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WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

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THE CRISIS OF 1558

SCHISM IN THE SWISS REFORMED CHURCH

By

Charles E. Valier

A thesis presented to the
Graduate School of Arts and Sciences
of Washington University in
partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the
degree of Master in Liberal Arts

May 2010

Saint Louis, Missouri

These all died in faith, not having received the promises,
But having seen them afar off,
And were persuaded of, and embraced them,
And confessed they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.
Hebrews 11:13

“Hospes D. Valerius ad Dominum quoque migravit aestate superiore, paulo postquam
rhotomago redisset, quo illum miseramus Lausanna ejectum Et bonus senex non
dubitavit extremo vitae tempore vitam suam omnibus periculis objicere, ut aliquos
Christo lucrificeret. Labor non fuit irritus, ut res ipsa ostendit. Redlit inde febricitans,
bona cum Ecclesiae venia, et placide tandem in Domino obdormivit.”

Correspondence de Théodore de Bèze, III, No. 165,
Bèze à Ambroise Blaurer, January 22, 1561.

Table of Contents

Epigraph.....	i
Table of Contents.....	ii
Acknowledgement.....	iii
Introduction.....	2
May 1475.....	6
Part A – The Emergence of Bern as a Military Power in Concert with religious Reform	7
The Events Leading to Bern’s Subjugation of Vaud.....	7
Introduction.....	8
The Burgundian Wars.....	9
The Wars in Northern Italy and the Mercenary Service.....	20
Achieving Consensus by Disputation in Zurich.....	27
The Reformation is Adopted in Zurich.....	28
An Early sign that Seizing Political control was Essential to the Adoption of Ecclesiastical Reform – The Case of Brunner.....	40
Niklaus Manuel.....	43
The Government of Bern and its Role in the Reformation.....	46
Conclusion.....	60
Part B – Imposition of the Reformed Church in Vaud.....	63
Prelude.....	64
The Establishment of the Reform Church in Vaud.....	73
Implementation of the Edicts of Reformation.....	87
The Departure of Beza.....	104
Denouement – The Denial of Christmas Communion.....	123
Conclusion.....	145
Bibliography.....	150

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This thesis would not have been possible without the support that I received from my advisor, Professor Christine Johnson. Beginning in the fall of 2006 when I made a trip to the archives in Switzerland and France (Aubonne, the Ardeche, the City of Lausanne, the Archives Cantonales Vaudoises in Lausanne and the State Archives in Bern) she worked with me over the course of four semesters as I did the research for this thesis. Her patience and constructive criticism forced me to dig deeper into the subject and kept me focused on what I was discovering in my research. During the summer of 2008 Christine noticed Michael Bruening's book, *Calvinism's First Battleground: Conflict and Reform in the Pays de Vaud.*, (Dordrecht, The Netherlands, Springer, 2005), in a listing of new publications. I read it that summer and at the suggestion of Professor Richard H. Helmholz, a law professor at the University of Chicago, wrote a book review. I, then, located a copy of Bruening's dissertation, "Bern, Geneva or Rome: the Struggle for Religious Conformity and Confessional Unity in Early Reformation Switzerland," (PhD diss., University of Arizona, 2002), and discovered in his annex about 18 letters from the period that I had never seen before. While Bruening had covered most of the ground that I was researching I felt that our perspective was different. I contacted Professor Bruening and he subsequently provided a draft of a manuscript that he was publishing of Pierre Viret's unpublished correspondence. As my footnotes testify, I would not have been able to piece together the events of the second half of 1558 without those letters and the assistance of Professor Bruening. Two archivists, M. Louis Grobety at Aubonne and M. Pierre-Yves Favez at the ACV were particularly helpful in my research. Two Washington University classics students, Joshua Hayes (now at Concordia

Seminary) and Tom Keeline (now at Harvard) provided the Latin translations that I was unable to accomplish with my two years of study at St. Louis Country Day School. My struggle with sixteenth century French required a lot of assistance from a bevy of helpers, Mary Dunsky, a French teacher in the St. Louis City school system, Veronique Vitt, a friend and Parisian, Professor Harriet Stone at Washington University and Professor Emily Thompson of Webster University and Pierre Viret student, but most importantly, Corinne Wilson, a French Instructor at Washington University, who over several semesters in 2009 retaught French to me, and enabled me to explore the French resources on my own and struggle with translating middle French. Finally, I owe a debt of gratitude to my wife, Patsy, whose indulgence and patience allowed me the time to accomplish this task.

Charles E. Valier
May 2010

Introduction

Toward the end of the 15th century Bern found success on the battlefield and began to chip away at the power of the Catholic Church by establishing its own church order in Bern over which it had the power of patronage. By the early 16th century the use of young men, surplus labor, as mercenaries began to be questioned by leaders like Niklaus Manuel in Bern and Huldrych Zwingli in Zurich. Because the hiring of mercenaries was associated with the Catholic Church or its leading proponents a reaction set in, both in Zurich and Bern, against the mercenary service and the nobles who profited the most from the payments from the monarchs who hired them. Out of this beginning the emerging bourgeois class formed a partnership with the reform elements of the clergy, who were repulsed by the avarice of the Catholic Church and its arbitrary rules. In this partnership each side profited from its success. The reformers freed themselves from the Catholic Church and the city-states achieved independence from the episcopal hierarchy. Both Bern and Zurich used their independence to seek territorial expansion. Zurich failed in the Second Kappel War when their army was overwhelmed and Zwingli killed. Bern bided its time until 1536 when it invaded Vaud on the pretext of coming to the aid of Geneva. Once Bern came, as this was not the first time, they stayed, because there was a power vacuum at that moment. Most of the nobility of Vaud gave fealty to Bern, but Bern was uneasy with this loose control, so it imposed its reform religion on the region as a means of political control. As such it worked well, because the local minister provided the schools, hospitals and aid for the poor in each community. However, Vaud was French speaking so Bern had to look elsewhere for its preachers. With the aid of three reformers, Guillame Farel, Pierre Viret and John Calvin, new

ministers were located and placed in the churches. The problem on which this paper focuses arose when these agents of Bern sought solutions to their ministering to a populace, who they felt were unruly, ungodly and did not readily accept the new religion, so they turned to the ruling bodies, the small and large councils in Lausanne and Bern, for help. Faced with the difficulty of dealing with men of conscience who drew their proposals from the Word of God as they saw it, the Bern magistrates foundered on their own rigid adherence to their reformation. What follows is an attempt to analyze the participants in the course of the ensuing dispute, in order to examine an inherent flaw in the Bern Reformation. Only recently has the bulk of the correspondence from this period become available to scholars, primarily as the result of the efforts of Michael Bruening to collect and publish the letters of Pierre Viret and the Class of Lausanne. This paper is intended to address itself to those letters and the plethora of other extant correspondence. What the Lausanne ministers steadfastly claimed as an ecclesiastical power (excommunication) granted by the Word of God and necessary for the ordering of their churches was perceived by the Bernese magistrates as an infringement on their control; refusing to enter into a theological debate, Bern turned the question of excommunication and discipline, as they had the Bernese Disputation years earlier, into an exercise of political power. From this we can conclude that while the Reformation is perceived as a religious upheaval it was also a political event, and when faced with a perceived erosion of its control, Bern acted as a ruler paralyzed by and clinging to its perception of “our reformation,” not as a shepherd ministering to the needs of its people. Consequently, the magistrates in Bern exposed a weakness in their understanding of the Reformation and inadvertently aided the efforts of John Calvin to send missionaries from Geneva to

France. Each of these men from Lausanne willingly undertook that extremely hazardous endeavor as missionaries, because they were, as you can be assured, men of the Word of God.

Part A

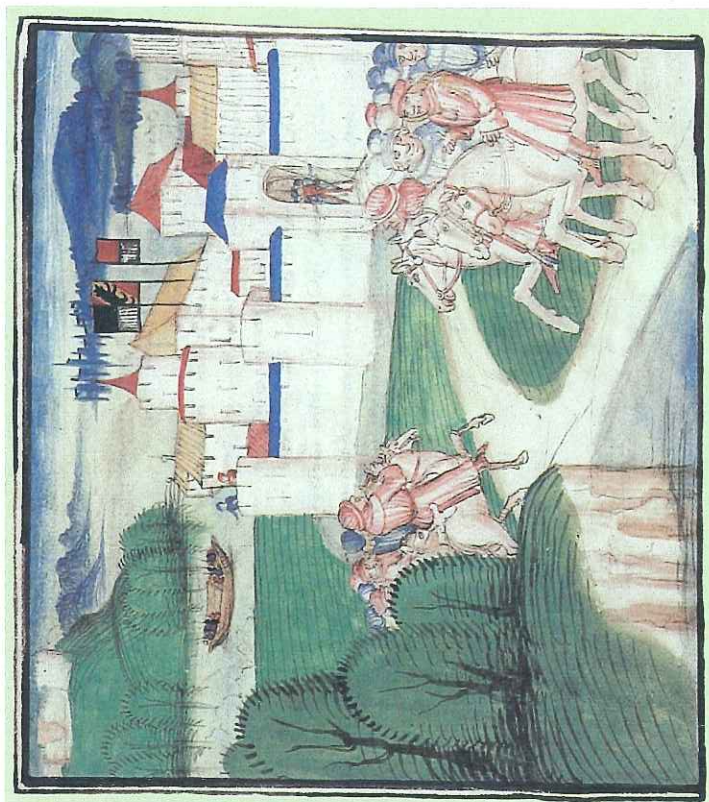
The Emergence of Bern as a Military Power

in concert with

Religious Reform

May 1475 – The representatives of Lausanne and the other cities come to Orbe in order to submit to the Swiss *

* *“Mai 1475 - Des envoyés de Lausanne et d'autres villes viennent à Orbe pour se soumettre aux Suisses.”* One of the 600 illustrations from the Diebold Schilling Chronicle. *“Et pendant que l'on assiégeait Orbe, beaucoup de villes et de châteaux se rendirent aux Bernois et aux autres villes, car chacun dans le pays était terrifié, tant et si bien que toute résistance cessa.”* Lucienne Hubler, *Histoire du Pays de Vaud* (Lausanne: Loisirs et Pédagogie, 1991) 86. Citing Diebold Schilling, *“Le récit des vainqueurs, La Chronique officielle,* ed.Tobler. pp. 526-527. *Traduit de l'Allemand.”*



The Events Leading to Bern's Subjugation of Vaud

Introduction

The invasion of Vaud by Bern in 1536,¹ and the introduction, rather imposition of the Zwinglian Reformation on its people, finds its roots in the 15th century and Bern's incursion into Vaud during the Burgundian Wars. The form of the Reformation that was imposed on the Savoyard citizens of Vaud after the Disputation of 1536 in Lausanne is tethered to the Reformation of Zurich and Bern in the early 16th century. While Bern was forced by the super powers of 15th century Europe to relinquish Vaud at the end of their success in the Burgundian Wars, it left the territory open to future conquest, since the Dukes of Savoy lacked the power to defend Vaud. The 15th century marked the zenith of Swiss power and the Confederation's emergence as a military power to be reckoned by much larger states.² Historians tend to identify the establishment of the Reformed Church in Switzerland around events in Zurich and Bern. The Reformation proceeded in tandem in those two city-states or cantons, because a powerful theologian, Huldrych

¹ The Bernese stayed until the invasion by the French on January 28, 1798, who brought a constitution with them that changed the confederation into a republic modeled on the French constitution. "*Les troupes françaises qui envahirent la Suisse dès le 28 janvier 1798 apportaient une Constitution qui transformait la Confédération en une république unitaire et centralisée conçue selon le modèle français.*" Lucienne Hubler, *Histoire du Pays de Vaud* (Lausanne: Loisirs et Pédagogie, 1991), 127. On March 5, 1798, the French troops entered Bern. In 1802 some of the Swiss revolted, but the French under Marshall Ney came back to suppress the Swiss. James Murray Luck, *History of Switzerland* (Palo Alto, Cal.: Society for the Promotion of Science and Scholarship Inc., 1985), pp. 282-286.

² Zurich, a prominent member of the Eidgenossen (see note 4), in 1519 had a population of 60,000 inhabitants, but the city had only 5,000 inhabitants, of this number only 923 [in 1529] males were on the military rolls and thus eligible to serve as magistrates. The disparity in size between the members of the Eidgenossen and larger states like France, Burgundy and the Holy Roman Empire is staggering. Norman Birnbaum, "The Zwinglian Reformation in Zurich," *Archives des Sciences Sociales des Religions*, 1959, volume 8, page 17.

Zwingli, led the movement in Zurich and provided the theological structure of the church to Bern's leading minister, Berchtold (Berthold) Haller, and a commanding presence in the Bern Disputation of 1528. Consequently, the Reformed Church in Switzerland is rightly considered to be the product of Zwingli, because what he crafted in Zurich was adopted in Bern and elsewhere. The reality is more complex. In Bern leadership came from two disparate sources: Berthold Haller, a minister in the Chapter of St. Vincents, who was heavily influenced by Zwingli and an artist, poet and playwright, Niklaus Manuel. Each of these men guided their city states to religious reform through the cooperation of the local magistrates, partly because two of the spiritual leaders, Zwingli and Manuel, were also members of the Small Council of their states, each of which had become dominated by the guilds at the time of acceptance of reform principles by the magistrates. In both instances the underlying motive of the magistrates was a desire for greater autonomy from the Emperor and the local Catholic clergy. Consequently, the Reformation flourished in both states, because its development aided, abetted and strengthened the political position of the local magistrates who had come to power as supporters of the religious reform in their city-state. Both states were aggressive in seeking to expand their territory, Bern to the west into Vaud and Zurich into the adjacent Catholic territories, but in 1530 their development diverged and both states lost their spiritual leaders within the span of a year, Haller to illness and Manuel to natural causes in 1530, and Zwingli of mortal wounds in battle in 1531. Ironically, both Manuel and Zwingli had served as mercenaries in earlier wars in northern Italy, and that experience dominated their efforts later. This section will analyze how the Bernese became a military power in the 15th century, how the Reformation developed in Zurich and Bern

under the influence of Zwingli, how the events of 1530-1531 altered the course that each state took thereafter and how politics, more than religion, drove the course of events thereafter. Because the defeat of Zurich in the Second Kappel War and Zwingli's death halted the expansionist plans that Zwingli had espoused for Zurich our attention will shift after that disastrous war to following the expansion of Bern. Bern extended itself through military conquest and then tried to govern in the conquered lands by imposing its "Reformation" in the large territory of Vaud. Its two agents, Guillaume Farel and Pierre Viret,³ launched Bern's influence in Geneva, which later came to be identified with John Calvin, and then moved to other areas under Bernese control, Neuchâtel and Lausanne. While Bern was unsuccessful in extending its hegemony into Geneva, its immediate presence allowed Geneva to survive as a small city-state sandwiched between three military powers: France, Savoy and Bern.

The Burgundian Wars

During the 15th century the Bernese nobility acting through the Small Council first displayed the expansionist inclination and policy that would mark the 16th century conquest of Vaud.⁴ Among the leading families were the Diesbachs, Erlachs, Hallwyls

³ Guillaume Farel (1489-1565) – see note 172. Pierre Viret (1511-1571) from Orbe in the Pays de Vaud, where he first preached and was discovered by Farel. Went to Geneva in 1532 with Farel where he was poisoned and almost died. Entered Lausanne before the Bernese army in 1536. Took part with Farel and Calvin in the disputation of 1536 in Lausanne. Appointed minister of Lausanne by the Bernese, first under Pierre Caroli, who was removed shortly afterwards, and then as the lead minister. Went to Geneva in 1540 to prepare the church for Calvin's return. Dismissed and banned with his assistants, Jaques Valier and Arnaud Banc, from Lausanne by the Bernese in January 1559. After two years in Geneva he left for southern France, where he was quite popular.

⁴ Bern was part of the "Swiss Confederation" or *Alte Orte*, the eight old places, which was composed of the cantons of Uri, Schwyz and Unter Walder (the Forest Cantons), Zug, Glarus and the City states of Bern, Luzern and Zurich. Together they were known as the *Magna Liga Almanie Superioris*, the great league of Upper Germany, or the

and Bubenburgs who controlled the Small Council⁵ that governed the small city-state of Bern. They began to assert themselves through aggressive diplomacy by negotiating with the large powers of France and Savoy. Although Bern was a small territory it had achieved independence from the Holy Roman Empire and its anemic leader, Sigismund, and Swiss soldiers were in demand as mercenaries, particularly with the King of France. Burgundy, Bern's neighbor to the north also had expansionist tendencies and its takeover of Alsace threatened Bern, the *Eidgenossen*, and the German Palatinate, particularly since its ruler, Charles the Bold, maintained a standing army and a disposition to use it.⁶

The Duke of Austria, Sigismund, had borrowed 50,000 Rhenish Florins from Charles the Bold,⁷ the Duke of Burgundy, in 1469 and 1470. Sigismund repaid 10,000 gulden to pay off Swiss bankers in return for Waldshut and the Schwarzwald, but then he turned around and mortgaged these properties to the Duke of Burgundy.⁸ Later

Eidgenossen or oath companions. See Richard Vaughan, *Charles the Bold*, (Suffolk, England: The Boydell Press, first published 1973 by Longman, and republished in 2002, 2004 and 2008), 263.

⁵ The government was composed of the Great Council and the smaller body, the Small Council, which controlled foreign policy and was dominated in this period by the noble families of Bern.

The chief office of the canton of Bern was the *Avoyer* or *Advoyer* (*Shultheiß*). He had a counterpart (*ancien avoyer* or *Altshultheiß*) who was the past avoyer. Sometimes incorrectly identified as the mayor of Bern. The two alternated every two years. Michael Bruening, *Pierre Viret's Unedited Correspondence*, unpublished manuscript, epistle number 9, note 1, Viret to Nägeli, November 23, 1547.

⁶ The Swiss relied upon a system of calling up volunteers from a list of eligible males kept by each canton. Since that eligibility also applied to representation on the councils it became a civic duty to respond to that call. The pool of mercenaries came primarily from the excess labor in the rural areas.

⁷ *Charles le Hardi (ou le Téméraire)*. That is Charles the Bold or Charles the Reckless. Both names seem to fit the last duke of Burgandy, as the reader shall see.

⁸ Modern readers may be confused with the term "mortgage" since financing for most residential properties is accomplished through a mortgage which leaves the debtor in possession and the creditor with only the right to possession if the the debtor defaults. In the 15th century the creditor or mortgage holder had the right of possession to collect the

Rheinfelden, Sackingen and other Alsatian properties were added to the mortgage. Concurrently through the treaty of St. Omar (1469) Charles guaranteed protection for Sigismund against the *Eidgenossen*. The Bernese realized they had been outmaneuvered in this “pawn shop diplomacy” and plotted to reduce Charles’ position through a series of diplomatic moves that brought Bern onto the European stage.

Niklaus von Diesbach and Adrian von Bubenburg rose to power in Bern at this time. Diesbach had ties with the French Court and Bubenburg with the Burgundy Court and was the recipient of a Burgundian pension.⁹ Initially, this split in foreign relations left Bern in an ambiguous position. In 1469 Charles appointed Peter von Hagenbach, a lesser noble from Sundgau, and his close associate, bailiff (or governor) of the mortgaged properties in Alsace.¹⁰ Hagenbach instituted rigorous policies of repression, which brought out popular discontent, because the mortgage did not include all of Alsace, and Hagenbach deliberately tried to intimidate the imperial cities that were not covered by the mortgage and independent, such as Mulhouse.¹¹ Bern was approached to contact Charles to ask for the recall of Hagenbach. Bubenburg was sent to intercede with the Duke who

levies of the debtor lord. Here Charles held mortgages on various pieces of property in Alsace, but not the entire territory. To his chagrin Charles found that many of the properties that Sigismund had mortgaged, had been mortgaged to others, including the Landgrave, Frederick, elector palatine of the Rhine.

⁹ Charles and his father, Philip the Good, bought allies with these yearly stipends. In effect it was either a reward for past services rendered or a bribe for future loyalty.

¹⁰ Hagenbach became the maître d’hôtel to Charles in 1460, and in 1462 Hagenbach exposed Jehan Coustrain’s (alleged) plot to murder Charles. In 1465 Hagenbach won military fame, particularly in the seizure of the town of Perronne. Richard Vaughan, *Charles the Bold* (Suffolk, England: The Boydell Press, 2008), 255.

¹¹ See Vaughan, *Charles the Bold*, 96. Mulhouse was an imperial city with powerful friends, but Hagenbach taunted her citizens telling them that their town was a weed in the Duke’s garden that needed uprooting and that the Duke would treat Mulhouse as he had Liège.

rebuffed him and restated his support of Hagenbach.¹² In reaction to these events Diesbach went to the French court and negotiated a treaty of neutrality on behalf of Bern in 1470 that guaranteed that neither France, nor Bern would aid Burgundy in the event that the other was at war with Burgundy. Next Bern turned its efforts to Austria to protect itself from attack from the east. Burgundy was expanding with the defeat of Lotharingia in 1473 and the subsequent Treaty of Nancy. But in 1474 the people arose in Alsace with the support of the League of Constance¹³ and beheaded Hagenbach.¹⁴ Sigismund began negotiations with the Swiss Confederation through the King of France, which resulted in a treaty of June 11, 1474, *Ewige Richtung*. A week later Sigismund denounced the earlier treaty of St. Omar with Charles. This left Bern, through the adroit diplomacy of Diesbach, in a position where it could prepare for war with Burgundy without the fear of a threat of intervention by a larger power.

Diesbach led the effort to prepare for war, but was opposed by Bubenburg. Bubenburg was removed from the Small Council, because the Bernese nobles and burghers supported Diesbach's policy toward France and were alarmed by Burgundy's threat in the north. In October 1474 a treaty was negotiated with Louis XI whereby France agreed to support Bern in its war with Burgundy and gave an indemnity of 80,000 gold francs annually to eight cantons, Freiburg and Solothurn in return for the right to

¹² May 10, 1474. Vaughan, *Charles the Bold*, pp. 265 and 271. The response was "our Lord of Burgandy...wanted to have a bailiff to do what he wanted him to do." Hagenbach is reputed to have said, "Ha, Ha, have you come to oppose my Lord of Burgundy? By Christ you villains, you have it coming to you."

¹³ The League of Constance was created by those who felt threatened by Duke Charles and his bailiff, Hagenbach, and was composed of Strasbourg and Basel, the Landgrave, and the cities of Baden, Colmar and Selestat. In 1474 the *Eidgenossen* joined the League. See Vaughan, *Charles the Bold*, 273.

¹⁴ May 9, 1474.

recruit Swiss mercenaries. Bern then moved its troops into parts of Vaud ruled by Yolande (Ioantha), the sister of the French king and widow of the Duke of Savoy, who had recently died and was acting for her seven-year-old son.¹⁵ She made the mistake of giving the right of transit to troops of the Duke of Burgandy and this provoked Bern first, to overrun Lake Neuchâtel, and then to march its army to Lake Lemman (Lake Geneva) by October 1475. The ease with which Bern found it could invade the territory confirmed that it could be done again. More ominous was what occurred in the towns and villages of Vaud, because it shaped the reaction by the Savoyards of Vaud sixty years later.

The suffering imposed on the Savoyards of Vaud made a deep impression on the people of Vaud as the official chronicler of Bern, Diebold Schilling,¹⁶ recounts:

“And during the siege of Orbe, many of the cities and castles surrendered to the Bernois and other cities, because everyone in this area was terrified, so much so that all resistance ceased. May 1475”¹⁷

Later Schilling recounted what happened at Yverdon: “And the Count of Romont,¹⁸ who it was said had also been wounded, emerged shamefully from the city

¹⁵ Lucienne Hubler, *Histoire du Pays de Vaud* (Lausanne: Loisirs et Pédagogie, 1991) pp. 68, 69 and 88 for the family tree of the House of Savoy. See footnote 24 for more detail.

¹⁶ Schilling, a judge and member of the Large Council, was commissioned by the Bernese in 1474 to write a chronicle of Bern. As such it is biased in that he defends the actions of Bern. He participated in the Burgundian Wars and was personally acquainted with much of what he wrote about. Entitled the “Great Burgundian Chronicle” it is illustrated with over 600 illustrations. Bruce Gordon, *The Swiss Reformation* (Manchester University Press, 2002), 29.

¹⁷ “*Et pendant que l'on assiégeait Orbe, beaucoup de villes et de châteaux se rendirent aux Bernois et aux autres villes, car chacun dans le pays était terrifié, tant et si bien que toute résistance cessa.*” Hubler, *Histoire du Pays de Vaud*, 86. Citing Diebold Schilling, “*Le récit des vainqueurs, La Chronique officielle*,” ed. Tobler. pp. 526-527. *Traduit de l'Allemand.*”

¹⁸ Jacques de Savoie, Count of Romont and Baron of Vaud. Vaughan, *Charles the Bold*, 360.

with everyone else; and with them, went the murders and traitors from Yverdon, with the women and children, and each one carried what it could draw or carry, and they had to leave behind them all their personal property and the dear city. January 1476”¹⁹

Throughout Vaud the residents paid a stiff price for the presence of Bern: “Likewise, the said Etienne of Aubonne and Jacques Munier, syndics of Nyon have paid, for the time when the Bernese were in Orbe with their army (May 1475), when all the good cities were in the locality and when they came to an agreement with the great captains of this army about the sums of money to be shed. And, because of these arrangements, or gifts, the Bernese had assured the said cities that they would not set fire to them and that they would not kill the population.”²⁰ These were the actions of a harsh conqueror, and a foretaste of what was to come. The mentality of the period was that conquest was an acceptable way to loot and rape.

¹⁹ “*Et le comte de Romont qui, à ce que l’on dit, avait également été blessé, sortit honteusement de la ville avec tout son monde; Et avec eux, s’en allèrent aussi le meurtriers et les trâitres d’Yverdon, avec femmes et enfants, et chacun emporta ce qu’il pouvait tirer ou porter, et s’ils durent laisser derrière eux tous leurs biens immobiliers et la belle ville. Janvier 1476.*” Hubler, *Histoire du Pays de Vaud*, 86. Citing Diebold Schilling, “*Le récit des vainqueurs, La Chronique officielle.* pp. 588-589. Traduit de l’Allemand.”

²⁰ “*De même, les dits Etienne d’Aubonne et Jacques Munier, syndics de Nyon, ont payé, pour le temps où les Bernois étaient à Orbe avec leur armée [Mai 1475], quand toutes les bonnes villes étaient dans cette localité et lorsqu’elles avaient convenu avec les plus grands capitaines de cette armée des sommes d’argent à verser. Et, à cause de ces arrangements, ou dons, les Bernois avaient assuré les dites villes qu’ils ne les incendieraient pas et qu’ils ne tueraient pas la population; Et ils avaient taxé toutes les terres et tous les mandements, tant les villages que les châteaux de toute la Patrie, en échange de la promesse d’épargner les foyers; et l’accord. Pour la ville et pour tout le mandement de Nyon, a été fait pour 200 florins petit poids, à verser le dimanche suivant à amener là où les Bernois seraient avec leur armée; Et il fut donné aux personnes qui ont négocié cet accord avec les chefs bernois 60 florins que le dit Jacques Munier, co-syndic, leur a payés.*” Hubler, *Histoire du Pays de Vaud*, 86. Citing Armando Tallone, *Parlamento Sabauda XII.*, Assemblée del Paese di Vaud 1260-1480, p. 403. Traduit du latin.

In the larger arena these bold moves by Bern alarmed the Emperor and the King of France, Louis XI. The Emperor made peace with Burgundy and Louis XI renounced his treaty with the Swiss. Charles took his army north and captured Lorraine and then moved to Grandson on Lake Neuchâtel, killing all its defenders. On March 2, 1476, a Swiss army arrived and drove the Burgundians from Grandson, not so much as by force of arms as by panic in the Burgundian army after the Duke ordered his cavalry to withdraw when the Swiss vanguard approached.²¹ When the main body of the Swiss showed itself the Burgundians panicked and in their haste left their artillery behind.²²

Charles shrugged off this accidental defeat and moved his army to Morat (Murten), which sits on the southeast side of Lake Morat sandwiched in between Lake Neuchâtel and Bern.²³ The siege of Morat began on June 9.²⁴ By then Diesbach had died and Bubenburg was restored and in command of the Bernese army in Morat.²⁵ An army of 25,000 men was assembled from Bern, Zurich and Thurgau of the Swiss

²¹ Cavalry was not used to fight pitched battles with infantry, but to act as the eyes and ears of the foot soldiers, and to locate the enemy. Once the enemy were located, the cavalry would, customarily, have withdrawn to allow the foot soldiers to slug it out.

²² Also the privy seal and jeweled crown of Charles. By tradition the booty was to be divided up among the army. Vaughan, *Charles the Bold*, 377.

²³ Bern was only 30 kilometers away or about 18 miles.

²⁴ One contingent of the Burgundian army was under Jacques of Savoy, Count of Romont and Lord of Vaud. Jacques was the brother of Amedee IX, Duke of Savoy. Amedee had given his brother, Jacques, Vaud as an appendage. Amedee was an epileptic. His wife, Yolande, the daughter of King Charles VII of France and Marie d'Anjou, acted in his behalf. Amedee died in 1472. His son, Philibert I, succeeded him at age seven, leaving Yolande as regent. Yolande was an ally of Charles, the Bold, and an opponent of her brother, Louis XI, of France. Ironically, Charles was the brother-in-law of Louis XI having married Catherine, daughter of Charles VII, the King of France at age seven. Catherine died six years later.

²⁵ Vaughan, *Charles the Bold*, 389.

Confederation.²⁶ On June 22, 1476, this army of the *Eidgenossen* arrived at Morat and immediately attacked the Burgundian army from the rear, routing Charles' army, which was spread around Morat to lay siege to it. They drove many of the soldiers caught between the attackers from Bern and the defenders of Morat into the lake by using the ancient Greek phalanx of unarmored troops massed tightly in formation attacking with spears, harlberds (see note 28).²⁷ The Burgundian army suffered heavy casualties and retired to Lausanne and then to Nancy, where it was defeated for the third time by a much larger army commanded by René, Duke of Lorraine, which contained 10,000 Swiss mercenaries on January 5, 1477, and Charles was killed in the battle by Swiss halberdiers.²⁸ Despite the obvious conclusion that the *Eidgenossen* established that they could defeat a major military power, Burgandy, these battles removed from the scene a militant neighbor with a standing army. The armies of the *Eidgenossen*, including Bern, were volunteer militias raised only when necessity or money prompted them to arm. Like the armies of the Roman Republic, they were led by popularly elected leaders or captains (the centurion of ancient Roman legions) and had a high degree of *esprit de*

²⁶ The decision to move was based on the threat at the beginning of the siege toward Bern. The *Eidgenossen* existed on the basis of mutual defense. It did not participate in attacks on other sovereign territory for the purpose of aggrandizement. The Swiss Confederation was also joined by René II, Duke of Lorraine and his contingent of cavalry. Vaughan, *Charles the Bold*, 390.

²⁷ Such an attack would have been in echelon with the commanders feeding the incoming troops into a line of attack which finally either enveloped the enemy or drove a wedge between them. However, the evidence suggests that there was no unit commander. The formation was constructed so that it could bring overwhelming power when it ran into the enemy. While each Bernese unit was an independent company the landscape dictated this style of attack. A double envelopment such as General George Thomas used at Nashville in December 1864 or the Russians at Stalingrad in December 1942 against Von Paulus' army was a classic maneuver. Vaughan, *Charles the Bold*, 397.

²⁸ Foot soldiers that carried the harlberd, an ax with a pike mounted on a six foot shaft.

corps.²⁹ While the victory at Grandson was an accident and made no lasting impact, the victories at Morat and Nancy were solid and convincing military victories that removed the armies of Burgundy as a military threat, and established the fighting reputation of the *Eidgenossen*.

The Duchess of Savoy was imprisoned and a treaty was negotiated. Bern received the territory of Aigle, and the following territories were placed under joint sovereignty with Fribourg: Erlach, Morat, Grandson, Orbe and Echallens (referred to as the “Common Lordships”). The rest of Vaud was restored to Savoy in return for cash from the French King, Louis XI, who received the right to recruit mercenaries. Louis preferred a weak Duchy of Savoy as his neighbor, moreover, Yolande was his sister.³⁰ By then the Swiss were considered the premier soldiers in western Europe and were sought after by the large powers, particularly France. The European powers also noticed the military skill exhibited by the Bernese and other Swiss commanders. While the Swiss nobility was willing to trade Swiss lives for gold, the military prowess displayed in this campaign was not lost on the European monarchs.³¹

²⁹ To an outsider this strong unit cohesion may appear to be a mystery, but it is created by a strong bond among the members of the unit and a sense of communal concern and pride by the unit and its leaders. The author experienced this during his service with the United States Marine Corps. The Sixth Marines had a corny, but effective motto, “When the going gets tough, the tough get going.” It was the goal, however, for the members of the Regiment.

³⁰ Nevertheless, Yolande’s alliance with Burgundy was counter to the interests of Louis XI.

³¹ James Murray Luck, *A History of Switzerland* (Palo Alto, Cal.: Society for the Promotion of Science and Scholarship Inc., 1985), pp. 98-104; Hubler, *Histoire du Pays de Vaud*, pp. 84-89.

Overlooked in this period was a concurrent action by Bern against the Bishop of Lausanne, who was appointed in 1471.³² Pope Sixtus IV's³³ selection of his cousin to this bishopric immediately met with opposition from Bern, whose government wanted to secure local candidates for the bishoprics within its territorial boundaries, and had its own candidate for the position.³⁴ Twice the Bernese complained to the Pope and twice he confirmed the appointment. To ameliorate the situation the Bishop appointed Burkhard Stor, from Bern, as the bishop's chief administrator. However, the Bishop then made a secret trip to Lausanne to meet with and mollify the Chapter of Lausanne, which had initially supported the Bernese, in order to solidify his control of the Chapter. Bern reacted to this action by sending its troops to Lausanne, which drove the members of the Chapter out of Lausanne. Ultimately, Bern had to back down under pressure from the great powers, but by then the Bernese had established that Bern had the military might to back their diplomatic positions and could occupy the territory of Vaud unchecked. This marked the first confrontation between Bern and the Church in Rome and set the precedent for what happened fifty years latter when the Bernese magistrates usurped the power of the Church in Rome in a series of actions by the Council in the 1520's culminating with the articles of Reformation in 1528.

³² Cardinal Julian [Giuliano] della Rovere. Dan Lee Hendricks, *The Bern Reformation of 1528, the Preacher's Vision, the Peoples Work, an Occasion of State* (PhD diss., Duke University, 1977) p. 14, 26 and 27. The future Pope Julius II, Giuliano held the episcopal sees of Carpentras (1471-2), Lausanne (1472-6), Catania (1473-4), Coutances (1476-7), Mende (1478-83), Viviers (1477-9), Sabina (1479-83), Bologna (1483-1502), Ostia (1483-1503), Lodève (1488-9), Savona (1499-1502), Vercelli (1502-3), and the Archiepiscopal See of Avignon (1474-1503).

³³ Pope Sixtus IV (July 21, 1414 – August 12, 1484), born Francesco della Rovere, was Pope from 1471 to 1484. A classic supporter of nepotism no fewer than three of his nephews were made cardinals by Sixtus.

³⁴ Francis of Savoy, Provost in Bernhardsberg. Hendricks, "The Bern Reformation of 1528," 27.

In 1483 Bern applied to the papacy to establish the Chapter of St. Vincents in Bern as a home for Bernese citizens in a religious order. The request included plans for a provost, deacon, cantor, curator, and 24 cannons with patronage and presentment rights to rest solely with the government of Bern, i.e., the magistrates of Bern would manage all the affairs of the chapter. The Pope, Innocent VIII, advised the Bishop of Lausanne of the application, and then granted it by Papal Bull on January 12, 1484. The papal charter granted full rights of presentation and patronage to the Bern Council. It empowered the government “to appoint cathedral personnel, examine their performance, and generally to manage the foundation.”³⁵

Thus, at the end of the 15th century Bern had established itself as a military power with the best fighting soldiers in Europe,³⁶ it had territorial ambitions as shown by the incursion in Vaud, and had challenged and then began to usurp Church privileges.³⁷ It had also established that it could invade Vaud with impunity. All that remained was to create a situation where the great powers were either too busy elsewhere or were not threatened by Bern occupying Vaud. The first third of the 16th century witnessed the independence of Bern from the Church, the rise of a mercantile class, and the realization of its territorial ambitions in Vaud. The bargain that the Swiss had made with the French King during the Burgundian Wars, allowing him to recruit mercenaries in their territory,

³⁵ Hendricks, “The Bern Reformation of 1528,” p. 100.

³⁶ Desmond Seward, *Prince of the Renaissance, the Life of François I* (London: Sphere Books, 1974), 48.

³⁷ Hendricks, “The Bern Reformation of 1528,” 28, note 7. “[Theodor] Quervain [in *Geschichte der Berner Reformation*] sees the dispute over the installation of the bishop of Lausanne and the foundation of St. Vincent’s as a demonstration of the degree to which the Reformation in Bern was not a sudden and unprecedented phenomenon, but the culmination of more than half a century of struggle between church and state.”

put the Swiss peasants up for hire and drew them into the wars in northern Italy at the beginning of the sixteenth century.

The Wars in Northern Italy and the Mercenary Service

The military success of the *Eidgenossen* in the fifteenth century emboldened the Swiss military, particularly the Bernese, and made them the subject of a bidding war for their services. By 1515 Swiss mercenaries, who comprised the bulk of the mercenary army of Maximilian Sforza, Duke of Milan, were the political masters of Lombardy in northern Italy. The new king of France, François I, the son of Louise of Savoy,³⁸ was approached by Venetian diplomats who easily enticed him to bring an army to Lombardy to throw out the Swiss mercenaries.³⁹ That summer François led a French army⁴⁰ into Italy over three mountain passes known only to local residents instead of the expected passes, which the Swiss had blocked. In doing this he replicated the feat of Hannibal some 1700 years earlier by bringing heavy artillery with him, just as Hannibal had brought his heavy engines of war, elephants.⁴¹ Once over the mountains François' army debouched into the Piedmont plain and approached Milan.⁴² For several weeks he

³⁸ R. J. Knecht, *Renaissance Warrior and Patron: The Reign of Francis I*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 67.

