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**Autor**

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# The Spread of Protestantism in Francophone Europe in the First Century of the Reformation\*

By Philip Benedict

As the first mass movement in European history whose dissemination depended on printed propaganda in the vernacular, the Protestant Reformation unfolded at different speeds and assumed different theological hues in Europe's different linguistic areas. In the German speaking regions, thousands of *Flugschriften* spread word of the *causa Lutheri* from Switzerland to the Baltic within a few years of the posting of the 95 theses. Evangelical preachers appeared in many localities by the early 1520s; acts of iconoclasm and other incidents demonstrating open rejection of Catholic practices became frequent by 1523–1524; and a growing number of free cities and duchies of the Holy Roman Empire and the Baltic region instituted territorial Reformations from 1525 onward, occasionally on the initiative of a princely convert, more frequently under pressure from a substantial and aroused fraction of the population won to the cause by the preachers and the printed propaganda. Outside the German linguistic area, the spread of Protestantism was a slower process. The Latin writings of Luther and other early reformers carried their ideas rapidly to university towns or convents, but wider dissemination among the population at large took longer since extensive vernacular propaganda was slow to develop, printing presses and graphic artists being fewer in number in many parts of Europe than in Germany or, where they were equally abundant, clustered in a few localities where they could be subject to tight control.<sup>1</sup> As a result, the critical moment for the implementation or shipwreck of territorial Reformations did not come until the years between 1540 and 1580 in the British

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\* Earlier versions of this essay were presented at the conference “Les protestantismes en Lorraine (XVIe-XXIe siècle)”, Nancy, November 2, 2016 and at an internal seminar of the IHR/MHR of the University of Geneva. I am grateful to the colleagues who offered helpful suggestions on these occasions. More generally, many ideas formulated here are a direct outgrowth of my teaching and learning in the stimulating environment of the IHR and Geneva. I owe a special debt for their assistance and comments to Mathieu Caesar, Christopher Close, Mark Greengrass, Olivier Labarthe, Julien Léonard, Andreas Würzler and two anonymous reviewers for this journal. This article is dedicated to the memory of Alain Dufour.

1. Andrew Pettegree, *The French Book and the European Book World* (Leiden: Brill, 2007), esp. chs. 10, 11, 13.



Isles, France, Italy, the Netherlands and the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. The character of the Reformation movement was also distinctively shaped within each linguistic region by the identity of the reforming voices that obtained the widest dissemination in its vernacular.

These features of the European Reformation argue for organizing accounts of its history by linguistic regions, but national historical traditions can work against this. Such is the case of what we conventionally call the “French Reformation”, the treatment of which stands in revealing contrast with the way in which historians write about the German Reformation. Because the modern German nation-state did not emerge until the nineteenth century and then on the basis of a shared language, it became standard for its historians to bring the entire German linguistic region into their purview when writing about earlier periods. The historiography of the German Reformation has long traced the dissemination of the programs of reform that emerged in Luther’s wake across the scores of more or less autonomous polities of differing economic, social and political character that constituted the German-speaking world of the sixteenth century. This has yielded precious insights into the conditions that either promoted or retarded the growth and implementation of the movement in any given area, illustrating the truth of the common observation that the Holy Roman Empire’s division among so many semi-autonomous polities of different character makes it an exceptional laboratory for comparative historical analysis. By contrast, the precocious medieval growth of the Capetian monarchy to the point where by 1500 it controlled a substantial majority – although by no means all – of the territory of the current French state has generated an enduring focus within French historiography on these core regions and on the gradual extension outward of their institutions. In the domain of religious history, the story of the Reformation and the story of the French crown and its lands have been linked ever Pierre de La Place’s 1565 *Commentaires de l’Estat de la Religion et Republique sous les Rois Henry Francois seconds, et Charles neufieme* and Theodore Beza’s 1580 *Histoire ecclésiastique des Eglises réformées au royaume de France*. Over the subsequent centuries, a few historians, usually non-French nationals, have bounded their studies geographically with reference to the wider francophone linguistic area. Between 1866 and 1897, the Lausanne-based Aimé-Louis Herminjard published nine volumes of his never-completed edition of the correspondence of the “réformateurs dans les pays de langue française.”<sup>2</sup> More recently, the rich scholarly tradition that examines

