors in Switzerland, Germany, and more especially in Holland…but as the moderate party has an evident superiority in point of numbers, power, and influence, these attacks of their adversaries are, generally speaking, treated with the utmost indifference.[68]

Such work prefigured the infamous statement of d'Alembert that Genevan Calvinism had, by the 1750s, transformed itself into "the perfect Socinianism." D'Alembert claimed that "Most of [the pastors] do not believe in the divinity of Christ, of which Calvin, their chief, was so zealous a defender, and on which account he had Servetus burned to death." The pastors had ceased to believe in a vengeful God and in consequence rejected hell and replaced belief in revelation with a believe in utility, supportive of whatever was conducive to the happiness of the community. D'Alembert stated that only a "reverence for Christ" prevented the pastors from becoming Deists.[69]

D'Alembert's view was met with national outrage and a campaign of refutation.[70] At the same time he had undoubtedly voiced questions that were obvious to external observers, who continued to be perplexed by the uncertainty about Genevan national

identity, the relationship between church and state, the nature of the relationship between the purported republican constitution and the practice of government, and above all Geneva’s likely future in changed times. Calvin had never envisaged an imperial theocracy aspiring to be the fulcrum of a Protestant empire. Yet the association between Protestantism and empire, or at least between a league of states united by religion was posited by numerous writers concerned with the defence of their country.[71] In practice, by the time of the French Wars of Religion, Genevan statesmen recognised that the city would only survive if it embraced a policy of neutrality in the wars between Europe’s major monarchies. Geneva existed within the orbit of France, and had to rely on an alliance with France for protection against Catholic Savoy. As Voltaire recognised, Calvinism had been weakened at Geneva because of the influence of French mores. The Consistory and the magistrates acknowledged the imperative of positive relationships with French ministers and merchants.

For Voltaire and other *philosophes* this represented an opportunity. In defining enlightenment as anti-Calvinist, their hope was that evidence of the movement of protestant ministers within the city away from Calvinism would underscore both the power of modern secular philosophy and help Calvinists across Europe to make similar ideological journeys. The explosive response from the critics of Voltaire and d’Alembert in Geneva and in other protestant states showed that Calvinism was stronger than they suspected.

VI The changing relationship between Scotland and Geneva

The experience of Voltaire's and d'Alembert's fellow *philosophe* David Hume at the hands of the lay and church authorities in Scotland, in failing to be appointed to a university professorship, can be seen to be equivalent to the attack on the *philosophes* at Geneva after the publication of d'Alembert's article. The difference was that for many orthodox Genevans the ideas of the French *philosophes* were at one with Catholics in France who were believed to be plotting the reconversion of the city. Both groups were arguing for a Francophone Geneva willing to turn its back on its distinctive religious history and cultural identity. There were parallels with Scottish concerns about English cultural dominion, but as the century proceeded, and as Scottish identity not only survived but flourished, Genevans became more and more interested in Scotland as a model small state with direct political lessons for them. As increasing numbers of Genevans perceived themselves to be dominated by France, and as there were worries about the relative decline of the Genevan Academy, it was natural to look towards a place that had become famous for Protestant learning and whose philosophers were more prominent than any then teaching at Geneva.[72] Thomas Jefferson identified the "two eyes of Europe" with regard to Protestant learning as Edinburgh and Geneva in 1794. He was probably playing up the Genevan Academy because he supported a proposal to move the Academy to the United States in order to save it from the excesses of the French Revolution.[73] The important fact is that the Academy was recognised to be in crisis and the independence of Geneva to be under threat.

In 1798 Geneva was annexed to France, becoming part of the new Léman department incorporating northern Savoy. It was during this period that Genevans turned to Britain in general, and the experience of the Scots in particular, for ideas about the

