

## CHAPTER 12: The Genevan Academy

*Scrutinizing European Connections in the Time of Theodore Beza*

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This chapter explores higher education in Geneva through the perspective of the Calvinist Academy during a period of tremendous social change in Europe between 1559 and the death of its spiritual leader Theodore Beza (Théodore de Bèze) in 1605. In Geneva, the Reformation was a continuous phenomenon that certainly did not stop when all institutions were in place. The Genevan Academy was founded relatively late, in 1559, and given its geographical setting and importance for French Huguenots, it faced outward beyond the city of Geneva as well as toward the city itself.

Through more than three hundred years of its history from its foundations under John Calvin and Theodore Beza in 1559 to its secular reformulation under Napoleon in 1798 and its transformation into a university in 1872, student interaction and movement, the choice of professors and administrators, their publications, their teaching and letters created a unique atmosphere of learning which was thoroughly embedded in the norms of Protestant thought until the end of the 18th century. Over the past 150 years scholars have used archival records in the State Archive of the Canton of Geneva, letter exchanges, lecture notes and published output at the

Genevan Library and other places, to track the members of this institution and study their changing beliefs and interests and interactions with other institutions and places. This chapter reviews the leadership of Theodore Beza and in particular his role in positioning Geneva in the network of educational institutions that grew rapidly during the 16th century among both Protestants and Catholics. This study seeks to reinterpret the development of the academy after the death of Calvin in the last four decades of the 16th century in the light of the letter exchanges and academic course disputations that involved the authorship of Theodore Beza. It argues that the Academy developed reciprocal relations with comparable institutions in Reformed francophone and Huguenot territories, ones that often were dependent upon the individual and personal intervention of Beza himself.<sup>1</sup> Consequently, the academy developed important educational practices and techniques that were adopted elsewhere in the world of 16th and 17th-century Calvinism.

There is abundant literature about politics leading to the establishment of the Genevan Academy and its relation to the Academy of Lausanne, and about individual intellectuals connected to the institution. The disciplines and their development at Geneva and student matriculation, exchange, and learning have also been investigated. The epochal work of Charles Borgeaud (1900–1959) presented the

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<sup>1</sup> The idea of Reformed francophone territories is defined by Philip Benedict, “The Spread of Protestantism in Francophone Europe in the First Century of the Reformation,” *Archive for Reformation History* 109/1 (2018): 7–52.

Genevan Academy from its inception as the predecessor of today's university.<sup>2</sup> His comprehensive lists and materials chiefly concerning the professors and their teaching are, together with the study of the matriculation list of students that Charles Le Fort,

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<sup>2</sup> Charles Borgeaud, *Histoire de l'Université de Genève*, 4 vols in 6 (Geneva: 1900–1959): 1: L'Académie de Calvin, 1559–1796; 2: L'Académie de Calvin dans l'Université de Napoléon, 1798–1814; 3: L'Académie et l'Université au XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle, 1814–1900; 4: L'Université de 1914 à 1956 (vol. 4 by Paul Edmond Martin). A comprehensive volume summarizes the history, secondary literature, and adds illustrations: Marco Marcacci, *Histoire de l'Université de Genève 1559–1986*, Préface de Justin Thorens (Geneva: 1987). For the establishment of the *schola privata* see also: *Enseignement secondaire, formation humaniste et société, XVI<sup>e</sup>-XXI<sup>e</sup> siècle* (a volume commemorating the 450th anniversary of the founding of Calvin's Academy in Geneva in 2009), eds. Charles Magnin, Christian Alain Muller with Blaise Extermann (Geneva: 2012), *passim*. For John Calvin's involvement in the early years of the academy teaching see Thomas D. Hawkes, "Pious Pastors: Calvin's Theology of Sanctification and How It Shaped the Teaching and Practices of the Genevan Academy, 1559-1564," (PhD Dissertation, Middlesex University (UK), 2013); and Karin Maag, "Reformed Education and the Genevan Academy," in *John Calvin in Context*, ed. R. Ward Holder, (Cambridge: 2020), 111–118.

Gustave Revilliod, and Edouard Fick published in 1860, the basis and background for many more in-depth treatments covering shorter time periods.<sup>3</sup> Today, an updated version of the matriculation list with biographical notes on the students is available, published in six volumes between 1959 and 1980 by Sven and Suzanne Stelling-Michaud.<sup>4</sup>

These show that students came from all Calvinist parts of Europe to study in Geneva. The international nature of this student body provided the basis for Karin Maag's re-evaluation of the origins and nature of the Genevan Academy in her seminal work *Seminary or University? Genevan Academy and Reformed Higher Education, 1560–1620*.<sup>5</sup> She points to two groups in Geneva influencing the goals of the Academy, magistrates who fought for a general education for their male offspring,

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<sup>3</sup> Charles Le Fort, Gustave Revilliod, and Edouard Fick (eds.), *Le Livre du Recteur: Catalogue des Etudiants de l'Académie de Genève de 1559 à 1859* (Geneva: 1860).

<sup>4</sup> Sven Stelling-Michaud, *Le Livre du Recteur de l'Académie de Genève (1559–1878)* vol. 1 (Travaux d'Humanisme et Renaissance) 33 (Geneva: 1959); Suzanne Stelling-Michaud, *Le Livre du Recteur de l'Académie de Genève (1559–1878)*, vols 2–6 (Travaux d'Humanisme et Renaissance) 33 (Geneva: 1960–1980).

<sup>5</sup> Karin Maag, *Seminary or University? Genevan Academy and Reformed Higher Education, 1560–1620* (St Andrews Studies in Reformation History) (Aldershot: 1995).

and ministers who wanted to use the educational resources to strengthen the community of pastors in the Genevan parishes.

Looking at Theodore Beza, who was a pastor but also a professor at the academy, and at his correspondence complicates this picture.<sup>6</sup> The letters show that Beza and his professorial colleagues had political as well as academic interests, both in the city and at large. They belonged to a network that included their students and former students, and colleagues all over Europe. How does this affect our understanding of the changing goals of the academy?

The changing goals and internationalization modified the ways students studied at the academy, as we can see through an examination of academic manuscripts and prints. My case study is a collection of disputations held as exams in Geneva in the 1580s.<sup>7</sup> They are among the first Genevan disputations, held as

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<sup>6</sup> For biographical information about Beza see the work of Paul Frédéric Geisendorf,

*Théodore de Bèze* (Geneva: 1949) and Alan Dufour, *Théodore de Bèze: Poète et théologien* (Geneva: 2009). Compare also Hervé Genton's chapter "Théodore de Bèze and Geneva" in this volume (ch. 4).

<sup>7</sup> Theodore Beza and Antoine de La Faye (eds.), *Theses theologiae in Schola genevensi ab aliquot sacrarum literarum studiosis sub DD. Theod. BEZA et Anton. FAYO S. S. Theologiae professoribus, propositae et disputatae. In quibus methodica locorum communium ss. theologiae epitome continetur* (Geneva: 1586); Theodore Beza and Antoine de La Faye (eds.), *Theses*

academic exercises, that survived in print.<sup>8</sup> They show how Geneva was modeling its teaching methods on forms and techniques used in European universities and academies, particularly in Reformed francophone and Huguenot territories in and outside the kingdom of France, such as Strasbourg, Bourges, or Basel.