³⁹ Seward, *Prince of the Renaissance, the Life of François I*, 45.

⁴⁰ Knecht, *Renaissance Warrior and Patron: The Reign of Francis I*, 70. Ironically, the Swiss had been France's main source of mercenaries, but in 1510 they withdrew from French patronage. For the upcoming campaign Francis raised an army of 8,000 French *aventuriers* and several thousand *gendarmes*, but his main fighting force was 23,000 German *landsknechts* including 2,000 *arquebusiers* armed with the *arquebus*, an early form of the muzzle loading musket, first invented by the Chinese in the 15th century.

⁴¹ Seward, *Prince of the Renaissance, the Life of François I*, 49.

⁴² Knecht, *Renaissance Warrior and Patron: The Reign of Francis I*, 72. Due to their surprise appearance they were able to capture Prospero Colonna and 300 of his Papal horsemen, thus depriving the Swiss of much of their cavalry. The Swiss were foot soldiers.

attempted to buy off the Swiss mercenaries, offering up to 700,000 gold crowns.⁴³ Some 7,000 Swiss from Bern, Fribourg and Solothurn under the urging of Albrecht von Stein, a soldier of Bern,⁴⁴ returned home enriched by the proposal and untouched by the scars of war, but leaving approximately 20,000 Swiss mercenaries to engage the French/Venetian army.⁴⁵ During two days in September, just outside Milan at Marignano, the French King's army composed of German mercenaries (*landsknechte*) ran into the remaining Swiss mercenaries who resorted to the ancient Greek phalanx method of fighting, which they had used so successfully in the Burgundian Wars. For the first day the Swiss *halberdiers* and the German *landsknechte*, infantrymen, slugged it out without a decision. However, on the second day the Venetian cavalry finally arrived and, combined with the French ordnance, they drove the Swiss from the battlefield with a total casualty list of 15,000.⁴⁶ While this battle determined that artillery could best the Swiss phalanx of *halberdiers*, it was only one of many battles the young king would fight until he was captured and held for ransom by the Spanish. The battle of Marignano caused Bern to switch sides, however, and ally themselves with the King of France, an alliance that would serve the Bernese well when they invaded Vaud. But its impact on the Swiss Reformation was far more significant than first surmised. Present for that battle were three men who would play dominant roles in the Reformation in Zurich and Bern. From

⁴³ Knecht, *Renaissance Warrior and Patron: The Reign of Francis I*, 73. States that the offer was up to 1,000,000 gold écus of which 150,000 was to be paid at once.

⁴⁴ Seward, *Prince of the Renaissance, the Life of François I*, 50.

⁴⁵ Knecht, *Renaissance Warrior and Patron: The Reign of Francis I*, 73. The remaining Swiss troops were encouraged by Matthias Shinner, cardinal bishop of Sion, to remain and fight. See also Seward, *Prince of the Renaissance, the Life of François I*, 50. Schinner was referred to as the Cardinal of the Swiss

⁴⁶ Knecht, *Renaissance Warrior and Patron: The Reign of Francis I*, 77. As many as 16,500 bodies were reported buried on the field.

Zurich were a young Huldrych Zwingli, who was then a minister in Glarus, and Markus Röst, a captain in the Papal Guard and from Bern, Albrecht von Stein, a member of the ruling nobility.⁴⁷ The subsequent year Niklaus Manuel joined the army of François I and marched on Milan. Due to a threat from the Emperor Maximilian I that did not materialize, his unit from Bern disbanded and returned home.⁴⁸ Manuel, an impoverished artist, had found a quick way to raise money.⁴⁹ Six years later he joined the mercenary service again under Albrecht von Stein and fought and was wounded at Navara, where he saw Swiss troops rape, pillage, and plunder the town and murder children after they did not receive the money they expected. He then went to Biocca, where the vaunted Swiss pike men were defeated by the German *Landsknechte* and other Swiss mercenaries. The images of those events remained with him for the rest of his life. More importantly, this battle had a startling impact on the political leaders of Bern, as 50 out of 300 members of the Large Council fell at that battle.⁵⁰

For all three men their early military adventures had a profound impact on the Reformation that followed in these two cantons of Bern and Zurich. Revulsion of the mercenary service drove the early stages in the Reformation in Zurich. A poem by Zwingli captures the depth of his feelings: “Whoever commits crime and murder is

⁴⁷ Bruce Gordon places him in northern Italy in 1518, not 1515.

⁴⁸ Knecht, *Renaissance Warrior and Patron: The Reign of Francis I*, 85. Maximilian invaded northern Italy, but retreated on March 24, 1516, when 8,000 Swiss from Bern, Fribourg and Solothurn hired by Francis showed up at Milan.

⁴⁹ Francis entered into a treaty of Perpetual Peace of Fribourg on November 29, 1516, agreeing to pay the Swiss a war indemnity of 700,000 écus and an annual subsidy of 2,000 gold écus to each canton. Knecht, *Renaissance Warrior and Patron: The Reign of Francis I*.

⁵⁰ Hendricks, “The Bern Reformation of 1528,” 26, note 1.

considered a bold man. Did Christ teach us that?”⁵¹ It was in this period that Zwingli came into contact with the great humanist, Desiderius Erasmus, and his early theology owed much to that man. However, it was his revulsion of the mercenary service that drove Zwingli into a partnership with the government of Zurich in seeking reform and freedom from the Church. The Burgermeister of Zurich in that period was Markus Röst, who had come back a respected soldier and risen to power in the critical period of 1520-1523. It was natural that these two ex-mercenaries, scarred by, but sharing the common experience of war, could form a partnership. More importantly, Zwingli’s theology was tailored to the magistrates desire for independence from the Church in Rome and coincided with Röst’s views. This partnership allowed the State of Zurich and the Church in Zurich to reject the mercenary service and to usher in the reforms that changed the religious character of the region. When compared to the experience of Calvin, who had a tenuous relationship with the ruling Syndics in Geneva, this close partnership makes it easier to understand why the Reformation in Geneva took an entirely different shape, because Calvin did not have the partnership that Zwingli had with Röst, which had been forged in the common experience of war.⁵² Zwingli could work with the local government, while Calvin had to fight for his survival in Geneva while he was at odds with the magistrates.

Albrecht von Stein had been secretly in the pay of the French King at Marignano

⁵¹ W.P. Stephens, *Zwingli, an Introduction to his Thought*, (Oxford Press, 1992) “The Labyrinth,” p 13.

⁵² Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes, a veteran of the Twentieth Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry Regiment, a man who had been wounded three times, described his war experience as follows: “We have shared the incommunicable experience of war. We have felt, we still feel the passion of life to its top... In our youths our hearts were touched by fire.” Geoffrey C. Ward with Ken Burns, *The Civil War, an Illustrated History*, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1990), 394.

and had earlier negotiated the buyout of the Bernese mercenaries. In 1522 he organized the company that Manuel joined and went to Navara and Biocca. It was at Biocca that von Stein swapped his horse for an indulgence for himself and 500 of his men. After that encounter, which indicates that he was imbued with the practices of the Church in Rome, his name disappears from the news of Bern.⁵³ Not unsurprisingly, the nobility of Bern lost power to the guilds in the election of 1527 and the Council banned mercenary service, required slits in their blouses and pantaloons, a sign of their mercenary service, to be sewn up and forbade, gambling, dancing, drinking, and whoring, all of which the new leaders associated with the mercenary service.⁵⁴ The corruption that mercenary service brought with the influx of large sums of money from their paymasters and the booty from the destruction they brought on their enemies pervaded the entire life of the Bern community in the early 16th century. In 1523 one-third of all the revenue of Bern came from mercenary service.

Historians such as Bruce Gordon pinpoint the moment, March 9, 1522, when the printer Christoph Froschauer cooked sausages in his home during lent, while Zwingli was present, as the beginning of the Reformation in Zurich.⁵⁵ What began as a simple

⁵³ Hendricks, "The Bern Reformation of 1528," 86, note 31, citing *Huldreich Zwinglis Sämtliche Werke*, vol. 9, no. 608, pages 103-104. Edited by Emil Egli and George Finsler. "*Dominus a Mülinen cum duobis aliis e senatoria dignitate protrusus est. Lapides quoque exclusi sunt, et quod omnium est.*" See also Valerius Anshelm, *Die Berner-Chronik*, 6 vols. Edited by the Historischen Verein des Kantons Bern: K.J. Wyss, 1884-1901. See vol. 5, page 199. It is presumed that he was replaced on the Small Council in the elections of 1527, since Anshelm mentioned the Steins.

⁵⁴ See the exposition of this in Manuel's painting of *The Judgment of Paris*. Rose Marie and Rainer Hagen, *What Great Paintings Say*, (Los Angeles: Hohenzollerning, Taschen, Vol. 2, 141.

⁵⁵ Stephens, *Zwingli, an Introduction to his Thought*, 8; Gordon, *The Swiss Reformation*, 53-54. Gordon says the Reformation in Zurich "began on an empty stomach." Zwingli did not partake of the repast, however Leo Judd, his colleague, did.

expression of practical necessity, food for hardworking people, and an attack on the proscriptions of the Church made without authority from the New Testament, became a *cause célèbre*. On March 23 Zwingli preached on freedom in the matter of food, arguing for Christian freedom. Then in May he expanded the argument by attacking the whole system of Swiss mercenary service. It “placed the whole people under God’s wrath.”⁵⁶ This went beyond the condemnation of the moral corruption of the system and the irreconcilable political position it put the political leaders in who were profiting from the sale of their young men and thus governing in their own interest, rather than that of the state. The experience of his own participation in the system now called into question the continuation of the mercenary service.

In Bern in February 1522 Niklaus Manuel presented his “*Fastnacht Plays*,” *Totenfresser*, which were acted out on street corners. His “Pope and his Priests” was presented throughout the Lenten season.⁵⁷ In the play two mourners bring a young dead man, presumably a mercenary, before a regally dressed Pope, who they had to pay to have the young man’s soul released from Purgatory. The Pope then uttered this pronouncement: “and be thankful to the dead, who make it possible for us to fleece the living.”⁵⁸ It was presentations like this that irretrievably tied the Pope to the perceived evils of the mercenary service that laid the ground work for the reformers, whose actions led to the independence of their churches, particularly from the local bishops, who often,

⁵⁶ Stephens, *Zwingli, an Introduction to his Thought*, 18.

⁵⁷ Bruce Gordon, “Toleration in the Early Swiss Reformation, the Politics of Niklaus Manuel of Berne,” in *Tolerance and Intolerance in the European Reformation* (Cambridge, 1996) 135. See also Stephen E. Ozment, *The Reformation in the Cities, The Appeal of Protestantism to Sixteenth Century Germany and Switzerland* (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1975), pp. 111-116.

⁵⁸ Hendricks, “The Bern Reformation of 1528, 36, note 37.

like della Rovere, simply lived off the revenues of the position and may have held several other positions at the same time.

Later Manuel brings a bishop forward to express his gratitude for the papal prohibition of marriage by priests, even though there is no scriptural authority for the prohibition, but which is a matter of indifference to the bishop, because he reaped the bounty of concubinage and the resulting fine that became known as the “cradle tax” that supported the bishops.⁵⁹ As Valerius Anselm, a contemporary of Manuel and a physician in Bern, wrote at the time, “through this strange production of unprecedented blasphemy, the people were moved to think about and distinguish Christian freedom and papal slavery.”⁶⁰ Further Manuel satirized the nobility of Bern by presenting the Pope supported by bloodthirsty soldiers recalling the depravity and bestiality that he saw at Navara.⁶¹ Manuel placed the Pope, the bishops and the Church at the heart of the corruption he saw, because they benefited the most from the misfortune of the mercenary service.

Even in his paintings Manuel reflected his obsession with his own and the Swiss mercenary service. “The Judgment of Paris,” 1518-1522, depicts the “foolish” Paris being seduced by an almost nude Venus clothed in a transparent shift holding out a golden apple and a nude Minerva standing nearby with her hand on the long narrow

⁵⁹ Gordon, *The Swiss Reformation*, 29.

⁶⁰ Hendricks, “The Bern Reformation of 1528,” 37, note 40, quoting Valerius Anshelm, *Die Berner-Chronik*, 6 vols. Edited by the Historischen Verein des Kantons Bern: K.J. Wyss, 1884-1901. See vol. 4, p. 475: “*Durch dis wunderliche und vor nie, als gotslasterliche, gedachte anschowungen ward ein gross volk bewegt, Kristliche friiheit und babstliche knechtschaft zu bedenken und ze underscheiden.*” Anshelm is also spelled Anselm.

⁶¹ Gordon, “Toleration in the Early Swiss Reformation, the Politics of Niklaus Manuel of Berne,” 135.

sword that Manuel favored and which was his signature. The gaudy style of dress with slit pantaloons and arms favored by the Swiss mercenaries, and identified as “mercenary style,” are shown on a woman believed to be the wife of Albrecht von Stein.⁶² His *Fastnacht* Plays made clear what Manuel was trying to depict, Bern itself seduced by the money of the mercenary service, which enslaved the Swiss who became beholden to the foreign powers that paid them and the church that fleeced them by requiring contributions for the masses being said for the souls of the dead. Independence could only come by rejecting foreign and Church dominance. The Reformation in Zurich and Bern were complicated affairs, as we shall see, but the impetus for reform began on the battlefields of northern Italy, because the mercenary service became entwined in the assault on the Church in Rome and the Pope. This was clear in Manuel’s attacks, because the Pope with the Papal States was an active participant in the wars in northern Italy and was the beneficiary of the indulgences and other contributions made for the dead.

Achieving Consensus by Disputation in Zurich

Elector Frederick the Wise of Saxony, known as the protector of Martin Luther, wrote to the City Council of Wittenberg on December 19, 1521, questioning the nature of the proposed reform or evangelical communion, but stated: “The issue [must] be dealt with in a Christian and reasonable way, by disputation, writing, lecturing, preaching, and the like.”⁶³ When Luther returned to Wittenberg after his exile in March 1522, he stated from the pulpit:

“The mass is an evil thing, and God is displeased with it...it must be abolished... Yet Christian love should not employ harshness here... We must first win the hearts of the people... In short, I will preach it, teach it,

⁶² Hagen, *What Great Paintings Say*, Vol. 2, pp. 136-139.

⁶³ Ozment, *The Reformation in the Cities*, 143, n. 99, *Die Wittenberger Bewegung* No. 56, 124.

write it, but I will constrain no man by force, for faith must come freely without compulsion.”⁶⁴

Thus the disputation, a scholarly confrontation between Protestant and Catholic theologians, became a tool of the Reformers and the magistrates who allied themselves with them, not so much as a grand debate, for most of them were rigged for one side or the other through the ground rules established by the proponents, but as a public means of allowing the local magistrates to adopt the new church of the Reformation as an expression of popular will. Particularly, in the 1520s the disputation was used throughout southern Germany and Switzerland in areas where the Reformation began to take hold. Its antecedents lay in the European university tradition of debate and discussion.

The Reformation is adopted in Zurich

To understand the role that the magistrates in Zurich played in the adoption of the Reformation in that city-state a short explanation of its structure is necessary.⁶⁵ The government of the city and the state consisted of the Great Council or “Two Hundred,” and the *Bürgermeister* at its head. The Great Council was elected (selected) by the twelve guilds of Zurich and the “*Constaffel*” or Constables that were composed of the nobility. The Council during the period we will be looking at was composed of 162 members, 12 from each guild and 18 from the *Constaffel*. The *Bürgermeister* had a counterpart the *co-Bürgermeister* who he shared power with and who served for six months.⁶⁶ Within the Great or Large Council there was the Small Council consisting of

⁶⁴ Ozment, *The Reformation in the Cities*, 144, n. 106, *Luther's Works* 51:75-77.

⁶⁵ Zurich was both the city on the Zurichsee, but also the rural communities around the city, comprising the canton or state of Zurich.

⁶⁶ This was an extension of the governmental principle of the Republic of Rome where power was shared among two consuls or *praetors* or *aediles*, except in times of emergency when a dictator was appointed. After the fall of the Republic this practice

24 masters and 24 representatives of the guilds and the *Constaffel*. Twice a year the Council had elections (often a selection rather than an election), June 24, the feast of St. John the Baptist and December 27, the feast of St. John the Evangelist.⁶⁷ It was after these elections that many of the changes in the adoption of the Reformation occurred. Quite simply election changes either advanced or retarded the Reformation.

The adoption of the Reformation in Zurich hinged on the success and force of the personality of Zwingli, but also the political success of the merchant burghers whose increase in political power began at the end of the fifteenth century.⁶⁸ While Berthold Haller and Niklaus Manuel were the facilitators of the Reformation in Bern, Zwingli was both the instigator and the commanding presence of the Reformation both in Zurich and later Bern where his dominance at the Bern disputation of 1528 united the theology of the Reform Church in both city-states.

Zwingli had attended the university in Basle and came under the humanist influence of Erasmus and Johann Ulrich Surgant, a long time rector of the university.⁶⁹ In 1505 he became a parish priest in Glarus and stayed there until 1516. It was during

was continued, except the Emperor, who replaced the two consuls of Rome, without removing them from office, held absolute power. However, in the cities of the Empire the practice of dual leadership continued in municipal government.

⁶⁷ G. R. Potter, *Zwingli*, (Cambridge Press, 1976), 50-52. The twelve guilds were: the shopkeepers, tailors, vintners, bakers, weavers, smiths, tanners, butchers, shoemakers, carpenters, fishermen and gardeners. The *Gessellschaft zur Constaffel* originally a house of lords, but by the 16th century many of their privileges had been taken over by the merchant class.

⁶⁸ See Norman Birnbaum, "The Zwinglian Reformation in Zurich," *Archives des Sciences Sociales des Religion*, 1959, volume 8, pages 15-30, for a discussion of the change in the merchant class in Zurich in this period, which was concurrent with the rise of trading and weapons making as an important part of the economy.

⁶⁹ Johann Ulrich Surgant. Author of the book *Manuale Curatorium*, which provided advice to ministers and stressed the importance of the sermon and the minister's pastoral duties. He taught Zwingli at Basle and was the long time rector there. Potter, *Zwingli*, 19, note 7. Gordan, *The Swiss Reformation*, pp. 28-29.

this period that he intensified his study of the ancient writers, learned Greek and Hebrew and was introduced to the mercenary service as a chaplain for the Swiss troops.⁷⁰ In 1516 he was appointed a stipendiary priest (*leutpriester*⁷¹) at the Benedictine monastery at Einsiedeln, a place of pilgrimage for Zurichers. It was here that he first preached against the French alliance and mercenary service.⁷² Based on the recommendation of Oswald Myconius⁷³ and the support of Markus Röist⁷⁴ he was appointed in December 1518 a stipendiary priest at the main church in Zurich, the *Grossmünster*, with the function of preacher and pastor.⁷⁵ By this time he was imbued with a love of Paul's letters, which he had read in Greek and memorized.⁷⁶ He was able to read Hebrew, Greek, Latin and German, but he thought in Latin. It was this encyclopedic knowledge of the Gospels and

⁷⁰ "Field preacher." Potter, *Zwingli*, 34.

⁷¹ Often translated "people's priest," lay minister or common preacher, both Potter and G.R. Elton state there is no satisfactory translation of the term. "...but the duties were not primarily those of preaching so much as the 'cure of souls,' including baptising, marrying, burying, giving extreme unction to the dying, hearing confessions and saying mass. The *Leutpriester* was not, however, the parish priest: he did not receive the tithes or all the oblations and customary payments." Potter, *Zwingli*, 40-41, footnote 4. Citing G.R. Elton, *Reformation Europe, 1517-1559* (London, 1963), 63

⁷² Gordan, *The Swiss Reformation*, 49-50.

⁷³ Oswald Myconius, 1488-1552. Teacher of classics in Zurich and early supporter of Zwingli in 1518, who he worked closely with. Zwingli's letter to Myconius in 1520 is first evidence of the reform nature of Zwingli's ministry. Except for short period (1520-1523) when he taught in Lucerne, he was in Zurich with Zwingli in the 1520s. From 1532 he headed the church in Basle, where he replaced Oecolampadius.

⁷⁴ Markus Röist, 1454-1524. Soldier who fought at Morat. Apparently, present at the battle of Marignano. Captain of the Papal Guard in 1518. From wealthy family in Zurich. *Bürgermeister* of Zurich from 1505 to 1523. Was a member of the Council for almost 30 years. One of Zwingli's strongest supporters, who presided at the disputations in Zurich before his death. Succeeded by his son, Diethelm, as *Bürgermeister*, who continued the family support for Zwingli.

⁷⁵ Potter, *Zwingli*, 44. The appointment gave rise to a minor dispute, because Zwingli had to confess that he had had sex with a prostitute. The alternative candidate under consideration by the chapter was a priest who had fathered eight children, which highlighted the extent to which priestly celibacy was overlooked in this period

⁷⁶ Potter, *Zwingli*, 100.

Paul's letters that enabled him to excel at public disputations. His studies were wide-ranging and deep: Augustine, Chrysostom, Eusebius, Jerome and Origen; in short the fathers of the Church.⁷⁷ Zwingli began his ministry by preaching the book of *Matthew*, which he proposed to do, *ad seriatim*. After *Matthew*, the longest of the gospels, he turned to the *Acts of the Apostles*, and then to Paul's letters. It was this return to scripture, which had been ignored by priests of this era that set Zwingli apart. Fables and stories of Duns Scotus⁷⁸ were the fare delivered to congregations by priests in Zurich then. In 1520 the council, in response to Zwingli's preaching, authorized preaching from scripture only. In an era where the principal form of mass communication was from the pulpit this decision reinforced Zwingli's position as the principal source of public communication in Zurich.

As the citizens came to hear their *leutpriester*, they came in contact with the gospel, which for many of them was the first time that they had an opportunity to understand the message of the New Testament. The Protestants claimed that the priests of the established Roman church preached fables, stories of the saints, sin, but not scripture. Some priests felt that scripture should be hidden from the people, but the introduction of the printing press was now making the Bible available to more people. Three events early in his career began to shape his character so that he grew from the Erasmian humanist into the theological leader of the Swiss Reform Church.

⁷⁷ Stephens, *Zwingli, an Introduction to his Thought*, 15. A more extensive list is included in Stephens. Zwingli brought a large library of these early church leaders with him to Zurich.

⁷⁸ John Duns Scotus (d. 1308), thirteenth and early fourteenth century Franciscan theologian from Scotland, who explored metaphysics to explain the existence of God and the immaculate conception of Mary. He was looked down upon by 16th century theologians, who referred to him as a "dunce," a play on his name.

First, the plague struck Zurich in 1519 and Zwingli remained to minister to his parish flock. As a result of his exposure to so many people with the plague he contracted the disease himself and almost died.⁷⁹ In the depth of his despair he committed himself to God and penned a poem that captures his commitment to God's salvation:

Help, Lord God help
In this trouble!
I think Death is at the door.
Stand before me, Christ;
For thou hast overcome him!
To thee I cry;
If it is Thy will
Take out the dart,
Which wounds me
Nor let me have an hour's
Rest or repose!
Will'st Thou however
That death take me
In the midst of my days,
So let it be.
Do what thou wilt; Me nothing lacks.
Thy vessel am I;
To make or break altogether."⁸⁰

From this point on Zwingli placed his life in God's hands. His willingness to minister to his parishioners in the face of death helps to explain the loyal following that he had in Zurich.

Second, on March 9, 1522, Zwingli was present in the home of the Zurich printer, Christopher Froschauer, along with his future assistant, Leo Jud,⁸¹ when sausages were

⁷⁹ See the following confirming this practice. "Our lord Jacques's serving woman has died from the plague; he himself is healthy along with his wife and is shut up inside his house, as is the custom of the community." Hipolyte Aubert, Fernand Aubert et Henri Meylan eds., *Correspondence de Théodore de Bèze*. (Genève: Librairie E. Droz, 1960-1962), tome II, no. , Beza to Calvin, April 20, 1551.

⁸⁰ Stephens, *Zwingli, an Introduction to his Thought*, 46, citing I- 67.5-24; *Huldreich Zwinglis Sämliche Werke* (Berlin, Leipzig, Zurich, 1905-), and S. M. Jackson, *The Latin Works and the Correspondence of Huldreich Zwingli*, i. 1510-1522 (New York: 1912; Repr. as *Ulreich Zwingli Early Writings*, Durham, NC, 1983) 56.

eaten during Lent. Zwingli, did not eat the sausages and the matter could have been downplayed, but Zwingli chose to attack the Catholic practice of prohibiting the consumption of meat during Lent, in a sermon on March 23, entitled “On the Right to Choose Freely what to Eat.” Froschauer then printed the sermon in a pamphlet on April 16. His thesis was that the Bible did not require abstention from eating meat and therefore the Canon law, that required it, was *ultra vires*.⁸² The Bishop of Constance⁸³ took notice that his authority was being flouted and on May 24 sent a letter to the Zurich Council. But before it became an issue Zwingli joined in a petition to the Bishop on July 2, 1522, with ten other priests advocating clerical marriage. Since Zwingli had secretly married in early 1522 this petition might be viewed as self serving, but in fact it seems most of the priests in northern Switzerland were living in marital state, paying the “concubine” tax and the “cradle” tax to the Bishop. In the diocese of Constance there were said to be 1,500 children of priests.⁸⁴ In return for these payments the Bishop agreed not to commence legal action in the ecclesiastical courts. Zwingli pointed out that the requirement of celibacy was not derived from the Bible. Indeed, Paul’s choice set out in his First Letter to the Corinthians to remain celibate was his personal choice.⁸⁵ The

⁸¹ Also present was Hans Hottinger, who was involved in a later act of iconoclasm, when he helped pull down a large cross at Stadelhofen in September 1523, which was illustrated by Heinrich Thomann (1544-1618) in the collection of the Zentralbibliothek, Ms B 316, fol. 99r, which appears on the cover of the 2002 paperback version of Gordon’s *The Swiss Reformation*.

⁸² Stephens, *Zwingli, an Introduction to his Thought*, 18. Gordon, *The Swiss Reformation*, 53-55. Potter, *Zwingli*, 74-75.

⁸³ Hugo Hohenlandenberg from Zurich.

⁸⁴ Potter, *Zwingli*, 79.

⁸⁵ First Corinthians 7:32 -33 – “The man who is unmarried (*αγαμος*) is concerned (*μεριμνα*) with the things of the Lord (*τα του κυριου*), how he might please the Lord (*αρεσει τω κυριω*). But the married man is anxious about the affairs of the world, how to please his wife (*αρεσει τη γυναικι*),...” Paul began at 7:25 by explicitly stating, “I

petition pointed out that the early bishops of the Church were married. The petition was quickly rejected.

Nevertheless, on two separate occasions in 1522 Zwingli had confronted the authority of the church and more directly the Bishop of Constance. While Zwingli argued from the principle of *sola scriptura*, the magistrates in Zurich were driven by a desire to free themselves from the oversight of the Church, and more particularly, the Bishop of Constance.⁸⁶ Zwingli had strong support from Markus Röist (1454-1524), who was the Bürgermeister of Zurich between 1505-1523. Zwingli articulated the rationale for reform while the magistrates driven by the political proclivity to free themselves of the Bishop provided the muscle Zwingli needed to sustain his position. Each had his own separate agenda, but it was the eloquence of Zwingli, a man driven by his faith in God, that was the engine of reform in Zurich.⁸⁷ The challenges Zwingli made in 1522 led the magistrates to order, as Zwingli requested, a disputation in early 1523.⁸⁸ As Steven Ozment of Harvard has noted, “the Bible could be as effective a means for city councils to ‘bell’ their bishops and clergy as it was for Protestant reformers to obtain new religious and domestic freedoms.”⁸⁹ For the Zurich magistrates the disputation was to settle the

have no command of the Lord (*επιταγήν κυρίου*) with regard to virgins (*παρθενων*), but I give you my opinion, as one who has found the mercy (*ηλεημενος*) of the Lord and who can be trusted (*πιστος ειναι*).” While the use of the word “virgins” is literally translated as unmarried women Paul refers in 7:25-35 to unmarried and married men, so the inference is that *παρθενων* (*parthenoi*) might better be translated “celibate or celibacy.” Joseph H. Fitzmyer, S.J., *First Corinthians, A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, The Anchor Yale Bible (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), 313. Quoted portions from the New Revised Standard Version and the Greek from the 1550 Saint Stephanus New Testament version.

⁸⁶ Gordon, *The Swiss Reformation*, 57.

⁸⁷ Potter, *Zwingli*, 100, note 2. See also page 58.

⁸⁸ The magistrates selected at the end of 1522 were more supportive of Zwingli.

⁸⁹ Ozment, *The Reformation in the Cities*, 147.

disputes “according to the truth of Holy Writ,” in the German language. The disputation was to be conducted by the magistrates. As Zwingli convinced them, “there are in this assembly so many Christian hearts, taught doubtless by the Holy Spirit, and possessing such upright understanding, that in accordance with God’s spirit they can easily judge...”⁹⁰ By regulating the preaching in their churches the magistrates asserted their supremacy over the Roman Church and its bishop. The primary rule was that scripture alone would determine everything, the debate would not be in Latin, the language of scholars of that period, but in the German vernacular, and Röist, the Bürgermeister, would preside.⁹¹

The Bishop of Constance determined not to attend, but he sent Dr. Johann Fabri,⁹² his vicar general and three others as observers, “to listen...”⁹³ Approximately 600 people attended the disputation and Zwingli was center stage sitting at a table with folio volumes of the Greek New Testament, and the Hebrew version of the Old Testament. Only Zwingli could translate these into German, which gave him a tremendous advantage in the forthcoming debate. More important to the outcome was the absence of any traditional Catholic Church theologian. While the Bishop of Constance had sent four people, headed by Fabri, they were under instruction “not to dispute, but to listen, advise and mediate.”⁹⁴ Fabri briefly broke that imprecation when he stated that there had not been a married priest for 1200 years, to which a member of the Zurich city council

⁹⁰ Hendricks, “The Bern Reformation of 1528,” 109, see note 19, *Huldreich Zwinglis Sämtliche Werke*, vol. 1, 499. Edited by Emil Egli and George Finsler.

⁹¹ Potter, *Zwingli*, 98. Zi, p. 467.

⁹² Rendered as either Faber (Potter and Gordon) or Fabri (Stephens and Ozment).

⁹³ Gordon, *The Swiss Reformation*, 58. Ritter Fritz Jakob d’Anwyl (ca. 1460-ca. 1537), Domherr Georg Vergenhaus, and Dr. Martin Blausch.

⁹⁴ Gordon, *The Swiss Reformation*, 58, note 31, Keith Dennis Lewis (1985).

retorted, “maybe not, but they have been free to keep their mistresses.”⁹⁵ The bishop’s position, which was ignored by Zurich, was that the Pope should call a general council of the Church in the next year to address these issues. In that vacuum Zwingli stood out. The result was that the council directed that preaching was to be from scripture, but masses continued to be said in Latin. “Nothing is to be established or taught except what can be proved by the testimony of gospel doctrine and the authority of sacred Scripture by themselves.”⁹⁶ Zwingli was vindicated and the seeds of reform were laid. The Bishop of Constance had branded the disputation as a “tinker’s convention,” but the Zurich magistrates established that they would control public worship and they would dictate the nature of preaching in their territory. In doing this the locus of power shifted even though the initial impact was minimal.

Afterwards, Zwingli edited and had his 67 articles, upon which he had based his presentation at the disputation, printed and distributed, first, to his former parishioners in Glarus and then to the Bishop, who could not miss that it was addressed “*urbi et orbi*.”⁹⁷

⁹⁵ Potter, *Zwingli*, 103.

⁹⁶ “*nihil aliud instituere aut docere nisi quod Evangelicae doctrinae testimone et Sacrae Scripturae auctoritate per ipsis proberi posit.*” James T. Dennison, Jr., *Reformed Confessions of the 16th and 17th Centuries in English Translation: Volume 1, 1523-1552* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Reformation Heritage Books, 2008), pp. 1-8. Translated by E.J. Furcha, *Huldrych Zwingli Writings, Volume One; The Defense of the Reformed Faith* (Eugene Oregon: Wipf & Stock, 1984).

⁹⁷ “...but as the Bishop of Constance and the Elector of Saxony were quick to recognize it was addressed *urbi et orbi*.” *Urbi et orbi* (“to the City [of Rome] and to the World”) was a standard opening of Papal proclamations. Suggests that Zwingli was showing the Bishop of Constance that his exposition of the Reform measures needed by the church was on an equal basis as the pronouncements that came from Rome. As he said in the *Shepherd* the church in Rome was only one among many and what came from the church in Zurich had equal stature with what came out of Rome. In any event it was an attack on the exclusive jurisdiction of the Church in Rome. See See Potter, *Zwingli*, 104, n. 4 and 136.

Thereafter, Zwingli began to preach the controversial aspects of his thesis.⁹⁸ When put to the test of scripture much of the foundation of the Church began to crumble, because the façade of the Church in the sixteenth century was buttressed by papal pronouncements and interpretation. Specifically, what he attacked in his articles were the following practices, which he felt were not supported by Scripture. Each of the practices attacked by Zwingli also involved methods by which the Church in Rome raised money and thus his attack based on scripture gave people an opportunity to cease paying money to the church. Purgatory was an invention of the Church and became a productive money-raising device, because families were asked to pay for masses for the dead and since people kept on dying the cycle continued in perpetuity. Pilgrimages required people to travel to the shrine and then pay for the maintenance of the shrine. Consequently, Zwingli's theology gave the merchant class in the cities relief from the oppressive money raising efforts of the Church in Rome, which was desperately trying to pay for the large number of priests and other functionaries that supported the Church and

⁹⁸ 1. Purgatory. "The true Holy Scriptures know nothing of purgatory after this life." 2. The intercession of saints. "God alone remits sin through Jesus Christ his Son, our only Lord." 3. The prohibition of priestly marriage. "I know of no greater offense than to forbid priests to have wives, yet allow them to engage prostitutes." 4. Pilgrimages. "Therefore, Christ is the only way to salvation of all who were, are now, or shall be." 5. Veneration of saints. "That Christ is the one eternal high priest; from this we deduce that all those who pretend to be high priests, oppose the honor and power of Christ; indeed they reject it." 6. Indulgences. "Whoever remits certain sins for money alone, is fellow to Simon and Balaam and the very messenger of the devil." 7. Abstention from eating meat during Lent. "In the gospel we learn that human teaching and statutes are of no use to salvation." 8. The practice of having people pay for masses for the dead. "The sentence of those who have died, is known only to God." Dennison, compiler, *Reformed Confessions of the 16th and 17th Centuries in English Translation: Volume 1, 1523-1552*, pp. 3-8. Potter, *Zwingli*, pp. 105-106.

the effort of the Popes at the time to build the basilica of St. Peter in Rome.⁹⁹ What also offended the emerging merchant class was that while they were taxed the priests of the Church were free from taxation themselves. So Zwingli tapped a responsive chord at a time when the merchant or Bourgeois class was emerging as a political force in Central Europe.

In doing this Zwingli challenged the Canon Law of the Church (*Corpus Juris Canonici*). In turning to Christ as the head of the Church Zwingli was pushing the Pope out of control of the Church and substituting local magistrates, in this case, of Zurich. In this sense he was adopting the teaching Luther espoused in “To the Christian Nobility of the German Nation.”¹⁰⁰

The next step in the process of reformation in Zurich was the pulling down of a wooden cross at Stadelhofen, just outside the walls of Zurich. Sometime between September and November, 1523 Lorentz Hochrütiner, who had been present at the illicit meal at the home of the printer, Froshauer, and Clauss Hottinger, a supporter of Zwingli, tore down a crucifix belonging to a private individual.¹⁰¹ The Small Council jailed the culprits. The matter was then referred to a special commission consisting of Bürgermeister Röist, eight counselors, and three *Leutpriester*, Zwingli, Jud and Engelhard, all supporters of reform. They called for another disputation on the matter of

⁹⁹ R. A. Scotti, *Basilica, The Splendor and the Scandal: Building St. Peter's* (New York: Viking, 2006), 83. Pope Julius II commenced construction on the basilica in 1506. It was the idea of his secretary, Agostini Chigi, to establish a separate building fund and to fund it with the granting of indulgences. Acquiring indulgences was a century old practice. To pursue his plan Pope Julius had to tear down the original St. Peter's, erected by the Emperor Constantine more than 1,000 years earlier. At the time that act was more controversial than the sale of indulgences.

¹⁰⁰ 1520 - *An den christlichen Adel deutscher Nation*, which questioned the Pope's sole authority to interpret scripture.

¹⁰¹ Gordon, *The Swiss Reformation*, 63.

images, whose scope was later expanded to include the doctrine of the mass. Once again debate was to be based on “the divine scriptures of the Old and New Testament,” and once again the Bishop of Constance and two other invited bishops of Chur and Basle refused to participate. Nevertheless, 900 men, including 350 from holy orders, showed up for the event on October 26-28. Again Zwingli took center stage backed by his friend and assistant Leo Jud.¹⁰² The determination was that idols or images were condemned by the Old Testament and were to be removed. Moreover, masses could not be conducted for the souls of the dead, and that purgatory was rejected. They went on to conclude that communion was both bread and wine and it was to be given for both the laity and the priests. At the conclusion of the disputation nothing changed, but a commission of fourteen was appointed to study matters. Zwingli, Jud and Engelhard¹⁰³ were among the fourteen.¹⁰⁴

Beginning in early 1524 signs of change occurred.¹⁰⁵ *Candelmas* was not celebrated on February 2, and palms were not present on Palm Sunday. The pace of change accelerated, statues of saints were removed from churches, but most importantly Zurich failed to participate in the failed military campaign of François I in northern Italy. These moves were all the result of the preaching of Zwingli and his assertion that money from the mercenary service resulted in death, greed and corruption. By January 1525 Zwingli’s supporters had a majority in the Great Council. This time the leadership came

¹⁰² Potter, *Zwingli*, 130-132.