future direction of Calvin's republic, if its independence could be restored. A sign of this trend was the establishment at Geneva of the journal *Bibliothèque Britannique* in 1796, by the brothers Marc-Auguste Pictet and Charles Pictet, and Frédéric-Guillaume Maurice. The *Bibliothèque Britannique* published articles drawn from English sources on sciences, arts, literature and agriculture. One academician heavily involved in the *Bibliothèque Britannique* was the natural philosopher Pierre Prévost. Prévost had met at Geneva in 1792 Dugald Stewart, the Professor of Moral Philosopher at Edinburgh.[74] They afterwards established an epistolary relationship that lasted until Stewart's death in 1828.[75] In the pages of the *Bibliothèque Britannique* and in separately published volumes Prévost began to translate into French some of the key works that he felt were relevant to the times.[76] By the early nineteenth century Prévost had became a leading advocate and populariser of what he termed "the Scottish school," including Francis Hutcheson, Thomas Reid, Adam Smith, Adam Ferguson, James Beattie, Hugh Blair, and Dugald Stewart among others, whose philosophical ideas were "so ingenious and so profound" and whose writings were "so well known and so appreciated across all of Europe."[77]

The reason why Genevans were so fascinated by Scottish political and economic experience derived from the evident parallel between the circumstances of Geneva in the 1790s and Scotland before the Union of 1707. At least since 1782, when troops led by France, Savoy and Bern put down a popular revolution against the magistrates in the city, the argument was increasingly made that Geneva, like so many of Europe's small states, could no longer survive as a sovereign entity. The issue became acute after 1798 because Geneva was transformed into the capital city of a French department with extensive devolved powers. One sure parallel was Scotland's own

incorporation into Britain. The history of Scotland in the eighteenth century was also important because it revealed how a small state had developed new relationships with a larger power. The widespread accusation was that England, as the archetypal mercantile system described in the third book of Adam Smith's *Wealth of nations*, dominated the economic and political lives of all of the polities that it traded with. Perfidious Albion might not directly control the politics of its client states, but the policy pursued by London was always supportive of its merchants' and landowners' economic interest narrowly envisaged. Such accusations were widespread with Britain and France at war in the 1790s; it was a tragedy that people and states "sold themselves for English money."[78] The surest evidence that England's policy was malignant towards weaker states could be found in the history of Ireland since the establishment of the Protestant Ascendency. The fact that the English sometimes placed restrictions upon the trade of Ireland in order to prevent competition with their own traders' products was undisputed. Whether this was the norm in relations between the countries was continuously debated. The point that was regularly made was that English pretensions to control Ireland's trade were baseless in law and violated the constitutional relationship between the two kingdoms. If asserted, such limits upon trade would turn the Irish into slaves:

> If England, with respect to us, had an absolute dominion over the sea, if she could regulate our trade at pleasure, if our commercial privileges were subject to her control, then Irishmen, in a matter essential to their happiness and prosperity, would have no pretensions to freedom. To a nation such as ours, depending upon foreign trade for so many of the necessaries and the comforts

> of life, a power of making laws confined within the limits of the land, is but as it were the shadow of liberty.[79]

The question was whether the English were dominant with regard to the making of laws for Scotland and for Ireland, and whether trade had increased, was increasing, and was greater than it would have been if Ireland and Scotland had remained small and independent. It was necessary accordingly for any advocate of British constitutional relations as a model for Europe, or of the Geneva-Scotland parallel, to refute those who held Britain to be a modern Carthage, altogether self interested and likely to collapse before the French Rome.

One of the most prominent Genevan writers of the period, François d'Ivernois, saw the position of all of the small states of Europe, and Geneva more particularly, in exactly these terms. D'Ivernois was an indefatigable opponent of the French Revolution, which he argued was continuing longstanding French aspirations to an empire on mainland Europe.[80] The threat to small states was grave, and d'Ivernois charted the demise of the little polities, with a particular focus on Geneva and the Swiss cantons.[81] D'Ivernois had been a leader of the popular party or *représentants* at Geneva in 1782 and had been instrumental in the subsequent failed attempt to create a "New Geneva" at Waterford in Ireland. He became an Irish subject at Dublin in 1783. Although the experiment at Waterford failed, d'Ivernois continued to believe that the future of the small states of Europe was intertwined with Britain. More particularly, he argued that the key to the future of Geneva was to learn from the Scottish and Irish cases. For d'Ivernois Scotland had been transformed economically since the Union of 1707. Those who argued that Scotland had been incorporated into an English empire

ignored the fact that the Scottish economy had grown at a far faster rate than England itself. Further proof came from Ireland during the short time it had been incorporated into the United Kingdom in 1801. Again, economic growth had been remarkable:

> Since the Union, the extension of the trade of Ireland has been so rapid, and has so far outstripped that of England and Scotland that if, in the former period, one hundred was an adequate number of representatives, she is now entitled to one hundred and thirty three.[82]

The broad point that d'Ivernois was seeking to make was that if Bonaparte sought to prevent trade with Britain, through the Continental System established by the decrees of Berlin and Milan in 1806 and 1807, the result would be the impoverishment of smaller nations across Europe. The lesson was that small states were a lot better off if they were united with benevolent and cosmopolitan empires like Britain, rather than being the pawns of tyrannies like the First French Empire. France's bleeding of Geneva since the annexation of 1798 demonstrated this.[83] Scottish history since the Union and the contemporary evidence of the vibrancy of Scottish culture and intellectual life proved that the mercantile system did not impoverish poor states. As such, Scotland offered an alternative future for all of the states of Europe. When the French finally departed from Geneva, in 1814, d'Ivernois was among the leading negotiators at the Congress of Vienna responsible for determining the future of the formerly independent republic.[84] It was because he had Scotland in mind that he worked for a union between Geneva and Switzerland in 1815, the expectation being that the Swiss would play the role of the English, supporting a Genevan renaissance of culture and intellect in the nineteenth century. Scotland was becoming a favoured

destination for European travellers, especially for those who had completed their education at Scottish universities, such as the mineralogist Louis-Albert Necker de Saussure.[85] Rather than guiding Scottish Calvinists by virtue of being the model Protestant polity, Genevans turned to Scotland in order to direct their politics and political economy.

Notes

1. Dawson, “Knox, John (*c.*1514–1572)”; Robinson, ed. and trans., *The Zurich letters*; Mason, ed., *John Knox and the British Reformations*.
2. Prestwich, ed., *International Calvinism, 1541-1715*.
3. Whatmore, *Against War and Empire*.
4. Pitassi, *De l'orthodoxie aux lumières*.
5. Pitassi et al., *Inventaire critique de la correspondance de Jean-Alphonse Turretini*.
6. Middleton, *Biographia Evangelica*, II, 97-102; Gaberel, *Histoire de l'église de Genève*; Kingdon, *Geneva and the Consolidation of the French Protestant Movement*; Monter, *Calvin's Geneva*; Mottu-Weber, *Économie et refuge*.
7. “The citizens swear to the Reformation, 21st May 1536,” *Documents Illustrative of the Continental Reformation*, 518-519; Naphy, *Calvin and the consolidation of the Genevan Reformation*.
8. Le Mercier, *The church history of Geneva*, 56-87.
9. Nicholls, *A supplement to the Commentary on The book of common-prayer*, 11-12. See further Monter, *Calvin’s Geneva*; Naphy, *Calvin and the consolidation of the Genevan Reformation*, 138-71; Höpfl, *The Christian polity of John Calvin*.
10. Millot, *Elements of the History of England*, II, 13, 29.
11. Rolt, *The lives of the principal reformers*, 125.
12. Heylyn, *Cosmography in four books*, Book 1, 132.
13. Caswell, “Calvin’s View of Ecclesiastical Discipline,” 210-225.
14. Anon., *The lawes and statutes* of *Geneva*, 13-14, 23.
15. Heylyn, *Cosmography in four books*, 131; Keyssler, *Travels through Germany, Bohemia, Hungary, Switzerland, Italy, and Lorrain,* I, 179; Monter, *Enforcing Morality in Early Modern Europe*; Walker, “Les lois somptuaires ou le rêve d’un ordre social,” 111-129.
16. Lauder, *Journals of Sir John Lauder*, 96.
17. Sherlock, *Letters from an English traveller*, 102.
18. Lambert and Watt, eds. *Registers of the Consistory of Geneva in the Time of Calvin*; Kingdom, “Social Welfare in Calvin’s Geneva,” 50-69, and Kingdom, “The Control of Morals in Calvin’s Geneva,” 3-16.
19. Le Mercier, *The church history of Geneva*, 218-9.
20. Anon., *Lettres genevoises*, 55.
21. Voltaire, *The Civil War of Geneva*, 5. See also the earlier letter to Jacob Vernet, 14 September 1733 in Voltaire, *Correspondence and related documents*, II, 389–390 (Letter D653).
22. Murdock, *Beyond Calvin*, 31-53, and Murdock, *Calvinism on the frontier*, 46-76, 270-290.
23. Knox, *The historie of the reformatioun*; George Garden, *The case of the Episcopal clergy*, 83; Edwards, *Veritas redux,* I, xxvi-xxvii; Burnet, *The abridgment of The history of the reformation of the Church of England*, II 283; Breviter, *No democracy in the church*, 109; Robertson, *The history of Scotland*, 213-4. See further, Manetsch, *Theodore Beza and the Quest for Peace in France*.