My overview of the secondary literature in the first section of this chapter argues that four interpretations have dominated the overall evaluation of the institution in the years since Borgeaud's volumes came out. I will then examine the French connection to the academy and trace how the academy culture reacted to one of the most disastrous killings of Protestants in France in the time of Theodore Beza, the St. Bartholomew's Day massacre (1572), and to the ensuing exodus of scholars from the kingdom of France. My argument supports the results of Gillian Lewis's research into the Genevan Academy (1994), that the goals of the academy included an

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*theologicae in Schola genevensi ab aliquot sacrarum literarum studiosis sub DD. Theod. BEZA et Anton. FAYO S.S. Theologiae professoribus, propositae et disputatae. In quibus methodica locorum communium ss. theologiae epitome continetur. Altera editio emendatior et auctor priore* (Geneva: 1591).

<sup>8</sup> Henri Heyer, *Catalogue des Thèses de Théologie soutenues à l'Académie de Genève pendant les XVI<sup>e</sup>, XVII<sup>e</sup> et XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècles* (Geneva: 1898) has systematically collected information on theological disputations at Geneva that were held as academic exercises. According to his work, the two printed editions are the first printed theological theses editions of this genre that survived.

indoctrination directed against Lutherans, Catholics and anti-trinitarianism, designed to strengthen French Huguenot belief.<sup>9</sup> But I will suggest that though the goals of the academy were directed toward service to the French, in return the academy actively sought guidance. The Genevan Academy was aiming to build a two-way bridge to the Reformed francophone and Huguenot university network. The Genevan Academy was already looking to the Reformed francophone and Huguenot territories for academic guidance even before academic French refugees came to Geneva in 1572, but the subsequent arrival of important figures from France magnified the French impact. The arrival of François Hotman in 1572, an exile from the University of Bourges, helped enhance legal studies within the academy.<sup>10</sup> Other refugees such as Joseph Scaliger, who came from Valence, and remained in Geneva between 1572 and

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<sup>9</sup> Gillian Lewis, “The Genevan Academy,” in *Calvinism in Europe, 1540–1620*, eds.

Andrew Pettegree, Alastair Duke, and Gillian Lewis (Cambridge, New York, Melbourne: 1994), 35–63, here 63.

<sup>10</sup> For more information and literature about the relation of Hotman with the academy in Geneva see Béatrice Périgot, “Du droit des magistrats de Théodore de Bèze et Franco-Gallia de François Hotman: Deux méthodes au service de la philosophie politique,” in *Théodore de Bèze (1519–1605). Actes du colloque de Genève (septembre 2005)*, ed. Irena Backus (Travaux d’Humanisme et Renaissance) 424 (Geneva: 2007), 553–568.

1574, helped develop humanist studies.<sup>11</sup> There were many connections between Beza and *savants* in the francophone and Huguenot regions, as his letter exchanges show. Among them were Jean de Serres (ca. 1540–1598), a French refugee who went first to Lausanne in 1553, then in 1559 with Beza to teach at the academy of Geneva, and from 1579 to 1589 became rector of the academy of Nîmes;<sup>12</sup> and the Hebraist François Du Jon (1545–1602) from Bourges who studied in Bourges and Lyon and held academic posts in Geneva, Heidelberg, and finally at the newly founded university of Leiden.<sup>13</sup> Because of the reciprocity of giving and taking, of service and guidance, I would include among the overall goals of the academy the aim of working alongside Protestant France, and I want to flesh out this point in the following.

My second argument is that the close work of the academy with international Protestant scholars, especially those in exile in Geneva due to English and French politics, helped adapt technologies in Geneva that were used in universities

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<sup>11</sup> For more information and literature about the ambiguous relations between Joseph Scaliger and Geneva, see Jeltine L.R. Ledegang-Keegstra, “Théodore de Bèze et Joseph-Juste Scaliger: Critique et admiration réciproques,” *Bulletin de la Société de l’Histoire du Protestantisme Français* 159 (July-September 2013): 441–458.

<sup>12</sup> Further on the letter exchange between Jean de Serres and Beza, *CB* 39 (1598), XXIX–XXX.

<sup>13</sup> For more information on the letter exchange with Du Jon see *CB* 34 (1593), XXV.



throughout Europe, thus making the academy part of, and visible in, the international network of higher education. The academy, in turn, became a major influence on international Calvinist education in the 17th and 18th centuries.<sup>14</sup> English, Scottish,

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<sup>14</sup> Still the most important work on the spreading of Calvinism from Geneva in the 16th century is Philip Benedict, *Christ's Churches Purely Reformed: A Social History of Calvinism* (New Haven: 2002). He replaced John T. McNeill, *The History and Character of Calvinism* (Oxford, New York: 1954). Benedict updated the francophone part of his book in 2018 in his recent article Philip Benedict, "The Spread of Protestantism in Francophone Europe in the First Century of the Reformation," *Archive for Reformation History* 109/1 (2018): 7–52. For academic Protestant networks, Graeme Murdock, *Calvinism on the frontier: 1600–1660: International Calvinism and the Reformed Church in Hungary and Transylvania* (Oxford, New York: 2000) states that the Hungarian people, when visiting universities for their Calvinist education, would go to Heidelberg and Leiden at the end of the 16th and 17th centuries. We see that Geneva is not the only center of theology here. Calvinist networks are the topic of Ole Peter Grell, *Brethren in Christ: A Calvinist Network in Reformation Europe* (Cambridge: 2011). The most recent deliberations on the topic are in: Crawford Gribben and Graeme Murdock, *Cultures of Calvinism in Early Modern Europe* (Oxford, New York: 2019). See also Emidio Campi, "Calvin, the Swiss Reformed Churches, and the European Reformation," in

French, Italian and also German-speaking refugee professors brought to Geneva new sorts of teaching and evaluation. These innovations, when combined with Genevan teaching methods, using *loci communes* techniques (but not departing as far from Aristotle as the controversial Parisian Petrus Ramus did), produced a specifically Genevan contribution to European academic thesis culture.<sup>15</sup> The focus of my study is therefore upon the external forces that shaped Genevan practices. Consequently, it moves in a different direction from the studies of Philipp Benedict, whose emphasis is on the ways in which Calvinism adapted to new environments beyond Geneva.

François Hotman, coming from Bourges, introduced to Genevan education not only his knowledge in law, but with it also a particular form of published disputation

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*Calvin and His Influence: 1509–2009*, eds. Irena Backus and Philip Benedict (Oxford, New York: 2011), 119–143; and Richard A. Muller, “Reception and Response: Referencing and Understanding Calvin in 17th century Calvinism,” in *Calvin and His Influence: 1509–2009*, 182–202.

<sup>15</sup> Compare Irena Backus, “L’enseignement de la Logique à l’Académie de Genève entre 1559 et 1565,” *Revue de Théologie et de Philosophie* 29/2 (1979): 153–163; and Ann Blair, “Principes et pratiques de la pédagogie humaniste et réformée,” in *Enseignement secondaire formation humaniste et société, XVI<sup>e</sup>-XXI<sup>e</sup> siècle* (a volume commemorating the 450th anniversary of the founding of Calvin’s Academy in Geneva in 2009), eds. Charles Magnin, Christian Alain Muller with Blaise Extermann (Geneva: 2012), 39–67.

that had not been part of Genevan education before.<sup>16</sup> After Hotman, publicly defended disputation exercises in Geneva were published in the 16th and 17th centuries. One treasure trove that I use here to demonstrate these changes are the theological disputations or “theses” introduced as systematic exercises and evaluations in Theology during the rectorship of another French refugee, the theology professor Antoine de La Faye (1540–1615),<sup>17</sup> which began in 1580. Together with Theodore Beza, he published these as a collected volume in 1586 and, in expanded

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<sup>16</sup> Borgeaud, *Histoire de l'Université de Genève*, 153–156, summarizes the disputation exercises at Geneva, in place since 1559, that received enhancement in the field of legal studies by Hotman. In contrast to the other Genevan professors, Hotman published treatises in the format of disputation theses: François Hotman, *De Feudis Commentatio tripartita: Hoc est, Disputatio de iure Feudali. Commentarius in vsus Feudorum. Dictionarium verborum Feudalium. Recens in lucem edita cùm Indice copiosissimo*. (Cologne: 1573).