¹⁰³ Heinrich Engelhard – stipendiary minister (*leutpriester*) at the Fraumünster. From a prominent family in Zurich. Closely allied with Zwingli. One of six original members of the marriage court set up on May 10, 1525, along with Leo Jud. It replaced the ecclesiastical court of the Pope’s Church, which Zwingli rejected.

¹⁰⁴ Potter, *Zwingli*, 133, n. 2.

¹⁰⁵ Potter, *Zwingli*, 138.

from Diethelm Röist, the son of the deceased Markus Röist and the new Bürgermeister.¹⁰⁶ On April 11, 1525, Zwingli, Judd, Engelhard, Megander¹⁰⁷ and Myconius appeared before the Council and asked that the mass be abolished and replaced with a communion service.¹⁰⁸ On Maundy Thursday a table draped in linen appeared between the nave and the choir of the *Grossmünster*.¹⁰⁹ Upon it were placed bread in wooden baskets and wine in wooden pitchers. The service was conducted in the German vernacular. As much as this was the work of the Council it was the triumph of Zwingli, who had preached the reform doctrine, attacked the corruption of Catholic betrayal of the Gospel and the evils of mercenary service. For the first time the communion service was in a language that the people could understand and the redemption of Jesus Christ was shared with his body (bread) and blood (wine) in simple containers without the opulence of the Church on a plain table where the priests faced the people. Zwingli had lifted the veil of mystery that had surrounded the mass, expunged the extravagance and shared the experience of the Gospels with the people in a language they could understand. In accomplishing this he became the undisputed leader and theologian in Zurich. It was too much power as events shall show.

An Early Sign that Seizing Political Control was Essential to the Adoption of Ecclesiastical Reform - The case of George Brunner

¹⁰⁶ Potter, *Zwingli*, 153.

¹⁰⁷ Kaspar Megander (1484-1545). Native of Zurich and a member of Zwingli's close circle of friends. Allied with Zwingli in the 1520's and was at the disputation in Bern in 1528. Was called to Bern where he stayed until he was suspended by the Council of Bern in 1538. Gordon, *The Swiss Reformation*, xvii.

¹⁰⁸ Potter, *Zwingli*, 208, Gordan, *The Swiss Reformation*, 67, and Stephens, *Zwingli, an Introduction to his Thought*, 24.

¹⁰⁹ Stephens, *Zwingli, an Introduction to his Thought*, pp. 24-25.

George Brunner was an assistant to the deacon in the church (“*münster*”) at Münsingen.¹¹⁰ He called the Pope an anti-Christ in a sermon in the *münster* in 1521-1522 early in the reform movement in Bern. He continued to preach these unorthodox views until he was reported and brought before the Bern Council by a group of his colleagues, who asked that he be transferred. In his defense Brunner asked that he be allowed to prove the truth of his ideas by holding them up against scripture. The magistrates called for an examination before the priests of Bern on these grounds. At this point in the hearing the Deacon, who had brought the charges produced a letter from the Bishop of Constance, who had jurisdiction over Münsingen, summoning Brunner to appear before him. Notwithstanding this direction the Bern Council refused to relinquish control to the Bishop and appointed a committee of 16 jurors.¹¹¹ These included Thomas Wytttenbach, a priest from Biel and the sponsor of Berchtold Haller to St. Vincents in Bern, Ludwig Löubli, deacon of St. Vincents, Sebastien Meyer of the Franciscan Cloister,¹¹² Dr. Theobold Nigri of the Cloister of the Holy Spirit and two Dominicans rounded out the ecclesiastics. From the magistrates was Sebastien Stone, the treasurer of Bern, three military advisers, Barthlome May, Anton Noll and a secretary made up the examining committee.¹¹³ Eight of these sixteen were considered supporters of the evangelical cause and three supporters of the Catholic position.¹¹⁴ On the day of the hearing Ludwig Löubli disqualified himself and stated that authority in the matter rested with the Bishop of

¹¹⁰ Part of the Bernese Oberland

¹¹¹ Hendricks, “The Bern Reformation of 1528,” 39.

¹¹² Sebastian Meyer, 1460’s-1545. Worked with Haller from 1521 to 1523 in Bern, until he was forced to leave for his outspoken evangelical sympathies. Gordon, *The Swiss Reformation*, pp. 101-102.

¹¹³ Hendricks, “The Bern Reformation of 1528,” 39.

¹¹⁴ Gordon, *The Swiss Reformation*, 101. Note that Gordon’s conclusion as to the facts of this event and mine are at odds. See footnote 119.

Constance and that the committee had no authority in the matter. His action was accepted and a replacement was named, Niklaus von Wattenwyl, the provost of St. Vincent's.¹¹⁵ Brunner's accusers stated that he had called the Pope, cardinals and bishops devils and antichrists, and that priests were seducers of the people.¹¹⁶ These same priests failed to preach the Holy Gospel according to Brunner. He began his defense, "I thank God, that today it is my lot to confess our dear Lord Christ Jesus."¹¹⁷ He then argued from John 16:3-7, which announced the return of Jesus, as the basis of his defense.¹¹⁸ In light of this he argued that the teachings, commandments and institutions of the Pope, cardinals and bishops were not based on faith and that his accusers should support their accusations in scripture. He ended his defense with, "what is not from God, that I will not be in, what is not according to scriptures, that I will not be in, nor have part in." He stated he was a member of the priesthood of all believers. These arguments echoed Martin Luther, particularly his "Babylonian Captivity of the Church," which was a pamphlet circulating in the Swiss Federation at the time.

¹¹⁵ Niklaus von Wattenwyl was the son of Jacob von Wattenwyl, the Advoyer of Bern at the time. Hans Jacob von Wattenwyl (1506-1560), another son of Jacob, was Advoyer in the following periods: 1542-1544, 1546-48, 1550-52, 1554-56, and 1558-1560, the later a critical period of suppression of the Reform Church in Lausanne. His counterpart was Hans Franz Nægeli, the commander of the Bernese army that invaded Vaud in 1536. Michael Bruening, *Pierre Viret's Unedited Correspondence*, unpublished manuscript, epistle number 4, note 1, Farel to Viret, April 10, 1546.

¹¹⁶ Hendricks, "The Bern Reformation of 1528," 39, note 49. "Primo appellat papan, cardinales et episcopos dyabulos et veros antichristos." Quoting Stech and Tobler, p. 28

¹¹⁷ Hendricks, "The Bern Reformation of 1528" 40, note 54.

¹¹⁸ "3They will do such things because they have not known the Father or me. 4I have told you this; so that when the time comes you will remember that I warned you. I did not tell you this at first because I was with you. 5"Now I am going to him who sent me, yet none of you asks me, 'Where are you going?' 6Because I have said these things, you are filled with grief. 7But I tell you the truth: It is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Counselor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you." New International Version.

On September 2, 1522, the jury acquitted Brunner, because his accusers could raise no arguments to object to his teachings. The ruling that scripture must frame the debate had stymied his accusers, just as it would stymie the Catholics at the subsequent disputations. Once the ground rules were based on that principle victory followed for the reformers. The result was that the unorthodox views of Brunner were tolerated, probably, more out of a lack of understanding of their implications,¹¹⁹ but more importantly, Bern rejected the exclusive jurisdiction of the Bishop of Constance. Thereafter, reform preaching was cast as a road to independence from the Catholic Church thus continuing the path begun in the previous century.¹²⁰ That Reform did not come to be accepted by the Bern magistrates until 1528 was the result of a political struggle between the nobility that clung to the old ways of the Catholic Church, and controlled the Small Council, and the rising bourgeoisie of the guilds, who controlled the Three Hundred, and finally became dominant in the Small Council elections of 1527 on Easter Monday.¹²¹

Niklaus Manuel¹²²

Niklaus Manuel¹²³ was an artist trained in Italy whose family migrated north to Bern. In Bern he was schooled in glass blowing, but like many artists he had to turn to

¹¹⁹ In 1525 Brunner was banned from Bernese territory for refusing to celebrate the mass, which created a quandry since writings attacking the mass were tolerated. Gordon, *The Swiss Reformation*, 104.

¹²⁰ Gordon limited his conclusion to, "At this early date the Bernese Council had demonstrated at least tacit support the reformation." In fact, the evidence suggests that the Council was more concerned with defying the bishop of Constance. Gordon, *The Swiss Reformation*, 101.

¹²¹ Bruening, Michael, *Calvinism's First Battleground: Conflict and Reform in the Pays de Vaud.*, (Dordrecht, The Netherlands: Springer, 2005), 32.

¹²² Gordon, "Toleration in the Early Swiss Reformation, the Politics of Niklaus Manuel of Berne," and Ozment, *The Reformation in the Cities*, are the principal sources of information on Manuel. Manuel's son, Hieronymous, was the Bailiff of Lausanne in 1557 during the trial of Pierre Viret.

another trade to survive economically. In 1516 he enlisted in the army of François I of France as a mercenary soldier and went to Milan where the Swiss confronted the army of the Hapsburg emperor, Maximilian I, which was also composed of Swiss mercenaries. When neither side engaged in hostilities and a peace was negotiated Manuel went home. Again in 1522 Manuel enlisted in the Bernese corps of Albrecht von Stein, serving under the French king. Again he went to Italy, but this time he saw combat. He was wounded at Navara where he saw the Swiss troops rape, pillage and plunder the town. The army then went to Bicocca where the vaunted Swiss pike men were defeated by German foot troops (“*landesknechte*”). Just as the profiteering from the sale of recruiting rights by municipalities to the monarchs of Europe repulsed Zwingli, Manuel was sickened by the acts of depravation committed by his fellow soldiers that he saw as a mercenary, and those impressions shaped his future political career.

It was through his art, he was a painter and playwright, that Manuel propelled Bern’s reformation. Through his *Fastnacht* plays he portrayed his rejection of the papal policies and the rapaciousness of the clerics. While Zwingli used the pulpit as his means of reaching the people, Manuel used the stage. The corruption of the Pope and the avarice of the clergy were first shown in *Totenfresser*,¹²⁴ but he also implicated the noble families who had been profiting from the mercenary service. A character that was presumed to be Martin Luther represented the truth of the Gospel. The conflict in the play came between those who sought “self satisfaction” and those who were devoted to “higher goals.”

¹²³ He is identified as Niklaus Manuel Deutsch in most art museums, such as the Getty and the Frick.

¹²⁴ 1523. See Ozment, *The Reformation in the Cities*, pp. 111-116 for a more complete discussion of this *Fastnacht* play.

Then, in 1523 Manuel entered the government by appointment as “*Landvogt*” (governor) of Erlach. It was in this position that he learned that the rural inhabitants of the Bernese state did not readily accept the Gospel, which they did not understand and clung to the “old ways” of the Church in Rome. The nature of this resistance to change can be found in the fear that the peasants had for the forces of nature that governed their lives: “In order that the Lord God will protect us, that our crops may flourish in the fields, and that there may be good weather, dancing is forbidden.”¹²⁵ Superstition ruled the lives of the peasants in this period. He had felt that once they were given the alternative between the greedy clergy and the evangelical teaching, that the people would readily accept the Reformed Church just as the members of the guilds had in Bern, but learned during his five years in Erlach that such was not the case. Manuel felt that it was the papal establishment and the clergy that had to be abolished, since he felt they would not reform themselves. Zwingli, on the other hand, felt that it was the whole of society that had to be reformed. Manuel found that while the people in the city of Bern were receptive to his anti-clerical message in his *Fastnacht* plays, the people in the country were unreceptive and unresponsive. The Peasant Wars that sprang up in 1525 upset Manuel’s belief that peace would come from the adoption of religious reform, consequently, he began to advocate a more centralized rule and the reduction of rural autonomy. In 1526 Manuel had angrily stormed out of a meeting of the Bern Small Council when they had voted to retain the Catholic faith. In response he sent a case of Erlach wine to the Council and wrote a “brilliant” letter to the Council parodying the Catholic mass, and then created the play, “Barbali.” The story of the play was the story

¹²⁵ Ozment, *The Reformation in the Cities*, 113, note 62, citing Hans Morf, *Zwingliana*, 13 (1970) pp. 164-203.

of a young girl forced to enter a nunnery by her parents. The theme was a rejection of coercion in religious matters. Rather than the pulpit from which Zwingli convinced Zurich to adopt reform, the popular movement for Reformation in Bern came from the stage of Niklaus Manuel.

In 1527 Manuel was elected (appointed) to the Small Council. Manuel was also appointed *Venner*, which evolved from a military position into a diplomatic post representing the city-state. It was from this position that he would guide Bern through his twin goals of peaceful resolution of Zurich's confrontation with the Catholic cantons, and the maintenance of local authority through the local magistrates, even at the expense of withholding introduction of the Reformation as he advised in the case of Basel.

The Government of Bern and its Role in the Reformation

As with Zurich, an understanding of the make-up of Bern's government is necessary to comprehend how the Reformation took place in Bern. Bern's ruling body consisted of the Large Council composed of about 300 members, mostly guild members, and the Small Council, composed of 27 members, mostly noblemen and wealthy merchants.¹²⁶ The guildsmen, who controlled the Large Council, came from sixteen guilds, such as the weavers, shoemakers, stonemasons, smiths, etc.¹²⁷ The guilds controlled wages and prices, and even measurements. While the Large Council was mostly concerned with internal affairs, such as the regulation of markets, the Small Council controlled military affairs and foreign policy. Within the Small Council was a ruling elite who constituted what Haller described as an "oligarchy." Social rank dominated Bernese society and at the top was the nobility and the wealthy landowners.

¹²⁶ Hendricks, "The Bern Reformation of 1528," 2, note 2.

¹²⁷ Hendricks, "The Bern Reformation of 1528," 18.

Particularly in the Bernese Oberland the nobility were the dominant power. At the outset of the Reformation period in Bern (1520-1528) Jacob von Wattenwyl, a noble and the *Advoyer*,¹²⁸ supported the early reforms put forward by Haller and Sebastien Meyer and advocated by Manuel. This symbiosis between the chief magistrate and the principal ministers of St. Vincents came not from a shared experience, as in Zurich, but from a shared family. Jacob von Wattenwyl was the father of the provost of St. Vincent's, Niklaus von Wattenwyl.¹²⁹ Thus it was no accident that reform progressed in this period in Bern. In a letter to Zwingli in 1523 Haller described the nascent popular support of the new preaching:

“The Lord Jesus Christ increases the number of faithful daily [to our congregation], so that if God does not abandon us, it will be hard to suppress his doctrine, much as a group of the nobility work [protest] against it. The Bernese hunger for the Word of God; we feed them according to the grace given us.”¹³⁰

We also learn from this letter that the Bishop of Lausanne had requested a visitation of Bern's parishes, apparently to check on iconoclasm, but the City Council denied him permission at the urging of Niklaus von Wattenwyl. The year 1523 saw a significant change when the Council on June 15, 1523, enacted its mandate (*Mandat von Viti und Modesti*) that preaching and teaching adhere strictly to the Bible.¹³¹ While this action clearly moved Bern closer to the reforms seen in Zurich it represented a more significant

¹²⁸ The nominal head of “Messieurs de Berne” as the magistrates were addressed in the French speaking areas that are now Switzerland, was the *Advoyer* or *Avoyer*. See note 5.

¹²⁹ Hendricks, “The Bern Reformation of 1528,” 45.

¹³⁰ “*At utcunq̄ue dominus Iesus quottidie congregationi addit apud nos, ut facile (nisis divina in nos ira) verbum eius explodi nequeat, reclamantibus quantumcunq̄ue nobilibus. Famen verbi Bernates habent, pascuntur in dies iuxta gratiam nobis datam.*” Huldreich Zwinglis *Sämtliche Werke*, vol. 8, no. 302, p. 77. Edited by Emil Egli and George Finsler. Cited in Hendricks, “The Bern Reformation of 1528,” p. 46, note 1.

¹³¹ Hendricks, “The Bern Reformation of 1528,” 49.

change in that it altered Bern's relationship with the Church in Rome, because it was the magistrates, not Rome, that dictated the religious life in Bern. Previously, the Bishop and its clergy decided on what was to be preached. Now the locus of power had shifted to the magistrates. This change was reinforced that year when the Council released the nuns at the convent in Königsfeld from their vows by an act of the magistrates on November 20, 1523.¹³² Then in 1524 and 1525 a reaction set in against the changes that culminated in the events of 1525. Part of the problem was the method (*Volksbefragung*) that the Council used to gauge public opinion by resorting to public meetings throughout the state, which exposed the gulf between the cities and the farm communities.¹³³ As the changes under the reformers were instituted, a certain amount of public disorder resulted from those who resisted the changes or were simply confused by the "new" teachings ascribed to Luther. One of the primary concerns of the magistrates was maintaining public order and resorting to the familiar "old ways" was an easy method to restore public order. The appearance of Anabaptists at this time with their radical views invariably created disturbances as well.

¹³² Hendricks, "The Bern Reformation of 1528," 52-53. Among the nuns released was Margaretha von Wattenwyl, sister of Niklaus and daughter of Jacob. She was a frequent correspondent of Zwingli during this period and credited him with this action. See note 25 citing *Huldreich Zwinglis Sämtliche Werke*, vol. 8, no. 289, p. 49-50. Edited by Emil Egli and George Finsler.

¹³³ Hendricks, "The Bern Reformation of 1528," 54, note 1. Polling constituents is a time honored political tradition. This is one of the earliest examples where it was used extensively. The question is whether the method used by the Bernese over weighted the rural areas that were supporters of the established church. Gordon, *The Swiss Reformation*, 103.

In April 1525 the five Catholic cantons approached the magistrates warning them about the errors of Luther and Zwingli.¹³⁴ Simultaneously, the Council received the results of their polling calling them to hold to the Catholic faith or “old ways.” On April 7 the Council issued its Reformation Articles (*Reformationsartikel*), which recited in its preamble the unrest throughout the Swiss cantons. The mandate required, among other things, that the mass be performed as the Christian church (*kristenliche kitch*) has “established, ordained and held it up to now.”¹³⁵ A month later they passed another law forbidding the marriage of priests, and they enforced it by stating that a priest who had a wife should be deprived of his living.¹³⁶ While these provisions reverted to the “old ways,” the Reformation Articles also stopped the collection of Papal and Episcopal revenue and diverted them to local governments for the benefit of the poor.¹³⁷ Even though the magistrates may have been uneasy about the changes that were taking place in their churches, they were united in declaring their independence from Rome. Thus the Reformation in Bern was at a crossroads, because the Council found they could gain independence from the Church and its bishops without advancing the reforms that usually went hand in hand with the magistrates steps to gain that freedom.

In 1525 two major events set the cause of the reform movement back when on June 24 Jacob von Wattenwyl was replaced as the *Advoyer* by Jacob von Erlach, a

¹³⁴ Lucern, Uris, Schwyz, Underwalden and Zug. Hendricks, “The Bern Reformation of 1528,” 55, note 4.

¹³⁵ Hendricks, “The Bern Reformation of 1528,” 59, note 18, citing Steck and Tobler, eds., *Actensammlung zur Geschichte der Berner Reformation 1521-1532*, no. 610, pp. 190-195.

¹³⁶ Hendricks, “The Bern Reformation of 1528,” 61, citing Steck and Tobler, eds., *Actensammlung zur Geschichte der Berner Reformation 1521-1532*, no. 627, page 201.

¹³⁷ Hendricks, “The Bern Reformation of 1528,” 60.

defender of the “old ways” and the Catholic faith,¹³⁸ and on December 1 when Niklaus von Wattenwyl resigned his position as Provost of St. Vincent’s to marry a former nun.¹³⁹ While both were members of the nobility, Wattenwyl was in the minority of the old families who welcomed and encouraged the changes that were advocated by the reformers. This change in control and the disappearance of Wattenwyl from St. Stephen’s retarded the efforts at reform for several years and explains the initial success of the evangelists with the magistrates and then the turning back to the Church in Rome and the “old ways.”

On December 15, a legation from Zurich appeared in Bern before the Council stating that the “mass had been abolished because it was nowhere celebrated or instituted by Christ.” That being the case “it would be a grave error to continue it.”¹⁴⁰ As a result of this presentation Haller announced that he would no longer say the mass in St. Vincent’s.¹⁴¹ Despite this visit it was under the conservative leadership of Erlach that Haller was later put on trial, an action that precipitated the final stages of the acceptance of the Reformation in Bern. But first the conservative forces polled their constituents and determined that adherence to the old practices was demanded. The mandate of

¹³⁸ Hendricks, “The Bern Reformation of 1528,” 18, note 68. Note that Hendricks used the term “mayor” while the office held by Wattenwyl more closely resembled the head of state. See note 5.

¹³⁹ Hendricks, “The Bern Reformation of 1528,” 62, note 29 citing Valerius Anshelm, *Die Berner-Chronik*, 6 vols., edited by the Historischen Verein des Kantons Bern: K.J. Wyss, 1884-1901. See vol. 5, p. 121.

¹⁴⁰ “so will es uns sum höchsten schwer sin, darinn su beharren.“ Hendricks, “The Bern Reformation of 1528,” 64, note 39 citing citing Steck and Tobler, eds., *Actensammlung zur Geschichte der Berner Reformation 1521-1532*, vol. 1, no. 785, page 251.

¹⁴¹ Hendricks, “The Bern Reformation of 1528,” p. 65.

Pentecoste Monday was passed requiring the citizens of Bern to subscribe to an oath to the “old Christian faith” (*alten christenlicken glouben*).¹⁴²

It appeared that the efforts of the reformers had been brought up short, but this action coincided with the commencement of the Baden Disputation sponsored by the bishops of Constance, Basle, Lausanne and Chur. The dominant figure in the disputation was Johannes Eck, a Catholic scholar who had already been tested in debate with Luther and who, by all accounts was the superior debater.¹⁴³ He offered seven theses that were the basis for the disputation and were intended to uphold the Catholic position.¹⁴⁴ As we shall see in examining the Disputation of 1528 each side tailored their disputation to advantage their views. Thus, “sola scriptura,” the reliance on scripture alone, the underpinning of the Reform views, was completely ignored at Baden. Purgatory, the creation of Catholic theologians and the Pope, was taken as accepted, while the reformers rejected it as without support from Scripture. The intercession of saints, a source of Church revenue, but rejected by reformers as a creation of the Catholic hierarchy, was also taken as an important element of faith. So each of the premises on which the disputation commenced began from the Catholic point of view. Zwingli, for whom the

¹⁴² Hendricks, “The Bern Reformation of 1528,” 69. The “Bible Mandate” was enacted May 21, 1526.

¹⁴³ “The Diputation ends, at least in the short term, with a clear victory by Eck, who simply turns out to be a better theologian than his opponents.” Irena Backus, *The Disputations of Baden, 1526, and Berne, 1528: Neutralizing the Early Church*, Studies in Reformed Theology and History (Princeton Theological Seminary, vol. 1, number 1, winter 1993), 61.

¹⁴⁴ Hendricks, “The Bern Reformation of 1528,” 70, note 4: “1. The true body of Christ and his blood were present in the sacrament of the altar. 2. They are also truly offered in the liturgy of the Mass for the living and the Dead. 3. Mary and the saints are called upon as intercessors. 4. Images of the Lord Jesus and the saints are not to be eliminated. 5. After this life, there is Purgatory. 6. Children, even Christian children are born in original sin. 7. The baptism of Christ, not of John, takes away original sin.”

disputation was planned after an exchange of pamphlets in 1524-26, between Eck and Zwingli, hesitated, but decided not to attend, fearing that he would be condemned as a heretic and imprisoned.¹⁴⁵

The Small Council dispatched Haller to Baden on the third day. While at Baden he arranged to be released from the oath of Pentecost Monday, which prohibited disputation of the Mass, and on May 30 he rose to dispute with Eck, who had just demolished the reformer Johannes Oecolampadius.¹⁴⁶ Haller chose the second thesis that Jesus is sacrificed for the living and the dead at the Mass.¹⁴⁷ While, an accurate, or, at least, unbiased transcript of Haller's remarks is not available¹⁴⁸ we know that he looked to *Hebrews* 9 and 10 for support for his argument that the crucifixion of Christ was the one and only sacrifice for our salvation. A reading of those passages makes clear the argument that he would have put forward that Christ's sacrifice on the cross was a one-time event that gained salvation for all believers. "[A]nd by virtue of his own blood, not the blood of goats and calves, he has entered the holy place once for all, having procured

¹⁴⁵ Backus, *The Disputations of Baden, 1526, and Berne, 1528*, "The First Exchange of Pamphlets Prior to the Baden Disputation, 1524-1526," pp. 1-17.

¹⁴⁶ Johannes Oecolampadius, 1482-1531. German from Swabia with an extensive education, including Heidelberg, who was a city preacher in Basle. "Oecolampadius and his party are thus driven into a corner. Isolated from Luther and from the Roman Catholic Church, they are left wide open to Eck's identification of them with ancient heresies." Backus, *The Disputations of Baden, 1526, and Berne, 1528*, 61.

¹⁴⁷ Hendricks noted that Haller "probably drew his understanding of the sufficiency of Christ's death from Zwingli." He cited *Auslegung, Articles 19-21, Sämtliche Werke*, vol. 2, p. 157f. Edited by Emil Egli and George Finsler. Hendricks, "The Bern Reformation of 1528" 72, note 20.

¹⁴⁸ Hendricks, "The Bern Reformation of 1528," 79. "The debate secretaries confessed that their notes, being hastily prepared, were probably unreadable." See also Backus, *The Disputations of Baden, 1526, and Berne, 1528*, pps.76-78. Backus cites Leonhard von Muralt, *Die Badener Disputation, 1526* (Leipzig, 1926, *Quellen und handlungen zur Schweizerischen Reformationsgeschichte*, Bd. 6).

eternal redemption.”¹⁴⁹ “Nor has he entered there in order to offer himself repeatedly, as the high priest enters annually into the holy place with blood not his own.”¹⁵⁰ “And by his ‘will’ we have been sanctified once and for all through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ.”¹⁵¹ And finally, “Now where these are forgiven, there is no sin offering any longer.”¹⁵² These passages argued against the Catholic view that the Mass was an ongoing sacrifice necessary to procure redemption for our sins, and, consequently, defied the existence of purgatory. Haller by picking the argument that could best be supported by Scripture, in a hostile environment,¹⁵³ showed an uncanny ability to pick the right fight.¹⁵⁴ And as Irena Backus described his performance: “Haller remains surprisingly clear headed. He repeats his main argument about the uniqueness of Christ’s sacrifice and adopts Luther’s interpretation of the words of the Institution which he tinges with the distinctly Zwinglean element of commemoration... He further demands that Eck prove from the Scripture that the sacrifice of the mass was instituted in the New Testament... Eck, the reader senses from the Acts, is somewhat caught out by this direct

¹⁴⁹ *Hebrews* 9:12. Translation by E.F. Bruce, *The Epistle to the Hebrews* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1990), pp. 211-218.

¹⁵⁰ *Hebrews* 9:25. Translation by Bruce, *The Epistle to the Hebrews*, pp. 227-230.

¹⁵¹ *Hebrews* 10:10. Translation by Bruce, *The Epistle to the Hebrews*, pp. 239-243.

¹⁵² *Hebrews* 10:18. Translation by Bruce, *The Epistle to the Hebrews*, pp. 244-248.

¹⁵³ “[Antonius] Halieus points out, the Protestants were called all the names under the sun, heretics, criminal, thieves, traitors, and were never referred to except by a rude name.” Backus, *The Disputations of Baden, 1526, and Berne, 1528*, 73.

¹⁵⁴ See Gordon, *The Swiss Reformation*, pp. 104-105 for a contrary view. “Eck, with superior learning and sardonic wit, made mincemeat of Haller, who retreated humiliated to Berne...” Citing Irena Backus, ‘The Disputations of Baden, 1526 and Berne, 1528, Neutralizing the Early Church,’ *Studies in Reformed Religion*, 1 (1993), pp. 1-78. The only direct criticism of Haller by Backus can be found on page 65 where she states, “Second, it assumed an exegetical competence that Haller simply did not have, so that he cited passages of the Scripture without being certain of their sense.” See further explanation in note 159.

challenge...”¹⁵⁵ During the disputation Zwingli wrote two *Replies* to Eck that were posted on the door of the Baden Church and Town Council. In the second one of June 3, 1526, Zwingli defends Haller. “He begins by saying that, whatever Eck claims, Haller’s citing of Hebrews against the sacrifice of the mass was quite conclusive. He also admires the Bernese preacher’s perseverance.”¹⁵⁶ In a letter to Haller after the performance one of the onlookers, Vadian,¹⁵⁷ said, “Let them cry out that you have brought back an outstanding trophy and ample spoils from the disputation held at Baden.”¹⁵⁸ But Haller’s role also precipitated a reaction from the Small Council, which within three weeks (June 26, 1526) of his return to Bern summoned him to explain his failure to read the Mass for the last six months.¹⁵⁹ The report of the Catholics from the Baden Disputation may have come back to some of the magistrates in Bern for they pointed out that Haller had been unable or refused to answer Eck’s question about the presence of Christ in the Eucharist.¹⁶⁰ At a meeting of the Swiss Confederation in late June, the Catholic Cantons

¹⁵⁵ Backus, *The Disputations of Baden, 1526, and Berne, 1528*, pp. 41-43.

¹⁵⁶ Backus, *The Disputations of Baden, 1526, and Berne, 1528*, 68.

¹⁵⁷ Vadian or Vadianus (Joachim von Watt), 1484-1551. Humanist reformer and doctor in St. Gall. Bürgermeister of St. Gall in 1526, one of the presiders at one of the Zurich disputations and one of four presidents (moderator) of the Bern Disputation of 1528.

¹⁵⁸ Hendricks, “The Bern Reformation of 1528,” 73, note 23. “Eximum trophaeum et spoila ampla retulisse te e Badensi disputatione omnes clament.” Citing Emil Arbenz and Hermann Wartmann, eds., *Die Vadianische Briefsammlung*, 7 vols. (St. Gall: Fehr’sche Buchhandlung, 1890), vol. 4, no. 461, p. 30. Hendricks’ translation was: “Everyone is constantly talking about the exquisite trophy and great spoils you have brought back from Baden.” This view runs contrary to that taken by Gordon, who stated that the Catholics at Baden treated Haller with derision. Gordon, *The Swiss Reformation*, 105.

¹⁵⁹ Hendricks, “The Bern Reformation of 1528,” 74, note 27 citing citing Steck and Tobler, eds., *Actensammlung zur Geschichte der Berner Reformation 1521-1532*, vol. 1, no. 936 and 937, pages 327-328. See also Valerius Anshelm, *Die Berner-Chronik*, 6 vols. Edited by the Historischen Verein des Kantons Bern: K.J. Wyss, 1884-1901. See vol. 5, pages 171-175.

¹⁶⁰ Gordon, *The Swiss Reformation*, 105. Gordon argues that Haller was ineffective at Baden, that he was “mincemeat.” The discrepancy was caused in that perception, what

tried to assert that their oath included a common religion, but no agreement was reached. Thereafter Bern sought accurate minutes of the Disputation to separate fact from opinion, but never received them.¹⁶¹ Again Haller displayed a keen sense of timing by requesting the hearing be before the Large Council, where he expected a more sympathetic audience, thus avoiding the more conservative Small Council led by Erlach and Ludwig von Diesbach, who were pushing a return to the “old ways.” Contemporary reports, such as that of Valerius Anselm, who was a member of the Council, state that crowds appeared outside the assembly hall in support of Haller. When he was finished, no member of the Council rose in opposition and the Council agreed to relieve Haller of his responsibility to read the Mass, while retaining him as a preacher in St. Vincent’s. Contemporary historians accredit the popular support that Haller received at that moment as the force that turned the tide in the Council. Throughout this period of retrenchment the

Vadian and Zwingli reported, was accepted when in fact Haller’s performance may not have been that strong or certainly the Catholic secretaries who transcribed the event so reported. The sequence of events after the Disputation argues that Haller, rather than being weakened after the Disputation, had the stronger hand based on the vote in the Large Council and the elections of 1527. Perception often becomes fact. On December 29, 1526, the Bern Council after seeking an accurate transcript of the disputation refused to support the conclusions of the supporters of the Baden Disputation. The Council entrusted the drafting of the theses for the disputation to Haller and Franz Kolb. Vadian, who praised Haller’s performance at Baden, was later made one of the four presidents or presidars at the Bern Disputation, and afterwards was asked to draw up the articles of reformation, indicating the great respect for him and his views by the Bern Council. During the Disputation Haller took an active role in the debate making 34 speeches, alone, in the discussion of the first thesis. Haller may not have had the overpowering presence and intellect that Zwingli did, but he was the primary ecclesiastical force in Bern and he enjoyed the favor of the ruling magistrates. See Hendricks, “The Bern Reformation of 1528,” 79, note 9. Citing Steck and Tobler, eds., *Actensammlung zur Geschichte der Berner Reformation 1521-1532*, no. 1072, pp. 357-360, for an account of the decision of December 29.

¹⁶¹ Hendricks, “The Bern Reformation of 1528,” 79. “[W]henever differences over the minutes arose, the Catholic secretaries had the casting vote.” Backus, *The Disputations of Baden, 1526, and Berne, 1528*, 72. See also pp. 76-78.

magistrates had sought a gage of popular support throughout the state by use of the *Volksbefragung*, but at this moment they bent to the will of the towns people of the city of Bern, who had been the backbone of support for reform throughout this period.¹⁶²

It was at the Easter election of 1527 that Niklaus Manuel was elected to the Small Council along with four other members of the reform party. Two members of the conservative nobility, Kaspar von Mülinen and Sebastien von Stein, left the Small Council, thus tilting the Small Council to reform. A contemporary report stated, “Lord Mulinen was expelled from the senatorial order along with two others. The Steins were also expelled.”¹⁶³ After six months of debate over the lack of an accurate transcript from the Baden Disputation, Haller’s disdain for that event became the official position of the magistrates and the Mandate of May 27, 1527, was enacted calling for the unimpaired preaching of the Gospel:

“...that all who preach in our country and canton undertake to preach and proclaim the word and teaching of God freely, publicly, openly and unhindered according to what they know to be contained in the old and new testaments, even though such preaching might be against the statutes, ordinances and teaching of the men, whoever they may be.”¹⁶⁴

¹⁶² Hendricks, “The Bern Reformation of 1528,” pp. 74-78. See note 4, p. 77 where Hendricks cites Wilhelm Hadorn, *Die Reformation in der deutsche Schweiz*, (Leipzig: Huber & Co., 1928), p. 116 saying he gave the “mob” total credit for the Council actions. Erlach and Diesbach appealed the ruling of the Large Council, but were decisively defeated and the Council warned that anyone who acted counter to the ruling would lose his rights to citizenship. At page 78, note 5.

¹⁶³ Hendricks, “The Bern Reformation of 1528,” 86, note 31, citing *Huldreich Zwinglis Sämtliche Werke*, vol. 9, no. 608, pages 103-104. Edited by Emil Egli and George Finsler. “*Dominus a Mülinen cum duobis aliis e senatoria dignitate protrusus est. Lapides quoque exclusi sunt, et quod omnium est.*” See also Valerius Anshelm, *Die Berner-Chronik*, 6 vols. Edited by the Historischen Verein des Kantons Bern: K.J. Wyss, 1884-1901. See vol. 5, page 199. Hendricks only identifies Sebastian von Stein as one of the Steins that was expelled.

¹⁶⁴ Hendricks, “The Bern Reformation of 1528,” 85, note 28.

This made clear that within Bern it was the magistrates, not the bishops, nor Rome, that would guide the religion to be practiced in their canton. For almost three years the magistrates had been torn between a return to the security of the “old ways,” and the more unchartered path of reform. Ultimately, the pressure of public opinion had been brought to bear and the magistrates adopted the reforms that created the new church.

Events began to move more quickly, by October 31 four communities in the state had abolished the mass, by November 4 six guilds (shoemakers, weavers, merchants, fishermen, stonemasons and carpenters) had also abolished the mass and more appeared to Haller to be prepared to follow suit. On November 15 the Small Council decided to put the question of holding a disputation before the citizenry.¹⁶⁵ Following an affirmative vote the disputation was set for January 6, 1528.

Drawn mostly from disputations elsewhere, half were a refutation of the Baden Disputation,¹⁶⁶ they laid the ground work for what the Bernese magistrates constantly reminded their subjects in Vaud was “our reformation.” Just as the Baden Disputation was rigged for the Catholics, the Bern Disputation laid out the Reformers’ point of view, this time in ten theses.¹⁶⁷ Like all disputations sponsored by the reform side the

¹⁶⁵ Hendricks, “The Bern Reformation of 1528,” 87-88. Rohrbach, Langnau, Bolligen and Rüderswil. See note 38 citing note 39 citing citing Steck and Tobler, eds., *Actensammlung zur Geschichte der Berner Reformation 1521-1532*, vol. 1, no. 785, page 251. “*Et ad feriam sextam sequentem a civibus tractari debet pro collatione cum omnibus sacrificulis Bernatum habenda, more turoum. Instamus et urgemus, ut modo commode, fiat.*”

¹⁶⁶ See items 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9 in the following footnote.

¹⁶⁷ “1. The Holy, Christian Church, whose only Head is Christ, is born of the Word of God, abides in the same, and does not listen to the voice of a stranger.
2. The Church of Christ makes no laws or commandments without God’s Word. Hence all human traditions, which are called ecclesiastical commandments, are binding upon us only in so far as they are based upon and commanded by God’s Word.

underlying basis of the debate was the principal of *sola scriptura*. Other theses directly contradicted the Baden theses:

“The holy, Christian church, whose only Head is Christ, is born of the word of God, abides in the same, and does not listen to the voice of a stranger.”¹⁶⁸

By limiting the debate to Scripture the magistrates consciously limited, rather proscribed, reliance on oral and doctrinal tradition of the Catholic Church, the “stranger” referred to above.¹⁶⁹ In selecting this standard the Disputation did not attract many Catholic defenders to Bern. However, the Disputation did attract a galaxy of reformers including Zwingli, who proved to be the dominant voice at the Disputation. On January 8 of that

3. Christ is our only wisdom, righteousness, redemption, and payment for the sins of the whole world. Hence it is a denial of Christ when we acknowledge another merit for salvation and satisfaction for sin.