24. Spon, *The history of the city and state of Geneva*, 120-125, 180-191; O'Mara, "Geneva in the Eighteenth Century," 197-198; Roney and Klauber eds., *The Identity of Geneva*, 93-110.
25. Borgeaud, *Histoire de l' Universite de Geneve*; Lewis, "The Geneva Academy," 35-63.
26. Heyd, *Between Orthodoxy and the Enlightenment*, 227; Haakonssen, *Natural Law and Moral Philosophy.*
27. Keate, *A Short Account*, 129-132
28. Le Mercier, *The church history of Geneva*, 40-1; Benedict Pictet, *True and False Religion Examined*.
29. Coxe, *Travels in Switzerland*, II, 91.
30. Keate, *A Short Account*, 15.
31. James Howell, letter of 5th December 1651, *Epistolæ Ho-Elianæ*, 79-80.
32. Le Mercier, *The church history of Geneva*, 204-5.
33. Planta, *The history of the Helvetic confederacy*, II, 174-79.
34. Misson, *A new voyage to Italy*, II, part II, 652-3.
35. Ibid., II, 657.
36. Bromley, *Remarks in the grand tour of France and Italy*, 246.
37. Rolt, *The lives of the principal reformers*, 125, citing Baxter's *Holy Commonwealth* I, 77-81.
38. Kingdom, "Calvinism and Democracy," 393-401.
39. Hooker, "A preface to That sort of People who would Abrogate the Laws and Orders Ecclesiastical in the Church of England," in *A faithful abridgment*, xliii-lvii.
40. Peter Heylyn, *Cosmography in four books*, 132. See further Baron, "Calvinist republicanism and its historical roots," 30-42; McNeill, "The Democratic Element in Calvin's Thought," 153-171; Kingdom, "Calvinism and resistance theory, 1550-1580," 193-218; Witte, "Moderate Religious Liberty: John Calvin and the Geneva Experiment"; Black, "Christianity and Republicanism: From St. Cyprian to Rousseau," 647-56; Nederman, "The Puzzling Case of Christianity and Republicanism," 913-18; Black, "Christianity and Republicanism: A Response to Nederman," 919-21.
41. Calvin, *The Institution of the Christian Religion*, Book IV, ch. 20, sections 4, 7, 8, 27, 29.
42. Ibid., Book IV, ch. 20, sections 9, 32.
43. South, *Five additional volumes of sermons*, VII, 67.
44. Buchanan, *A Dialogue on the Law of Kingship among the Scots*; Burns, *The True Law of Kingship*; Heylyn, "The Stumbling-block of Disobedience and Rebellion. Cunningly laid by Calvin in the Subjects way, discovered, censured, and removed," in *The Historical and Miscellaneous Tracts*, 652-6.
45. Blair, *Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres*, II, 182.
46. Anon., *The rise and growth of fanaticism*, 10; Anon., *Saul and Samuel*, 6.
47. Edwards, *Veritas redux*, I, xxvi-xxvii.
48. Nichols, *Calvinism and Arminianism*, lxxx.
49. Trenchard, *Cato's letters*, II, 131-2.
50. Anon., "A Short Account of a Work," 587.
51. d'Aubigné, *History of the Reformation*, 2-3; Hall, *The Genevan Reformation and the American Founding*.
52. Gorski, *The Disciplinary Revolution*.