<sup>17</sup> Eugène and Emile Haag, *La France protestante: ou Vies des protestants français qui se sont fait un nom dans l'histoire depuis les premiers temps de la réformation jusqu'à la reconnaissance du principe de la liberté des cultes par l'Assemblée nationale*, vol. 6 (Paris: 1846–1859), 186–188.

form, in 1591.<sup>18</sup> Introducing and publishing the disputation exercises, or theses, the academy implemented and publicly displayed techniques of teaching and learning based on models from the francophone and Huguenot academies and universities, and on those from other European universities. Such disputations had been frequent public and examination exercises at many universities from late medieval times on.<sup>19</sup> The adoption of theses and disputations brought Geneva now in line with technologies used in an international network, and the practice of publishing theses that La Faye introduced helped to establish Geneva's value in the international intellectual network of Protestant universities. Theology students received new recognition and legitimacy elsewhere, being able to present their exams in a format that other universities recognized. By the late 16th century, the Genevan network of scholars, spread by their

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<sup>18</sup> Beza, La Faye, *Theses theologicae* (1586); Beza, La Faye, *Theses theologicae* (1591).

<sup>19</sup> See the comprehensive overview in Marion Gindhart and Ursula Kundert (eds.), *Disputatio 1200–1800: Form, Funktion und Wirkung eines Leitmediums universitärer Wissenskultur* (Berlin, New York: 2010). For more recent literature on disputations and dissertations in the Old Reich see Hanspeter Hanspeter, Reimund B. Sdzuj, Robert Seidel, and Karin Marti-Weissenbach (eds.), *Rhetorik, Poetik und Ästhetik im Bildungssystem des Alten Reiches: Wissenschaftshistorische Erschliessung ausgewählter Dissertationen von Universitäten und Gymnasien 1500–1800* (Cologne: 2017).

publications, had grown to include Protestant universities and academies elsewhere in Europe – in Cambridge, Wittenberg, Basel and Edinburgh, to name but a few.

## 1 Overall Reevaluation of the Academy

While most research in recent years on the Reformation has been disproportionately dedicated to the Lutherans and their important center in Wittenberg, the Reformed movements in Switzerland, France, and the Netherlands have received less attention. But when such work does discuss the Genevan Reformation, it includes research on the Genevan Academy itself. Discussions of the Genevan Reformation often discuss the academy, but for many narratives of the Reformation, such as those recently written by Irene Dingel and Volker Reinhardt, the Genevan Academy is something of an afterthought, as a means to identify the social composition of Calvinism.<sup>20</sup> In this view, the academy was established and used to consolidate and distribute a doctrine, because a new group of pastors and a new group of secular administrators needed to be educated to fill strategic positions in government. The academy fits very well into the hierarchy of offices in Geneva's Church examined by Irene Dingel, because it is associated with one of the four columns of the church.<sup>21</sup> These columns of the church were: first, ministers to preach and administer the sacraments; second, learned doctors

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<sup>20</sup> Irene Dingel, *Geschichte der Reformation, Vol. Band 5: Theologische Bibliothek* (Göttingen: 2018); Volker Reinhardt, *Die Tyrannei der Tugend: Calvin und die Reformation in Genf* (München: 2009).

<sup>21</sup> Dingel, *Geschichte*, 262–263.

to teach in the academy and schools; third, presbyters, the elders to uphold morals; and finally, deacons to aid the poor and ill and administer the charity funds. She argues that it was not ministers, presbyters or deacons, but doctors, who made the academy attractive to students from all over Europe and a “multiplier for Calvin’s theology.”<sup>22</sup> Similarly, Volker Reinhardt talks about the academy only at the end of his exploration of Geneva and then very sporadically.<sup>23</sup> For him, the academy is the result of the large numbers of incoming refugees who wanted to study theology at Geneva. He emphasizes this connection to the European Reformed world and emphasizes the spread of Reformed theology to Europe from the academy.

A second interpretation also sees the learned doctors as central to the academy but shows that Calvinist doctrine changed and developed through their work. For example, Jeffrey Mallinson argues that Beza’s doctrine changed through the reasoning force of academic method that he was using for his theology to provide a “rational defence” for the Genevan position.<sup>24</sup> (Mallinson makes clear that this change

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<sup>22</sup> Dingel, *Geschichte*, 273.

<sup>23</sup> Reinhardt, *Die Tyrannei der Tugend*, 196–7.

<sup>24</sup> Jeffrey Mallinson, “Beza’s Academic Challenge,” in *Faith, Reason, and Revelation in Theodore Beza (1519–1605)* (Oxford: 2003), 30–79. On Beza’s views concerning civic morality, see Kirk Summers, *Morality after Calvin: Theodore Beza’s Christian Censor and Reformed Ethics* (New York: 2017). A new approach to learning of civic moral is about note-taking of the Genevan

of doctrine had an effect on the balance of church and government in the state.) In this interpretation, academic thinking has an impact on the government of Geneva insofar as governance was guided by theological precepts.

Thinking of the relation between church and government, and interpreting the academy as one that reflected the tensions, growth, and limits of and between both of these forces, Charles Borgeaud had already made clear that the introduction of the study of law at the academy in the time of Theodore Beza was key to the new government.<sup>25</sup> For him, the figure of Jacques Lect was important, because he was a lawyer and part of the government rather than a pastor.<sup>26</sup> He was also a professor at the academy. He was directly sponsored by Beza, and after Beza's death became the spiritual leader of Geneva.

A third view sees the academy as an opportunity for humanists to have the freedom to pursue their research. This approach places it outside the political

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Consistory in: Kvíčalová, Anna, *Listening and Knowledge in Reformation Europe: Hearing, Speaking and Remembering in Calvin's Geneva* (Cham, Switzerland: 2019).

<sup>25</sup> Borgeaud, *Histoire de l'Université de Genève*, vol. 1, 296–313.

<sup>26</sup> More information on Jacques Lect in Matteo Campagnolo, "Jacques Lect, juriste et magistrat, 'théologien et évêque,' " in *Jacques Godefroy (1587–1652) et l'Humanisme juridique à Genève. Actes du colloque Jacques Godefroy*, eds. Bruno Schmidlin and Alfred Dufour (Basel: 1991), 149–173.

spectrum of Geneva and within a broader network of the republic of letters. This interpretation emphasizes the literary and text editing interests of the professors, one that they shared with a wide range of colleagues throughout Europe. Karine Crousaz showed in her book, *L'Académie de Lausanne entre Humanisme et Réforme (ca. 1537–1560)*<sup>27</sup> that the Academy of Lausanne was the model on which the Genevan Academy was founded. Calvin not only asked Theodore Beza, who at the time was head of the Lausanne Academy, to be rector of the new academy in Geneva, but he also encouraged all the teachers at Lausanne to become teachers in Geneva, when the academy opened in 1559. The humanist community there was enhanced by the arrival of distinguished figures such as Joseph Scaliger and Isaac Casaubon after the St. Bartholomew's Day massacre. The most recent scholarly work on Scaliger and Casaubon emphasizes the independence of their thought (particularly its independence from political constraints). This is Anthony Grafton's take on Joseph Scaliger, based on Scaliger's voluminous correspondence, recently published in eight