4. The essential and corporeal presence of the body and blood of Christ cannot be demonstrated from the Holy Scriptures.

5. The Mass as now in use, in which Christ is offered up to God the Father for the sins of the living and the dead, is contrary to Scripture, a blasphemy against the most holy sacrifice, passion and death of Christ, and on account of its abuse, an abomination before God.

6. As Christ alone died for us, so He is to be worshipped as the only Mediator and Advocate between God and the Father and us believers. Therefore, to propose the invoking of other mediators and advocates beyond this life is contrary to Scripture.

7. Scripture knows nothing of a purgatory after this life. Hence all office for the dead such as vigils, masses, requiems, octave and memorial services, lamps, candles and the like are in vain.

8. The making of images to be venerated is contrary to the Word of God of the Old and New Testaments. Therefore when the setting up of images involves the danger of veneration, they are to be abolished.

9. Holy matrimony is not forbidden in Scripture to any class of men, but is granted to all in order to avoid adultery and fornication.

10. Since according to Holy Scripture an open adulterer is to be excommunicated, it follows that because of the scandal involved, fornication and adultery are more pernicious for the clergy than for any other class of men.”

Hendricks, “The Bern Reformation of 1528,” pp. 130-189.

¹⁶⁸ The “stranger” being the Church in Rome. Hendricks, “The Bern Reformation of 1528,” 130.

¹⁶⁹ Hendricks, “The Bern Reformation of 1528,” 112.

year the disputation was held for twenty days in the Franciscan monastery. Local leadership for the event had come from Berchtold Haller and Franz Kolb. Despite a stern warning against the event from the Emperor Charles V¹⁷⁰ the disputation was attended by a large number of reformers: Zwingli, Martin Bucer,¹⁷¹ Wolfgang Capito,¹⁷² Guillaume Farel,¹⁷³ Ambrosius Blaurer¹⁷⁴ and Johannes Oecolampadius¹⁷⁵ for the Reformation and

¹⁷⁰ Gordon, *The Swiss Reformation*, 106.

¹⁷¹ Martin Bucer (1491-1551) Dominican and reformer in Strasbourg who left after the imposition of the Interim by Charles V after the Schmalkaldic War in 1548. Advocated church control of discipline, but found that the magistrates in Strasbourg were unwilling to cede control. Went to Cambridge upon the invitation of Archbishop Thomas Cranmer in 1549 where he worked on his last book, *The Kingdom of Christ*. Worked on the revision of the Book of Common Prayer. D. F. Wright, ed. *Martin Bucer: Reforming Church and Community* (Cambridge University Press, 1994).

¹⁷² Wolfgang Capito (1478-1541) Educated in Fribourg where he taught. Minister in Basle from 1515 until 1519 when he moved to Mainz. In 1523 he moved to Strasbourg to work with Martin Bucer. Tried to negotiate between the Lutherans and Zwinglians without success.

¹⁷³ Guillaume Farel (1489-1565) From Gap in the Dauphiné, but was educated in Paris. Studied in Basle where he met Erasmus, who later asked for his expulsion. After the Disputation of 1528 he worked as an itinerant preacher for the Bern Reform Church mostly in the Mandated Territories. A fiery red-head he usually caused disruption and iconoclasm in the churches he visited. The council in Grandson wrote Bern: "Ask yourselves, very honorable lords, is all of this done in the name of the gospel?" Went to Geneva with Pierre Viret in 1532 to preach reform. Met Calvin in Geneva and persuaded him to remain. Fostered the career of Jaques Valier, a minister from Briançon, also in the Dauphinée, who he apparently met in 1534 or 1535 in Geneva after Valier fled Privas "suspected of ideas of Luther." Later he was assigned to the church in Neuchâtel after he was banished from Geneva in 1538. Often at odds with the magistrates in Bern as he was a close associate and supporter of Calvin. For quote concerning Farel see James Blakeley. "Negotiating the 'Reformation from Without': Popular Responses to Religious Change in the Pays de Vaud," (PhD diss., University of Arizona, 2006-07), Council of Grandson to MM. De Berne, 121.

¹⁷⁴ Ambrosius Blaurer (1492-1564) From Constance where he got his start. Went to Wittenberg in 1534 until he was forced out in 1548 as a result of the Interim imposed by the Emperor after the Schmalkaldic War. Sent his son, Gerwig, to study at Lausanne in 1557 where he stayed in the home of Jaques Valier. Gerwig Blaurer to Ambrosius Blaurer, September 9, 1557, Musée Historique de la Réformation, Geneva, Papiers Herminjard, C-R, p. # 132.

¹⁷⁵ Johannes Oecolampadius (1482-1531) His given name Hussgen Hausschein. Appointed city preacher in Basle in 1515. Worked with Erasmus on the translation of the

only Bishop Conrad Treger for the Catholic side. The ringing words of Zwingli, "Fear not! The God who enlightened you, will enlighten also your confederates; and Switzerland, regenerated by the Holy Spirit, shall flourish in righteousness and peace."¹⁷⁶ After the attendees had accepted the theses after lengthy debate, the Small Council voted for the Reformation on February 7, 1528. Articles of Reformation (*Reformationsmandat*) were adopted by the Council. On February 13 every male citizen fourteen years of age or older was required to take an oath of obedience.¹⁷⁷ A new theocracy was established in Bern.

Conclusion

Manuel, after being ignored by Zurich, which entered into the first Kappel War with the Catholic cantons against his advice and without the support of Bern, negotiated the peace. Manuel had advised Bern not to enter the war, because he felt such a war would only strengthen the position of the Hapsburg Emperor. The Swiss Confederation was sandwiched in between the large powers: France, Savoy and the Hapsburg Empire, and had to keep them at bay to survive. Manuel felt that the Confederation with two religions was better able to survive in this hostile environment. Unfortunately, Manuel died in 1530, and Zwingli led Zurich into the Second Kappel War the next year with disastrous results. Zurich was defeated on the battlefield, Zwingli was killed in battle and Zurich was invaded and forced to pay reparations. Just as Manuel's experience as a mercenary had driven him to seek peace within the Swiss Confederation, the Second

New Testament. On his return to Basle in 1522 he was also appointed Reader of Holy Scripture at the University of Basel. Led the reform delegation at the Baden Disputation in 1526. Author of many written works.

¹⁷⁶ Dennison, ed., *Reformed Confessions of 16th and 17th Centuries in English Translation*, Volume 1, 1523-1552, 40-41.

¹⁷⁷ Hendricks, "The Bern Reformation of 1528," 191

Kappel War drove Zurich and Zwingli's successor, Heinrich Bullinger to oppose any further religious wars. The disaster of the Second Kappel War had been avoided in Bern due to the diplomatic adroitness of Manuel. This war left Zurich at the whim of its conquerors and impoverished. It put an end to Zwingli's influence in civic matters in Zurich and extinguished the desire and ability to bring about territorial expansion and religious hegemony in the Swiss Confederation by Zurich. Ironically, after some internal tension over the direction of Bern's Church in the 1530's, Zwingli's theology as practiced in Bern remained intact due to his influence over Haller and his commanding presence in the Disputation of 1528 in Bern. Berthold Haller had been a constant force for change and reformation of the Church in Bern, but had hued closely to Zwingli's theological line. His successor, Johannes Haller, who came to lead the church in Bern in 1548, after Simon Sulzer was deposed, returned Bern to Zwingli's teaching. Without a strong theologian throughout the formative years in the 1520's, in Bern the Small Council decided the shape of the Church, and not the lead minister in the church, and without theological training themselves they turned to the theology of Zwingli.

Meanwhile Geneva, which had ended its treaty (*combourgeoisie*) with Fribourg in 1534,¹⁷⁸ and was left with only Bern as an ally, called upon Bern for assistance against the threats of Savoy in 1528, 1530 and on December 20, 1535. On January 16, 1536, Bern declared war on the Duke of Savoy and six days later the Bernese army of 6,000 troops under the command of Hans Franz Nägeli invaded Vaud and by February 2 arrived

¹⁷⁸ Bern and Fribourg had responded to Savoy's threat to Geneva in 1530 with an army of 12,000, but at great expense. The subsequent treaty of St. Julien provided that if Savoy ever threatened Geneva again Bern and Fribourg could seize the lands of Vaud. Bruening, *Calvinism's First Battleground: Conflict and Reform in the Pays de Vaud.*, 39. See also William Monter, *Calvin's Geneva*, (New York, John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1967), 46.

in Geneva.¹⁷⁹ Unlike their previous incursions this time the Bernese were to stay and within seven months they imposed their ["our"] reformation on Vaud. Military occupation was consolidated by imposition of the religion of Bern through a disputation in Lausanne during October 1536. Religious uniformity was to be the instrument of political control that the Bernese imposed on Vaud, and not a response to popular will, for there had been no internal indication of a desire for reform.¹⁸⁰

¹⁷⁹ Charles Gilliard, *La Conquête du Pays de Vaud par les Bernois* (Lausanne: Histoire Helvétique, Éditions de L'Aire, 1985), pp. 60-61.

¹⁸⁰ Blakeley, James, "Negotiating the 'Reformation from Without': Popular Responses to Religious Change in the Pays de Vaud" (Ph.D. diss., University of Arizona, 2006-07).

Part B

Imposition of the Reformation in Vaud

Schism in Lausanne

Prelude

August 6, 1557. Pierre Viret, the minister of Lausanne, Jaques Valier, his assistant, and Arnaud Banc, the deacon, appeared before the Council of Sixty of Lausanne.¹ The reason for this sudden appearance before the magistrates was a rumor that Valier was to be removed from his position with the church. The minutes tell the story:

“Friday the sixth day of the month of August, 1557, were assembled the Magnificent Council of Sixty, the Bourgeois and Counselors of Lausanne, in front of whom appeared the respectable Misters Pierre Viret, Jaques Valier and Master Arnaud, ministers of the word of God in Lausanne. These said have proposed, in the form of a lamentation, that the said Valier had been brought forward to be removed from ministering, without knowing the reason for it and without he himself having done anything wrong, which should not and cannot be done without observing the order of the church”.²

Without further explanation the August minutes record the action by Viret to support his assistant in very simple terms:

“Furthermore, the said Pierre Viret pardons himself for his weakness and ill-health, requesting that he would like another be elected in his place, with considerable discourse of reprimand and regret that one [the

¹ Lausanne was then a part of Vaud, in the occupied territories of Bern. Bern occupied Vaud in 1536 and continued to do so until 1799 when Vaud with the aid of Napoleon Bonaparte’s army threw out the occupiers and declared independence. The Lausanne government was composed of a small and large council headed by the Advoyer. *The Soixante* or Sixty was the large council.

² “*Le vendredi sexte jour du mois d’augst mille cinq cent cinquante-sept, sont estés assemblés les magnifiques seigneurs Soixante, Bourgeois et conseillers de Lausanne, par devant lesqueulx ont comparus spectables messy Pierre Viret, Jaques Vallier (sic) et maistre Arnould (sic), ministres de la paroule de Dieu à Lausanne. Lesquelz ont proposés, à mode de lamentation, que led. Valier a esté mis en avant pour estre oster du ministere, sans ce qu’il en sceusse rien et sans soy estre meffaict, ce que ne se doibt ny peult fere sans observer l’ordre de l’esglise.*” Archives de la Ville de Lausanne, Manual, D 12, fol. 340, p. 970-971. Archives de la Ville de Lausanne. Parts of this entry were cited in Henri Meylan and Maurice Guex. Viret et MM. de Lausanne, *Revue Historique Vaudoise*, vol. 69, no.3 (Sept. 1961), 121.

congregation] was neither following the preaching nor the christian reformation”.³

Viret had entered Lausanne in 1536 to preach reform, before the army of Bern, during the invasion of Vaud; was the chief presenter at the disputation in Lausanne in October 1536 with Farel; and was the minister of Lausanne thereafter, when he was appointed the assistant to Pierre Caroli, who was later removed after a contentious run-in with Viret. He was popular with the people of the city, and Valier, who Viret referred to as my “excellent assistant,” had been his loyal assistant and colleague since 1546.⁴ To offer to give up the position he had held for over twenty years must have made a strong impression on the magistrates, because the issue of Valier was quickly dismissed and the Council offered to raise Viret’s pay.

“Given that the above has been stopped, involving (the intervention of) Master Jaques Valier, this matter is left in the hands and good intentions of the Lords our Princes. And with regard to Master Pierre Viret, in order to provide relief, a knowledgeable deacon should be appointed, and his [Viret’s] pay should be increased. And while as far as we know the current deacon is the said Arnaud, he might be occupied in some other capacity.”⁵

³ “D’aultre part ledit maistre Pierre Viret c’est excusé de sa foiblesse et debilité de sa personne, priant d’en vouloir eslire ung aultre en son lieu, avec beaucoup de remonstrances lamentatoires de ce que l’on ne suyt les presches ny observe la reformation chrestienne.” Archives de la Ville de Lausanne, Manual, D 12, fol. 340, p. 976.

⁴ “*optima collega meus Valerius sua fide.*” See Michael Bruening, *Pierre Viret’s Unedited Correspondence*, unpublished manuscript, Viret to Bullinger, June 29, 1550, epistle no. 57.

⁵ “Sus ce a esté arresté touchant maistre Jaques Vallier (sic), l’on laisse ce entr les mains et bon voulloir de messeigneurs noz princes. Et touchat maistre Pierre Viret, pour son soulagement soit esleuz ung diacre sçavant et l’on luy augmenterat son gage. Et cependant, que le diacre d’à present est, à sçavoir led. Arnauld (sic), soit pourveu en quelque aultre estat et gage.” Archives de la Ville de Lausanne, Manual, D 12, fol. 340, p. 976.. For a different interpretation of this meeting see Michael Bruening, *Calvinism’s First Battleground: Conflict and Reform in the Pays de Vaud*, (Dordrecht, The Netherlands, Springer, 2005), 239.

Viret walked out of the meeting with what he wanted, the retention of his assistant, and the bonus of increased pay and the promise of a new deacon, but within ten days the Council had instigated litigation against Viret and by December 1558 the Bernese had dismissed Viret, Valier and Banc. It is what caused these turn of events that this thesis will investigate. In the course of a few short weeks in August and September 1557 at three separate meetings of the council of Lausanne the reader will see a bewildering turn of events. In the first scene on August 6 the ministers of the Lausanne church appeared to respond to rumors that one of them was to be removed. The reason was never stated nor implied, but the next two appearances give some clue of the issues that were present then. At the first meeting Pierre Viret is treated with deference and is almost fawned over. Rather than let him quit, the magistrates offer him more money and staff, and immediately put an end to the attempt to remove his assistant. Ten days later the reader will find that the magistrates have changed their opinion of Viret and have turned on him. Then a few weeks after that, Viret's assistants go to the magistrates, without Viret, to seek redress for the ecclesiastical issues that plagued Viret and the Class of Lausanne for much of the decade of the fifties, and which ultimately led to their banishment.

On Friday, August 13, 1557, exactly one week later, in his sermon at the Lausanne Cathedral, Viret had made a reference, a rather harsh reference to the handling of the Facco Affair. Since few other examples of his sermons from this period are extant this brief extract from one of his sermons serves as an example of Viret at his most volatile, and introduces the reader to the character of the leader of the Lausanne Class, an example his detractors would find too often; Viret at his most contentious.

“You have condemned and made die the thief, you have done well, but you have safeguarded stolen goods and held it in your possession. You are worse thieves than he, you are just a bunch of thieves, I tell you.”⁶

The incident that Viret had referenced so vociferously had occurred on May 8, 1557, when Jacques Facco, a merchant from Genoa, was apprehended at the Golden Lion Inn in Lausanne with a large amount of cash (about 1,700 ecus of gold) on his person that he and his criminal partners, the Pinello brothers, had stolen in Lyon from the merchants Guillaume, Jean, Henri and François Desgouttes. After his arrest Facco was tried in Lausanne and hanged by June 1, 1557. A speedy trial even by the standards of those times. Subsequently, the Desgouttes came to Lausanne and asked for the return of their money, which had been impounded by the magistrates. The ruling of the magistrates, based on the custom of the city of Lausanne, was astonishing:

“Upon this it is ruled, it is written in the minutes of the City, that since the said money has been confiscated it must not be returned, thus it remains in the hands of the magistrates, to do with it what pleases them.”⁷

Viret, in expounding from the pulpit, was questioning, and condemning the actions of the ruling oligarchy of Lausanne. In this act, and his defense of his assistant, Valier, we have an insight into the nature of affairs in Lausanne during Viret’s tenure as minister of Lausanne, and into his rapport with the people of Lausanne, because he was willing to stand up against the magistrates and the power of the oligarchy.

“Monday the sixteenth day of August were assembled the Magnificent Lords of Sixty, in front of whom was presented the great insults that Master Pierre Viret must have publicly preached against the Bourgeois of

⁶ “*Vous avez condamné et fait mourir le larron, vous avez bien fait, mais vous gardés le larcin et le detenés. Vous estes plus larrons que luy, vous n’estes que de larrons, je le vous dy.*” Henri Meylan and Maurice Guex. *Viret et MM. de Lausanne*, *Revue Historique Vaudoise*, vol. 69, no.3 (Sept. 1961), 137.

⁷ Henri Meylan and Maurice Guex. *Viret et MM. de Lausanne*, *Revue Historique Vaudoise*, vol. 69, no.3 (Sept. 1961), 119-120.

Lausanne in general. The above mentioned was ordered such that one must articulate against the said Viret, and bring the complaints and take counsel against he who before our very noble princes of Berne, with the power of the Lords of Twenty-four to elect ambassador Lords in order to make and deliver [the case] against the said Viret.”⁸

The allegations of the magistrates against Viret and the subsequent trial involving these accusations would drag on for almost a year while the magistrates in Bern tried to mediate the matter. Although Viret won some satisfaction in the matter, and the Desgouttes got some of their money back⁹ the contentiousness of the two sides would weaken his position as the minister in Lausanne. Thus, by the fall of 1558 the Bern magistrates would begin to contemplate the removal of a loyal supporter of their Reformation. While the events of 1557 did not in themselves affect the banishment of Viret, they served as a sideshow that undermined his authority and led to his deposition, and they exposed a flaw in Viret’s character. These two minute entries reveal that Viret was willing to gamble everything to support his assistant, and just as willing to condemn the magistrates in his city regardless of the consequences. Calvin would later describe Viret as “deceived by an excessive inclination to hoping for good.”¹⁰

⁸ “Le lundy seizième jour du mois de Augst, mille cinq cent cinquante-sept, sont esté assemblés les magnifiques seigneurs Soixante, par devant lesquelxa esté proposé les grandes Injures que maistre Pierre Viret doibt avoir presché publiquement contre les bourgeois de Lausanne en general. Sus ce esté ordonné que l’on doibt articulé contre led. Vire, et fere plaintifz et prendre conseil contre luy par devant nos tresredoubtez princes de Berne, avec puissance eisd. Seigneurs Vingt- Quatre d’eslire seigneurs ambassadeurs pour faire & dire contre ledit Viret.” Archives de la Ville de Lausanne, Manual, D 12, fol. 340, p. 971-972.

⁹ It was not until 1570 that the Desgouttes received their money back and then, only two-thirds of it. Henri Meylan and Maurice Guex. *Viret et MM. de Lausanne*, Revue Historique Vaudoise, vol. 69, no.3 (Sept. 1961), 120.

¹⁰ *quum ad hanc, quae nunc vitio ventitur, invituum pertraxieros. Calvini Opera*, t. XVII, no. 2943, fol. 307-309, Calvin to Viret, August 27, 1558.

Based on a subsequent appearance by Valier and Banc before the Small Council¹¹ on September 12, the rumor that Valier was to be deposed appears to have been over doctrinal matters: confession, excommunication and refusal of communion. These were all issues that the ministers in Lausanne had been postulating with the ministers and magistrates in Bern over for years.

“Sunday the 12th day of September 1557, before the Lords of Twenty, appeared together Mister Jaques Valier and Mister Arnaud, who had expressed the wish to assemble the Lords of Sixty, in order that certain accusations against them might be purged, notably to discuss three points, the first on confession, excommunication, and the refusal of the sacraments.”¹²

These issues can be better understood by looking at a report made several years earlier by the Lausanne ministers to the magistrates in Bern. On March 7, 1555, the Class of Lausanne¹³ wrote to the magistrates in Bern describing the deplorable morals of the people of Lausanne:

¹¹ The Small Council was referred to as the *Vingt Quatres*, the twenty four.

¹² “*Le dimanch douzeieme jour de septembre, Mille Cinq Cent Cinqante-Sept, par devant Messeigneurs Vingt Quatres ont comparus Maistre Jaques Vallier (sic) & Maistre Arnauld (sic), lesquelx ont prié leur vouloir assembler les Seigneurs Soixante pour soy purger de certains articles, à sçavoir de trois points, le premier de la confession, l'excommunication, reffus de sacremetz. Et pour ce que Messeigneurs les ambassadeurs sont à Berne, l'on leur reffuse lesd. Soixante jusques à leur retour. Et après avoir faict response, ils ont adjuré les seigneurs banderetz que par leurs seremens et cellon la coustoume ilz leur doibvent ssembler lesd. Seigneurs Soixante.*”. Manual, D 12, fol. 342, p. 976. Archives de la Ville de Lausanne. Parts of this entry were cited in Henri Meylan and Maurice Guex. Viret et MM. de Lausanne, *Revue Historique Vaudoise*, vol. 69, no.3 (Sept. 1961), pp. 121-122, note 1.

¹³ The Class was the second rank of ecclesiastical government after the Synod. The class consisted of all the pastors of the churches in a specific geographic area and was intended to oversee the work of the ministers in the class. The most powerful class was that of Lausanne, which included Vevey, Montreaux and the four mandated territories stretching to Aigle and the professors of the Academy of Lausanne. It was administered by the dean (doyen) and was supposed to oversee the doctrine and morals of its ministers. Robert Dean Linder, *The Political Ideas of Pierre Viret*, (Genève, Libraire Droz, 1964) 35. See Michael Bruening, *Calvinism's First Battleground: Conflict and Reform in the*

“There is no one who does not see that everything is corrupt, depraved, and all but hopeless; sin and wickedness of every sort rule; there is unconcealed contempt for the divine word, the sacraments, and your edicts; there is unbearable usury, drunkenness, fornication, blasphemy, idolatry. Moreover there is trouble with these problems universally and everywhere, all the way up to the greatest part of those whose duty it is to remedy those ills, both the ministers and all the rest who are appointed for guarding the popular morals. Their profligate and dissolute life would not even be tolerated among some papists.”¹⁴

This was not a condition that had just arisen in Lausanne, for Beza had reported much the same thing when he first came to Lausanne, “there is no humanity here, to say nothing of piety or charity.”¹⁵ During the intervening period the Class had been complaining to Bern seeking a remedy, but without success. In November 1554, Beza and Valier were sent to Bern to negotiate the right of discipline over the morals of the citizens of Lausanne, whose lives they considered dissolute. Already, as can be seen in a letter to Calvin, Beza was not optimistic about the reception they would receive in Bern: “For tomorrow I must go there again with Jacques—that is to say, our efforts must again be mocked and our time spent in vain.”¹⁶ So in March the Lausanne ministers came to the

Pays de Vaud, (Dordrecht, The Netherlands, Springer, 2005), 169-170, for a description of the six classes in Vaud.

¹⁴ “*Quid autem? omnia corrupta, depravata, ac prope deplorata esse nemo non videt, vitia et flagitia omnes genus regnant: divini verbi, sacramentorum, ac vestrorum edictorum non obscurus contemptus, foenora intolerabilia, ebriositates, supra, blasphemiae, idololatriae: atque his morbis vulgo et passim laboratur, vel usque ad maximam partem eorum, quorum officii esset istis malis mederi, tum ministrorum tum caeterorum, in morum populique custodiam praefectorum: quorum vita flagitiosa et nefaria ne inter papistarum quidem nonnullos ferretur.*” Michael Bruening, *Pierre Viret's Unedited Correspondence*, unpublished manuscript, Appendix I, Class of Lausanne to the Bern Council, March 7, 1555.

¹⁵ “*Nulla enim hic humanitas, nedum pietas aut charitas.*” Hipolyte Aubert, Fernand Aubert et Henri Meylan eds., *Correspondence de Théodore de Bèze*. (Genève: Librairie E. Droz, 1960-1962), tome I, no. 17, pp. 66-67. See also Calvini Opera, t. XIV, no. 1481, fol. 103, Beza to Calvin, April 20, 1551.

¹⁶ “*Cras enim mihi iterum eundum illuc est cum D. Jacobo, id est iterum ludenda opera et tempus frustra consumendum, cujus tamen jacturam egerrime fero, vel propter annotationes illas in quibus vix unum perpetuum diem mihi pergere licet, quin centies*

Lausanne Council seeking a remedy from them in the absence of Pierre Viret, who was then under charges from some of the magistrates and nobles of Lausanne. It was not reasonable for them to expect that body to act on their request, because when these magistrates had intruded on Bern's power before (March 1551) they had been told in no uncertain terms and in a very heavy handed manner to leave these matters to Bern.

“We have seen certain rulings that you have made under the articles presented to you by the ministers of the word of God. And because of this, you do not have power, and it is no longer your role to make edicts, rulings or statutes concerning our reformation and our sovereignty; we do not want to allow these as having taken place, and thus these [rulings] shall be revoked, and [know] that in this place you shall follow and observe our instructions, ordinances and statutes.

The Advoyer and Council of Berne”¹⁷

Nevertheless, the ministers went to the magistrates of Lausanne in hopes that someone would listen to their complaints. This was a pattern that would be followed again and again, just as the Bern magistrates would repeat that church matters would have to conform to “their reformation,” by which they meant their Edicts of Reformation enacted in 1528 after the completion of the disputation in Bern that January. This part of my thesis will explore the inherent structural flaw in this aspect of the Bern Reformation and the disastrous consequences that would result from Bern asserting their sovereignty. At

interrumpar.” Hipolyte Aubert, Fernand Aubert et Henri Meylan eds., *Correspondence de Théodore de Bèze*. (Genève: Librairie E. Droz, 1960-1962), tome I, no. 51, pp. 142-143, March Also Calvin Opera, t. XV, no. 2040, fol. 300, Beza to Calvin, Novemeber 2, 1554. *Jacobo* is Jaques Valier.

¹⁷ “*Nous avons veu certainness ordonnances qu’avez faictes sur les articles que vous ont presenté les ministres de la parolle de Dieu. Et à cause de ce n’avez puissance et à vous n’appartient de faire edicts, ordonnances ou status touchant nostre reformation et nostre souverainité, ne voullons permettre icells ayent lieu, ains icelles soient revocquées et en ce endroict suivez et observez noz mandemens, ordonnances et status.*” State Archives of Bern, A III, *Welschmissiven Buch C*, fol. 314 recto, June 3, 1551. Cited in Henri Meylan and Maurice Guex. Viret et MM. de Lausanne, *Revue Historique Vaudoise*, vol. 69, no.3 (Sept. 1961), 115-116.

the heart of this epic struggle was the core concept of reformers of the sixteenth century, the Word of God. The magistrates had used it to achieve power; the ministers of the Lausanne Class used it to guide them in their duty.

The Establishment of the Reform Church in Vaud

The Kappel Wars instigated by Zwingli and Zurich were intended to consolidate the power of the Protestants in the Swiss Confederation, but had the opposite result, particularly after the defeat of the Zurichers in the Second Kappel War on October 11, 1531. Meanwhile Geneva, “menaced daily by the Savoyards, squeezed by famine,” which had ended its treaty (*combourgeoisie*) with Fribourg in 1534,¹ and was left with only Bern as an ally, called upon Bern for assistance against the threats of Savoy in 1528, 1530 and on December 20, 1535.² On January 16, 1536, the army of Bern of 6,000 troops under the command of Hans Franz Nägeli, a veteran of the wars in northern Italy and the Kappel Wars, invaded Vaud and by February 2 arrived in Geneva.³ Unlike their previous incursions this time, Bern was to stay and within seven months they imposed their reformation on Vaud. They were “to achieve a good peace or achieve a brilliant victory.”⁴ It was to be “a solemn crusade in the name of God.”⁵ Religious uniformity

¹ Bern and Fribourg had responded to Savoy’s threat to Geneva in 1530 with an army of 12,000, but at great expense. The subsequent treaty of St. Julien provided that if Savoy ever threatened Geneva again Bern and Fribourg could seize the lands of Vaud. Bruening, *Calvinism's First Battleground: Conflict and Reform in the Pays de Vaud.*, 39. See also William Monter, *Calvin's Geneva*, (New York, John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1967), 46.

² “*Menacée jour après jour par les Savoyards, pressé par la famine...*” Charles Gilliard, *La Conquête du Pays de Vaud par les Bernois* (Lausanne: Histoire Helvétique, Éditions de L’Aire, 1985), 60.

³ “*Naegeli avait pratiqué dès sa jeunesse le métier des armes; Dès 1521, il avait pris part aux campagnes en Italie; En 1531 il avait commandé le contingent bernois pendant la guerre de Musso; Lors de la guerre de Cappel.*” Charles Gilliard, *La Conquête du Pays de Vaud par les Bernois* (Lausanne: Histoire Helvétique, Éditions de L’Aire, 1985), pp. 60-61.

⁴ “*...ils obtiennent une bonne paix ou une éclatante victoire.*” Charles Gilliard, *La Conquête du Pays de Vaud par les Bernois* (Lausanne: Histoire Helvétique, Éditions de L’Aire, 1985), pp. 77.

was to be the instrument of political control that the Bern magistrates imposed on Vaud, and not a response to popular will, for there had been no internal indication of a desire for reform.⁶ After the siege of Geneva was lifted, William Farel, a fiery red head, who, for a decade, had been evangelizing in the Swiss Confederation as an agent for Bern, and a young pastor from Orbe, Pierre Viret, went into the episcopal city of Lausanne to establish the Reform church in the city. Initially the army commanders told the cities they passed through that the old ways could continue and they could have freedom of religion, but it became clear that this promise had been made to aid in the subjugation of the territory, which offered no resistance except at Gex, “where he (Hans Frisching) burned six chateaux.”⁷

By June Fribourg, which was Catholic, was asking about rumors of a proposed religious disputation and on July 5 Emperor Charles V issued an order forbidding the holding of a religious disputation and asking that religion in Vaud be returned to its original state.⁸ Nevertheless on July 16 a summons was issued for a disputation in Lausanne beginning October 1.⁹ This event ultimately left the churches in Vaud vacant, and sowed the seeds of repression in the Vaud, because unlike the Reformation in other

⁵ “...une croisade gravement, au nom de Dieu...” Charles Gilliard, *La Conquête du Pays de Vaud par les Bernois* (Lausanne: Histoire Helvétique, Éditions de L’Aire, 1985), pp. 77.

⁶ Blakeley, James, "Negotiating the 'Reformation from Without': Popular Responses to Religious Change in the Pays de Vaud" (Ph.D. diss., University of Arizona, 2006-07).

⁷ “Hans Frisching avec sa troupe de volontaires, d’aventuriers comme on disait alors, achevait la conquête du Pays de Gex, où il brûlait six chateaux.” Charles Gilliard, *La Conquête du Pays de Vaud par les Bernois* (Lausanne: Histoire Helvétique, Éditions de L’Aire, 1985), pp. 96.

⁸ Michael Bruening, *Calvinism's First Battleground: Conflict and Reform in the Pays de Vaud*, 45.

⁹ Arthur Piaget, *Les Actes de la Dispute de Lausanne – 1536* (Neuchatel, Secrétariat de l’Université, 1928) 3-4. “Le premier jour du mois d’octobre prochainement...”

cites of the Swiss Confederation there was no popular support for reform, and other than Viret, no local priests who wanted to convert. The introductory lines of the summons made clear who was in charge and the status of the people of Vaud. The disputation was to be “in our land, which we recently conquered by the grace of God.”¹⁰ For eight days in October William Farel, Pierre Viret and John Calvin engaged in a disputation with the Catholic authorities named by the bishop, who was unable to attend due to a fall from a horse.¹¹ With the troops of Bern within the gates of the city the outcome was foregone. Shortly thereafter Lausanne declared for the Reform and on December 24, 1536, Edicts of Reformation were introduced by Bern for Vaud.

The immediate problem was for the German speaking Bernese to place French speaking ministers in the churches throughout the canton and the long term problem was to be for the new ministers, who were foreigners, to convince the local population to accept the new religion. Farel, with the aid of Calvin identified a group of former priests from France to meet this requirement. The Council and the Advoyer of Bern appointed the new ministers of the churches of Vaud after the conclusion of the Disputation in Lausanne. The language of the appointment to the ministers again made clear where the authority came from:

“The Advoyer and Council of Bern (give) our greetings! We watched the election that the preachers in Lausanne have made in our conquered territories, to announce the Word of God to our subjects of those said territories, and, on this declare that you, upon receipt of this letter, be transported to our Bailiff of *** who will in turn introduce you to our subjects of ***. There you will hold the office of minister of the

¹⁰ “...en noz terres, que justement par la grace de Dieu avons conquesees,..” See the transcript of the “*Mandement*” Arthur Piaget, *Les Actes de la Dispute de Lausanne – 1536* (Neuchatel, Secrétariat de l’Université, 1928) 3.

¹¹ Sébastien de Montfalcon, who had been both the religious leader of the territory around Lausanne and its de facto civil leader.

Church, according to the grace that God has bestowed upon you. Dated October 19, the year 1536.”¹²

This document laid the ground work for the conflict that followed. While the men named were the nominees of Farel and Calvin, it was the Advoyer and the Council of Bern that made the appointments, and the status of Vaud as a conquered territory was made clear. The conflict arose because the Reformation in Bern was the product of the teaching of Huldrych Zwingli, and the French ministers as they began their jobs looked first to Farel, but by the 1540s to the teaching of John Calvin in Geneva as it began to dominate their thoughts. Zwingli’s church was subserviant to and considered an extension of the state, while Calvin believed that certain matters of religion and moral precepts were the provenance of the church alone. The people of Vaud were the new subjects in these conquered territories and they were to abolish the Catholic ceremonies, not because they were dissatisfied with the conduct of the Catholic priests, but because they were told to do so. And to make their point the bailiffs and their soldiers visited the towns of Vaud to enforce this change.¹³

At this point it will be necessary to discuss the Disputation in Lausanne in the context of the Disputation of Bern, because while both events were staged to present Bern’s new religion in the guise of a scholarly religious debate, the outcome was a foregone conclusion, and what was established in Bern in 1528 became fixed in stone. Any attempt to alter the foundation laid by Zwingli was rigidly rejected, which is why the

¹² A. -L. Hermingard, *Correspondence des Réformateurs*, Vol. 4, (1872), No. 574, 94. [insert Fr.]

¹³ “*C’est le bailli de Moudon qui vient à Aubonne pour détruire les autels et les sculptures.*” From the minutes of the City of Aubonne, November 8, 1536, folio 73v, p. 134.

Bernese had turned on Martin Bucer, who was trying to reconcile the Swiss church with the Lutheran churches of southern Germany.¹⁴ The Bern Disputation (1528) was staged as a political event to establish the supremacy of the Bern magistrates. But among the reformers who allied themselves with the magistrates it was also a refutation of the Baden Disputation (1526) with half the theses being the direct opposite of those at Baden, and an exposition of the theology of Zwingli, who had been absent at Baden. The Bern Disputation becomes important because it legitimized what the magistrates of Bern had done to replace the authority of the bishops of the Catholic Church with their own authority over the local churches and because the theology displayed by the reformers there established the theology of the Bern church. The Edicts of Reformation in Bern were drawn from the ten theses of the Bern Disputation and became the law that the magistrates imposed. The magistrates had begun usurping the power of the church in Rome toward the end of the 15th century, so the actual change in control took about fifty years. The Bern magistrates who called for the disputation in 1527 decided who would preside and who would be invited.¹⁵ Thus from the beginning the Bern magistrates were in control of events, because while outwardly it was an exposition of reform theology, it was a political event.

It will be helpful to go back over the debate of the first thesis at Bern to understand the underpinnings of the shift in power and to see how easily the reformers made their point. We will then look at the opening of the disputation in Lausanne to see

¹⁴ Zwingli and Luther had split over the issue of God's presence at Communion. Bucer tried to bridge the gap without success. See Amy N. Burnett, "The Myth of the Swiss Lutherans: Martin Bucer and the Eucharistic Controversy in Bern," 2005, DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska – Lincoln.

¹⁵ Zwingli had arrived in Bern with an armed guard of 200 arquebusiers preceded by the herald and bürgermeister, Röist of Zurich.

how it evolved, because Viret's efforts to build his church in Lausanne, particularly in the 1550's, hinged on the issue of who controlled the church and on what basis change in theology could be implemented. The first thesis debated at the Bern Disputation of 1528 was at the core of the reformers' attack on the Catholic Church.

"The Holy Christian Church whose sole head is Christ, is born of the Word of God, remains in it, and does not listen to the voice of a stranger."¹⁶

The discussion at the Disputation on this first thesis took six full days and was joined in by a bevy of reformers: Berchtold Haller, Oecolampadius, Martin Bucer, Huldrych Zwingli and Wolfgang Capito.¹⁷ The Catholics were represented by Alexius Grat,¹⁸ Conrad Treger¹⁹ and a group of undistinguished Catholic priests.²⁰ Grat initiated the debate stating the papacy was ordained by Jesus to administer the Church ("Peter and his successors as the regents of Christ received the power upon earth to bind and to loose, to know and to teach ..." ²¹) citing John 1:42 as stating that Peter was called *Cephas* or governor, and thus head of the Church. "Thou art Simon the son of Jona; thou shalt be

¹⁶ "Die heilig Christenlich kilch dren einig haupt Christus ist us dem worts Gots geboren, in selben blibt si, und hört nit die stimme ienes frömden." Backus, *The Disputations of Baden, 1526, and Berne, 1528*, citing Dan Lee Hendricks, *The Bern Disputation: Some Observations*. *Zwingliana* 14 (1978) at 574, See also Hendricks, "The Bern Reformation of 1528," 126, which reads, "Die heilig Christenlich kilch, deren einig haupt Christus, ist us dem worts gots geboren; im selben blibt si, und hört nit die stimm eines frömden."