53. Anon., *Edits de la Republique de Geneve*, 2, 8.
54. Thomson, *The spirit of general history*, 328.
55. Phillips, "The Dissolution of Francis Turretin's Vision of Theologia," 77-92.
56. Armstrong, *Calvinism and the Amyraut heresy*; van Stam, *The controversy over the theology of Saumur*.
57. de Rabutin-Chantal, *Selected Letters*, 271-2.
58. Dodge, *The political theory of the Huguenots of the dispersion*; Myriam Yardeni, "French Calvinist Political Thought, 1534-1715," 315-37; Hochstrasser, "The Claims of Conscience," 15-52.
59. Savonius, "Locke in French," 47-79.
60. Cerny, *Theology, politics and letters at the crossroads of European civilization*.
61. E. de Budé & E. G. T. de Budé, *Vie de J.-A. Turrettini*; Klauber, *Between Reformed Scholasticism and Pan-Protestantism*; Pitassi, *De L'Orthodoxie aux Lumières*.
62. Klauber, "Reason, Revelation, and Cartesianism," 326-339; Pitassi, "From Exemplarity to Suspicion," 16-22.
63. Rouse and Neill eds., *A History of the Ecumenical Movement*.
64. Klauber, "The Drive Toward Protestant Union in Early Eighteenth-Century Geneva," 334-349; McNutt, *Calvin Meets Voltaire*.
65. Ostervald, *A treatise concerning the causes*, 233-282; Werenfels, *Three discourses*, 93-104.
66. Turretini, *An Oration of composing the differences among Protestants*, 6-7; Turretini, *A discourse concerning fundamental articles in religion*, 57-85.
67. Coxe, *Travels in Switzerland*, II, 92.
68. Mosheim, *An ecclesiastical history*, IV, 89-92; Klauber, "The Eclipse of Reformed Scholasticism in Eighteenth-Century Geneva," 129-142.
69. D'Alembert, "A Short Account of the Government of Geneva" in *Miscellaneous Pieces*, 70-73.
70. Vernet, *Lettres critiques d'un voyageur anglois sur l'Article*; Raymond Naves, *Voltaire et l'Encyclopédie*, 18-50; Grimsley, *Jean D'Alembert (1717-83)*, 56-77; Gargett, *Voltaire and Protestantism*, 135-55 and Vernet, *Geneva and the Philosophes*, 144-65.
71. Anon., *The Declaration and manifesto of the Protestants of the vallies of Piedmont*; Anon., *The Duke of Anjou's succession considered*, 52; Stevens, *The history of Bavaria*, 110; Marty, *Righteous Empire*.
72. Phillipson, "The Pursuit of Virtue in Scottish University Education," 82-101; Sher, "Professors of Virtue," 87-126.
73. Jefferson to Wilson Cary Nicholas (one of Albemarle County's two representatives in the Virginia House of Delegates), 23 November 1794: *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson Digital Edition*. See further McNutt and Whatmore, "The attempts to transfer the Genevan Academy to Ireland and to America, 1782-1795," 345-368.
74. Prévost, "Notes biographiques sur Dugald Stewart," 239.
75. Etchegaray et al., "The Correspondence of Dugald Stewart," 1-73.
76. Prévost, "Réflexions sur les Œuvres Posthumes d'Adam Smith," in *Essais philosophiques*, II, 228-271.
77. Prévost, *Cours de rhétorique et de belles-lettres*, I, xvi.

78. Theremin, *Des intérêts des puissances continentales*; Debroca, *La Politique Du Gouvernement Anglais Devoilée*.
79. Crawford, *A History of Ireland*, I, 242.
80. François d'Ivernois, *Reflections on the War. In answer to the Reflections on Peace addressed to Mr. Pitt and the French Nation* (London: Elmsley et al., 1795).
81. d'Ivernois, *A short account of the late revolution in Geneva*.
82. d'Ivernois, *Effects of the continental blockade*, xxi, 121-137.
83. d'Ivernois, *Exposé de l'exposé de la situation de l'Empire français*, 153-154.
84. Charles Pictet and d'Ivernois, *Genève Et Les Traités De 1815*.
85. Necker de Saussure, *Travels in Scotland*; Kerr, *A General History and Collection of Voyages and Travels*, XVIII, 582-589.

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