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<sup>27</sup> Karine Crousaz, *L'Académie de Lausanne entre Humanisme et Réforme (ca. 1537–1560)*, (Education and Society in the Middle Ages and Renaissance) 41 (Leiden: 2012).



volumes;<sup>28</sup> Joanna Weinberg and Grafton make a similar point in their research on the library of work of Isaac Casaubon.<sup>29</sup>

The importance of Geneva in spreading the Calvinist Reformation has also prompted historians to speculate about the relations between center and periphery. This work focuses on the relation between people, letters, and the circulation of new Protestant knowledge. In examining the distribution of ideas in, for example, the cases of Beza and Godefroy, these scholars have focused on the international connectivity of the academy, and the two-way traffic it promoted.<sup>30</sup> They have also pointed not

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<sup>28</sup> Anthony Grafton, *Joseph Scaliger: A Study in the History of Classical Scholarship*, Oxford-Warburg Studies. 2 vols (Oxford: 1983, 1993); Paul Botley, Dirk Van Miert, Anthony Grafton, H. J. De Jonge, and Jill Kraye (eds.), *The Correspondence of Joseph Justus Scaliger* (Travaux d'Humanisme et Renaissance) 507, 8 vols (Geneva: 2012).

<sup>29</sup> Anthony Grafton and Joanna Weinberg, *"I Have Always Loved the Holy Tongue": Isaac Casaubon, the Jews, and a Forgotten Chapter in Renaissance Scholarship* (Cambridge, Mass.: 2011). See also: Nicholas Hardy, *Criticism and Confession: The Bible in the Seventeenth-Century Republic of Letters* (Oxford: 2017).

<sup>30</sup> See the collaborative volumes: Bruno Schmidlin, and Alfred Dufour (eds.), *Jacques Godefroy (1587–1652) et l'Humanisme juridique à Genève. Actes du colloque Jacques Godefroy* (Basel: 1991), and Backus (ed.), *Théodore de Bèze*.

only to the students, who came to Geneva from all over Europe, but to the migration of Genevan students to institutes of higher education that allowed or fostered Protestant belief, such as Zurich (which was an ally of Geneva in the Swiss Confederation), Heidelberg in the German territories with its tolerant religious politics, and the Protestant Leiden in the Low Countries after its inauguration in 1575. In the fullest discussion of this topic, Karin Maag has written about student exchanges that were remarkably numerous. She worked with the matriculation list brought together by Le Fort, Revilliod, and Fick (1860) and by Stelling-Michaud (1959–1980) to make her case. She concludes that up to 1592, most students came from France; after that, a comparable number of students also came from the German territories. Few native students were actually enrolled; the student body was very international.<sup>31</sup> However, it is not clear how many of the French students returned home after their studies, which makes it unlikely that a goal like “educating pastors for France,” driven by demands from French Protestant parishes would have been achieved in the political climate between 1572 and 1579.<sup>32</sup> But we also learn that from the 1580s, French parishes sought actively either to recruit pastors from Geneva, or to finance

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<sup>31</sup> Maag, *Seminary or University?*, 30, 33, 57, 83, 85, 124 (see the tables on these pages).

<sup>32</sup> Alain Dufour, *Théodore de Bèze*, 63–64.

and send pastoral candidates to study in Geneva and come back to take over Protestant parishes in France.<sup>33</sup>

## 2 Beza Shaped the Academy and Integrated it into the Political Process

When the Genevan Academy was founded in 1559, it was founded in two stages. First, in 1558, Calvin and Beza established a Latin school, the *schola privata*, with seven classes; then, a year later, they founded the *schola publica*, the academic part. The official opening of the academy was on 5 June 1559.<sup>34</sup> The two schools had one set of printed regulations, though they concentrated on the *schola privata*.<sup>35</sup> When Calvin made the rules together with Beza, he had some comparative schemes to draw on. First, he could look to the college of Versonnex that existed in Geneva from 1424, a traditional Latin school offering Latin and the *artes liberales*, and the Collège de la Rive that the Reformer Guillaume Farel established in Geneva as a boarding school (local students could also attend as well as day students) from 1536 to 1538; second, he could draw on the academy of Lausanne that had existed since 1537, and from which Calvin recruited professors, first and foremost the Greek professor Theodore

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<sup>33</sup> Maag, *Seminary or University?*, 124, fig. 4.1.

<sup>34</sup> See Maag, *Seminary or University?*, 10.

<sup>35</sup> Académie de Genève, John Calvin, *Leges Academia Genevensis* (Geneva: 1559).

Beza, whom Calvin installed as the new director of the new academy.<sup>36</sup> Beza, in turn, drew other professors from Lausanne with him.<sup>37</sup> A third influence was the school in Zurich, where Calvin's ally, Heinrich Bullinger, was *Antistes*. There, the *schola publica* was meant to teach the Bible and its exegesis as well as necessary advanced knowledge in the languages Latin, Greek, and Hebrew to scholarship students who were deemed intelligent and diligent to pursue a profession as teacher or minister in one of the Zurich parishes, or others, who prepared themselves to go abroad for further studies in other subjects, such as the liberal arts or medicine.<sup>38</sup> We should also not forget the Academy of Strasbourg, the culmination of liberal arts studies at the time under Johannes Sturm, where Beza and Calvin spent some time, and where they

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<sup>36</sup> See Maag, *Seminary or University?*, 10, and Lewis, *The Genevan Academy*, on literature about the prior schools at Geneva; Crousaz, *L'Académie de Lausanne*, on the early Lausanne Academy. On the installation of Beza as rector, and his subsequent departure to France: Karin Maag, "Recteur, pasteur et professeur: Théodore de Bèze et l'éducation à Genève," in *Théodore de Bèze, (1519–1605). Actes du colloque de Genève (septembre 2005)* (Travaux d'Humanisme et Renaissance) 424, ed. Irena Backus (Geneva: 2007), 29–40.

<sup>37</sup> Crousaz, *L'Académie de Lausanne*.

<sup>38</sup> See Anja-Silvia Goeing, *Storing, Archiving, Organizing: The Changing Dynamics of Scholarly Information Management in Post-Reformation Zurich* (Library of the Written Word) 56 (Leiden, Boston: 2017), 55–61.

still had connections and friends, one of them being Pierre Martyr Vermigli, who had just been hired in Zurich when the Genevan academy opened.<sup>39</sup>

The Genevan regulations show two things. First, they reveal a concentration on the *schola privata*, which was of preeminent importance for Calvin, because there children would learn the catechism. The training of ministers was secondary. But the professors that Calvin appointed enhanced the importance of the *schola publica*. The question of how independent these intellectuals, who came from Lausanne and elsewhere, were from official state doctrine, led historians to discuss the range of interpretations of the Holy Scripture and to scrutinize the consistorial trials and archives.<sup>40</sup> But the academy enhanced not only the discussion of faith. During the time of Beza, the academy created chairs for law and medicine: two chairs for law from 1565/66 (held by Henry Scrimger and Pierre Charpentier) and there was one early attempt to establish a chair in medicine in 1567 with Simon Simonius, though this was almost immediately discontinued.<sup>41</sup> The *schola publica* became more important for Geneva only after Calvin's death in 1564 though this is not made apparent in the school regulations. This development might have had to do with the struggle between pastors and magistrates over the school, as Karin Maag suggested,

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<sup>39</sup> More on Strasbourg, Calvin and Beza in Dufour, *Théodore de Bèze: Poète et théologien*, 21.