¹⁷ Guillame Farel was also present and took part in the one day reserved for French speaking reformers.

¹⁸ Alexius Grat was a Dominican priest in the monastery at Insel.

¹⁹ Conrad Treger (1480–1542) was an Augustinian Provincial from Freiburg. Denounced Martin Bucer and the other Strasbourg reformers on September 5, 1524, at a Disputation in Strasbourg. Arrested, he was released shortly and left Strasbourg. Also engaged in a pamphlet war with Wolfgang Capito at the same time. Participated in the Disputation at Baden. When he left Strasbourg he went to Freiburg.

²⁰ Theobold Huter from Appensell, Niklaus Christen, canon of the Chapter of St. Mauritius in Zofingen, Daniel Shatt from Gontenschwil, and Gilg Murer.

²¹ Hendricks, "The Bern Reformation of 1528," 134, citing *Samtliche Werke*, f. 10. "Petrus und ander nachkomend Statthalter Christi habend empfangten den gewalt uff erden zu binden unnd entbinden, zu wysen und leren..."

called Cephus, which is by interpretation, a stone.” Haller immediately responded that *cephas* was Aramaic, not the Greek *kephalè*.²² This quick riposte dispirited Grat and resulted in an easy victory. Zwingli then went on to argue what became the guiding principle for the Reform Church in Bern, that “*The shepherd should pasture the sheep, not rule them, ... the sheep and the shepherd are God's.*”²³ Zwingli envisioned that the church sprang from God’s word, but was a partner with the magistrates. As a consequence of the ease with which the reformers refuted the Catholics it created a false sense of security by the magistrates and limited any debate on the key issue of how the Word of God was to be interpreted by the magistrates.

The alternative proposed by the reformers to a central theological administration of bishops, cardinals and a pope, was a decentralized approach that vested authority with local magistrates, who with the clergy, they appointed, determined and oversaw the local churches based on the “Word of God.” The reformers called this an “assembly of true believers.” From this position they were able to eliminate and overturn the temporal power of bishops, cardinals and the pope. By asserting the “sufficiency” of the Word they rejected the necessity of episcopal government. What they did, however, was to insert the local magistrates in place of the Pope, cardinals and bishops. In Bern and

²² Backus, *The Disputations of Baden, 1526, and Berne, 1528*, 82. King James version quoted. The latin vulgate reads: “*tu es Simon filius Johannatu voaberis Cephaz quod interpretatur Petrus.*” The New International version reads: “You are Simon son of John. You will be called Cephaz (which when translated, is Peter).” In Aramaic *Kêpã* means both rock and peter, while in Greek *petros* is peter and *petra* rock, so the play on words works better in Aramaic, which is the language that it would have been rendered in and why the author used Aramaic here. Raymond E. Brown, *The Gospel According to John*, (The Anchor Bible, Doubleday, 1966), 76.

²³ Backus, *The Disputations of Baden, 1526, and Berne, 1528*, 86. “*der Hirt soll Gottes schaaf weiden, nit herschen, es spricht nit: weid dine Schaaf, sonder mine, die Schaaf und der Hirt sind Gottes.*”

Zurich the reformers were comfortable with this arrangement, because the magistrates were their allies in their struggle to change the church, and the reformers gave the magistrates the intellectual basis for independence. In taking this position the reformers relied upon their new found partnership with the magistrates, not realizing that after the original partners would fade from the scene the magistrates would become the dominant party. Bucer summarized the position of the reformers: “That this holy Christian Church, whose only Head is Christ, not the Pope, which was born from the Word of God, not from the decree of councils.”²⁴ Of course, Bucer did not envision that the city councils who enacted the reformation in the Swiss Confederation and southern Germany would soon be issuing decrees themselves.

The debate at the Bern disputation could have ended here, but Zwingli carried it further when he ventured into Matthew 18:18 and the power of excommunication: “Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; And whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.”²⁵ Zwingli stated that excommunication had to be governed by the spirit of God or else it became tyranny.²⁶ Zwingli’s interpretation had disastrous future consequences for the reformers in Vaud,

²⁴ Hendricks, “The Bern Reformation of 1528,” 139, note 29. “...uff Concilia, die ye und ye wider einandern beschlossen haben; uff die vatter, deren dheiner ist, der nit ouch sin eigne leer an menschen ort geendert hab wysen.”

²⁵ King James version. Depending on who is interpreting the passage you get very different conclusions. Daniel J. Harrington, a Jesuit, says, “The power to bind and loose, previously bestowed on Peter in 16:19, is now given to the disciples at large.” Daniel J. Harrington, S.J., *The Gospel of Matthew*, Sacra Pagina Series, (Collegeville, Minnesota, The Liturgical Press, 1991), 269. While the Scottish Episcopalian William Barclay sees it quite differently, “It is not possible that Jesus said this in its present form...it sounds more like the regulations of an ecclesiastical committee.” (Passages interposed for clarity.) William Barclay, *The Gospel of Matthew*, vol. 2, (Louisville, Ky., Westminster John Knox Press, 1975), 187.

²⁶ Backus, *The Disputations of Baden, 1526, and Berne, 1528*, 83.

who found themselves in need of a disciplinary tool to reign in a more disrespectful and unbelieving population, but were constricted by Zwingli's caveat. As Viret was to expound in 1558 to the Lausanne council "they were neither following the preaching, nor the Christian reformation."²⁷ Thus thirty years later Bern's Haller saw the attempt by the Lausanne ministers to seek the right of excommunication as a "great evil" ("*tryanis*"). In taking this position he was referencing Zwingli's view.²⁸

The atmosphere at the disputation had become so heavy by this time and the hectoring by Bucer and Capito of Treger to stick to the Gospel according to the rules laid down in the call for the disputation that Treger left the disputation and the City of Bern after the conclusion of the debate on the first thesis. Thus exited the only accomplished Catholic theologian at the disputation. There were two striking differences between the disputation at Baden and that at Bern, the two dominant theologians, Johannes Eck and Huldrych Zwingli. Zwingli was absent at Baden and Eck at Bern. The Reformers had been bruised and beaten up at Baden, Bern was their revenge. The absence of any real opposition, particularly an experienced theologian like Eck, at Bern made it too easy for the Reformers. Having won the victory and reversed the results of Baden, they did not think out the long term consequences of vesting so much power in a civil government. Having gotten what they wanted they could not foresee the need to accommodate future change. Calvin, foresaw the need to separate church matters from civil government and

²⁷ "*...que l'on ne suyt les presches ny observe la reformation chrestienne.*" Archives de la Ville de Lausanne, Manual, D 12, fol. 340, p. 976.

²⁸ "*Senatus cognoscens haec confiderans novum periculum, & inprimis quod Papatus principio non alia ratione crevisset, facileque olfaciens quanta fubesset tyranis, indignatus, omnes quotquot, erant Lausannae vel Ministri vel Professores, ut huc venirent, evocantur.*" Johannes Haller, "*Ephermides D. Joannis Halleri,*" edited by Jacob Simler, *Museum Helveticum*, (1747), 120-121.

set that out in his book, *The Institutes of Christian Religion*, first published in 1536. The situation that Viret found in Lausanne called for this separation, but the magistrates in Bern having seized power were not about to relinquish it.

By the time of the Lausanne Disputation (1536) there was no feeling that the replacement of Episcopal jurisdiction had to be justified. That had been done at Bern, so at Lausanne, Guillaume Farel, who had attended the Bern Disputation, wrote the ten theses drawing on his experience at Bern. The first thesis at Lausanne was simply an exposition of reform theology adopted in Bern: “Holy Scripture acknowledges no other way of salvation than by faith in Jesus Christ, who offered himself once for the remission of sins.”²⁹ While Farel finessed the issue of who controlled the church in his ten theses, one of the Catholic canons of Lausanne, who was the first to speak, stated quite clearly, “...when doubts arise concerning matters of faith, the universal church, which is not subject to error, is the sole judge.”³⁰ Since the “universal” or catholic church had rebuffed the reforms sought in this period, the reformers had moved past the issue of councils to resolve religious disputes, which they simply saw as a delaying tactic by the Catholics to avoid change, so they ignored the canon. In fact the Catholic church had a mechanism for dealing with issues like those raised by the reformers, but it lacked the

²⁹ “*La sainte escripture n’enseigne point aultre maniere pour ester justifié, si non celle qui est par la foy en Jesuchrist, une fois offert et qui jamais plus ne le sera, tellement que celuy aneantist du tout la vertu de Christ, qui met aultre satisfaction, oblation ou purgation pour la remission des pechez.*” Arthur Piaget, *Les Actes de la Dispute de Lausanne – 1536* (Neuchatel, Secrétariat de l’Université, 1928) 16. Reprinted in English in James T. Dennison Jr., compiler, *Reformed Confessions of the 16th and 17th Centuries in English Translation: Volume 1, 1523-1552*, (Grand Rapids, Reformation Heritage Books, 2008) 340-341. However my translation differs slightly.

³⁰ “*...et ce neanmoins ce n’appartient ny n’est licite a aucun sinon a l’eglise universelle de Jesuchrist qui n’est subjecte a aucunes erreurs.*” Arthur Piaget, *Les Actes de la Dispute de Lausanne – 1536* (Neuchatel, Secrétariat de l’Université, 1928) 25.

leadership to accommodate the reformers. Consequently, the reformers saw church councils as a mechanism for inertia and rejected them. Farel wrapped up the first debate by ignoring the canon and simply rereading the thesis, which did not touch on the issue of Church control and concluding, “as Holy Scripture teaches no other way of salvation but faith in Jesus Christ, it consequently condemns all human doctrines and traditions, which make the pardon of sins to depend upon any other thing – as pilgrimages, indulgences, masses, purgatory...”³¹ Farel was merely targeting the aspects of the Catholic Church that were unpopular, playing to the audience of reformers who felt the Catholic Church had used these devices to fleece the public. The eighth theses, while it ceded civil authority to the state also did not address the relationship between church and state, except to say that the acts of civil magistrates should not be contrary to the word of God.³² He was either unwilling or unable to work out the logistics of secular control of ecclesiastical matters as Calvin had done in his *Institutes*.

Only the fifth thesis touched on the issue of how the Word of God was part of the compact. “The said church also does not recognize any ministry, except the preaching of

³¹ “Parquoy, ne fault chercher autre maniere pour estre justifié pour avoir remission des pechez que la seule foy en Nostre Seigneur Jesus, qui a esté offert une foys pour nous et plus ne la sera. Dont vient que tous pellerinaiges, indulgences, messes, pardons, entrees de religion, confessions aux hommes, et satisfactions envers Dieu, et l’invention mensongere du purgatoire, et tout ce qu’on a donné entendre estre pour la remission des pechez...” Arthur Piaget, *Les Actes de la Dispute de Lausanne – 1536* (Neuchatel, Secrétariat de l’Université, 1928) 138.

³² “Aussy elle reconnoist le magistrat civil seulement, ordonné de Dieu, nécessaire pour conserver la paix et tranquillité de la chose publique. Auguel elle veult et ordonne que tous obeissent intant qu’il ne commande rien contre Dieu.” Arthur Piaget, *Les Actes de la Dispute de Lausanne – 1536* (Neuchatel, Secrétariat de l’Université, 1928) 6.

the Word of God, and the administration of the sacraments.”³³ In explaining the purpose of the thesis Viret said the Word of God “always had to be requested, recaptured, corrected, admonished, exhorted, consoled, confirmed and corroborated,” but never touched on how magistrates would recognize it and legislate it.³⁴

By rejecting any episcopal authority, but accepting that of their magistrates, the reformers left future doctrine within the control of the magistrates. So long as the magistrates were working hand in glove with the reformers this did not create a problem, but Berchtold Haller became ill in 1530 and died in 1536, and his successors began to flirt with Lutheranism in concert with Martin Bucer, who wanted to unite Lutherans and Zwinglians and were ousted by the magistrates. After Bern’s invasion of Vaud the Bern magistrates were tired of this ecclesiastical conflict, because it threatened the theology of their “reformation” created out of the Bern Disputation, and kicked three ministers out of Bern between 1538-1548. First, Kaspar Megander left in January 1538, then Sebastien Meyer in 1541 and Simon Sulzer in 1548. The Bern magistrates made clear that they, not the second generation reformers would establish doctrine. At the Disputation in Lausanne in 1536 we find a smoothed out version of ten theses restating the Reform dogma as at Bern in 1528.³⁵ Since the Bernese were not French speaking the weight of the debate

³³ “*La dicte eglise aussy ne reconnoist aucun ministre, sinon celui qui presche la parolle de Dieu et administre les sacremens.*” Arthur Piaget, *Les Actes de la Dispute de Lausanne – 1536* (Neuchatel, Secrétariat de l’Université, 1928) 276.

³⁴ “*Tous les jours sollicitez, reprins, corrigez, admonestez, exhortez, consolez, confirmez et corroborez,...*” Arthur Piaget, *Les Actes de la Dispute de Lausanne – 1536* (Neuchatel, Secrétariat de l’Université, 1928) 276.

³⁵ Henri Vuilleumier. *Histoire de l’Eglise Reformée au pays de Vaud Sous le Régime Bernois*. 4 vols., (Lausanne: Editions la Concorde, 1927-1928), 155. Thesis 2 asserted “*icelle escripture reconnoist Isuschrist qui est resuscite des morts et se sied au ciel a la destre du pere seul chief et sacrificateur vrayment souverain mediatour et advocat vrayment de son eglise*” which precluded the earthly powers of bishops, cardinals and the

was carried by Guillaume Farel and Pierre Viret, with Calvin providing a helping hand.³⁶ While Farel had been an agent of Bern his theology moved closer to Calvin after his close association with him in Geneva. The language barrier would isolate and insulate the French speaking ministers in Vaud from the German speaking magistrates and ministers in Bern. But it was this unresolved issue over the Word of God that would ultimately splinter the Reform Church in Vaud. The ministers in Lausanne felt that they had only been fed the “pure word of God”³⁷ by their colleagues, and could not reconcile that understanding with the tenets of Bern’s church.³⁸ Viret’s struggle to get the power of discipline for his church, including the power of excommunication, hinged on the issue of who controlled the church, and the basis by which change could be implemented. This attempt ran afoul of the political partnership of first generation reformers and magistrates, which rendered the position of Viret and the magistrates irreconcilable, since he was excluded from that partnership. The shoals on which Viret foundered, although couched

papacy without stating it directly. See Dennison, ed., *Reformed Confessions of 16th and 17th Centuries in English Translation*, Volume 1, 1523-1552, 340-341 for an English translation. Vuilleumier reprints the original French version as does Arthur Piaget, *Les Actes de la Dispute de Lausanne – 1536* (Neuchatel, Secrétariat de l’Université, 1928).

³⁶ See Bruening, *Calvinism’s First Battleground: Conflict and Reform in the Pays de Vaud*, 141, for an evaluation of Calvin’s contribution and note 29 for the contrary view. Bruce Gordon, *Calvin*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 2009, 67, notes 11 and 12, agrees with Bruening.

³⁷ “La pure parole de Dieu...” Michael Bruening, *Pierre Viret’s Unedited Correspondence*, unpublished manuscript, Appendix XXV, the Class in Lausanne to Bern Council, December 15, 1558.

³⁸ “l’accord et union en doctrine et en esprit qui a esté tousjours entre nous, graces à Dieu; Joint et aussi que nosdicts freres nous ont tousjours communiqué leur advis sur ce en demandant nostre conseil, tel que nous le pouvons avoir selon la parole de dieu.” Michael Bruening, *Pierre Viret’s Unedited Correspondence*, unpublished manuscript, Appendix XXV, the Class in Lausanne to Bern Council, December 15, 1558.

in terms of theological debate, were built on the new fabric of jurisdiction, authority and power that the reformers' challenge to the Catholic Church had made possible.

Implementation of the Edicts of Reformation

The invasion of Vaud had come swiftly, and the imposition of the Reformation on its inhabitants just as swiftly thereafter. We will look at the reaction of one barony to see how the articles of reformation were accepted by Vaud's population. We will follow the development of the church in Aubonne, where Jaques Valier was called to be the minister to see how the new church was set up in accordance with the Edicts of Reformation, and then we will follow him to Lausanne, where there was another more complex set of problems that tested Bern's authority and ability to respond to the need to reconcile the new religion with a population that was unwilling to accept it with open arms.

The Count of Gruyère, who held the barony of Aubonne and other fiefdoms in Vaud and Catholic Fribourg equivocated in abolishing the rites of the Catholic church, believing the promises made to him prior to the invasion and his special status as "bourgeois" of Bern protected him against this change.¹ On January 16, 1536, Bern sent notice of its proposed incursion to the seven Catholic cantons and the Count of Gruyère.² However, a subsequent letter on January 20, indicated that Bern had some doubts as to his loyalty, as it contained a thinly veiled threat that they would send troops if his loyalty was withdrawn.³ Now almost a year later the Council of Bern wrote him on December 19,

¹ "Plusieurs seigneurs vaudois s'étaient fait recevoir bourgeois de Berne, sans y habiter, pour jouir de la protection de la République..." Charles Gilliard, *La Conquête du pays de Vaud*, 68, n. 2.

² Charles Gilliard, *La Conquête du pays de Vaud*, 54, note 4, citing StAB, Ratsman. No. 254, p. 70. "En même temps le gouvernement avisait les VII cantons catholique..." Also p. 69: "Parmi les alliés que Berne avait avisés de son entrée en compagnie, il y avait le comte de Gruyère;..."

³ Charles Gilliard, *La Conquête du pays de Vaud*, 70, citing StAB W, Miss. B-A, fol. 371. "Sy l'opposite y est [nous] ferons ce que à gens de guerre appartient."

1536, and made clear that there was no flexibility in the matter of the type of church that would be established in the “conquered territories.”

“Illustrious, magnificent Lord, true friend and very dear bourgeois! Regarding your letter most recently sent to us, dealing with the abolition of the papal ceremonies in our city of Aubonne, [per your orders to be] executed by our bailiff of Moudon, we respond to you that not long ago we had said to your governor [maitre d’hôtel], that it must be reported to you that it is our wish that this would be done by your subjects through the officers of the said Aubonne. Upon which opinion are written certain letters to our said Bailiff of Moudon, making mention that this should be ordered. Of which **we have made the order to our said bailiff to put this into effect, alerting you that, in all places where we are sovereign, that we will abolish the papal ceremonies.** (emphasis added)

Dated December 19, 1536.

The Advoyer and Council of Berne.”⁴

After the completion of the conquest of Vaud Bern divided Vaud into six baillages. Each of the bailiffs appointed on April 30, 1536, either was a soldier that participated in the invasion or was a relative of one of the soldiers. Hans Frisching, who had commanded the volunteers and had participated in the Second Kappel War, was awarded the bailage of Moudon, which included the barony of Aubonne. He was known as a “rough soldier, who had the qualities and defects of warriors of that era” Frisching had been installed as Bailiff April 30, 1536, as part of the spoils of war.⁵ The minutes of Aubonne show that the town was visited by this soldier in November and December. On November 8, 1536, the City Council sent letters to the Count of Gruyère that the Bailiff

⁴ A. -L. Hermingard, *Correspondence des Réformateurs*, Vol. 4, (1872), No. 594, __, the Council of Bern to the Count Jean de Gruyère with the notation in note 1 that the letter of the Count has not been preserved. [insert Fr.]

⁵ State Archive of Bern, Ratsmanual # 256, p. 200, October 8, 1536, cited at Gilliard, Charles, *La Conquête du pays de Vaud* (Lausanne Editions de l’Aire, 1935, 1985) 245. See also page 59, “*Hans Fisching, qui avait les qualities et surtout les défauts des guerriers de sons temps.*”

of Moudon wanted to destroy the church in Aubonne.⁶ On December 16, 1536, the Bailiff came again to destroy the altars and images (statues).⁷ The Count may have equivocated, but the minutes of the council indicate that the town did not. Aubonne had been visited by the Bernese army during the invasion and had no desire to have it return.⁸

The Count's intransigence lasted until May 17, 1537 when his steward wrote the Senate in Bern and agreed to accept the edicts of the reformation.⁹ On August 17(13?), 1537 the Senate in Bern wrote to Farel about finding a pastor for Aubonne.¹⁰ From later correspondence it appears that the price the Count had to pay for his equivocation was that he was required to pay the salary of the ministers in Aubonne.¹¹ The ministers of the reformed church in the Vaud were paid very well, because the government wanted them to become the leading citizens in their communities.¹² On August 26, 1537, Guillaume

⁶ AA c.v. D4, f. 73v. November 8, 1536. "*Littera ad dominum comitem gruerie ydeo quod ballives merduns vellebat a nychilare ecclesiam albone.*"

⁷ AA c.v. D4, f. 77, December 16, 1536. "*Monsieur le Ballif de moudon fut de rector aulbonne pour fayre anychille les outlars et ymages.*"

⁸ Gilliard, Charles, *La Conquête du pays de Vaud*,

⁹ "*Nous Jehan, Comte seigneur de Gruyere, baron d'Aulbonne, ...et de plusieurs aultres lieux faisons scavoir et confessons par ce presentes, comme ainsi soit que les capitains, conseillers et conducteurs de guerre des magniffiques et tres redoubtes messieurs de Berne estant au siege devant Yverdon, nous ayent summes par letters missives de venir vers eulx à Payerne pour faire fidelité commes les autres seigneurs et gentilz homes des pays de Chablaix, ...par eulx conquests...*" Hisely, J.J. *Monuments de l'Histoire du Comté de Gruyère*, vol. II, (1869). 257

¹⁰ Herminjard, *Correspondence des Réformateurs*, vol. IV, No 650, 275-276. [Fr.]

¹¹ "...de Gruyere son pere que ne feust entendu dentre-tenir et souldoyer que deux predicans, et ce a cause et par raison que luy avions remis et abandonne tous les benefices et biens desdictes esglises d'Aulbonne, de quoy ne nous contentans lavons charge encore dung aultre et tier predicant et presentement du quatrieme chose qui le griesve fort, daultant que les biens et reveus desdictes esglises ne sont souffisans pour soubstenter les dicts quatre predicans..." J.J. Hisely, *Monuments de l'Histoire du Comté de Gruyère*, vol. II, (1869), # 312, 272-273.

¹² The fourth minister at Auonne was to be paid an annual salary of 30 gold écus, or the Count de Gruyère could pay currency and wheat in lieu of the 30 gold écus, J. J. Hisely, *Histoire de Comté De Gruyère*, tome II, (Lausanne, Georges Bridel éditeur, 1857), 393. "

Farel wrote to Pierre Viret to request that Jaques Valier be assigned to assume pastoral duties in Aubonne:

“If you can do anything else in the matter of Jaques whom I hope is in Aubonne, which seems to me to be necessary for his well-being, see to it that he takes care and the people of Bern accept it until someone else come along who can be appointed in Aubonne. But if the people of Bern won’t change their opinion nor the terms that they have designated, then let him return to us.”¹³

Several days later on August 31, 1537, the pastors of Geneva wrote to the Consistory of Bern to propose as pastor of Aubonne the person (Jaques Valier) upon whom Berne had recently conferred responsibilities as deacon to Vevey and as school principal, for he possessed in their opinion all of the qualities of a good pastor:

“Farel received a letter from your Senate in which he was ordered to pick a faithful minister for the church in Aubonne who could be sent to you for investigation and confirmation. Since we understand that there is a report that the church in Aubonne no longer is without a pastor we propose to suggest, if it seems thus to you, that the person who recently by your decree had been an assistant (deacon) to the minister in Vevey and by that law was in charge of the school in that town be transferred there. If we possess any measure of judgment and if in fact he excels in doctrine, experience, integrity, and the other gifts of a faithful pastor, he will be very suited for that town and the ministry of the Word.”¹⁴

...donnèrent en blé de quoi compléter le traitement du nouveau prédicant.” See also, J.J. Hisely, *Monuments de L’Histoire du Comté de Gruyère et D’Autes Fiefs de la Maison Souveraine de ce Nom*, (Lausanne, Georges Bridel Éditeur, 1869), No. 312, pp. 272-273, *ladvoyer et conseil de Berne, June 3, 1545*, “certaine somme de deniers et bled.” ...a certain quantity of French currency [deniers] and wheat.

¹³ A. -H. Herminjard, *Correspondence des Réformateurs*, vol. IV, No 653, page 280, Guillaume Farel to Pierre Viret, in Lausanne, from Geneva, August 26, 1537. Handwritten. Library of M. le colonel Henri Tronchin. “*Si aliud non potes in negotio Jacobi, quem opto Albonae esse, ut mihi videtur valae necessarium, fac ut donec alius venerit qui Albonae possit designari, curam interea suscipiat, et id Bernates ferant. Quod si non mutant sententiam Bernates, nec conclicionem quam assignarunt, redeat ad nos.*”

¹⁴ *Correspondence des Réformateurs*, A. -H. Herminjard, vol. IV, No 655, page 286. “*Litteras a Senatu vestro Farellus accepit, quibus jubebatur fidelem aliquem ministrum Albonensi ecclesiae deligere, qui ad vos mitteretur explorandus et confirmandus. Quoniam magnopere referre intellegimus ne Albonensis ecclesia diutius pastore careat, expedire censemus, si vobis ita visum fuerit, Ut eo traducatur qui nuper vestro decreto*

It is unclear whether this recommendation reached Bern before he was appointed, however, Jaques Valier was assigned to Aubonne, where he directed the pastoral ministry until June 1546. Certainly, he had been noticed by the church hierarchy in his work in Vevey. What he encountered was a church that had already been ravaged by the presence of the Bernese army and the iconoclasm of the Reformation. The minutes of the council chronicle on a regular basis what was taking place. All of the liturgical garments were taken from the Church.¹⁵ The altars were destroyed, but the report must have been premature, because a few months later they were ordered replaced in the church.¹⁶ The parish priest asked that the Church be covered, presumably because it was leaking.¹⁷ It was decided to give all the instruments of the church to the home for the poor and make two keys for the church.¹⁸ By letter dated December 19, 1536, *MM de Berne* announced to the Count de Gruyere that they were going to execute their order to the Count to abolish Catholic ceremonies in Aubonne.¹⁹ His appearance in Aubonne would have made clear that the Bernese intended to replace the Catholic ceremonies without any

ministro Viviacensi adjunctus fuerat, ea lege ut simul ejus oppidi scholae praeesset. Si quid enim iudicii nobis est, et Verbi ministerio et illi loco erit aptissimus, siquidem et doctrina pollet, et peritia, et integritate, et aliis fidi pastoris dotibus.”

¹⁵ Archives d’Aubonne, folio 74. November 8, 1536, “*dum ipsi removerunt indumenta ecclesie Albone.*”

¹⁶ Archives d’Aubonne, November 8, 1535, folio 74v., “*duas litteras dominocomiti gruerie ut quomodo ballivus merduni deruerat altaria ecclesie...*”; February 19, 1536, folio 51v. “*Fuit conclusum reponere indumenta deposita ab ecclesia pro bello quod illa reponantur in eadem ecclesia et omnes littere ville reponantur ubi erat prius.*”

¹⁷ Archives d’Aubonne, July 22, 1536, folio 54v. “*Fuit conclusum quod dominus curatus albone faciat coperire chorum ecclesie una pro omnibus prout convenerat [conveniat?].*”

¹⁸ Archives d’Aubonne, November 11, 1536, folio 58v. “*Fuit conclusum reponere omnia instrumenta ecclesie cappellarumque et villa in domo hospitalis et conficeantur due[?] clasum[?].*”

¹⁹ A. –L. Herminjard, *Correspondence des Reformateurs*, vol. 4, (Geneva, 1872), 139 – 140. [text]

overt acquiescence by the Count. At the same time it was reported that the crosses were knocked down.²⁰ The Council decided to inventory the furniture and to pave the floor where the altars had been located.²¹ Then the baptismal fonts were moved to the choir loft in the church. The Council on March 3, 1537 entrusted the relics of the Church, along with the silver to Claude Villiet.²² This dissaray and iconoclasm mirrored what had been taking place elsewhere in the Swiss Confederation. As an example, on October 23, 1530, in nearby Neuchâtel, William Farel preached against the veneration of saints in such a fiery manner that the congregation began destroying the images in the church right then. For a period chaos reigned in the town until November 4, when the citizens of the town were summoned by the council to vote on the Reformation. By a narrow margin the Reformation of Bern was accepted and order was restored in the town.²³

Jaques Valier left no writings, other than a few letters, so piecing his career together and understanding his personality requires more thorough research. While we learn from a footnote that he was born in Briançon in the Dauphiné,²⁴ near the birthplace of William Farel, there is scant evidence of his presence there. Henri Vuillemeumier, the author of the most comprehensive history of the Reformed Church in Vaud during the period of Bernese occupation and professor at the University of Lausanne was attempting to trace the history of the early Réformateurs and their descendants at his death. His

²⁰ Archives d'Aubonne, Decmber 16, 1536, fol. 77, "...pour dispense fayte par Jehan milliat, Glaude pachtier bartholomey Crepin et Jaqueme Marguerat qui mirent bas le croyx."

²¹ Archives d'Aubonne, December 16, 1536, folio 78, "qui pavirent lac ou les outlars estoent."

²² Archives d'Aubonne, March 3, 1537, folio 62, "fuit conclusum dare in custodium venerabili domino Glaudio Villiet reliquias ecclesie unacum brachio."

²³ Bruce Gordon, *The Swiss Reformation*, 150.

²⁴ Herminjard, *Correspondence des Réformateurs*, vol. IV, No 655, n. 3, 280.

notes state that Jaques Valier was a priest and school master in Briançon before he went to Privas.²⁵ The first record to identify him is from a history of Privas in the Ardeche. In 1534, Valier, a Catholic priest began introducing the reform precepts of Martin Luther in his sermons in the church there, and for doing that he was forced to flee to Geneva.²⁶ The Reformation was started by Catholic priests, that is, the push for reform came from within the Catholic Church, as we have seen in our study of Zurich and Bern. The next priest, Antoine Marlnault, who began preaching the reform in Privas, was put to death. The name of the person giving the secret testimony to the Inquisition, that accused Jaques of heresy, was Jehan Compte. His mark was “□+.” He could not read or write, but he could talk and that is how this story comes down to us. Someone else wrote down what he said and he put his mark on it.²⁷ All this was done in secret before the King’s prosecutor in Toulouse, so no one in the town would know who was informing on them, since Privas was in the center of the religious rebellion taking place in the south of France. This shows how the inquisition could divide communities and instill fear. As the first to preach and proclaim of the Reformation²⁸ Valier exhibited strength of character that he would need later in dealing with *MM de Berne*.²⁹

²⁵ ACV, BCU, IS 4511, “*Prêtre et maître d’école à Briançon*”

²⁶ E. Reynier, *History of Privas*, vol. I, 1941, p.139, note 3, *Le Parlement 27-XI-1538*, “*a ordonné à l’évêque de faire conduire dans la conciegeriede Toulouse Jacques Chavaignac prêtre, sous peine de 1000 l. Arch. Ardeche B 32, f 20. “ung né Jacques Vallerii, lequel prechoyt en lesglise parochelle dudict Privas, lequel sen alla à Genève.”* “One named Jaques Valier who preached in the local church of Privas, who went to Geneva.”

²⁷ Archives Ardeche, B 32, f 20. “*car ne sçait escripre, na signé sa depposition, ains a faict sa marque.*” “...because he did not know how to write, nor sign this deposition, he made this mark.”

²⁸ The entry in Reynier reads, “*prêchait en ladite église beaucoup de propositions au peuple de fausses doctrines hérétiques de la secte luthérienne.*” This was the common

It appears that Valier left Privas late in 1534, possibly in 1535. While it is certain that he went to Geneva he is not on the register of strangers for that period. Somehow he made himself known to William Farel, because in 1536 he was named a deacon to the church in Vevey after the Edicts of Reformation were adopted and ministers appointed on October 19. In Vevey Valier ran the college or middle school.³⁰

In his first appearance before the council of Aubonne, October 1537, the new pastor asked the city to hire a carpenter to build benches for his church.³¹ Under the control of the Dukes of Savoy the Catholic churches in the Vaud had required the people to stand in the nave during the church services. It is significant that the first order sought by the new minister was the construction of benches so that his parishioners could now sit during church services to hear the minister's sermons, and as a means of instilling order in the church, because people could no longer mill around in the nave during the service. The giving of sermons on scripture was one of the hallmarks of the Reformation and they could be long. There is no evidence that the new minister was ordered to find seating for his parishioners, so it is clear that acting in the role of a shepherd for his new community Valier was addressing their needs for comfort and his need for order. Since it was a major departure from the established norm it signaled that the new reform church was going to address the comfort of its flock and the feeding of their souls through an

reference to the followers of the Reformation. They were all considered followers of Luther.

²⁹ "MM de Berne," or Messieurs de Berne refers to the Council and Advoyer of Bern.

³⁰ "*Quoique peu savant, c'était apparemment un bon éducateur et il avait donné au Collège de Vevey une certaine réputation, comme en fait foi la lettre suivante adressé pour les prier de lui recommander un candidat apte à remplacer le pasteur Jacques Vallier (sic), qui venait d'être transféré de Vevey Aubonne.*" Reardon, Ed., *Etudes Historiques sur le Passé de Vevey*, vol II, (1944), 84-86.

³¹ Archives d'Aubonne, minutes of the council of the city of Aubonne, October 27, 1537, folio 70. [Latin]

exposition of the Scripture, and in doing so would set itself apart from the Catholic priests who, according to the Reformers, only preached fables, rather than Holy Scripture. The argument of the reformers was that these priests were preying on the fears of eternal damnation of the people by requiring payment for masses for the dead, seeking the intercession of saints for their souls and, in some cases, selling indulgences to pay for St. Peter's Cathedral in Rome. Rather than exploiting the fears of the public the new reform ministers were trying to address the needs of the people through their sermons and also recognizing that seats would better hold the attention of their parishioners.³² While not the first reform minister to do this, as Zwingli had designed his celebration of the Lord's Supper with the people seated, it was the beginning of a process that helped perpetuate the Reformation in the Vaud.³³

One of the tenets of the reform movement was that symbols of the saints, decorative windows and other signs of excess and idolatry were abolished. On July 20, 1538 Valier returned the baptismal fonts that he located in the choircroft to the Count de Gruyère through the members of the Council.³⁴ Both Luther and Zwingli had called for infant baptism and the keeping of records of such baptisms. However, the two viewed the sacrament differently. Whether the fonts were to be in the church proper was the area

³² Archives d'Aubonne, October 27, 1537 - The council of the city of Aubonne ordered that benches be made for the people to listen to the pastor. "*Fuit conclusum quod villa facial facere banca in ecclesia Albone pro sedendo in sermone predicatoris.*" (AC, A 70. folio 70v).

³³ Bruce Gordon, *The Swiss Reformation*, 69.

³⁴ Archives d'Aubonne, July 20, 1538 – From the minutes of the Council of Aubonne. "*Dominus curatus Albone reddidit la bassinaz des fonts gubernatori.*" *Le curé d'Aubonne rend la bassinaz des fonts baptismaux aux gouverneur.* (AC, A folio 70v). The minister of Aubonne returns the baptismal fonts to the Governors.

of dispute.³⁵ Valier faithfully follows this practice. Why the fonts were returned to the Count is unclear, except he was the chief official and noble in the town, Valier was following a cautious policy in light of this conflict between the two churches. Later entries suggest that they were returned to the church in December 1538.³⁶ Later the stained glass windows were removed from the church to the home for the poor.³⁷ The new minister appeared to be moving slowly and deliberately to change the church, without the incendiary rhetoric that Neuchâtel had experienced. Having experienced a violent reaction to the change he had initiated in Privas, Valier appeared to be determined to make the changes last at this church. His initial enthusiasm displayed in Privas was tempered by the reaction that had occurred there. In Aubonne he was carefully implementing what Bern had decreed.

By August 1538, the new minister had organized his church so that he could make a major presentation to the Aubonne Council. This was made up of four points:

1. He asked that the council attend his sermon the next day.
2. He asked that the children attend his sermon, except when directed not to.
3. That the poor be provided for.
4. That the Church be repaired so that:
 - a. the doors would be airtight,
 - b. new roofing material would be ordered from Geneva,

³⁵ Bruce Gordon, *The Swiss Reformation*, 159.

³⁶ Archives d'Aubonne, December 21, 1538 - From the minutes of the Council of Aubonne. "*Fuit conclusum solvere lathomis qui actaverunt batitorium in choro pro duabus jornatis per eos.*" *Les maçons qui ont déplacé les fonts baptismaux sont payés.* The masons who removed the baptismal fonts are paid. (AC A f. 81).