<sup>40</sup> See the chapter on the Genevan Consistory in this volume.

<sup>41</sup> See Maag, *Seminary or University?*, 26–28, for an overview of events.

and surely had been the result of urgent concerns by Theodore Beza and other influential figures in Geneva about the political situation in France.<sup>42</sup>

After 1572, legal studies were especially important, because they helped to educate the governors of the state. The law chairs were filled with professors of international standing. Often these professors had studied at least for part of their time in Bourges or Strasbourg, both centers for new forms of legal humanism where Calvin and Beza had also stayed and studied. In Bourges, scholars developed an alternative to canon law that grew out of legal humanism. They used techniques of historicizing the old law body that developed from the end of the 15th century, a practice that scholars soon named “mos gallicus” to honour its origins.<sup>43</sup> This new form of making legal arguments was the preferred way for French Protestants to formulate law, and John Calvin used it. Beza drew it into the sphere of the Genevan Academy. In 1572, when François Hotman needed to go into exile from Bourges, he was given a chair to teach law in Geneva.<sup>44</sup> Beza also tried to hire François Pithou, whom he first knew at

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<sup>42</sup> Maag, *Seminary or University?*, 2–3.

<sup>43</sup> On the development and specifics of legal humanism compare the collected articles in Donald R. Kelley, *The Writing of History and the Study of Law* (Aldershot: 1997).

<sup>44</sup> Recent literature on Hotman in Geneva in Périgot, “Du droit des magistrats de Théodore de Bèze et Franco-Gallia de François Hotman,” 553–568.

Strasbourg, as a law professor to Geneva in 1574.<sup>45</sup> Pithou was in exile at Zurich at the time of Beza's letter. He was from a family of Protestant French lawyers, very close to the French King Henry IV.<sup>46</sup> Later, the Genevan Jacques Lect, who was one of the students at the Academy, became a magistrate in Geneva and also a professor of law at times.<sup>47</sup> After Beza's death he was instrumental in cutting some powers from the Company of pastors, especially those that fixed the appointment of new pastors in parishes.<sup>48</sup> More importantly, Lect was able to conduct international diplomatic work during his tenure.

### 3 The Character of Beza's Leadership

Beza was a Frenchman, a reformer from a Catholic family. Growing up in a small town, he studied the liberal arts and law in Orléans, Bourges, Paris, Strasbourg (and other places). In 1548, he briefly sought refuge in Geneva, together with his wife

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<sup>45</sup> Theodore Beza: Letter to Nicolas Pithou on 30 March 1574, in *CB* (1574) 15: 63–64.

<sup>46</sup> More on François Pithou in Pierre Jean Grosley, *Vie de Pierre Pithou, avec quelques mémoires sur son père et ses frères* (Paris: 1756), 106–231.

<sup>47</sup> See the biographical information in Campagnolo, “Jacques Lect, juriste et magistrat,” 149–173.

<sup>48</sup> Scott M. Manetsch, *Calvin's Company of Pastors: Pastoral Care and the Emerging Reformed Church, 1536–1609* (Oxford Studies in Historical Theology) 91 (New York: 2013), 303.

Claudine and his friends Conrad Badius and Laurent de Normandie.<sup>49</sup> In the first instance of his friendly relations with Calvin, the latter strongly recommended him as a teacher and director to the newly founded Lausanne Academy in 1549. In 1558 Calvin asked him if he would work in Geneva, and the *Petit Conseil* made Beza a professor of Greek on 24 November 1558, and rector of the academy on 5 June 1559.<sup>50</sup> The Company of Pastors also accepted him as a pastor and gave him a seat on 19 May 1559. He was thus, as Karin Maag pointed out in 2007, a pastor, professor and rector at the beginning of his career in Geneva. But, due to his political involvement in France in 1561, Beza left Geneva for France, first for nineteen months between 17 August 1561 and 4 September 1562, and then again from 1 October 1562 to 5 May 1563, and consequently the post of rector was biennialized.<sup>51</sup> To vote for a rector every two years means to make the position of this rector less powerful. The new rector would need to rely on the expertise of the predecessors and could plan changes only two years ahead.

When Beza finally returned in May 1563, his position within the academy was not as clearly defined as before: until his death, he used to sign his letters as “pasteur” (pastor). Together with a selection of academy professors, he was a member of the Company of Pastors. In both the academy and in the Company of Pastors, he

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<sup>49</sup> Dufour, *Théodore de Bèze: Poète et théologien*, 20–21.

<sup>50</sup> For this and the following: Maag, “Recteur, pasteur et professeur,” 30–31.

<sup>51</sup> Maag, “Recteur, pasteur et professeur,” 30–31.



exercised considerable power, especially after Calvin's death in 1564, when the members of the Company of Pastors elected him on 5 June 1564 as their chair. They reelected him every year until 1580. He has been called a "spiritual leader," given that his position had no equivalent elsewhere. The actual offices in government or the academy that he influenced were occupied by other people. Nevertheless, in 1574, he used his personal authority and his office of chair of the Company of Pastors to seek a new professor of law for the academy, and to propose that they appoint the exile Frenchman François Pithou, whom he wanted for the job. This was not the first such attempt nor would it be the last. Where did this power come from? The answer cannot be understood by scrutinizing the offices he held. Was he like Heinrich Bullinger a communicator for decisions that were made jointly with professors of the Zurich lectorium? Or like Calvin, did he have independent power? Were his decisions unchallenged? I argue that he drew his power in the academy from his standing within the international community of Calvinist scholars and academics. He remained a leader until his death, maintaining contact with all reformers of the non-Lutheran Protestant world. He was part of a network of universities, courts and political groups, where people discussed his work eagerly or communicated with him on equal terms.

While Beza's work was received favorably at some courts, such as the court of James I/VI in Scotland, the centers where he held the most influence were mainly the universities and academies in Wittenberg, Herborn, Basel, Leiden, Marburg, Cambridge, Helmstedt, Leipzig, Strasbourg, and Lausanne. These are the ones that appear most frequently in his correspondence.

But the question of whether this authority was personal or institutional is important for the argument this chapter is making. The evidence points to the personal nature of the power and authority that Beza exerted. Though the Genevan Academy did not formally communicate with the Zurich lectorium, Beza was in touch with Zurich residents and also Zurich students. One of these was the very gifted Raphael Egli, who came to Geneva from Zurich and worked with Beza in 1580, and who later, in 1592, became professor of New Testament in Zurich.<sup>52</sup>

Though Beza had a great deal to do with church officials in other cities, such as the Zurich and Basel *Antistes*, and sent books and did, on occasion, discuss the affairs of the academy, most of his correspondence concerned larger issues of international politics. So, though he sent the school regulations with a note in 1559 to the Zurich head of church, Heinrich Bullinger, he did not further discuss the academy. Most of his letters to Bullinger shared political news from France. Beza also had a lot of contact with Johann Jacob Grynaeus who held the office of Antistes in Basel. Beza often wrote to him about the academy, usually in general terms about the state of the institution, such as when he remarked that the students recommended to Beza by

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<sup>52</sup> *CB* (1580) 21: 119 note 5; Andreas Marti, “Raphael Egli,” *Historisches Lexikon der Schweiz* HLS, <https://hls-dhs-dss.ch/de/articles/010586/2009-12-02/> (accessed 13 December 2019). For more information on Egli see G. Schmidlin, “Raphael Egli (1559–1622),” *Nova acta Paracelsica*, NF 11 (1997): 79–86.

Grynaeus would be treated well.<sup>53</sup> Beza's letters to Grynaeus too concerned mostly the international political situation of the Reformed Church.

Theodore Beza was a very prolific letter writer. The bulk of his known correspondence between 1539 and his death in 1605 consists of 2792 letters either written by him or addressed to him. Curated by a team of editors, the Genevan publisher Droz brought Beza's correspondence out in 43 volumes between 1960 and 2017.<sup>54</sup> He addressed politicians and scholars all over Europe, to further the Reformed cause, to share political news, to distribute his academic and poetic writing, to stay in

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<sup>53</sup> *CB* (1591) 32: 105–109.

<sup>54</sup> Starting in 1903, Hyppolyte Aubert transcribed 1840 letters, and laid the foundations for the later publishing project. Editors of the Droz series were: Henri Meylan (vols I–IX), Fernand Aubert (I, II), Alain Dufour (I–XLIII), Arnaud Tripet (IV), Alexandre de Henseler (V, VI), Claire Chimelli (VII–XI), Mario Turchetti (VII, VIII, XII), Béatrice Nicollier (IX–XLIII), Reinhard Bodenmann (XVI–XX), Hervé Genton (XXI–XLIII), Monique Cuany (XXXVI, XXXVII), Kevin Bovier (XXXVIII–XLIII), and Claire Moutengou Barats (XLIII). Important to know is that the archivist and paleographer Alain Dufour was part of the publishing project from the beginning in 1959 and served as its director between 1968 and 1995. Dufour also wrote the latest biography of Theodore Beza (2009), in which he included much of the new knowledge from the letter exchanges.

touch with friends and receive updates about what happened elsewhere. The academic part of his correspondence contains discussions about editions of Greek literature, poetic works, and exegetical text explaining the Holy Scripture and Christian doctrine.

Overall, Beza's letters show that he himself wrote rarely about the specifics of the academy. Instead they reveal how involved he was with French politics and with what I would call an information network, one through which he gave and received information about wars and unrest in Protestant communities around Europe, but mostly in France. It is possible that he was keen on training diplomats to deal with these political uproars, thus he added to his earlier goal of educating French ministers in the Protestant faith a new emphasis on educating for political leadership.

Beza's personal authority within the academy can be seen in the recruitment of students. Parents who sent their students to Geneva, if they were in any way acquainted with Theodore Beza, would send a letter of recommendation asking Beza to take care of the arriving child, though we do not know how he responded to these requests.<sup>55</sup> Beza was also active in sending students (but not very many, occasionally) from Geneva to other places, like Leiden, Heidelberg, or Basel. Migration seems to

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<sup>55</sup> See Béatrice Nicollier, "Le rôle de Bèze dans le maintien et le rayonnement de l'Académie de Genève," in *Théodore de Bèze, (1519–1605). Actes du colloque de Genève (septembre 2005)* (Travaux d'Humanisme et Renaissance) 424, ed. Irena Backus (Geneva: 2007), 41–54.

have been part of the student career in all three confessions, Calvinist, Lutheran, and Catholic.<sup>56</sup> It was quite normal that a student studied at more than one university or academy with different people. Beza played a personal role in the international movement of students, as was characteristic for the 16th century. In short, if we want to assess adequately the impact of the Genevan Academy we need to look beyond its formal rules and policies and include the personal contribution of Beza himself.

## 4 The Genevan Academy Looked towards France

Recent arrivals from France had a strong presence in 16th century Geneva, and many of them held leading positions. They sat on the city council, they preached from the pulpit, and they taught in school. It was difficult for Geneva to nurture a genuinely Genevan group of leaders in the face of powerful French influence. And yet, when Calvin and Beza established the academy during the second half of the 16th century, it did not do the one thing that we would expect it to do: to supersede the French and promote the Genevans. On the contrary, Beza fashioned it as an entry point for French

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<sup>56</sup> More on early modern mobility and education in Violet Soen, Alexander Soetaert, Johan Verberckmoes, and W. François, *Transregional Reformations: Crossing Borders in Early Modern Europe* (Refo500 Academic Studies) 61 (Göttingen: 2019); Liam Chambers and Thomas O'Connor (eds.), *Forming Catholic Communities: Irish, Scots and English College Networks in Europe, 1568–1918* (Catholic Christendom, 1300–1700) (Manchester: 2017).

intellectuals, a tool to educate French Protestants on Genevan soil: the Genevans were to become French Protestants and develop a special relationship with France.

This relationship was elaborated through two channels: the exchange with France that the academy fostered and guided and the movements in diplomacy and politics. In Geneva itself books were printed and published for distribution in the French and francophone markets. Eighty per cent of the first generation of Protestant pastors in the town were French origin.<sup>57</sup>

At the Academy, Beza recommended French students for admission.<sup>58</sup> He also seems to have successfully helped in implementing a goal for the academy after Calvin's death and before the St. Bartholomew's Day massacre. Pastors were to be trained to work in France, and the Genevan academy was to be the center of this training. It may well have been that the establishment in Geneva of legal studies after the St. Bartholomew's Day massacre was intended to replace the usual programs of law studies for Protestants that had suffered in such universities as Bourges. Certainly, Geneva opted for a particular sort of legal study, and the attempt to appoint François

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<sup>57</sup> Manetsch, *Calvin's Company of Pastors*, 42. See Jameson Tucker's chapter in this volume.

<sup>58</sup> See Nicollier, "Le rôle de Bèze," 41–54.

Pithou reflects its emphasis on the *mos gallicus*, a way of interpreting Roman Law for contemporary society based on humanist historical and text critical methods.<sup>59</sup>

The French connection extended into diplomacy and politics and, again, Beza was crucial to these links. He was often called upon to provide diplomatic leadership for the Calvinist cause and almost remained in France after his first year as head of the Genevan Academy. He was even involved in raising a mercenary army of 20,000 soldiers in 1587. In almost every instance, even when discussing the politics of the Genevan academy, Beza looked to France.

## 5 The International Network of Institutions (via France but beyond France)

This strong connection of the academy to France, centering on Beza, had ramifications that extended throughout the Presbyterian world. This can be seen if we examine the history and effect of the theses that were defended in Theology at the Genevan Academy and whose influence extended beyond the francophone realm of France and Geneva. *Theses theologicae in Schola genevensi* is a book written by students and edited by Theodore Beza and Antoine de La Faye. It was published in Latin in two editions, one in 1586 and one extended edition in 1591. The publisher, Eustache Vignon (1586) and his heirs (“Héritiers d’Eustache Vignon,” 1591)

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<sup>59</sup> Particularly on Beza’s preference of *mos gallicus*: Christoph Strohm, “Wirkungen der juristischen Schulung auf Bezas theologisches Oeuvre,” in *Théodore de Bèze (1519–1605). Actes du colloque de Genève (septembre 2005)*, 517–536.

regularly published scholarly materials pertaining to the Genevan Academy. The second edition was translated in the year of publication into the English language and published in 1591 and again in 1595 in Edinburgh, as will be explained in detail below.

The original Latin texts with 198 (1586) and 258 (1591) numbered pages contain 81 theses (of between 2 and 6 pages long) with an addition of 10 theses in 1591 (which were 2–30 pages long). It is important to note that it was the *students* of Beza and La Faye who prepared both the theses of the first edition between 1580 and 1586, and the additional ten theses of the second edition from 1586 to 1591. They played an important and explicitly acknowledged role in what we shall see was regarded as an important statement of Genevan Calvinist theology.