³⁷ Archives d'Aubonne, October 27, 1537 - From the minutes of the Council of Aubonne. Folio 84v., "*qui hostirent les verrieres de la chapelle de la garillietaz lesquelles sont en la maison de l'hospital.*"

- b. that benches be provided for people to sit in, and
- c. that the bells be repaired so that the townspeople will know the time to come to church services.³⁸

It was clear that the minister was asserting his moral authority by requesting the governing council to attend his sermons through which he was addressing the needs of his parishioners to understand scripture and he was asking the Council to recognize this reform by its attendance at his sermons. The repairs to the church addressed the practical need to make the church habitable as it had been vacant for almost a year. In addressing the needs of the poor he was echoing other reformers who felt that the ostentation of the Catholic Church should be diverted to the poor. The need to repair the bells addressed the practical necessity of establishing and regulating the time in each day, since the people were without watches.³⁹ Reform leaders such as William Farel were known for their provocative sermons and the havoc that they caused; this was a man who was systematically building support for his reform church with a population that had had its choice of religion forced on it as a result of military occupation. This was a methodical

³⁸ Archives d'Aubonne, August 17, 1538 (Saturday) - From the minutes of the Council of Aubonne. [replace with French] Session by the governors with nobleman: Jaques de Mont, Jean Mestral, François Mallet, Etienne Monvillat, Michel Croisier, Antoine Dunant, Etienne Challet; Master Jaques (Valier), preacher in a presentation asked; Firstly, that the Council attend his next Sermon; secondly, for the children to come to the Sermon except on certain fixed days, at a given hour; thirdly, for the sick to provide instruction and visits for them; fourthly, for the Church to repair it and order construction of benches, to repair the doors so they will be airtight, and the church bells which can sound at the appointed hour for the Sermon, and sound in the morning and evening so that the villagers can come to the Sermon. It was decided to give the preacher what he asked for and thereby the city will do its part and ask the governor to do its part. (AC Aubonne.)

³⁹ Without wrist watches the townspeople relied on the tolling of the church bells to keep track of time. Valier's family had made church bells in Briançon. Jean Vallier Fecit, *Les Vallier fondateurs de Cloches* (Association pour le Protection de Hameau de Plampinet de son Environment, 1995).

man who was determined to win over his new parishioners, not by the force of his sermons, by enticing the governing body of the community to accept and support what he was doing and by publicly showing his concern for his community by meeting the daily needs of the people of that community in a very careful and logical manner. When Valier had asked the Council to provide two chalices for the serving of communion and on December 21, 1538, the Council acted. One of two sacraments that the reformers preserved, it symbolized that the communicant was one with Christ. It was reserved for special occasions, Pentecost, Easter and Christmas, and so the order for the chalices was timely.⁴⁰

In 1539 the council announced that the local carpenter, Jean Chavannaz, had built benches for the Church.⁴¹ It also authorized payment for a table for communion to be served on in the church.⁴² The placing of a table in the church to replace the altar positioned the preacher toward the people seated in the nave so that he spoke directly to them in the vernacular, rather than having the priest standing in front of the altar with his back to the people reciting the liturgy in Latin. It was in 1539 that baptismal fonts were installed in the Church. Baptism was the other sacrament that the reformers continued, and thus, the installation of the fonts was important to the new minister, and to the

⁴⁰ Archives d'Aubonne, December 21, 1538, "*Fuit conclusum tradere predicatori duo callusoz die nativitatis domini pro la sennaz ita quod tirminata sena...*" "*Il est décidé de confier deux calices utilisés pour la Cène au pasteur.*" [later entry] It is decided to give two chalices used for Holy Communion to the pastor. (AC A folio 81)

⁴¹ Archives d'Aubonne, 1539 - From the minutes of the Council of Aubonne. "*Des bancs sont executés par le charpentier Jean Chavannaz.*" Some benches were built by the carpenter, Jean Chavannaz. (AC A folio 99).

⁴² Archives d'Aubonne, August 2, 1539 - "*A maystre Jehan Chavanaz par le commandement de messieurs du conseil lequel fit la table en l'église d'Aulbonne.*" The Council ordered payment to the carpenter, Jean Chavannaz, for the table for the church. (Ac A 5e).

families with newborns, who felt that baptism was the first thing that had to be done after birth, usually within a few days of a birth to save the child's soul. It also allowed the minister to enter a record of each birth.⁴³ Later that year we find another entry indicating that the carpenters were paid for benches. Obviously, the people of the city were satisfied with this innovation.

It was on Christmas day, 1539, that a fire destroyed nine homes and four stables in the town of Orbe,⁴⁴ including the home of the minister there. Valier went to the Council in January to ask that money be sent to the victims who lost their homes that Christmas "for the love of Christ." It was at this meeting that he also asked to have the heated room at the home for the poor available for the colloquy and that the town crier would announce the meeting. The purpose was to set aside certain days for children to learn about the Christian faith.⁴⁵

Jaques had been the head of the college⁴⁶ in Vevey and when he went to Aubonne the education of the children of his parishioners was one of his primary goals. In 1539 the house belonging to the Rochefort Chapel of the church was converted into an elementary school⁴⁷ and negotiations were begun with the Count of Gruyère. A formal document with his maitre d'hôtel, Francois Maritine, spells out that the Count would pay

⁴³ The records from this period show the date of baptism, not birth, the names of the parents and the god parents. ACV

⁴⁴ Pierre Viret was born in Orbe and had been the minister there prior to the invasion by the Bernese.

⁴⁵ January 17, 1540, AC A, folio 92v. [insert Fr.] For a history of the fire, Louis Junod, *Memoire de Pierrefleur*, Lausanne, 1933, p. 144-145.

⁴⁶ In France and Swiss *Romand*, "college" is the equivalent of an American middle school.

⁴⁷ Archives d'Aubonne, From the Minutes of the council of Aubonne, 1539, folio c.v., D4, "tavillons sus le toiyct de la mayson de la chapelle de Rochiffort en laquelle mayson il mis le petite predicand pur enseigner aux enfant."

Guillaume Michaut, the deacon or assistant of Valier, the sum of 30 gold écus annually to become the master of the school for as long as the count held the barony of Aubonne. The stipulation was that the deacon must teach the children religion and the principles of the Latin language. The Count acknowledged that as the ecclesiastical head of the barony he was responsible for the care and feeding of the ministers of the church of Bern.⁴⁸ So it was under the leadership of Valier that a school was established in Aubonne. A letter to the heir of the Count, Michael, Count de Guyère, indicates that he was behind on the payments and that *Messieurs de Berne* were making them during this period. The letter also reveals that Valier had built his staff of ministers in Aubonne to four, including himself, which indicates that Valier was now running an extensive social service organization in the small barony with the three other ministers.⁴⁹

One of the goals of the Reform Church was to stress the human dignity of ordinary human callings. One method to achieve this was to have its ministers marry and raise families like their parishioners.⁵⁰ While no record exists from this period of the pastor Valier marrying, a letter from Théodore de Bèze in April 1551, sheds light on the true situation stating that a dreadful epidemic had been ravishing Lausanne where Jaques Valier and his wife were present in their home waiting for it to subside, so it is clear that he had married, but we do not know when.⁵¹

In his will, executed in June 1560, Valier identifies his wife as Beatrice Pierre from

⁴⁸ Rosset, D. *l'Eschole d'Aulbonne 1539* (Printed by the Ville d'Aubonne, 1977), 20. Original document in the Archives of Aubonne.

⁴⁹ J.J. Hisely, *Monuments de l'Histoire du Comté de Gruyère*, vol. II, (1869), # 312, 274-275.

⁵⁰ Zwingli had married and made this an issue with the Bishop of Constance. See page

⁵¹ Correspondance de Théodore de Bezel, vol. I, No 17, page 66. "*Res nostrae, mi pater, sic se habent. Ancilla D. Jacobi nostri peste interiit; valet ipse cum uxore, domo inclusus, Ut sunt hujus civitatis mores.*"

Geneva.⁵² He also states that he had a son, Jean Valier, living in his home in Aubonne. The records of Aubonne indicate that his son was the Châtelain of Aubonne, that is the chief judge of the courts there. The land records indicate Jaques purchased a house on Market Street in Aubonne on September 21, 1542. Such a purchase suggests that he had a family by then and had a need of a home.⁵³ So it is clear that Valier had followed the new practice laid down by the Reformists, married and had at least one child.

An entry from the minutes of January 13, 1543, indicates that the Council delegated to the minister of the Church, Valier, the question of what to do with the widow of Master Martin of Burtigny, who had taken money from Pierre Gilliet, and obligated herself for one term, “because Master Jaques, preacher, was legally obligated, that nothing could be asked of her, and with regard to the matter of the accusation that she had taken money from the City, the accusation is nullified.”⁵⁴ He successfully interceded for the widow of a colleague and showed himself to be a compassionate man. As a stranger and newcomer in the community, the minister had to gain the confidence of his parishioners. Showing compassion for those in trouble and need was basic to his role as a shepherd for his flock.

Valier’s ministry in Aubonne was highly successful, as evidenced by the action of the council on January 30, 1546, “Master Jaques Valier, minister of the Word of Aubonne, was established by the constitution as bourgeois of the city. He took an oath according to the custom of the others.”⁵⁵ This status, which usually required a payment of a fee by the emerging middle class, was granted without any payment as recognition of the esteem in which he was held in Aubonne. Less than 45 days later he cemented his relationship with the community by acquiring a vineyard in Aubonne. By contrast, John Calvin was not made

⁵² Archives de Genève, AEG, Notaire Jean Rageau, pp. 498 à 500. “*Veult et ordonne que après son décès, honeste Béatrix Pierre, sa femme, jouysse sa vie durant de tout ce qui se trouvera à luy testateur estre deu en ceste cité de Genève.*”

⁵³ September 21, 1542 - Jaques Valier purchased a house on the street (“Charrière”) Marché (Market Street) in Aubonne, Vaud.

⁵⁴ Archives d’Aubonne, Minutes of the City of Aubonne, January 13, 1543. [cite Fr.]

⁵⁵ Archives d’Aubonne, Minutes of the Council of Aubonne, January 30, 1546. [cite Fr.]

bourgeois of Geneva until almost the end of his life, late in his career.

Then in June 1546 Jaques Valier went to Lausanne where he joined Pierre Viret at the Cathedral of Notre Dame in Lausanne.⁵⁶ He was to be the “second” to Viret at Lausanne. Valier had succeeded so well in Aubonne that Michel, Comte de Gruyère, “wrote to the Council of Bern that his subjects and himself knew the wisdom, virtue and talent of Master Jaques Valier, they humbly prayed to leave their minister for the good and consolation of the people and church of Aubonne.”⁵⁷ As Hisely reported, “Monsieur d’Aubonne was not content to write to the lords of Bern; he sought pay back for the favor of his subjects, so he was insistent. But he came to see it was a futile effort.”⁵⁸

So in Aubonne the Reformation was successful, because the record reflects that the minister patiently introduced the new reforms through the local governing body, the city council, by always presenting his plans to them and getting their support. Because he understood the necessity of educating children of Aubonne (the barony), he worked closely with the count to establish a school with a teacher in the town. This was a very

⁵⁶ Bern Staatsarchiv (StAB), A III 160 (Welsches Missivenbuch C), fol. 85r. “*Ilz nous ont les ministres de la classe de Lausanne escript comme il ayent suyvant notre mandement esleuz ung ministre pour votre esglise, assavoir maistre Jaques Valier, à present predicant de l’esglise d’Aulbone, à quoy aent aussy consentiz les ministre de la classe de Morges, nous sur ce prians icelle election approuver et confirmer par notre autorité, ce qu’avons faict. Dont est notre vouloir que icelluy recepvés, et mettés au lieuz de maistre Comes. Datum xvi Januarii 1546.*”

⁵⁷ J. J. Hisely, *Histoire de Comté De Gruyère*, tome II, (Lausanne, Georges Bridel éditeur, 1857), 393. “*Monsieur d’Aubonne écrivit au Conseil de Berne que ces sujets et lui, ayant reconnu la sagesse, la vertu et le talent de maistre Jacques (sic) Valier, ils le priaient très humblement de leur laisser ce ministre pour le bien et la consolation du peuple et de l’église d’Aubonne.*”

⁵⁸ J. J. Hisely, *Histoire de Comté De Gruyère*, tome II, (Lausanne, Georges Bridel éditeur, 1857), 393. “*Monsieur d’Aubonne ne s’était pas contenté d’écrire aux seigneurs de Berne; Il s’était rendu auprès d’eux pour obtenir en faveur de ses sujets ce qu’ils demandaient avec instance. On vien de voir qu’il fit un voage inutile.*” Cited *Lettres de François de Gruyère et du comte Michel au Michel Conseil de Berne, datées de Gruyère, le 14 janvier 1546*, note 1.

basic approach to the implementation of what Bern had decreed and it appeared to be accepted, because the minister carefully kept the council informed and involved, and he built up the community's trust in him. The fact that the council bestowed bourgeois status on him and the Count would argue for his retention when he learned that Valier was being considered for a new post in Lausanne supports the conclusion that the reformation was working in this part of Vaud.

The Departure of Beza

In late July 1558, Théodore de Bèze announced his plan to leave the faculty of the Academy in Lausanne where he had been professor of Greek to go to Geneva to work with Calvin to establish an educational academy of higher learning there, where he would become the first rector.¹ His letter to Calvin of July 26, 1558, makes his decision to depart clear: “Nevertheless, I will keep what I promised (God willing), that is, I will put off our departure long enough to bid the brothers farewell in the assembly.”² Beza, as he

¹ Jean Barnaud, *Pierre Viret, Sa Vie et Son Oeuvre*, (Saint-Amans: G. Carayol, 1911) 465. At the time the Academy of Lausanne was the only French speaking educational institution of higher learning in Europe, and thus the only place where French-speaking Swiss could be trained for service in the Reform Church, not only in Vaud, but also for the missionaries that Calvin was sending into France. Calvin was interested in establishing his own academy where he could control the dogma being taught and have a ready supply of trained ministers to send out as missionaries. See Robert M. Kingdon, *Geneva and the Coming of the Wars of Religion in France, 1555-1563* (Geneva, Droz, 1956), 22. “It was this group of several dozen exiled Calvinist ministers that provided the first big group of ministers officially sent to France.” See Appendixes VI and VII, pp. 145-148, for a listing and information about the missionaries.

² “*Praestabo tamen quod promisi, si Deus volet id est, predectionem nostrum differam tantisper, dum fratribus in coetu valedicam.*” *Calvini Opera*, vol. XVII, no. 2922, folio 264-265, Beza to Calvin, July 26, 1558. See also Hipolyte Aubert, Fernand Aubert et Henri Meylan eds., *Correspondance de Théodore de Bèze*. (Genève: Librairie E. Droz, 1960-1962), tome II, no. 145, pp. 207-209, which has more comprehensive footnotes. The actual departure date of Beza, while announced in August did not occur until November 11, 1558. *Correspondance de Théodore de Bèze*. (Genève: Librairie E. Droz, 1960-1962), tome II, no. 145, pp. 207-209, *Beza Memoire*, Archive Tronchin, vol. 7, fol. 86 s. “... he obtained a dismissal by permission of the Senate on that condition which he himself had offered, namely that he continue performing the duties of his office until the 11th day of November... But when the appointed day arrived Beza left for Geneva...” “*et missionem cum bona Senatus venia impetravit, ea conditione quam ipse ultro obtulerat, nempe ut usquead undecimum diem novembris... Beza vero, quum dies constitutus, advenisset, Genevam migravit...*” See also ACV, Bb 32 vol. 5, p. 94: *Le compte du bailli de Lausanne, Peterman d'Erlach, qui va du 1er juin 1558 au 1er juin 1559 ne mentionne en effet qui deux trimestres payé à Bèze...*” See also the *Ratsmanual* of Bern of September 7, 1558, which mentions “*le congé honorable accordé à Bèze par MM. de Berne, et qui accepte sans reserve l'offert faite par lui de poursuivre son enseignement jusqu'à la Saint Martin.*” Hipolyte Aubert, ed., *Correspondance de Théodore de Bèze*, tome II, Pieces Annexes XIV, pp. 267-269. For the older view that he

was referred by his Latin name, had become an indispensable ally of Viret. During the trial instigated by the magistrates and nobles of Lausanne, who had charged Viret with slandering them, Beza had been instrumental in dealing with the members of the Bern council that controlled the outcome of the trial, as the Bern magistrates had appointed the committee of three to investigate the charges.³ His eloquent letter on behalf of the Class of Lausanne of November 10, 1557, to the senate in Bern had argued strongly on behalf of Viret: "...there is nothing in this world that vexes the devil more than the Word of God and the truth pronounced by faithful ministers of this time."⁴ Beza had also served as an emissary for Viret in Bern and elsewhere. Beza had become an essential supporter, leader of the Class in Lausanne and voice for Viret's cause.

The timing of Beza's announcement could not have come at a more critical moment, the Class of Lausanne, after years of back and forth with Bern over the issue of discipline, on June 22, had submitted by letter its "Advice of the Ministers of the Class of Lausanne on the Matter of Ecclesiastical Government," to the Bern ministers, and had

left earlier, see Jean Barnaud, *Pierre Viret, Sa Vie et Son Oeuvre*, 465-466. "...il offrît de continuer ses leçons jusqu'à la Saint Martin, pour que le cours des études ne fût pas interrompu, le gouvernement l' autorisa à ses retirer immédiatement. Il alla à Genève où on l'appela bientôt à enseigner le grec..." Jean Barnaud, *Quelques Lettres Inédites de Pierre Viret*, (Saint-Amans, G. Caayol, Imprimeur- Editeur, 1911)113, n. 9. "De Bèze avait quité Lausanne le 31 août." See also Henri Vuilleumier, *Histoire de l'Eglise Reformée au pays de Vaud Sous le Régime Bernois*. 4 vols., Lausanne: Editions la Concorde, vol. 1, 1927-1928, 664. "L'ayant obtenu dans les termes les plus honorables, il se retira à Genève, où il fut bientôt suivi par le professeur d'hébreu..."

³ Henri Meylan and Maurice Guex, "Viret et MM. de Lausanne," *Revue Historique Vaudoise*, vol. 69, no.3 (Sept. 1961), pp. 113-173. In the Latin correspondence the small council is referred to as the Senate.

⁴ Hipolyte Aubert, ed., *Correspondence de Théodore de Bèze*, tome II, Pièces Annexes XIII, pp. 264-266, Théodore de Bèze for the Class in Lausanne to the Senate in Bern, November 10, 1557. "Il n'y a rien en ce monde qui plus enuie le diable que la parole de Dieu et de verité, annoncee par les fideles ministres d'iceluy." The Class of Lausanne was composed of the ministers in Lausanne and the surrounding area, such as Vevey, and the professors at the Academy.

sent two members of the class to present it in person to the council of Bern on July 11.⁵ Beza and Jaques Valier had gone together to Bern four years earlier in November 1554, to argue for similar powers of discipline presented in this petition without success.⁶ Then in March 1557, Viret, Valier and Banc had gone to Bern to present their position for the regulations submitted with an autographed petition of thirty-three ministers and professors of the Class of Lausanne.⁷ Now Beza was to be sent to Bern again with Viret on July 29 to present a letter of July 18 and argue the position of the Class on

⁵ Michael W. Bruening, “*La Nouvelle Réformation de Lausanne: The Proposal by the Ministers of Lausanne on Ecclesiastical Discipline (June 1558)*,” *Bibliothèque d’Humanisme et Renaissance*, Tome LXVIII, no. 1, pp. 21-50. “*Advis des ministres de la classe de Lausanne sur le fait du gouvernement ecclesiastique.*” See also Michael Bruening, *Pierre Viret’s Unedited Correspondence*, Appendix XIV, note 2, Lausanne Class to the Bern Council, July 6, 1558. “*Ils partirent le 8 pour Berne; Cf. La lettre de Viret du 9 juillet. Le 11 juillet il présentèrent au sénat cette lettre avec le projet de discipline ecclesiastique adopté à Vevy par la classe de Lausanne le 22 juin.*” The note appears to have been penned by Herminjard. Haller disclosed in his letter to Viret in November that the two separate communications had created a problem. “But you sent that writing directly to the senate, without first sharing your statements with us. Sure, you sent us a Latin copy also, but since you had already been told to show a French copy to the senate, nay, since it had already been shown, no brother wanted to accept a Latin copy or pass judgment about it unless it was demanded by the senate, who already had your [writing] in their hands.” “*Vos vero scriptum illud ad senatum transmisistis, non prius nobiscum collatis sententis. Misistis quidem latinum ad nos quoque exemplar, sed quoniam iam vobis decretum erat gallicum exemplar senatui exhibere, imo iam exhibitum esset, fratrum nullus latinum recipere aut de eo iudicare voluit, nisi a senatu, qui iam in manibus habeat suum, requirretur.*” *Calvini Opera*, volume XVII, no. 2976, f. 368-372, Haller to Viret, November 1558.

⁶ Hipolyte Aubert, ed., *Correspondence de Théodore de Bèze*, tome II, no. 51, 142-143, Bèze to Calvin, November 2, 1554, see note 3. “*Bèze et le pasteur Jacques (sic) Valier délégués de la classe, se rendirent effectivement à Berne.*” See also no. 53, 146, Beza to Farel, November 4, 1554. See also *Calvini Opera*, t. XV, f. 314-316, no. 2048, Haller to Bullinger, November 17, 1554. Jean Barnaud, *Pierre Viret, Sa Vie et Son Oeuvre* (Saint-Amans: G. Carayol, 1911) 442.

⁷ Henri Vuilleumier, *Histoire de l’Eglise Reformée au pays de Vaud Sous le Régime Bernois* t. 1, 757-759, autographs can be found between pages 668 and 669, August 18, 1557.

predestination, but Beza did not expect to be received well by the magistrates there.⁸ That view reflected the reality that the reformers in Lausanne were swimming up stream against an entrenched system that was not receptive to change, particularly when it came to “our reformation,” which was how the Bern magistrates perceived the Edicts of Reformation enacted after the Bern Disputation of 1528. Ironically, the reformers of the 1520s had run into the same opposition in the Catholic Church, which also was not receptive to change, but they established an important ally, that Viret and his colleagues lacked, the magistrates of their city-state, whose interests coincided with those of the reformers.

It will be instructive in understanding the back and forth with Bern to touch on the principal controversies that were occurring at this critical juncture in the summer of 1558. On June 22, the Class at Lausanne had sent to the ministers in Bern their written project that had been requested in a letter of May 28, 1558, by the Bern magistrates for maintaining discipline with their parishioners. In explaining why they felt a need to undertake the project they stated that “Satan has entered the flocks here...”⁹ Specifically, they asked for the right of excommunication as a means to withhold communion from sinners, who they felt corrupted the giving of communion and needed discipline, citing

⁸ Hipolyte Aubert, ed., *Correspondence de Théodore de Bèze*, tome II., no. 145, pp. 207-209, Beza to Calvin, July 26, 1558, see note 5. “Bèze fut délégué à Berne avec Viret, le 29 juillet, par la Classe de Lausanne pour soutenir la cause de la discipline ecclésiastique. Bèze s’attendait sans doute à être très mal reçu à Berne.” Michael Bruening notes that the letter of August 3, 1558, of the Lausanne Class to Bern is written in Beza’s hand, which argues that Beza and Viret did not go to Bern as planned, but waited for the meeting on August 15, 1558.

⁹ “Satan est entré auz troupeaux de deçà.” Michael W. Bruening, “*La Nouvelle Réformation de Lausanne: The Proposal by the Ministers of Lausanne on Ecclesiastical Discipline (June 1558)*,” *Bibliothèque d’Humanisme et Renaissance*, Tome LXVIII, no. 1, pp. 28.

Matthew 18.¹⁰ Paul's Letters to the Corinthians were also used as the basis for this need.¹¹ On June 23, before anyone in Bern received the project, *un traicté de toute la discipline et police ecclesiastique* as the Class styled it, but *La Nouvelle Réformation*, as it was branded by Bern, Bern issued an order requiring their bailiffs to enforce an earlier order prohibiting the teaching of predestination in Vaud.¹² Then on July 6, the Class sent

¹⁰ The passages cited were Matthew 18, 1 Corinthians 5, 2 Corinthians 10, 2 Thessalonians 3, 1 Timothy 1 and 6, and Jeremiah 2. *Projet de constitution ecclésiastique, Proposé à Leurs Excellences de Berne par Viret et par les ministres de Lausanne*, reprinted in Michael W. Bruening, "La Nouvelle Réformation de Lausanne: The Proposal by the Ministers of Lausanne on Ecclesiastical Discipline (June 1558)," *Bibliothèque d'Humanisme et Renaissance*, Tome LXVIII, no. 1, pp. 27-49.

¹¹ "For you are not unaware of how the Senate, since you are appealing our case, asked us and indeed clearly ordered us to commit to writing what method we thought should be followed in practicing excommunication. *"Etenim non ignoratis quemadmodum senatus vobis causam nostram referentibus a nobis petierit et diserte iusserit, ut literis mandarem quae nobis ratio in exercenda excommunicatione sequenda videretur."* Michael Bruening, *Pierre Viret's Unedited Correspondence*, unpublished manuscript, Appendix XII, Lausanne Class to the Bern Ministers, June 22, 1558. The most commonly quoted passage for support for excommunication was Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians 5: 1-5, "When you are assembled in the name of the lord Jesus and I am with you in spirit, and the power of the Lord Jesus is present, hand this man [one who was living with his father's wife] over to Satan, so that the sinful nature may be destroyed and his spirit saved on the day of the Lord," NIV. In Calvin's commentary on Paul's Letters to the Corinthians, written in 1546, but published in 1556 he says in reference to the above passage. "For delivering over to Satan is an appropriate expression for denoting excommunication." John King, translator, *Calvin's Bible Commentaries: Corinthians, Part I* (Forgotten Books, 2007) 143.

¹² "*A ceste cause somme occasionez et contraincts, derechieffz escripre à tous noz bailliffs et vous tres-acertes par icestes admonester et advertir, soubz peyne en noz precedentes lettres expressement contenue, que ledict nostre mandement et ordonnance observez et ensuyvez, sans contradiction quelconque."* Michael Bruening, *Pierre Viret's Unedited Correspondence*, unpublished manuscript, Appendix XIII, Bern Council to its Francophone Classes, June 23, 1558. The earlier order was referred to as being issued in January 26, 1555, but was not issued to the ministers of Lausanne until April 3, 1555. See *Calvini Opera*, t. XV, no. 2096, f. 405, for the order to the ministers of Vaud, and *Calvini Opera*, t. 15, f. 547-549, Berne to the ministers at Lausanne, April 3, 1555. Why this order was issued at this particular time (see earlier discussion of the minutes of the city of Lausanne) remains a mystery, but it had been a thorn in Bern's side since the time of Zebedee and Bolsec, and in February Bern had disciplined four ministers at Thonon for teaching predestination. See Michael Bruening, *Calvinism's First Battleground:*

a letter with Jean Ribbit, professor of theology at the Academy and Arnaud Banc, the deacon at the Lausanne Cathedral, to Bern asking for a general synod to enact a plan establishing a mechanism to institute excommunication as a discipline to deal with the growing problem that they were encountering in Lausanne.¹³ It was the delegation that carried the plan, *La Nouvelle Réformation*, to the magistrates.¹⁴ To further complicate things, on July 18 the Class wrote its response to the order of June 23 concerning predestination (“*la divine providence et predestination*”). For several years Viret had ignored the order of 1555 against the teaching of predestination believing the teaching of predestination was central to church teachings, and, now he made clear they were not going to start following Bern’s direction. “You must not hope for us to approve of, nor publish your orders affecting predestination.”¹⁵ While Valier was the closest colleague of Viret and provided moral support in these struggles, Beza and Calvin had been the intellect behind Viret’s continuing battles with Bern, and it was Beza who served as a

Conflict and Reform in the Pays de Vaud., (Dordrecht, The Netherlands, Springer, 2005), 242. Citing Henri Meylan, “L’affaire des quatres pasteurs du Chablais, champions et victimes de la prédestination,” RHV 80 (1972): 15-31. After this event Calvin made a plea and Viret went to Bern to argue for their reinstatement without success. Jean Barnaud, *Pierre Viret, Sa Vie et Son Oeuvre*, 447-448.

¹³ “...nous vous envoyons deux de noz freres, à savoir Jehan Ribittus et Arnauld Banc, porteurs des presentes et dudict traicté à ceste intention.” Michael Bruening, *Pierre Viret’s Unedited Correspondence*, unpublished manuscript, Appendix XIV, Lausanne Class to Bern Council, July 6, 1558.

¹⁴ In labeling the plan of discipline, *La Nouvelle Réformation*, the Bern magistrates were emphasizing that it was something different than “*nostre reformation*,” and so it was a term of derision or, at least suspicion.

¹⁵ “...qu’il ne faut point que vous espérez que nous puissions approuver ni publier vosdits mandemens touchant la prédestination.” Michael Bruening, *Pierre Viret’s Unedited Correspondence*, unpublished manuscript, Appendix XV, Lausanne Ministers and Professors to the Bern Council, July 18, 1558.

valuable emissary in their regular meetings with the Senate.¹⁶ In fact, the ecclesiastical plan advocated by the class in Lausanne bore a striking resemblance to the ecclesiastical structure in Geneva. Unfortunately, Beza had lost confidence in Viret, who he felt was too obdurate. “He fights for the best cause in the worst way, nor does he allow himself to be corrected by any advice.”¹⁷

The letter the Class had written on July 18, was rather harsh, almost rude and undiplomatic, because it directly challenged the authority of the magistrates and attempted to limit their authority.

“We also know, thank God, that we are sent to preach the word of God and not the orders of man, which however, we don’t disdain at all, when they are according to God, before which we willingly obey and teach others to obey.”¹⁸

Then they laid out the challenge to authority that was at the heart of the controversy.

¹⁶ Henri Vuilleumier, *Histoire de l’Eglise Reformée au pays de Vaud Sous le Régime Bernois*. 4 vols. (Lausanne: Editions la Concorde, 1927-1928), III, 659. “A Lausanne, en particulier, Viret prit à tâche de réveiller de temps en temps le Conseil et le consistoire de leur torpeur, surtout depuis qu’il avait pur collègue non plus Bêat Comte, mais Jaques Valier qui n’était qu’un coeur et qu’une âme avec lui.” See also *Calvini Opera*, t. XV, no. 2048, fol. , Haller to Bullinger, November 17, 1554. *Calvini Opera*, t. XVII, no. 2831, f. 92-93, Calvin to Viret, March 16, 1558. Calvin makes a veiled reference to Valier, while castigating the other ministers in Lausanne, identifying him as “*qui tamen proximus est.*” See note 3. “For although it was fitting for all your colleagues to fight together with you more ardently, nevertheless the one who is closest, takes too much thought for leisure and private conveniences.” Note 3: “Does he mean Valerius? But he was dismissed at the same time as Viret.”

¹⁷ “*Nam optimam causam tuetur pessime, neque ullis cosillis regi se patitur.*” *Calvini Opera*, t. XVI, no. 2761, fol. 700-703, Beza to Calvin, November 24, 1557. Hipolyte Aubert, ed., *Correspondence de Théodore de Bèze*, tome II, no. 118, 126-128, Bèze a Calvin, November 24, 1554.

¹⁸ “*Nous savons aussi, Dieu mercy, que nous sommes envoyés pour prescher la parole de Dieu, et non point le mandements des hommes, lesquels toutesfois nous ne desdaignons point, quand ilz sont selon Dieu, ains nous y obeissons volontiers, et enseignons les aultres d’y obeir.*” “*Il nous semble que par ce moyen la liberte de parler de la verite de Dieu seroit ostée.*” Michael Bruening, *Pierre Viret’s Unedited Correspondence*, unpublished manuscript, Appendix XV, Lausanne Ministers and Professors to the Bern Council, July 18, 1558.

“You should not hope that we would approve or publish your commandments about predestination, nor do other than what we have done until now. Thus, if you consider us competent to do our ministry, you will kindly do your job as Christian princes, and let us accomplish our duty, in which if we have failed or if we fail, we are ready to answer to anywhere it is appropriate to do so.”¹⁹

In a period in which extreme deference was given to the oligarchy in Bern this was strong language. The Protestant Reformation had succeeded initially based on a partnership between the clergy/ministers of a locale and the leaders of the government. However, no partnership existed in Vaud, because the Bern Reformation was imposed there as a means of political control. The concept of a partnership with the clergy in Vaud was difficult for the magistrates in Bern to swallow, because they could not accept their subjects from the conquered territories as equals. The letter went on to touch on the political issue that was at the heart of the dispute between Lausanne and Bern when the ministers stated that the ruling prohibiting teaching predestination, “by this means the liberty of speaking about the truth of God would be denied...”²⁰ Appended to the letter was another three

¹⁹ “*Qu’il ne fault point que vous esperiés que nous puissions approuver ny publier vos dictz mandement touchant la predestination, ny faire aultrement que n’avons faict jusques icy. Parquoy si vous nous tenez pour suffisans à faire noste minister, il vous plaira faire l’office de princes chrestiens nous laissant accomplir nostr charge en laquelle si avons fally, ou si nous fallons, nous sommes prestz d’en respondre partout ou il appartiendra.*” Michael Bruening, *Pierre Viret’s Unedited Correspondence*, unpublished manuscript, Appendix XV, Lausanne Ministers and Professors to the Bern Council, July 18, 1558.

²⁰ “*ils nous semble que par ce moyen la liberte de parler de la verite de Dieu seroit ostee...*” Michael Bruening, *Pierre Viret’s Unedited Correspondence*, unpublished manuscript, Appendix XV, Lausanne Ministers and Professors to the Bern Council, July 18, 1558. See also Michael W. Bruening, “Bern, Geneva or Rome: the Struggle for Religious Conformity and Confessional Unity in Early Reformation Switzerland,” (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Arizona, 2002), 329, (number 7), Lausanne Ministers and Professors to the Bern Council, July 18, 1558, ACV Bd. 1/1,155, and cited in part in *Calvinism’s First Battleground: Conflict and Reform in the Pays de Vaud.*, (Dordrecht, The Netherlands, Springer, 2005), 248. This comment recalls the Mandate of 1527, which stated, “...that all who preach in our country and canton undertake to preach and

pages of complaints (*un petit recueil*) with examples of how they could not enforce discipline in Lausanne. It was as if, after they had written the letter, the Class wanted to throw in all of their other complaints, which deviated from the issue of predestination and were directed at their problems with enforcing discipline in Lausanne. By appending a recitation of complaints to their letter the Class probably foreclosed any reasoned discussion with the Bern ministers and magistrates. Bern's position prevented the ecclesiastical issues from being debated, discussed and subjected to the test of the Word of God, the original standard in the Bern Disputation. The Bern Disputation had been a political sham in that the result was planned ahead of time, and that once it had served its purpose, the shifting of the locus of political power had taken place, it had been discarded. The grand conception of Elector Frederick the Wise of Saxony, dealing with issues "in a Christian and reasonable way" had been sacrificed for the exigencies of the moment.²¹ The discussion of ecclesiastical issues was never again to be used by Bern, except to imbed control through their church in Vaud. While the Class saw a clear distinction between the role of the magistrate and the minister, the Bern magistrates were not willing to cede that ground to their ministers, particularly in their conquered territory. Overlooked in this long missive was a warning to Bern that portended the schism that came six months later.

"And because this affects, not only the ministers in this city of Lausanne, but also those who have signed below, we have by common agreement and in the fear of God consulted with each other and agreed upon the

proclaim the word and teaching of God freely, publicly, openly and unhindered according to what they know to be contained in the old and new testaments, even though such preaching might be against the statutes, ordinances and teaching of the men, whoever they may be."

²¹ Ozment, *The Reformation in the Cities*, 143, n. 99, Die Wittenberger Bewegung, no. 56, 124.

present response, toward which we desire to clearly understand your intention.”²²

Throughout the negotiations with Lausanne, Bern followed a strategy, which would have divided the Class if they had to banish some of the ministers. This closing line was an admonition that the strategy might not work.

Beza had disagreed with the harshness of the language of the complaint in the letter of July 18, and felt that the Class should have seen the disaster ahead from such a brash attack. Nevertheless, he wrote and signed the letter in a show of solidarity.²³ The Bern magistrates reacted by ordering the twelve ministers and professors at Lausanne, who signed the July 18 letter, to Bern to meet with the council on August 15.²⁴ What was occurring was a clash of wills that transcended the urgent need of both sides to accommodate a solution to the problem that existed in Vaud and with which the Bern magistrates were ill equipped to deal. The problem was that the Class was arguing theology with a group of men who were primarily concerned with control of their

²² “*Et pource que cecy touche non seulemnet les ministres de ceste ville de Lausanne, mays aussi à nous tous qui sommes icy soubssignes, nous avons d’un commun consentement en la crainte de Dieu consulté et arrêté la presente response, sur laquelle nous desirons d’ntendre clairement vostre bon vouloir.*” Michael Bruening, *Pierre Viret’s Unedited Correspondence*, unpublished manuscript, Appendix XV, Lausanne Ministers and Professors to the Bern Council, July 18, 1558.

²³ The reader should be aware that the handwriting, based on an analysis by Michael Bruening, appears to be that of Beza. One may conclude that he was simply the scrivener for the Class, as he had been previously, or that his protestation was not genuine.

²⁴ “*L’advoyer et conseil: Avoir entendu le contenu des articles de vostre part envoyéz, à nous avons advisé de nous resouldre là dessus de nostre response, bon voulloir et plasir pour lequel entendre vous assignons jour à comparoir par devant nous à l’heure de conseil sus le quinziesme jour du present moys.*” StAB, AIII 161, fol. 151r. Cited in Bruening, *Calvinism’s First Battleground*, 249, n. 121. See Michael Bruening, *Pierre Viret’s Unedited Correspondence*, unpublished manuscript, for the full text of the order, Appendix ?, Bern Council to the [named] Ministers and Professors of Lausanne, August 1, 1558. The named ministers and professors were identical to those who signed the letter of July 18.

conquered territory of Vaud. Johannes Haller, the chief minister of the church in Bern,²⁵ described the meeting in his chronicle:

“The Senate realized these things and, considering the new danger, particularly the fact that the papacy had grown into a principate in that very way, and easily sensing the great tyranny that lay beneath the proposals, was indignant and summoned all the ministers and professors of Lausanne. They came in the month of August. The thronged Senate discussed matters with many of them, begging and pleading that they consider the present state of affairs and that they be content with the discipline and ecclesiastical form that had been granted them and that they not stir up new and useless disturbances; they said that they themselves were eager to help them (i.e. the people of Lausanne) and to assist them in everything so that mutual piety and discipline be preserved.²⁶”

Zwingli had expressed concern at the Bern Disputation with excommunication, which considering that he had been excommunicated himself, was perfectly natural. Excommunication was seen as a tool that the Catholic Church used against the reform movement to punish anyone who challenged the Catholic Church. The Lausanne reformers had tried to draw a distinction between the excommunication they had in mind, which involved the denial of communion until the wayward parishioner repented, and excommunication *per se*, which was excommunication practiced by the Catholic Church, and which was used to punish reformers who found fault with the Church, solely because the Church had the power to excommunicate. Haller tried to convince Viret that there was a third way that he felt was just as effective:

²⁵ Johannes Haller (1523-1575), preacher in Augsburg when he was forced out by the Interim in 1548. Went to Bern after leaving Augsburg. Corresponded frequently with Heinrich Bullinger in Zurich.