The theology professor at the Genevan Academy, Antoine de La Faye, who wrote the preface to the *Theses theologicae in Schola genevensi*, dedicated the book to one former student, the Polish nobleman Nicholas of Ostrorog. Ostrorog had come to Geneva and matriculated, according to the Livre du Recteur on 9 April 1581 at the Genevan Academy, together with his brother Jan Ostrorog and two other young men from Poland.<sup>60</sup> La Faye's dedication to the Polish earl emphasizes the importance of the disputations for the teaching and learning of theology. The mastery of disputation techniques presented in monthly public disputations under his and Theodore Beza's

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<sup>60</sup> CB (1581) 22: 66, note 1: "They arrived also with their Preceptor Johan Jonas, their Prefect Jac. Milejewski, and their servant Chr. Lubieniecki."



presidency demonstrated students' rhetorical skills, a crucial part of both university culture and the culture of the church since the Church fathers.

La Faye praised Nicholas Ostrorog as “an example to all others of industry and diligence in the schools, not only by hearing, but even by your godly and learned disputations.”<sup>61</sup> He made clear how important students' work and skills were to the production and dissemination of Reformed theology.

Ostrorog had been part of the cohort taught by La Faye, but his disputations, as well as those by others in his group, were not included in La Faye's volume, although he was present at the time of the disputations. This fact suggests that not all disputations in theology given at Geneva found their way into the volume. Though La Faye acknowledged the importance of the students' work, he and Beza seem to have been selecting certain of their dissertations to give the book a particular form.

In the volume, the student names and days of public defense (but not the years) are written under each thesis. We learn that the day of the week for the public defenses was Friday, and with this information and old calendars, we can infer the year of each thesis defense. The surprising result is that the theses are not published chronologically, although the rhythm of days and months would suggest a chronological series. Here is an example, with my addition of the years:

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<sup>61</sup> Beza, La Faye, *Theses theologicae in Schola genevensi* (1586 and 1591), preface (by Antoine de La Faye).

1. Thesis De Deo, respondent: Samuele Avieno Bernensi on die Veneris 14. Julij (1581);
2. De ss & Veneranda Trinitate, respondent: Johanne Cherpontio, Neocomensi on die Veneris 29 Julij (1580);
3. De Deo Patre & Filio, respondent: Joannes Henricus Schvytzer Tigurinus, 11. Augusti (missing week day, but if a Friday, it would have been 1581);
4. De S. Spiritu, respondent: Joan. Jacobo Colero Tigurino, die Veneri 1. Septemb (1581);
5. De attributis Dei in genere, respondent: Joanne Castollo Genevensi, die Veneris 16. Cal. Oct. (=16 Sept) (1580).

If we rearrange the defenses chronologically, we can see that disputations of theses that became the first five chapters of La Faye's book were held about once a month starting on 29 July 1580. Looking at the whole volume, the public disputations range between 1580 and 1586 for the first edition, and between 1586 and 1591 for the addition of the second edition. The idea to hold public disputations one Friday a month was an old one: it was in accordance with the school regulations of 1559, and in fact, we have manuscript theses in the Genevan public library from the periods between 1565 and 1567. Published theses before 1586 that were the result of academic exercises and involved a student respondent and a professorial supervisor have survived very rarely. Today we know of only one such thesis: the Westphalian

legal student Georg Schilling published in 1582 in Geneva his *Theses de nobilissima et difficillissima materia obligatum* that he defended under the presidency of the Genevan law professor Giulio Pace, needless to say, not in the subject of theology, but in legal studies.<sup>62</sup> Pace was a legal humanist who studied the works of the legal humanist Jacques Cujas, a professor in Bourges and Valence, as had a kernel of important professors at the Genevan Academy before him, starting with John Calvin and Theodore Beza. Charles Borgeaud suggested in 1900 that Pace, who had to flee from Padua because his lecture on Cujas had been deemed heretical, studied more of Cujas' approach to legal humanism under the refugees and former Cujas students

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<sup>62</sup> Georg Schilling, *Theses de nobilissima et difficillissima materia obligatum. Quas ... praeside D. Iulio Pacio jurisconsulto ... defendet Georgius Schilling ... Sabb ... 14 aprilis ...* (Geneva: [Jean I de Laon?], 1582). (Original at Biblioteca Nacional de España in Madrid, Signature 3/61120–40.) Schilling went on in the same year to defend his doctoral dissertation in legal studies at the University of Basel: Georg Schilling, “De pactis theses. Ad diem 3. Augusti, hora locoque consuetis Quas, Dei Optimi Maximi auxilio, ex decreto Amplissimi Ordinis Iurisconsultorum in eximia Basiliensium Academia, pro felici Doctoratus in Utroque jure inauguratione defendere conabitur Georgius Schillinck Vuestphalus,” (Basel: Oporinus, 1582).

François Hotman and Joseph Scaliger, before in 1575 becoming a professor of law in Geneva himself.<sup>63</sup>

Beza and La Faye eschewed chronology and deliberately re-arranged the book in a topical order, starting with explanations of God and ending with the rituals of the church. The topical order follows the catechisms of the Reformed Church.<sup>64</sup> La Faye argued in the preface that they wanted to render the volume “a methodical summary of divinity.” With this format, they made it like a textbook or lecture-book. While recognizing the importance of the students’ contribution, La Faye enhanced the importance of the book by pointing to his venerated colleague Theodore Beza as being heavily involved in the volume, which presented an abbreviated version of the doctrine of the Reformed Church.

Sixteenth-century scholars often used the terms theses, disputations and propositions, interchangeably. *Disputatio* was most frequently used for academic theses, and the Universal Short Title Catalogue (USTC) has about 17,000 books whose titles included the term *disputatio*, including around 14,000 disputation exercises that

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<sup>63</sup> Borgeaud, *Histoire de l’Université de Genève*, vol. 1, 278–279.

<sup>64</sup> The theses are grouped in this order: 1) of God and the Trinity; 2) of Faith; 3) of Law; 4) of the Word of God; 5) of the Sacraments; 6) of the Church; 7) of the Last Judgement.

were printed.<sup>65</sup> The name *disputatio* goes back to very old times, to the form of the scholastic *quaestio disputatio* in the late Middle Ages. The word “theses” was used in titles to describe academic disputations of scholars and public disputation exercises (where the professor presides, and the student responds to a set of given or self-drafted theses), reaching a pinnacle in the 1590s, though the numbers in my USTC research fall off in the 17th century. Theses are less than a third of the booklets called ‘disputations’ in Europe. Theses came mostly from reformed places, especially in the Calvinist areas of Geneva, Heidelberg, Strasbourg. But there were also theses from Rome and Wurzburg, which chiefly dealt with the law and medicine. ‘Propositions’ is a fuzzy term and was used far less often than the other terms. The number of ‘propositions’ in USTC is about a ninth of the theses. The term was mostly used in the second half of the 16th century in the same places as the theses and the disputations, as well as in Wittenberg, Tübingen, Helmstedt. They were chiefly identified with Lutheran places, but could also be found in Catholic cities such as Rome, Naples and Venice.

Thus, the idea of theses as academic exercise can be found in all confessions but has its center in Calvinist places in the 1590s. But this does not mean that all academic places called their examinations by this name. In Geneva, the academic exercise theses was first, in its non-published form, connected to the lectures of Beza.

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<sup>65</sup> Universal Short Title Catalogue: <https://www.ustc.ac.uk/> (accessed 6 February 2020).