²⁶ “*Senatus cognoscens haec confiderans novum periculum, & imprimis quod Papatus principio non alia ratione crevisset, facileque olfaciens quanta fubesset tyranis, indignatus, omnes quotquot, erant Lausannae vel Ministri vel Professores, ut huc venirent, evocantur.*” Johannes Haller, “*Ephermides D. Joannis Halleri,*” edited by Jacob Simler, *Museum Helveticum*, (1747), 120-121.

“I am still free and allowed to excommunicate through the word [*per verbum*], and I use this excommunication diligently before the use of the Supper since the other [excommunication] is not yet allowed. Nor do I have any doubt that whatever is bound by that word is bound in heaven, even if those bound think they are especially unbound and reject that binding.”²⁷

Subsequent to the meeting on August 15, Beza asked the magistrates to grant him leave from his post as professor of Greek at the Lausanne Academy. Beza, himself, described what he did and why, writing in his customary third person, and displaying his sense of diplomacy:

“Then Theodore Beza, after being professor of the Greek language for nine years at Lausanne, partly because he had resolved to dedicate himself entirely to sacred scripture, as he had long since testified to the Class at Lausanne, partly because he was sick and tired of those disturbances and entertained no hope for any outcome from them except the most deplorable [decided to leave his position]—when therefore, before he was summoned to Bern with his colleagues, since he could no longer stand to live in such a miserable state of affairs in Lausanne,... he set out for Bern and gave the reasons for his departure,... and he obtained a dismissal by permission of the Senate...”²⁸

²⁷ *Calvini Opera*, t. XVII, no. 2976, fol. 368-372, Haller to Viret, November 11, 1558. “*Mihi per verbum excommunicare adhuc licet et liberum est, et hac excommunicatione utor diligenter ante coenae usum, quum alia adhuc non liceat.*” Haller said he wrote the letter during an entire week and dated it “*Martinianis.*” Under the Julian calendar Friday, November 11, 1558, was the feast day of St. Martin of Tours.

²⁸ Beza memoire, AG, Archives Tronchin, vol. 7, fol. 86 s. “*Tum vero Theodorus Beza, graecam linguam per novem annos Lausannae professus, partim quod se totum constituisset sacris literis dedere, sicut jampridem Lausannae Classi testatus erat, partim istarum turbarum pertaesus, quarum nullum unquam nisi tristissimum exitum speravit, quum idcirco antequam Bernam cum suis collegis evocaretur, non amplius sustinens in tam misero statu Lausannae vivere...*” The actual date of when Beza sought permission to leave Lausanne is not ascertainable with exactness. Haller in his *Ephemeredes* stated: “At this Beza,... after a few days returned here and sought permission from the Senate to set out elsewhere,..” This suggested that it was after the August 15 meeting in Bern. In its letter of July 29, 1558, the Class stated that Viret and Beza were setting out “at the first possible moment,” for Bern. Michael Bruening, *Pierre Viret’s Unedited Correspondence*, unpublished manuscript, Appendix XVI, Class of Lausanne to the Bern Ministers, July 29, 1558. Haller’s letter to Bullinger of September 10, 1558, makes clear that Beza had asked for his release by then. See *Calvini Opera*, t. XVII, no. 2957, fol. 334, Haller to Bullinger, September 10, 1558.

The “disturbances” referred to the lawsuit with the magistrates and nobles of Lausanne that took up almost half a year, beginning in late summer of 1557, and then, the running battle over discipline and predestination with Bern’s magistrates in 1558, but which had been going on for some time before 1558. As Beza had put it earlier to Calvin, “I will take a much different course of action than he who has so much strife.”²⁹ It appears that there were too many controversies going on in Lausanne for Beza. Understanding the hopelessness of the situation, but feeling that he had the ability or understanding to bring about the change that was being sought, Beza was frustrated with his future in Lausanne. He saw a different future in Geneva, where Calvin had recently won his political fight with the Perrinists and was consolidating that victory with the erection of a theocratic state supportive of his vision of the relationship between church and state. Beza had been almost fawning in his correspondence with Calvin in this period. He saw a future in Geneva and nothing but ruin in Lausanne.

Nothing was said by Beza about going to Geneva to teach Greek and become the rector of Calvin’s nascent academy, yet that is exactly what he did.³⁰ Beza’s caution in his explanation to Bern must have been caused by his concern that the Bern Council would not approve his request to leave, because of their disdain for Calvin. Haller in his chronicle, *Ephemerides*, said:

“At this Beza, whether sensing what the outcome would be or induced by other reasons, since Lausanne seemed to his judgment to be going to be too confined and narrow, and the authority of the Senate seemed to be going to inhibit him from being free to go to the elections, to the princes of Germany (which he had done several times before) as often as he wished, after a few days returned here and sought permission from the Senate to

²⁹ *Calvini Opera*, vol. XVI, no. 2761, fol. 700-703, Beza to Calvin, November 24, 1557. See also Hipolyte Aubert, ed., *Correspondence de Théodore de Bèze*, tome II, no. 118, pp. 126-128, Beza to Calvin, November 24, 1557.

³⁰ Robert-M. Kingdon, ed. *Registres de la Compagne des Pasteurs de Genève au Temps de Calvin*, Tome II, 1553-1564, 83-84, entry for December 1558. For a different view on when Beza went to Geneva, see Michael W. Bruening, "Pierre Viret and Geneva," *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte / Archive for Reformation History* 99 (2008): 190.

set out elsewhere, promising that he would live at Geneva as a private citizen and devote himself to a life of literary leisure: permission was granted.”³¹

Beza, ever the diplomat, recognized that candor with Bern was not a profitable thing so he simply obscured his real motives. This explained the conundrum that the ministers in Lausanne were in, because the program of ecclesiastical regulation they were espousing was Calvin’s, but by then Calvin was looked upon with suspicion by Bern.³² By this time the Lausanne church was perceived to be the stalking horse for Calvin and the Geneva Church, and therefore a threat to Bern’s political control of Vaud.

As the leading Vaudois historian, Henri Vuilleumier, commented: “For the poor Viret this abrupt departure was a terrible blow. What a loss for the Academy, no less the Church. He let his unhappiness and irritation overflow in a letter to Calvin.”³³ In his letter of August 24, 1558, to Calvin, Viret expressed both his loss of Beza and more painfully, his ignorance of the events:

“I had mind to write you because Beza was retreating from here to you... If he should decide to leave here (as it seems he intended from the start), then he ought to have found other pretexts... Whether he has your support and that of other colleagues I do not know.”

³¹ Johannes Haller, “Ephermites D. Joannis Halleri,” edited by Jacob Simler, *Museum Helveticum*, (1747), 121. “*Beza sub haec, seu subolfaciens quod futurum esset, seu aliis quoque rationibus ductus, quoniam illius existimationi nimis humilis & angusta videbatur futura Laussanna, Senatus que nostri auctoritas istum cohibitura, quo minus illi liberet, quoties liberet ad Comitiam, ad Principes Germaniae (quod aliquoties fecerat) profici, paucis post diebus huc reverfus ventam a Senatu alio proficiscendi petit, promittens, fe privatim Genevae victurum, otioque literario traditurum; Venia illi concedessa est.*”

³² Michael Bruening, *Calvinism's First Battleground: Conflict and Reform in the Pays de Vaud*, 217, see note 24, “*Magno Calvinus laborat odio,*” quoting *Calvini Opera*, t. XIV, no. 1616, f. 309, Haller to Bullinger, December 14, 1552. See pages 214-221 for a discussion of the Bolsec affair and its importance in Bern’s distaste for Calvin.

³³ Henri Vuilleumier, *Histoire de l’Eglise Reformée au pays de Vaud Sous le Régime Bernois*, t. 1, 664. “*Pour le pauvre Viret, ce brusque départ était un coup terrible; quelle perte pour l’Académie non moins que pour l’Eglise! Il laissa déborder sa douleur et son irritation dans une lettre à Calvin.*”

This was the plaintive cry of someone who was deeply unsure of his position and who had been weakened by Beza's announcement. Viret went on to air his own quandry, "I am stuck between a rock and a hard place that I know not where to turn."³⁴ Viret had been blindsided by Beza's action, because in March Calvin had exhorted Viret to take on the struggle with Bern over discipline: "It is a difficult fight that you must make, but it is a necessary fight... For what hope will you have left if you hesitate to fight it out now?"³⁵ This was a clarion call to arms made by the man whom Viret looked up to as the preeminent leader in the reform movement in the middle of the sixteenth century. While Bern was secure in the Reform that it had adopted in 1528 there was no strong theologian in Bern to articulate the solution to the problems that Bern's church was experiencing in Lausanne. But in Geneva there was a strong theologian and he was viewed with suspicion. While Bern exercised military control over Vaud it had lost the loyalty of its Vaud ministers, because it was not equipped to respond to the needs in Lausanne, and the language barrier of French and German complicated matters.³⁶ In Geneva and Calvin, the ministers in Lausanne had found someone who had articulated a solution and who

³⁴ "*Animus erat ad te scribere, quod hinc ad vos se Beza reciperet: sed tempore exclusus non potui. Scripturus eram de Bezae consiliis quae video paucissimis probari. Si statueret hinc discedere quod pridem videtur statueret alios debuit quaerere praetextus et aliam sequi rationem. An te et collegas habeat suffragatores nescio... Sic sum inter sacrum et saxum constiutus, ut nesciam quo me vertam.*" *Calvini Opera*, vol. XVII, no. 2940, fol. 300-302, Viret to Calvin, August 24, 1558.

³⁵ Charles Schnetzler, *Pierre Viret et le Conflit Ecclésiastique avec Berne, Au Milieu du XVI^{me} Siècle*, *Revue Historique Vaudoise*, vol. 15 (September 1907), 372. Citing *Calvini Opera*, vol. XVII, no. 2831 (incorrectly cited as no. 2836), Calvin to Viret, March 16, 1558. "*Durum certamen, sed necessarium. Quid enim posthac sperandum, si nunc conflagere dubites.*"

³⁶ "*Et ne vous faut trouver étrange, Tresredoutez Seigneurs, si nous, qui n'entendons pas votre langue,...*" Michael Bruening, *Pierre Viret's Unedited Correspondence*, unpublished manuscript, Appendix XXI, Class of Lausanne to the Bern Ministers, before August 15, 1558.

spoke their language. Except for Viret, the ministers and professors of the Lausanne Class were native Frenchmen. During this period Geneva had been admitting French protestant refugees by the hundreds. Geneva was becoming more French than Swiss and resisted control by Bern. Now Calvin was abandoning Viret, which stung Viret deeply, because he and Farel had found Calvin in Geneva in 1536 and persuaded him to stay and preach the Gospel there.³⁷ After Calvin's exile, 1538-1541, Viret had gone to Geneva to prepare the city for Calvin's return and stayed for a year. Thus Calvin's abandonment of Viret in the middle of the crisis, that Calvin had urged upon him, clearly, bewildered Viret, a man for whom loyalty, as we have already seen, was at the core of his soul. "I alone am assailed on all sides and I despair of help from those whom I especially expected it."³⁸

In his July 26 letter to Calvin, Beza alluded to his real purpose in leaving Lausanne:

"Meanwhile perhaps we shall hear something that will either free me from this great trouble—no doubt, of departing thither—or that will force me to anticipate the day fixed for our meeting, for instance if I'm called there."³⁹

³⁷ "Farel, who burned with an extraordinary zeal to advance the gospel, immediately strained every nerve to detain me. And after learning that my heart was set upon devoting myself to private studies, for which I wished to keep myself free from other pursuits, and finding that he gained nothing by entreaties, he proceeded to utter the imprecation that God would curse my retirement and the tranquility of the studies which I sought, if I should withdraw and refuse to help, when the necessity was so urgent. By this imprecation I was so terror-struck, that I gave up the journey I had undertaken..." John Calvin, preface to *Commentary on the Book of Psalms*, trans. James Anderson, vol. 1 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1948), pp. xl-xli. See also John Calvin, *Calvin's Bible Commentaries: Psalms*, trans. John King, (Forgotten Books, 2007) The Author's Preface, 25-26.

³⁸ *Calvini Opera*, t. XVII, no. 2940, fol. 300-302, Viret to Calvin, August 24, 1558. "Ego urrus undique impetor, et eorum destituor subsidio a quibus maxime speravi."

³⁹ "Interea fortassis aliquid audiemus quod vel liberabit me magna molestia, mimirum illuc proficiscendi, vel me coget diem nosto corventui constitutum anticipere, puta si illuc vocer." *Calvini Opera*, t. XVII, no. 2922, fol. 264-265, Beza to Calvin, July 26, 1558.

While Beza was disingenuous with Bern in what he was going to do, and while it is unclear what role he had negotiated with Calvin from reading the extant correspondence, it seems clear from the appointment of Beza to teach at the new Academy of Geneva upon his actual arrival in Geneva that the plan had been hatched long before his arrival.⁴⁰ Beza's action in leaving Lausanne can be seen as the critical event in the relations between the ministers left in Lausanne and the magistrates in Bern, which foreshadowed the final break a few months later. His departure signified a break in faith with Viret, but more importantly an abandonment of Viret by Calvin, who was pulling out of the fray in Lausanne by enticing its most capable minister to Geneva. By August the schism was fore ordained. Viret was left on the sinking ship, a prisoner to his own contentious nature. Calvin summed it up in his response to Viret of August 27, 1558, where he was quite direct, firm, and really quite ruthless:

“...you forcibly dragged him [Beza] to this against his will... when zeal for piety directs you, you are deceived by an excessive inclination to hoping for good... If I have not always feared that your city would be rent into parts by zeal. I have no doubt that Beza diligently wanted to watch out for that, but, again, you should watch out lest while tying your free brother to your will, you increase the problem that I now smell is getting worse.”⁴¹

Hipolyte Aubert, ed., *Correspondence de Théodore de Bèze*, tome III, no. 145, pp. 207-209, Beza to Calvin, July 26, 1558,

⁴⁰ Robert-M. Kingdon, ed. *Registres de la Compagne des Pasteurs de Genève au Temps de Calvin*, Tome II, 1553-1564, 83-84, entry for December 1558. “*Le XVe dudit mois, le jour de noz censures, par tous les freres d'une voix M. Theodore de Beze (qui auparavant avoit estré eleu professeur publiques des letres gregues) fut eleu pour servir en après au ministre de l'Evangile en preschant qu'on auroit la continuation de ses lectures en la sainte escripture, et que ce pendant qu'on auroit prouveu d'un autre profeseur en sa place, il contnueroit toutes ses leçons commencées. Ce qu'accorde de Bèze avec excuse honneste et modestie tres grande.*”

⁴¹ “*Aliam vero rationem sequi debuisse parum humaniter exprobas, quum ad hanc, quae*

Pointedly, correspondence between Viret and Calvin virtually dried up following this exchange. Calvin had made clear that Viret was too headstrong and that he had lost Calvin's support, and that of Beza, who felt used by Viret. Whatever was to happen in Lausanne was left to Viret, and Calvin had no confidence in the outcome. Of course, sensing his inability to convince the Bern magistrates to accept his theological program as crafted in Geneva, Calvin was abandoning his efforts in the Swiss Confederation and turning elsewhere, which in the late 1550s was France. Failure by Viret played into Calvin's hands. Bern, by focusing on what upset it, Viret's actions, failed to look at the long term effect of what they were doing and how it would affect their efforts in Vaud. Haller in his chronicle and a letter to Bullinger, dated September 10, 1558, spelled out the strategy of Bern's magistrates. They had begun planning for the contingency of losing the faculty at the Academy in Lausanne.

“Our senate (but this is a secret, so please don't publicize it) is considering appointing German professors there, and if any suitable ones could be found, they would be accepted easily and would also be well treated.”⁴²

Unfortunately, it was an ill-conceived plan that did not work.⁴³ Clearly, the end was at hand, all parties sensed the inevitable result; it remained for the actors to play out their parts.

nunc vitio ventitur, invituum pertraxieros. Cuius autem aegirtatis est, quem violanter coegisti nunc damnare quia tibi morem gesserit. Vidit ab initio Beza quodiam res ostendit.” *Calvini Opera*, t. XVII, no. 2943, fol. 307-309, Calvin to Viret, August 27, 1558. See Heiko Oberman, *Calvin and Farel, The Dynamics of Legitimation*, *Journal of Early Modern History*, 2, 1998, 57, for a discussion of Calvin's rejection of Viret.

⁴² “*Senatus noster (quod tamen quum sit secretum, tu non publicarevelim) cogitat de Germanis professoribus illic constituendis, et si qui inveniri possint idonei, facil reciperentur et liberaliter quoque tracterentur.*” *Calvini Opera*, t. XVII, no. 2957, fol. 334, Haller to Bullinger, September 10, 1558.

⁴³ “Our men would have gladly had the German professors at Lausanne, but since we could not have them conveniently and we also feared too heavy expenses, I suppose this

decision will go to the sponge.” *“Nostrī libenter habuissent professores Germanos Lausannae, sed dum illi non commode possunt haberi, et nostrī quoque sumtus metuunt graviores, put consilium hoc in spongiam abiturum.”* *Calvini Opera*, t. XVII, no. 2993, fol. 400-402, Haller to Bullinger, December 16, 1558. Sponges were used to erase slate blackboards. Thus they were erasing that project at that time.

Denouement

The Denial of Christmas Communion

We have already seen that John Calvin and Théodore de Bèze abandoned Pierre Viret in the summer of 1558. Each had observed a character flaw in him and abandoned their support of Viret. They may have also concluded that the Bern magistrates were unable to accommodate the change called for by the Class in Lausanne and decided to withdraw from the fray since the break-up of the church in Lausanne strengthened the church, Calvin's nascent academy and Calvin's recruitment of missionaries to France in Geneva. No correspondence written by Calvin to Viret discussing these issues is extant. Certainly, Calvin's letter of August 27 suggests great displeasure with Viret's contentiousness and Beza confirmed that attitude. As the reader will see, Haller and the Bern magistrates suspected that Calvin had manipulated the situation and that speculation cannot be totally dismissed; however, the extant evidence supporting this theory is sparse. While it is reasonable to postulate that the die were cast by the end of the summer, the shape and extent of the stand by the Class, and the significance of their defiance were not yet clear. Consequently, it is necessary to follow events in November and December to better understand the nature and depth of the ultimate break-up and the unity of the Class. For while Viret had some obvious character defects, he also exhibited some strengths that carried him through the turbulent days of November and December and shaped the steadfastness of the Class. Concurrently, Haller comes into sharper focus, and his role in the outcome clearer. Finally, the reader will see how Bern's magistrates were unable to reconcile the dispute, because their objectives precluded such a course of action.

After the twelve named ministers and professors in Lausanne had gone to Bern to meet with the Advoyer and Senate on August 15, 1558, the Senate by decree on that same

day gave them some leeway on the matter of teaching predestination permitting them to speak of it “when the text of Scripture supports it.”¹ With this license the Class in Lausanne continued to try to persuade Bern to accept the Class’s plan of discipline. What followed was a war of words where each side bombarded the other with missive after missive, a torrent of words, with delegations shuttling back and forth between Lausanne and Bern. Fortunately, most of these letters survive and a clear picture of the unfolding of events can be ascertained as well as the underlying motives and personalities of the participants.² Through these letters and the recollections of Haller we can see how

¹ Michael Bruening, *Pierre Viret’s Unedited Correspondence*, unpublished manuscript, Appendix XVIII, Bern Council to its Francophone Classes, August 15, 1558. “...*a scavoit est que nostr intention n’a esté ny est que lesdits ministres et professeurs ne puissent rien prescher et parler de telle matiere, quant le texte de l’escripture le portera.*”

² The following letters are known to be missing, because they were identified in subsequent correspondence: 1. November 6, 1558, Viret to Bern Senate. See Calvini Opera, t. XVII, no. 2979, fol. 374-376, Le Sénat de Berne a Viret, November 18, 1558. “*Avoir entendu le contenu de voz letres a nous escrites du 6 de ce mois touchant les pointz et articles pour raison desquels vous faites difficulte d’administrer la cene de nostre Seigneur feste de Noel prochainement venante en nostre ville de Lausanne.*” And Michael Bruening, *Pierre Viret’s Unedited Correspondence*, unpublished manuscript, Appendix XXIII, Bern Council to the Lausanne Classe, December 4, 1558. “*Il nous est venu à notice que peu de jours en ça nostre ministre, maistre Pierre Viret, nonobstant ce que dessus, se seroit declayré, par ces lettres à nostre conseil privé escriptes du VIe de novembre dern[ièrement] passé...*” 2. November 2, 1558, Viret to Bern Senate and possibly a separate letter by Valier to Bern Senate. See Michael Bruening, *Pierre Viret’s Unedited Correspondence*, unpublished manuscript, Appendix XXIII, Bern to Lausanne Class, December 4, 1558, “*voz lettres que du second dudict moys a nostredict conseil.*” 3. November 27, 1558, Viret, Valier and Banc to Bern Senate. See Michael Bruening, *Pierre Viret’s Unedited Correspondence*, unpublished manuscript, no. 129, Bern Council to Viret, Valier and Banc, December 4, 1558, “*Ayants entenduz les lettres que par vous, maistre Pierre Vyret, nous ont esté envoyées, datées du xxviie jour du moys de novembre dernièrement passé...*” See also Michael Bruening, *Pierre Viret’s Unedited Correspondence*, unpublished manuscript, Appendix XXIII, Bern to Lausanne Class, December 4, 1558, “*ains a nostredict petit conseil derechiefz escriptdu xxvii de novembre dernièrement passe.*” 4. December 7, 1558, Lausanne Class to Bern Senate and possibly Viret to Bern on the same day. See See Michael Bruening, *Pierre Viret’s Unedited Correspondence*, unpublished manuscript, Appendix XXV, Lausanne Class to

the parties were unable to reconcile each other, which resulted in a complete break between the parties. While we have seen how Viret's contentiousness was a liability in the eyes of Beza and Calvin, we will now see the leadership skills that he exercised with the Class and how his collegial approach united the Class, and made the impact of their decision to leave so much more powerful. This narration will also reveal that the magistrates in Bern were unable to respond to ministers who insisted on the standard decreed by Bern in 1528, the "Word of God," to bring about change. The Bern successors thirty years later were unable to recognize and understand the defect in the structure of their reformation until it was too late. They had used the Word of God to come to power and now their chosen ministers, men of the Word of God, were relying on their understanding of the Word of God to change the structure that the magistrates had crafted to gain power. Certainly, the two sides tried to accommodate each other. Haller made clear in a letter to Bullinger after the banishment of Viret, Valier and Banc, that the Advoyer, Niklaus von Diesbach, then the chief magistrate with Naegeli, was concerned about the impact of what had happened on the reputation of Bern and wanted to temporize.

"Niklaus von Diesbach, who is now a consul (Advoyer), beseeches you from the heart to write yourself to Viret through this messenger who brings you this letter, and urge him to concord and consensus with us."³

Bern, December 15, 1558, "*nos dernieres lettres, envoyées à vos excellences le 7 de ce mois.*"

³ "*D. Nicolaus a Diesbach, consulis nunc vices gerens, ex animote precatur ut per hunc nunciam qui has tibi adfert Vireto ipse quoque scribere velis et illum ad concordiam et consensum una nobiscum hortari.*" *Calvini Opera*, t. XVII, no. 3022, f. 460-464, Haller to Bullinger, February 28, 1559.

Viret in a soul searching letter to Calvin expressed doubt in his position, a desire to look at it from both sides and concern about what he was asking others in the Lausanne Class to do.

“I am thoroughly investigating on all sides the arguments and testimonies by which I can surely learn what I should do and can strengthen my conscience by that.”⁴

Toward the end of the letter, in a moment of self doubt Viret said, “I fear that I am sinning unintentionally or rashly and out of fickleness.”⁵ This was a man who understood the significance and import of what he was about to do, who had weighed the consequences, and proceeded from principle. On the other hand the Bern magistrates tried to mollify the Class on a piecemeal basis, because they did not even know what the fundamental flaw was in their reformation, which was that their position existed due to their understanding of the Word of God decreed in 1528.

The pivotal letter from this period, which ignited the crisis, is lost, but the salient points of the letter are restated in other extant correspondence. On November 6, 1558, Viret wrote to Bern and announced that because the matter of discipline had not been resolved he could not hold communion at Christmas.⁶ In a painful letter to Viret in

⁴ “...disquiro undique rationes et testimonia quibus et quid agere debeam doceri certo possim, et in eo meam conscientiam confirmari.” *Calvini Opera*, t. XVII, no. 2989, f. 391-394, Viret to Calvin, December 1, 1558.

⁵ “...vereor ne quid aut imprudentia peccem aut temeritate et inconstantia.” *Calvini Opera*, t. XVII, no. 2989, f. 391-394, Viret to Calvin, December 1, 1558.

⁶ November 6, 1558, Viret to Bern Senate. See *Calvini Opera*, t. XVII, no. 2979, fol. 374-376, Le Sénat de Berne a Viret, November 18, 1558. “Avoir entendu le contenu de voz lettres a nous escrites du 6 de ce mois touchant les poinctz et articles pour raison desquels vous faites difficulte d’administrer la cene de nostre Seigneur feste de Noel prochainement venante en nostre ville de Lausanne.” And Michael Bruening, *Pierre Viret’s Unedited Correspondence*, unpublished manuscript, Appendix XXIII, Bern Council to the Lausanne Classe, December 4, 1558. “Il nous est venu à notice que peu de jours en ça nostre ministre, maistre Pierre Viret, nonobstant ce que dessus, se seroit

response to that lost letter, Johannes Haller, the chief minister in the Bern church responded, on November 11, by recounting his view of events since August 15 in which he condemned the way Viret and the Class went about seeking support for their plan of discipline. From the beginning the letter is defensive:

“For besides the fact that you sting and beat us with rather biting words, in many things you also really seem to cause us very serious injuries, and I can easily gather from your letter what your opinion of us is, and how you all look at us with a disapproving eye.”⁷

He goes on to complain that Viret is blaming him for the Senate’s refusal to support the Lausanne request for discipline. “And now we are accused as if we caused your condemnation.” A study of Haller’s correspondence in this period and his account of the events of 1558 in Lausanne in his chronicle confirms that Haller never supported the request for the power of discipline by excommunication by the Lausanne Class. As early as November 1554 he wrote Bullinger after Valier and Beza had been to Bern to argue for discipline, “But [they have done so] in vain, as they have often done before.”⁸ The overtones from his letters and account of events was that Haller was more concerned with defending the position of his overlords, and, hence, his own position.⁹ Nowhere does he inquire into the theological arguments propounded by the Lausanne ministers and

declayré, par ces lettres à nostre conseil privé escriptes du VIe de novembre dern[ièrement] passé ne pouvoir administrer la Cene de nostre Seigneur en noste eglise de Lausanne pour plusieurs raysons en sesdictes lettres contenues...”

⁷ “*Praeterquam enim quod satis mordacibus verbis nos pungis et flagellas, in multis certo gravissima quoque videris afficere iniuria, et facile possum ex tuis coigete quale sit vestrum de nobis iudicium et quam non detro nos aspiciatis oculo.*” *Calvini Opera*, t. XVII, no. 2976, f. 368-372, Haller to Viret, November 11, 1558. See note 26 in preceding chapter for explanation of my dating of this letter.

⁸ “*Sed frustra, ut antea saepe.*” *Calvini Opera*, t. XV, no. 2048, f. 314-316, Haller to Bullinger, November 17, 1554.

⁹ Haller’s *Ephemerides* was originally written in German and later rewritten in Latin, which would have allowed time to edit it. “Das Tagebuch Johann Hallers aus den Jahren 1548-1561,” *Archiv des Historischen Vereins des Kantons Bern* 23 (1917): 238-355.

professors, nor does he fault their scholarly conclusions concerning scripture. No mention is ever made of the biblical passages cited in their petition. He simply reacts to the perceived intrusion on Bern's power. Moving from the defensive Haller begins to attack Viret and blames the course of events on Viret's conduct and strong personality in explaining why the "brothers" in the church and the magistrates in Bern did not support his efforts.

"For you seem to advance your own concerns with such great strife with many good men, and with such force that it seems as if you will soon condemn everyone who doesn't subscribe to all your judgments. And under that banner you cause many, who otherwise think ill neither of you nor of the common cause of the church, to be alienated from you and to withdraw themselves from relations with you."¹⁰

Regardless, the merits of the cause, Viret's personality, in Haller's opinion, had interjected itself so forcefully into the dispute that logic and reason would not prevail, if it ever could have.

"...you have irritated the senate with your distressing prescriptions so that [the senate] doesn't even want to grant what we hoped and prayed for, and from which the senate didn't seem to shy away..."¹¹

What this letter makes quite clear is that Haller had chosen sides, as if that had ever been in doubt, when he states that with respect to church property, something Viret had raised in the lost November 6 letter, that "we do not want to take it away from the civil

¹⁰ "*Videmini enim multis bonis viris tanta contentione re vestras agere, et tanta mole, ut mox omnes quasi condemnare videamini qui non omnibus vestris iudiciis subscribant. Et eo nomine facitis ut multi a vobis alienentur se a commercio vestro subducent, qui alioqui neque de vobis neque de communi causa ecclesiac male sentiunt.*" *Calvini Opera*, t. XVII, no. 2976, f. 368-372, Haller to Viret, November 11, 1558.

¹¹ "...*vestris irritasse senatum sic ut noluerit etiam hoc concedere quod nos optabamus et sperabamus, et a quo senatus non usque adeo, uti ipse fateris abhorrere videbatur.*" *Calvini Opera*, t. XVII, no. 2976, f. 368-372, Haller to Viret, November 11, 1558.

magistracy.”¹² We have already seen from his earlier letter to Bullinger, September 10, 1558, when he confided his secret about Bern looking for German speaking professors, that Haller was in partnership with the magistrates and it will become clear that he was the junior partner.

On December 1, 1558, Viret took up his pen and unburdened himself with Calvin, whom he had not written since August, at least according to extant correspondence seeking his advice and worrying that he may have seemed to have rushed into the controversy.

“I would have long ago forewarned those in charge of the state (i.e., both councils) of this intention of mine so that I wouldn’t seem seditious if I began with a mixed crowd, and first dealt with this cause in sermons in which I often openly taught, [and if] I were now bound up by such difficulties.”¹³

This is the first sign of introspection on either side and underscores that Viret and the Class had long been dealing with the problem of what to do with sinners in the church. Examining Viret’s correspondence during the period since 1548, very early he began to raise the issue of the pollution of his church and what to do with it. In another letter to Calvin on December 3, 1558, Viret confessed, “I’m getting ready for an exile that is sure

¹² “*Nos, ut ea civili magistratui eripere (quem quidem ecclesiasticum quoque magistratum esse agnoscis) non cupimus ita desideramus tamen, ut ecclesiastica illa bona cum civilibus non commisceantur, sed separatim utraque administrentur, idque cum magna diligentia, et ad hoc senatum graviter scripto illo nostro cohortati fuimus, nec desinemus publice et privatim hoc rogare.*” *Calvini Opera*, t. XVII, no. 2976, f. 368-372, Haller to Viret, November 11, 1558.

¹³ *Calvini Opera*, t. XVII, no. 2989, fol. 391-394, Viret to Calvin, December 1, 1558. Viret explains his failure to write Calvin for months, “I had stopped writing to you in order to forgive you because I feared that if I wrote to you, you would get tired of writing back.” “*Ut tibi parcereum desieram ad te scribere quia verebar ne si ad te scriberem, tu te rescribendo fatigares.*” *Calvini Opera*, t. XVII, no. 2995, fol. 404-405, Viret to Calvin, December 22, 1558.

to happen, but that's nothing new for me."¹⁴ Bern on the other side seemed to have simply followed the pattern of staving off the complaining that was coming from Lausanne without trying to work out a solution in any meaningful way. Certainly, Haller's letters to Bullinger and his chronicle provide very little self analysis. As the reader will find, Haller's accounts are very defensive and the letters from the Advoyer and Small Council (the Senate) are authoritarian giving the reader limited insight into the thought process in Bern. We must rely on Haller to understand Bern's side of the conflict, since he was clearly defending the actions of the magistrates in his accounts. Where the stakes were as high as they were here, leadership, to reach a successful conclusion, required that each side weigh the consequences and not the personalities. Haller appeared to have fallen into the trap of allowing the emotion of the time to govern his actions, and to the extent that Haller was speaking for the magistrates, so also did Bern.

While Haller tried to justify the collision that he saw looming in the future by blaming Viret and his colleagues, it was the magistrates in two letters written on December 4, 1558, that laid out the extent of their intransigence. In the first of two letters of that date addressed to Masters Viret, Valier and Banc in response to a letter that the three ministers had sent to the Small Council on November 27, 1558, which is also lost,¹⁵

¹⁴ *Calvini Opera*, t. XVII, no. 2990. fol. 394-396, Viret to Calvin, December 3, 1558.

"Quare ad certum me paro exsilium, quod mihi iam novum non est."

¹⁵ Michael Bruening, *Pierre Viret's Unedited Correspondence*, unpublished manuscript, Appendix XXIII, Bern Council to the Class in Lausanne, December 4, 1558, "*ains a nostredict petit conseil derechiefz escript du XXVIIe de novembre dernièrement passe.*" See also no. 129, Bern Council to Viret, Jacques (sic) Valier, and Arnaud Banc, December 4, 1558. "*Ayants entenduz le lettres que par vous, maistre Pierre Viret, nous ont esté envoyées, datées du xxviie jour du mois de novembre dernièrement passé, aussy*

the magistrates told Viret, Valier and Banc that they would have to come before them in order to hear “our pleasure.”¹⁶ Based on the response by the named parties, it is clear that Viret and his colleagues took the offer as a threat for in his individual response of December 15, Viret is quite clear that he would not come to Bern:

“The first is, if you will excuse me is that I cannot come and present myself to your Majesties without risking clear danger to my life. I am not able to make the trip either on foot or on horseback without placing myself in danger. Even though you order me to come to your country under risk of my life, it is not possible for me to do it without encountering violence and danger to my person. To this end, God and your Majesties may be good and faithful witnesses.”¹⁷

la supplication à nous par vous, maistre Jaques Vallier (sic), envoyée. Ensemble ce que par vous, maistre Arnauld (sic) Banc dernièrement...”

¹⁶ Michael Bruening, *Pierre Viret's Unedited Correspondence*, unpublished manuscript, no. 129, Bern Council to Viret, Jacques (sic) Valier, and Arnaud Banc, December 4, 1558. “*Est sur ce, nostre voulloir et playsir, que ayants receuz les presentes, vous ayés à vous transpourter par devers nous, pour sur ce entendre nostre bon voulloir.*”

¹⁷ Charles Schnetzler, *Pierre Viret et le Conflit Ecclésiastique avec Berne, Au Milieu du XVI^e Siècle*, *Revue Historique Vaudoise*, vol. 15 (September 1907), 375-376. “*Le premier est, qu’il vous plaise me tenir pour excuse, de ce que je ne me suis aller présenter à vos magnificences, que pourtant que je ne suis tellement disposé de mon corps, que je puisse seulement faire une lieue de chemin, en ce temps-cy, soit à pied ou à cheval, sans me metre en danger tant évident de ma vie, ou bien de tomber bien tout impotent et perclus de mes membres. Parquoy quand vous me manderiez de vuider hors de vos pays sous piene de la vie, il ne seroit à moy possible de la faire, sinon qu’on m’en portast dschors par grande violence, et en grand danger de ma personne. Laquelle je n’ay épargnée jusques aujourd’huy, pour servir à Dieu et à vos magnificences, vous mesmes m’en pouvez estre bona et fidèles tresmoins.*” Interestingly, the Swiss writers have avoided discussing the threat that was implied in Bern’s letter. Jean Barnaud simply said, “*Viret était trop malade pour se mettre en route,...*” Jean Barnaud, *Pierre Viret, Sa Vie et Son Oeuvre* (Saint-Amans: G. Carayol, 1911) 469. Schnetzler said, “*Elle montre suffisamment par sa modération que le réformateur avait encore un très léger espoir que les transactions pourraient peut-être se résoudre à la amiable.*” See page 375.

The Lausanne ministers had been shuttling back and forth all summer and fall to Bern. But now Viret is constrained by fear and Valier, who had just gone to Bern the week before was now too old to go?¹⁸

“... your very humble servant, Jacques Valier, due to his age and the recent fall he had, and for the inconvenient timing, could not easily endure the trials of the road without great damage to his health.”¹⁹

While each of these responses are couched in the formality of the period and contain the respect called for in these dealings, they also make clear that the three ministers were not coming to Bern, because they saw no reason to do so or they saw a reason not to do so. Their responses were simply excuses. Haller writing in his chronicle sometime in 1559 remembered that Viret’s excuse was, “He himself was unable to come, pleading an illness of the feet.”²⁰ Obviously, the nature of the excuse was unimportant, Haller had failed to remember it, since it was only an excuse. Valier and Banc used a play on words to bolster their excuse:

“...we have received your letters dated the fourth of December in which the lords command that we two along with our brother, Mr. Pierre Viret,

¹⁸ “*Ayants entenduz les lettres que par vous, maistre Pierre Vyret, nous ont esté envoyées, datées du xxviie jour du mois de novembre dernièrement passé, aussy la supplication à nous par vous, maistre Jaques Vallier (sic), envoyée, ensemble ce que par vous, maistre Arnauld (sic) Banc, dernièrement nous az esté verballement proposé...*” Michael Bruening, *Pierre Viret’s Unedited Correspondence*, unpublished manuscript, no. 129, Bern Council to Viret, Jacques (sic) Valier, and Arnaud Banc, December 4, 1558. The distance between the two cities, depending on the route taken, as the most direct was through Catholic Fribourg, was 52 – 60 miles, too much for one day’s journey.