Thankfully we have both now in print, the manuscript of the lecture course of Beza from 1564 to 1567, connected with the theses that were developed every month out of the lecture course and defended. Both are preserved as manuscripts, the lecture course through the transcripts of students, and the theses rather casually written down by anonymous hand. The publication is recent, from 1988.<sup>66</sup>

Why were academic exercises printed? That might have to do with a change of functionality of the scholarly exercise, as distributed news, or to establish a reputation. Later obituaries emphasize the importance of printed disputations in the education and life of the deceased. They were a very important part of the *curriculum vitae*. For example, in 1582, one student, Raphael Egli, worked with Beza in Geneva, then went to Basel, where he published and defended a thesis with Grynaeus.<sup>67</sup> He

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<sup>66</sup> 45 thèses latines (Geneva Bibl. publ., ms. fr. 197 aa, portefeuille 4) (ca. 1564 to 1567), published as: Theodore Beza, *Cours sur les épîtres aux Romains et aux Hébreux: 1564–1566, after the notes by Marcus Widler: Thèses disputées à l’Acad. de Genève, 1564/67*, ed. Pierre Fraenkel (Geneva: 1988).

<sup>67</sup> See footnote 54 for information on Egli’s biography; Egli’s transcription of Beza’s lecture in 1582 is in: Theodore Beza, Raphael Egli, u.a., *De Praedestinationis Doctrina Et Vero Vsv Tractatio Absolutissima* (Geneva: 1582); his disputation presided by Grynaeus is in: Raphael Eglin and Johann Jakob Grynaeus, *De Forma Dei Et Servi Theses: An Videlicet Locus Pauli Ad Phil. 2.5 Secundum*

then secured a professorship in Zurich, where he introduced his own disputations with students, and then moved to Marburg in 1606, where he continued the practice.<sup>68</sup> He was one of the migrating scholars for whom the reputation of his thesis in different places was important.

In Geneva, the printed theses was a phenomenon of the 1580s, probably at the instigation of La Faye, who became the rector of the academy in 1580. Shortly before, Grynaeus, the close friend of Beza had introduced printed theological theses in Basel. Printed juridical theses had long been important in France, and came to Geneva with Hotman and other French immigrants. The Strasbourg academy was also a center for published theses, though the greatest number of printed disputations came from the Lutheran Wittenberg and Tübingen. In France, only a small number of printed disputations survive. The francophone Reformed world looked to the French universities, but the format of theses in Geneva had a more complex history, to which Beza's lecture course, the work of Grynaeus in Basel and other academy theses such as those held in Strasbourg contributed.

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*Patres Basil. Magnum & Chrysost. Intelligendus Sit, Illic De Divina, Hic De Humana Christi Natura, Necne?* (Basel: 1582).

<sup>68</sup> One of the disputations Egli presided in Marburg is: Raphael Egli, Johann Rudolph Stahel, *Disputatio theologica de precatone et ieiunio ex loco Matth. XVII, 21* (Marburg: 1606).

The importance of these Genevan theses helps explain why they were published in Scotland. Triggered by the name of Beza, the theses of 1586 were translated from Latin to English, and printed in 1591 by Robert Waldegrave in Edinburgh. A second edition based on the extended Latin second edition of 1591 appeared in 1595 without any indication of printer and location, presumably also in Edinburgh.

Since the 19th century the translation into English has been attributed to the Welshman John Penry, who moved with the Protestant press of Robert Waldegrave to the court of James VI (later James I of Britain) in Edinburgh to avoid persecution in England.<sup>69</sup> James was an old acquaintance of Beza. In 1581 he had already sent Beza portraits of Scottish Protestant Reformers, among others John Knox.

John Penry was an important reformer.<sup>70</sup> He had been educated at Peterhouse College Cambridge, while still a Catholic. But he then went to Wales in 1586 to preach and joined the Presbyterian faith. Penry worked for several years with the hidden, itinerant Marprelate press of Robert Waldegrave, a major vehicle advocating radical reform of the Church of England, and already had had other translations

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<sup>69</sup> I am very grateful to Joseph Black (UMass Amherst) for discussing the translator's name.

<sup>70</sup> For the following biographical sketch of Penry and more information about Penry and his involvement with the Marprelate press see William Pierce, *John Penry, his Life and Writings*, (London: 1923).



printed there. He was eventually executed in England in 1593 for heresy. In his preface to the 1586 theses Penry makes clear why he considered the text so important: It was from Beza and contained “the whole consent [consensus] of the Godly learned in the Church of Geneva and especially by that learned man universally revered in Gods Church M. Theodore Beza.”<sup>71</sup> He identifies it both as a work of collective scholarship and as the special wisdom of Beza. He also makes clear that the book

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<sup>71</sup> Theodore Beza and Antoine de La Faye (eds.), *Propositions and principles of divinitie: propounded and disputed in the Vniversitie of Geneva, by certaine students of divinitie there, vnder M. Theod. Beza, and M. Anthonie Faius, professors of divinitie. Wherein is contained a methodicall summarie, or epitome of the common places of divinitie: translated out of Latine into English*. [Translation ascribed to John Penry] (Edinburgh: 1591), 4v:  
Theodore Beza and Antoine de La Faye (eds.), *Propositions and principles of divinitie: propounded and disputed in the Vniversitie of Geneva, by certaine students of divinitie there, vnder M. Theod. Beza, and M. Anthonie Faius, professors of divinitie. Wherein is contained a methodicall summarie, or epitome of the common places of divinitie: translated out of Latine into English*. Newlie corrected with sundrie additions. [Translation ascribed to John Penry] ([Edinburgh:], 1595), 4v.

shows why “the Church of God is at the day persecute ... the cause of his trouble is contained and defended in this treatise.”<sup>72</sup>

It is difficult to know the precise impact of this translation. The Universal Short Title Catalogue verifies twenty-three copies of the first and twelve copies of the second edition, most of them in university and college libraries in the UK with a strong emphasis on Scottish academic libraries.<sup>73</sup> But we are not able to pinpoint the readership. Possibly it was drawn from members of the court of James and the associated new academy in Edinburgh, which officially opened its doors in 1593, but had been already under the patronage of James in the 1580s. And, although there were many links between Geneva and the Reformed Church in Scotland – the Presbyter Andrew Melville, one of the most powerful figures in Scotland, had spent time in Geneva in exile before becoming a professor of theology first in Glasgow and then in St. Andrews – it does not appear that publishing theses on the Genevan model ever became a general practice in Scotland.<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> Beza and La Faye, *Propositions* (1591 and 1595), 4v.

<sup>73</sup> Universal Short Title Catalogue:

<https://www.ustc.ac.uk/results?qa=0,0,propositions,AND&qb=0,0,Beze,AND&qo=0,0,1&qp=1&qso=11> (accessed 6 February 2020).

<sup>74</sup> Stephen J. Reid, *Humanism and Calvinism: Andrew Melville and the Universities of Scotland, 1560–1625* (St. Andrews Studies in Reformation History)

## 6 Conclusion: For France, via France, but beyond France

This essay has not concentrated on the everyday internal activity of the Genevan Academy. Rather it has emphasized the academy's importance to and reciprocal relationship with other parts of Europe, most notably France, an exchange in which Beza played a central role. From beyond its borders, it appears, the academy adopted and developed practices of pedagogy that were international and cosmopolitan, and to which the Genevans in turn gave a distinctive twist, one that placed student theses at its center.

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(Abingdon, New York: 2011); John McCallum, "The Reformation of the Ministry in Fife, 1560–1640," *History* 94/3 (315) (July 2009): 310–27.