¹⁹ Charles Schnetzler, *Pierre Viret et le Conflit Ecclésiastique avec Berne, Au Milieu du XVI^{me} Siècle*, *Revue Historique Vaudoise*, vol. 15 (September 1907), 376-377. See also Michael Bruening, *Pierre Viret’s Unedited Correspondence*, unpublished manuscript, Appendix XXIV, Jacques (sic) Valier and Arnaud Banc to the Bern Council, December 15, 1558. Viret’s letter to Calvin, December 3, 1558, confirmed Valier’s illness. “*Collega Valerius in febrim incidit quae illum lecto affixum detinet.*” *Calvini Opera*, t. XVII, no. 2990. fol. 394-396, Viret to Calvin, December 3, 1558.

²⁰ “*Non potest ipse venire, morbumpedum caussatus.*” Johannes Haller, “*Ephermides D. Joannis Halleri,*” edited by Jacob Simler, *Museum Helveticum*, (1747), 122.

travel to Bern to appear before your Excellencies, if we do not wish to acquiesce to the remonstrances made against us by the Class.”²¹

The class had met shortly after they received these letters from Bern, both in Vevey and then Lausanne. The Class agreed they would not deliver the warning or admonition to Viret, Valier and Banc, nor would they replace him and his colleagues. Consequently, Valier and Banc, when they wrote to Bern, knew that there would be no admonishment from the Class, and thus they turned the words back on themselves and excused themselves by acquiescing in the Class’ decision, which was not to warn them!

The Advoyer at the time was Hans Franz Naegeli, the general who commanded the army that invaded Vaud in 1536, and who the Romand Swiss referred to as the “sacker of cities.”²² While Bern was not in the habit of killing its ministers who disobeyed them, they were and did use strong measures to rebuke dissent and Naegeli was a man to be feared. However, it was in the letter addressed to the Class that the Senate revealed the intransigence of Bern’s position:

“Having heard all that, we have been very upset given that our reformation, which we formalized with the help of God, through which with Master Pierre Viret and the Class, we have been able, until now to have our churches regulated, protected and maintained the best we could, and as we hope to be able to do as long as God will allow it, making sure our reformation is protected and observed so that we will never lose it again.”²³

²¹ *Si nous ne voulions acquiescer à la remonstrance par la classe fiacte.* Charles Schnetzler, *Pierre Viret et le Conflit Ecclésiastique avec Berne, Au Milieu du XVI^{me} Siècle*, *Revue Historique Vaudoise*, vol. 15 (September 1907), 376-377. See also Michael Bruening, *Pierre Viret’s Unedited Correspondence*, unpublished manuscript, Appendix XXIV, Jacques (sic) Valier and Arnaud Banc to the Bern Council, December 15, 1558.

²² *Correspondence de Théodore de Bèze*, tome II., no. 139, p. 194 Beza to Calvin, May 29, 1558,

²³ “...nous en avons estés fort marris et despaisants vheu et attendu que par le moyen de notredite reformation qu’avons faicte et dressée à l’ayde de Dieu et dudct maistre Pierre Viret et la vostre nous avons noz eglises jusques icy reglaiseses, gardée et entrtemu, le

The problem had been from the time of the Bern Disputation in January 1528 was how to modify or adjust the Word of God after the Bern magistrates adopted it. The first thesis of the Bern Disputation was, “The Holy Christian Church whose sole head is Christ, is born of the Word of God...” Now they were confronted with a reasoned argument for excommunication propounded by the very people they had hired to expound on the Word of God and they were “upset” (*marris*) that these ministers and professors would question their reformation. While Haller could point the finger of blame on Viret and his temperament, neither he nor the magistrates were able to grasp the root of the problem, which was how to interpret the Word of God and how would they recognize the correct interpretation and legislate it, since there was no established procedure for recognizing and legislating the Word of God. Missing was a strong theologian in Bern to sort out the claims of the Lausanne Class and reconcile the two sides; Haller was not that person as shown by his repeated statements to Bullinger that he did not know what was going to happen and his slavish support of Bern’s magistrates.²⁴

The response of the Class, sent simultaneously with those of Viret, Valier and Banc revealed a thoughtful, but strong resistance to what the Class considered was an

mieux qu’il az esté possible, ce que de mesmes nous esperons fayre pour l’advenir, entant que dieu nous en fera la grace, tenant maing à ce que nostredite reformation soit gardée et observée sans d’icelle nous desvoyer, ains derechiefz à icelle nous tenir.” Michael Bruening, *Pierre Viret’s Unedited Correspondence*, unpublished manuscript, Appendix XXIII, Bern Council to the Class in Lausanne, December 4, 1558.

²⁴ “I don’t know how things will turn out.” “*Quo res causura sit nescimus.*” *Calvini Opera*, t. XVII, no. 2998, col. 411, Haller to Bullinger, January 5, 1559. “I have come to know the magistracy’s devotion in this cause to the point that I cannot keep from extolling it.” “*Non ergo desunt rationes cur pius magistratus (cuius certe pietatem in hac ipsa causa et actione sic cognovi ut non possim non illam praedicare) non velit omnem et plenam potestatem ipsorum arbitrio concedere.*” *Calvini Opera*, t. XVII, no. 3022, col. 464, Haller to Bullinger, February 28, 1559.

to be an assumption by Bern that if Viret, Valier and Banc had to be disciplined, that the rest of the ministers of the class would stay. The Class' letter of July 18 had couched in it a warning that such may not be the case, and the letter of December 15 made clear there was strong unity within the Class, which is a testament to Viret's leadership skills. The Class noted that Bern's letter addressed to them had two points. They were to warn their brothers, Viret, Valier and Banc, to remain in their vocation in accordance with the direction from Bern, i.e. without the right to excommunicate, or if that did not satisfy Viret, the Class was to elect others to succeed them and send the names to Bern for confirmation.

“First, very redoubtable lords, our brothers have only brought only the pure word of God, which we could not resist, which also we have held for a long time, forces them in their conscience to make to you the requests on which it pleased your lords to send us your will. If we now make the same, it is for reasons and particular considerations, some apply more to us, and some less to others, it is however true that we have made the same requests as our brothers for twenty years concerning ecclesiastical discipline, our last letters of the 7th of this month, contain and confirm this, these former letters demonstrate the agreement and union in the doctrine and in the spirit that has always been between us, thanks to God, also that our brothers have always communicated their opinion on this and asked for our advice as such we have according to the word of God..

“For this reason, very redoubtable lords, we cannot go against the conscience of our brothers (which we are allowed to know, we know is ruled by the Word of God), the other admonitions made presently without lying to God, our conscience and to you...”²⁵

²⁵ “*Premierement, tres-redoubtés Seigneurs, nosdicts freres ne nous ont jamais aporté que la pure parole de Dieu, à laquelle nous ne pourions resister, laquelle aussy, comme nous avons dès lontemps entendu, les contraint en leur conscience à vous faire particulièrement les requestes pour lesquelles il a pleu à vos Seigneuries nous mander vostre vouloir. Que si nous aultres pour le present ne faisons le semblable, il y a des raisons et considerations particulires en cela aux un plus, aux moins. Si est ce toutefois que tousjours d’un mesme accord depuis vingt ans nous vous ayons la mesme requeste qu’eux touchant la discipline ecclesiatique; Ce que mesme contiennent et conferment nos dernieres lettres, envoyées à vos excellences le 7 de ce moys, demonstrants par icelles, comme aussi par les presentes, l’accord et union en doctrine et en esprit qui a esté*

So now the magistrates, Haller and the ministers in Bern had come up against the standard that had been debated in 1528 by their predecessors, and which Bern thought they had resolved with its Edicts of Reformation. The reaction of Bern was to do two things. First, to equivocate and buy time and the other was to assert their power. As we shall see, the response was never to discuss the Class's understanding of the Word of God, because they only saw it in political terms. Haller, the chief minister in the church in Bern, in his discussion of it in his chronicle, which must be viewed as self-serving, but also revealing said :

“The senate, considering the state of our churches, and the fact that what was not also so established in the German churches could hardly be granted to them, and that it seemed that it would be very dangerous to introduce this thing that from the beginning of the Reformation had not been in use, and the fact that they themselves were principally seeking to excommunicate and devour each other, with the greatest hindrance to the church, refused to yield; they again and again in frequent delegations did not cease from urging this same demand.”²⁶

Haller, defending the actions of the Bern magistrates, who were his masters, couched the action in political terms, not ecclesiastical debate. The issues for him were uniformity and

tousjours entre nous, graces à Dieu; Joinct aussi que nosdicts freres nous ont tousjours communiqué leur advis sur ce en demandant nostre conseil, tel que nous le pouvons avoir selon la parolle de dieu.” Michael Bruening, *Pierre Viret's Unedited Correspondence*, unpublished manuscript, Appendix XXV, the Class in Lausanne to Bern Council, December 15, 1558.

²⁶ “*Concessit tandem Senatus, ut quod in Germanicis habatur Ecclesiis ipsis quoque daretur, nempe ut singulae Parochiae suos haberent seniores, & consistoria ordinata, hoc est, deligerentur quatuor vel sex de tota Ecclesia, senio & autoritate praepollentes, qui una cum ministro disciplinae Ecclesiasticae essent Custodes, vocarent imperitos, & eos qui praeter decorum viverent, monerent, arguerent, examinarent, illisque viderentur indigni communionem sacramentorum, si-ita videretur, suaderent, ut ad tempus abstinerent donec vel melius erudirentur vel vitam rectam inustiterent;*” Johannes Haller, “*Ephermides D. Joannis Halleri,*” edited by Jacob Simler, *Museum Helveticum*, (1747), 119-120.

avoidance of disturbances, purely political concerns. Like the magistrates, the Word of God had been established in January 1528 in the Disputation and the subsequent Edicts of Reformation. Zwingli had explicitly stated excommunication could be a dangerous thing. Now thirty years later there was no one the magistrates could rely on, who could either lead them out of their problem or pacify the Lausanne Class. It escaped Haller that an ecclesiastical question was being decided by a political body without any debate over the issue of what the Word of God meant and how it was to be interpreted. The “Word of God” was the cornerstone of Bern’s Reformation. Now, the Lausanne Class had raised it in the context of their situation in their churches and their need for discipline. The only issue both Haller and the magistrates could raise was the question of control and the danger that change would bring. Not being able or willing to look at what the Bible commanded Haller simply demonized Viret and the Lausanne ministers and professors thus falling into a common trap of justifying an unfortunate decision. Either they “condemned each other to hellfire” or “they actively looked after the interest’s of Calvin’s party.”²⁷ In either case the failure of reform in Vaud was the contentiousness of the Lausanne Class and their leader, or they had a political motive to advance the ideas of Calvin. Rarely was Haller, at least as he presented himself to us, able to examine the merits of the ministers’ program, nor was he able to help the magistrates bridge the

²⁷ “...non mordebant modo, sed damnabant se mutuo Ministri” and “strenue partes Calvinii in omnibus tuebantur...” Johannes Haller, “Ephemides D. Joannis Halleri,” edited by Jacob Simler, *Museum Helveticum*, (1747), 119.

differences between the two sides.²⁸ As the leader of the church in Bern it should have been his role to either facilitate a new position for the magistrates, or to reconcile the Lausanne Class to Bern's position. Failing at both, all Haller could do was vent his anger.

After the responses of Viret, Valier, Banc, and the Class, the Small Council replied on December 19, 1558, appearing to back down and allowing Viret, Valier and Banc to continue to preach (*continuer à prescher*) and authorizing the Lausanne Class to rigorously chastise those guilty of vice.²⁹ This represented a concession by Bern, ironically the only instance where Haller had referred to scripture as a reason not to do something. "We have found in the evangelical scriptures neither a command, nor an example of private examination."³⁰ So the one time that the Bern minister found no evidence of the "Word of God" the magistrates decided to give in? And if they (Viret and the Class) did that everything would "go well," but toward the end of the letter the magistrates betrayed their intransigence on excommunication:

"And so that the ignorant will be instructed and indoctrinated before receiving the communion, we without question that these ignorants be cited and led in the consistory, in order to be duly admonished, taught and indoctrinated, as necessary, not understanding by that that the communion should be refused to them."³¹

²⁸ The one exception was *Calvini Opera*, t. XVII, no. 2993, fol. 400-402, Haller to Bullinger, December 16, 1558. "We have found in the evangelical scriptures neither..." "*nec exemplum in literis invenimus evangelicis...*"

²⁹ "...ce que les vices soyent estroitement chastiés." Michael Bruening, *Pierre Viret's Unedited Correspondence*, unpublished manuscript, no. 130, the Bern Council to Viret, Valier, Banc and the Lausanne Class, December 20, 1558.

³⁰ "*Privati examinis, quod ipsi tantopere urgent, nec praeceptum nec exemplum in literis invenimus evangelicis, et quum videamus cuius olim tyrannidis in ecclesia occasio fuerit.*" *Calvini Opera*, t. XVII, no. 2993, fol. 400-402, Haller to Bullinger, December 16, 1558.

³¹ "*Et afin que les ignorants instructuictz et indoctrinez et indoctrinez avant que prendre la Cene, nous ne contrdisons pas que telz ignorantz soyent citiés et remis au consistoire,*

Unfortunately, what was being offered was the right to bring people before the consistory to be corrected, but denied the right of excommunication if anyone failed to change their ways. This was Haller's excommunication "*per verbum*," as expounded in his letter of November 11. So what was being asked was for the ministers to "pursue your charge as in the past, as best as it is possible."³² While the magistrates were accommodating the Class by allowing private examination by the Class, in fact, they had not changed their basic position. As Viret told Calvin in a contemporaneous letter, "They promise everything except what we demand."³³ They even referred back to their order of May 28, 1558, establishing consistories in each of the church parishes, but denying the right of excommunication.³⁴ And they demanded that the Lausanne ministers, "administer the communion of our Lord in the usual way, as we hope... without difficulty."³⁵ Unrest or difficulty was the only real concern for the Bern magistrates. The Class in Lausanne was creating concern and the antidote was to pacify them without effecting change.

pour là estre deuhement admonestez, enseigniez, et endoctrinés comme il apartiendra, n'entendant toutefois par ce que la Cene leur doibve estre refusée." Michael Bruening, *Pierre Viret's Unedited Correspondence*, unpublished manuscript, no. 130, to Bern Council to Viret, Valier, Banc and the Class in Lausanne, December 20, 1558.

³² "... *c'est de poursuivre vostre charge, comme du passé, au mieux qu'il sera possible,...*" Michael Bruening, *Pierre Viret's Unedited Correspondence*, unpublished manuscript, no. 130, the Bern Council to Viret, Valier, Banc and the Lausanne Class December 19, 1558.

³³ "*Pollicentur omnia, nisi quod nos postulamus.*" *Calvini Opera*, t. XVII, no. 2995, fol. 404-405, Viret to Calvin, December 22, 1558.

³⁴ *Calvini Opera*, t. XVII, fol. 185-187, no. 2878, Bern Council to the Lausanne Ministers, May 27, 1558.

³⁵ "*D'adminstrer la Cene de nostre Seigneur au mode accoustumé. comme nous esperons que, pour le desir qu'avez de l'avancement du royaulme de Dieu et de sa gloire, sans difficulté le terez.*" Michael Bruening, *Pierre Viret's Unedited Correspondence*, unpublished manuscript, no. 130, the Bern Council to Viret, Valier, Banc and the Lausanne Class December 19, 1558.

Surely, Bern must have had second thoughts about its position, because on December 22, they sent a letter to the Bourgemaster of Lausanne telling him that:

“It has never been our intention to dismiss them (Viret, Valier and Banc) as long as they are willing to discharge their responsibilities as they should while following the warning we gave them or that they will not leave on their own.”³⁶

The letter went on to acknowledge that the vices and disorders that the Class had been reporting were getting worse day by day. For the first time Bern acknowledged that what the Class had been complaining of had a kernel of truth. Unfortunately, the time to discuss and negotiate this problem had passed and Haller in describing the events leading up to Christmas and the refusal of the Class to administer communion reverted back into blaming the other side for failing to solve the problem when Bern’s position had not moved much at all.

“...the delegation (from Bern) came to Lausanne two days before Christmas. The next day (the day before Christmas), the large council of Lausanne (known as the Sixty) convened; the legates explained what they had done. The ministers were also present. They argued that there was too little time, nor could they possibly call on that day those whom they wanted to call, and so they sought to postpone the Supper to another Sunday, namely to the first of January. The Senate of Lausanne argued about this at length. The matter was debated with great strife that whole day into the middle of the night, which is called sacred because of the remembrance of Christ’s Nativity; there was such contention that the prefect was forced to come down to the city from his camp. Had he not calmed them down by his intervention, they probably would have risen up against each other. Finally, since they certainly weren’t saying that they

³⁶ “*Car nous ne desirons jamais este et ne sommes d’opinion de leur donner conge, en tant qu’ilz voudront continuer leurs charges, ainsi qu’il s’appartient selon le remonstrances que sur ce leur avons faictes et qu’ilz ne demanderont conge eulx mesmes.*” *Calvini Opera*, t. XVII, no. 2994, fol. 403, Bern Senate to the Bourgemaster of Lausanne, December 20, 1558.

wanted to offer the Supper, they granted that the Supper be put off until January 1.”³⁷

At this point Bern had two choices, accept the action of the Sixty and let the ministers hold their consistory, or react and shut off any discussion. Whether either course would have provided a long term solution, the former action would have bought time and may have convinced the Class to use excommunication *per verbum*, but that was unlikely. Bern, offended by this act of insubordination reacted strongly.

“We were now newly irritated and sent a messenger to Lausanne on swift horses to ban them from celebrating the supper on the day they had decided under threat of losing all privileges.”³⁸

Officially, the word came on December 27, 1558, when Bern suspended the celebration by Viret and his colleagues. In his chronicle, *Ephemerides*, Haller reported the next action:

“The Senate was indignant since there appeared no end to this delaying and because they had dared to break the common custom of all our Churches on their private authority, and after the Large Council had met declared that Viret and his colleagues were removed from the ministry.”³⁹

³⁷ “*Lausannam venere tertio ante fetrum nativitatis die. Crastina, hoc est pridie nativitatis Dominis, senatus Lausannensis maior convenit: exposuerunt legati quid effecerint. Adfuerunt etiam ministri. Illi causantes nimis angustum esse tempus, nec fieri posse, ut eo die quos vellent vocarent petierunt dilationem coenae in alium diem dominicum, primam scilicet Ianuarii.*” *Calvini Opera*, t. XVII, no. 2998, fol. 409-413, Haller to Bullinger, January 5, 1559. See also *Archive de la Ville de Lausanne*. Chavannes, manual, D 12, fol. 340, p. 1058-1059. “*Le vendredi, vingt-troisieme de decembre, mille Cinq Cent Cinquante-huit, Furent ensembles les Seigneurs Bourgemaistre & Vingt-Quatre du Consil de Lausanne au matin, & semblablement a Messieurs avec Les Seigneurs Soixante du Riève.,,*” Note the minutes confirm that the meeting took place on the 23rd of December and not the 24th as Haller indicated.

³⁸ “*Nostri de novo exacerbati illico ad Lausannenses per equos citatos nunciaum misere qui illis interdieret.*” *Calvini Opera*, t. XVII, no. 2998, fol. 409-413, Haller to Bullinger, January 5, 1559.

³⁹ “*Senatus indignatus cum nullus finis appareret hujus morositatis & quod ausifuisent communem morem omnium eccleziarum nostrarum privata autoritate confringere, adhibitis Dia[?]jonsiis depozitionem a Ministerio...*” Johannes Haller, “*Ephermides D. Joannis Halleri,*” edited by Jacob Simler, *Museum Helveticum*, (1747), 122.

Now the actions of Viret and the Class were cast in terms of authority. They had “dared” to challenge the custom of Bern making the magistrates indignant. So in the heat of emotion Bern took the action that would rupture the church in Vaud. This was not the first time that reformers had used denial of communion to force a confrontation. Calvin and Farel had done the same in Geneva in 1536 before they were banished and Viret had threatened to do it at Easter, 1558. It was the last action that the ministers could resort to, and like most dares it either worked or the party making the challenge loses everything. However, in this case the Class had prepared itself and was organized with its response. What they were not prepared for was the plan that Bern had to deal with the challenge: “to incarcerate those who refuse to choose.”⁴⁰ Having squandered their ability to ameliorate the conflict the immediate reaction by Bern was to use brute force to impose their will. Haller described Viret’s reaction when Bern tried to reconcile him to his duty, thinking that when faced with a resolute magistracy that he would cease to resist.

“Viret meanwhile was summoned here afresh by the Senate, for it was hoped that it was still possible that he could be induced to compromise and be restored to his Church; if this happened, it seemed that by his authority he would also retain all the rest. But he upon receipt of this letter, after calling several Frenchman into his counsel feared that he was being summoned for the following reason, so that if he refused to give his consent he might be thrown in jail. He fled to Geneva together with his

⁴⁰ “4. *Scilicet Ianuarii, designati sunt.*” *Calvini Opera*, t. XVII, no. 2998, fol. 409-413, Haller to Bullinger, January 5, 1559. See also plan that whoever of the council refused to elect others be held in prison until the magistrate made a ruling on them.” Johannes Haller, “*Ephermides D. Joannis Halleri*,” edited by Jacob Simler, *Museum Helveticum*, (1747), 123. “*Additum est etiam in illo consilio ut quicumque ex classe alios, elgire detractatus, incarcerati detinerentur, donec Magistratus de illis slatueret.*”

colleagues without asking for permission. The Senate, still more upset by his contempt, proscribed him.”⁴¹

Having punished Viret, and his colleagues the delegation from Bern assumed that the Class would now submit. They had been locked up for three days in the jail of the Chateau of Lausanne, their leader had been banished, so the Bern delegation assumed that the Class would capitulate when met with such staunchness. Nevertheless, the ministers of the Class were just as resolute in their resistance. Haller described the result in a letter to Bullinger, February 28, 1559:

“On Feb. 25 there were yet many men still to be examined, but they were the most obstinate of all. For when they learned from those examined on the 24th all that had happened to them, they basically conspired all over again to not consent, but to choose exile instead, and they also bound by conscience some of those who had agreed on the day so that we could barely keep them from returning to the senate and demanding exile with the rest. As it so happened, 9 or 10 of the chief men preferred exile to agreeing with the concessions of the Princes (as they call our senate). As pertains to the professors who are all left, namely Ribittus, Tagaultius, Beraldus and Randonus (for Merlinus was previously released after Beza), they asked for an amicable release.”⁴²

⁴¹ “*Viretus interea denuo a Senatu hoc vocatis est, sperabatur enim adhuc fieri posse, ut ad consensum induci possit, suaeque Ecclesie restitui, si fieret hoc, videbatur sua auctoritate reliquos quoque omnes retenturus. Sed is acceptis his literis, & Gallis quibusdam in consilium adhibitis verebatur ne ad hoc vocaretur, ut si consentire nollet, in carcerem conjiceratur. Genevam nulla accepta venia una cum Collegis perfugit. Quo contemptu Senatus adhuc magis offensus proscriptionem illi decrevit.*” Johannes Haller, “*Ephermides D. Joannis Halleri,*” edited by Jacob Simler, *Museum Helveticum*, (1747), 124.

⁴² “*25 Februarii super fuerunt aliqui adhuc examinandi, sed omnium obstinatissimi. Nam quum ab illis qui 24 die examinati sunt intellexissent, quae cum ipsis acta essent omnia, de novo quasi conspirarunt iterum ad non consentiendum, sed ad exsilium potius eligendum, et fecerunt quoque ut aliqui ex illis qui priore die consenserant, conscientia angerebantur ita ut aegre adhuc cum reliquis exsilium poscerent. Factum itaque ut novem vel decem ex praecipuis ensulare mallent quam concessionibus Principum (ut vocant senatum nostrum) consentire. Quod professores attinet, qui super fuerunt omnes, ribittus nempe, Tagaultius Beraldus et Randonus (nam Merlinus iam prius dismissus est post Bezam) dimissionem amicam petire.*” Calvin Opera, t. XVII, no. 3022, fol. 460-462, Haller to Bullinger, February 27, 1559.

One would expect the story to end here, but there is one more twist. In February Haller wrote to Bullinger and requested that Bullinger write to Viret and entreat him to return to Lausanne to continue to run the church there. The Bern magistrates were now dealing with the impact of what had happened and were trying to repair the damage, both in the church and the academy.

“But I don't know what will happen. Niklaus von Diesbach, who is now a consul, beseeches you from the heart to write yourself to Viret through this messenger who brings you this letter, and urge him to concord and consensus with us. He thinks, (and we agree) that your influence has great sway with him. So I myself ask you to write to him and send me a letter through this [messenger].”⁴³

The letter was written, but Viret declined, the ministers of the Class left their positions and went to Geneva, and the faculty of the Lausanne Academy went in mass to Geneva as well.⁴⁴

“For they say that more than a thousand men left Lausanne for Geneva, men who all thought that the very Word of the Lord, the Good News itself and the Church had been thrown out...”⁴⁵

⁴³ “*Sed quid futurum sit nescio. D. Nicolausa Diesbach, consulis nunc vices gerens, ex animo te precatur ut per hunc nunciam qui has tibi adfert vireto ipse quoque scribere velis, et illum ad concordiam et consensum una nobiscum hortari.*” *Calvini Opera*, t. XVII, no. 3022, fol. 460-464, Haller to Bullinger, February 27, 1559.

⁴⁴ “I beg and beseech you by the grace of our Lord and God, that you finally deign to return to your church and become one in consensus with our brethren.” “...*per misericordiam Domini Dei nosti te oro et obsecro, ut tandem nostris Bernensibus sancto digneris coalescere consensus.*” *Calvini Opera*, t. XVII, no. 3025, fol. 469-470, Bullinger to Viret, March 3, 1555.

⁴⁵ “*Affirmant enim ultra mille homines ex Lausanna Genevam migrasse, qui omnes putabant, ipsum Verbum Domini, ipsum Evangelium & Ecclesiam esse ejectam...*” Johannes Haller, “*Ephermides D. Joannis Halleri,*” edited by Jacob Simler, *Museum Helveticum*, (1747), 125. This number was first raised in Haller’s report on the condition of the churches in Lausanne. Haller was part of a commission sent to Lausanne on March 6, 1559. *Calvini Opera*, t. XVII, no. 3035, fol. 487-490, Haller’s passim account, March [31], 1559.

Conclusion

After the Class refused to appoint successor ministers Augustin Marlorat and Antoine Le Chevalier, were called to succeed Viret and Valier. They refused and went into exile. Finally, Richard Dubois of Payerne and Jean du Bosc of Thonon were selected and accepted the positions in Lausanne. By June of 1559, after Pentecost had begun (Easter was March 26, 1559) the academy in Lausanne was vacant.¹ Not only had the members of the Lausanne class left, but other ministers in Vaud left as well.² The students, numbering almost 700 followed their professors to Geneva and Calvin's academy, which found an overnight infusion of teachers and students.³ They went to Geneva where they, either, stayed and preached in the churches there, or they were dispersed as missionaries by the Company of Pastors to posts in France. Marlorat⁴ and Valier⁵ were sent to Rouen where they worked under adverse circumstances and under pseudonyms, Valier's was "des roches." In June 1560, Valier returned to Geneva where he died in Viret's home. As Beza stated:

¹ Johannes Haller, "*Ephermides D. Joannis Halleri*," edited by Jacob Simler, *Museum Helveticum*, (1747), 125. See also Charles Schnetzler, *Pierre Viret et le Conflit Ecclésiastique avec Berne, Au Milieu du XVI^e Siècle*, Revue Historique Vaudoise, vol. 15 (September 1907), 378. "Alors les Bernois appelèrent Richard Dubois, ministre de Payerne, et Jean du Bosc, ministre de Thonon, qui acceptèrent."

² Charles Schnetzler, *Pierre Viret et le Conflit Ecclésiastique avec Berne, Au Milieu du XVI^e Siècle*, Revue Historique Vaudoise, vol. 15 (September 1907), 378-379.

³ ...sunt autem hi ad septingentos. Michael Bruening, *Calvinism's First Battleground: Conflict and Reform in the Pays de Vaud*, (Dordrecht, The Netherlands, Springer, 2005), 173, citing Beza to Farel, April 29, 1558, *Correspondence de Bèze*, t. 2, 187, no. 137.

⁴ Kingdon, Robert M., *Registres de la Compagnie des Pasteurs de Genève, au Temps de Calvin*, Genève: Librairie B. Droz, 1962, fol. 36. "Le vendredy 13 de juillet les freres qui ensuivent furent esleus [ur aller en Fance prescher le sainc Evangile ascavoir: Maistre Augustin Marlorat à Paris."

⁵ "Aoust 1559 - Maistre Jaques Vallier (sic) fut eleu et envoyé le ____ pour prescher l'Evangile à Rouen avec celui qui y fut y fut envoyé auparavant." [Marlorat] Kingdon, Robert M., *Registres de la Compagnie des Pasteurs de Genève, au Temps de Calvin*, Genève: Librairie B. Droz, 1962, fol. 38.

Father Valier went off to the Lord last summer, shortly after he returned from Rouen where we had sent him after he was banished from Lausanne. And the good old man did not hesitate in the final moments of his life to subject his life to every peril so that he could convert some men to Christ. His labor was not in vain as the evidence indicates. He returned from there with a fever, in the good graces of the Church and finally he went quietly to sleep in the Lord.⁶

Marlorat met an untimely and gruesome death as a martyr as is vividly described in Robert Kingdon's book, *Geneva and the Coming of the Wars of Religion in France*.⁷ Banc was sent to southern France⁸ and after several years (1561) Viret went to southern France as well.⁹ As Haller feared "these churches will suffer a great schism."¹⁰ As he also said about a 1,000 people left Lausanne. Considering that the total population of Lausanne was 6,000, this represented about 17% of the population of the city. By February 27, when Haller writes Bullinger asking him to write and invite Viret back to Lausanne, he also condemns the Class and in doing so acknowledged the impact that their departure had on Bern. Further, he finally addresses the scriptural issue of excommunication and in a back handed way acknowledged the basis of their claim for discipline.

"They chose exile over these concessions. They made pretext of the

⁶ "*D. Valerius ad Dominum quoque migravit aestate superiore, paulo postquam Rhotomago redisset, quo illum miseramus Lausanna ejectum. Et bonus senex non dubitavit extremo vitae tempore vitam suam omnibus periculis objicere, ut aliquos Christo lucrifaceret. Labor non fuit irritus, ut res ipsa ostendit. Rediit inde febricitans, bona cum Ecclesiae venia, et placide tandem in Domino obdormivit.*" Théodore de Bèze to Ambroise Blaurer, January 22, 1561, *Correspondance de Theodore de Bèze*, t. III, no 165, 80.

⁷ Robert M. Kingdon, *Geneva and the Coming of the Wars of Religion in France, 1555-1563* (Geneva, Librairie Droz, first published in 1956, and reprinted in 2007), 127.

⁸ ACV. Vuilleumier's notes. Banc, from Castelnau was in Orleans in 1559 and Nimes in 1560.

⁹ Michael W. Bruening, "Pierre Viret and Geneva," *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte / Archive for Reformation History* 99 (2008): 175-97.

¹⁰ "*Rupturam gravem patientur hae ecclesiae.*" Calvin Opera, t. XVII, no. 2998, fol. 409-413, Haller to Bullinger, January 5, 1559.

conscience and the word of God, and the institution of Christ, and the example of the apostles. [They said] that they could not in good conscience offer the supper to those whose faith was unknown; and criminals should not only be punished by the government, but by the church too and made to submit to her ministers; the sacred was not to be cast to the dogs, etc. You wouldn't hear any of them speaking well of the church. Everyone is a dog in their eyes. If they had been in charge of the Corinthian church, they wouldn't have only excommunicated the incestuous man, but all the other members too, and they would have purged it to such an extent that as I consider the vices of that church I can't see how they would have kept anyone, not even one person, in the church."¹¹

While the churches in Vaud were denuded of ministers and the academy without professors by June, Bern was able to recoup its losses, find replacement ministers and bring in German speaking professors, the lasting impact of the schism was with Calvin who was a non participant. Calvin now had a pool of missionary ministers ready to be sent to France and 88 have been documented as being sent over the next several years, but also an academy to train a new cadre of ministers.¹² Calvin's relations, as we have already seen, with Bern were deteriorating before the banishment of the ministers in Lausanne. The schism simply closed the door on Calvin's relations with Bern, he turned his efforts West and built an enduring church through his missionary efforts and his correspondence with John Knox.

¹¹ *"Exsilium potius illi quam has concessiones elegerunt. Conscientiam praetexerunt, et verbum Domini, institutionem Christi, exemplum apostolicum. Non posse se bona conscientia coenam exhibere his de quorum fide ipsis non constet. Sceleratos non a ma[gistratu] modo puniri, sed et ab ecclesia quoque et illi[us ministris] coerceri debere, non proiciendum sanctum canibus [et alia] quae sunt eiusmodi. Non audires quemquam horum de [ecclesia] sua bene loquentem. Omnes sunt illis canes. Ecclesias si haberent Corinthiacas, non incestuosum modo, sed omnes alios quoque excommunicassent, et eam sic repurgassent, ut ego considerans vitia eius ecclesiae videre non possim an aliquem in ecclesia vel unum saltem retinuissent."* Calvini Opera, t. XVII, no. 3022, fol. 460-464, Haller to Bullinger, February 27, 1559.

¹² Twenty-four of whom came from Vaud. Robert M. Kingdon, *Geneva and the Coming of the Wars of Religion in France, 1555-1563* (Geneva, Librairie Droz, first published in 1956, and reprinted in 2007), 135-137.

Bern, on the other hand, continued to occupy Vaud without ever understanding how they had lost touch with the Word of God. In their letter of December 15, 1558, to the magistrates in Bern, the Class of Lausanne touched on the real issue of who was following the Word of God.

“We have only made this proposal by your request, hoping that the substance of it would be followed and that what would not be approved would be shown to us by scripture, which has always been our only rule under which we base our request.”¹³

What they were asking for was for Bern to tell them what part of the Word of God they did not understand so a dialogue could ensue. In their letter they cited the scripture they were relying on and asked that it be refuted.

“If the people of God put us in charge in our churches holds us to keep it for the true pastors and ministers, and if it approves our doctrine for good and holiness, renouncing all doctrine and religion contrary to the gospel of the reformation, as long as it conforms to the word of God. If it holds and recognizes us for such, if it does not truly want to regulate the life and behavior under the word of God then give to them and go hand in hand as we see our flock as the office of the true pastor requires it, as it is written in Ezekial 34 and John 10.”¹⁴

¹³ “*Mays seulement avons faict ledict traicté par vostre commandement esperants que le substance d'icelu seroyt suivi, et que ce qu'on n'approuveroyt pas nous seroyt remonstré par l'écriture, qui a esté tousjours et est nostre seule regle sus laquelle nous dressons toutes nos requests.*” Michael Bruening, *Pierre Viret's Unedited Correspondence*, unpublished manuscript, Appendix XXV, the Class in Lausanne to Bern Council, December 15, 1558.

¹⁴ “*Si le peuple duquel Dieu nous a baillé la charge en nous eglise nous tient et reçoit pour ses vrayz pasteurs et ministres, et s'il aprouve nostre doctrine pour bonne et sainte, renonçant à toute doctrine et religion contraire à l'engile et à la reformation, entant qu'elle est conforme à la parole de Dieu. S'il nous tient et reconnoist pour tels, s'il ne veult pas franchement regler sa vie et ses meurs selon la parole de Dieu que nous luy annonçons, et nous tenir main à ce que nous puissions reconnoistre toutes nos brebis, comme l'office d'un vray pasteur le requiert, selon qu'il est escript, Ezech. 34, Ioan. 10.*” Michael Bruening, *Pierre Viret's Unedited Correspondence*, unpublished manuscript, Appendix XXV, the Class in Lausanne to Bern Council, December 15, 1558. Herminjard's note reads: “*Dans cette letre écrite entière de la main de Jehan Tagault, était inclus un recueil des principaux points demandés tout d'un accod parla classe de Lausanne. Le voici.*”

And so it went citing passage after passage of the Bible and asking for a reasoned response that never came. All that Haller, the only person who could mediate the dispute, could muster was, “the sacramentarian schism disturbs us,”¹⁵ but, of course it was not a sacramentarian schism, it was a political divide, a struggle over power and Bern held the upper hand. And as Haller disclosed to Bullinger:

“So there is no lack of reasons why the magistracy is unwilling to grant all and full power to their will; I have come to know the magistracy's devotion in this cause to the point that I cannot keep from extolling it.”¹⁶

For Haller and Bern it had always been about power. The Word of God for Bern was what had been established in 1528 and what had empowered them, and for the Class it was what the Bible provided as guidance for their circumstances in their role as shepherds for their flock. For Bern changing the Word of God, as they viewed it, meant surrendering power. For the ministers it was about conscience. The two sides were irreconcilable, because for each their vantage point was so different.

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¹⁵ “*Sollicitat nos quoque schisma illud sacramentarium, quod aliquando hanc misere vexavit et exercuit ecclesiam.*” Calvini Opera, t. XVII, no. 3022, fol. 460-464, Haller to Bullinger, February 27, 1559.

¹⁶ “*Non ergo desunt rationes cur pius magistratus (cuius certe pietatem in hac ipsa causa et actione sic cognovi ut non possim non illam praedicare) non velit omnem et plenam potestatem ipsorum arbitrio concedere.*” Calvini Opera, t. XVII, no. 3022, fol. 460-464, Haller to Bullinger, February 27, 1559.

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