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2. Aimé-Louis Herminjard, ed., *Correspondance des réformateurs dans les pays de langue française*,

printed evangelical propaganda in French has shown that this topic cannot be understood without looking beyond France's present-day borders and recognizing the role of Antwerp, Neuchâtel and Geneva.<sup>3</sup> Nonetheless, the dominant tradition has always been to conceive and write about the French Reformation within a national framework that not only leaves aside the story of events in Walloon Belgium and the present day *Suisse Romande*, as would be expected for works written with contemporary political boundaries in mind, but also tells a tale that runs from the group of Meaux to the Wars of Religion that makes little or no room for those French-speaking portions of the modern hexagon such as Lorraine or Franche-Comté that stood outside the boundaries of the kingdom in the sixteenth century.<sup>4</sup>

This essay proposes to take the larger French-speaking linguistic area – what I will call for economy of expression “Francophonía” – as its geographic unit of analysis and to sketch the broad contours of Protestantism's diffusion over the first century of the Reformation within this area. In choosing Francophonía as the unit of analysis, I am not seeking to elaborate a specifically linguistic or cultural explanation of the Reformation's success or failure. I am widening the geo-political lens through which we conventionally look at the “French Reformation”. The interest of doing this, I hope to suggest, is at least four-fold. First, enlarging our vision to encompass this broader region highlights the interest and importance of events in a number of smaller territories in the French-speaking borderlands of the Empire whose Reformation history has too often been overlooked or inadequately integrated into general accounts. Second, looking outside the sixteenth-century boundaries of France helps us to see certain dynamics of the movement within it that historians focused exclusively

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9 vols. (Geneva: Georg, 1866–1897) (hereafter Herminjard).

3. Key titles within an ample literature include Gabrielle Berthoud, ed., *Aspects de la propagande religieuse* (Geneva: Droz, 1957); Francis Higman, “Le domaine français, 1520–1562,” in Jean-François Gilmont, ed., *La Réforme et le livre. L'Europe de l'imprimé (1517–v. 1570)*, (Paris: Editions du Cerf, 1990), 105–154; Jean-François Gilmont, Walter Kemp, ed., *Le livre évangélique en français avant Calvin* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2004); Jean-François Gilmont, *Le livre réformé au XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle* (Paris: Bibliothèque nationale de France, 2005).

4. See, for instance, such leading syntheses as Mark Greengrass, *The French Reformation*, (Oxford: Blackwell, 1987); Denis Crouzet, *La genèse de la Réforme française, 1520–1562*, (Paris: SEDES, 1996); and Patrick Cabanel, *Histoire des Protestants de France, XVI<sup>e</sup>-XXI<sup>e</sup> siècle*, (Paris: Fayard, 2012) – not to mention my own “Settlements: France,” in Thomas Brady, Heiko Oberman, James D. Tracy, ed., *Handbook of European History 1400–1600: Late Middle Ages, Renaissance and Reformation*, 2 vols. (Leiden: Brill, 1995), vol. II (1995), 417–454. The volume by Didier Boisson, Hugues Daussy, *Les protestants dans la France moderne* (Paris: Belin, 2006) is a noteworthy exception.

on it have not perceived. Third, trans-territorial links, patterns and processes are brought to light within this larger group of French-speaking polities that enrich our understanding of the broader dynamics of the European Reformation. Finally, thirty to forty entirely or partially French-speaking polities can be discerned on a map of sixteenth-century Europe. (The exact number depends upon the precise date chosen and whether the French-speaking provinces of the Netherlands and the *bailliages communes* of Suisse Romande are individually enumerated or treated as a whole.) In roughly one quarter Protestantism became the legally established religion of state. In another thirty per cent Reformed worship gained a measure of legal toleration alongside Roman Catholicism. This provides a substantial universe of differently sized and organized territories in a linguistic region where the movement spread more slowly and had less ultimate success than in Germany that can be used as a second laboratory for exploring comparatively what facilitated or impeded the dissemination and establishment of Protestantism, as well as terms on which it managed to obtain legal recognition or state support. The historiography of the French Reformation can thus be brought into more fruitful dialogue with that devoted to the German Reformation.

Table 1 specifies the precise universe of territories examined here. Combining into single categories the Walloon provinces of the Netherlands under Habsburg sovereignty and the *bailliages communes* of Suisse Romande, this table not only lists the thirty most important wholly or partially French-speaking polities that comprised Francophonía around 1520. It also classifies them according to their political regime around this date. (Note that Geneva appears twice in this table since its political regime changed early in the century.) The classification by political regime, it must immediately be stressed, somewhat oversimplifies a more complicated reality. Especially in the micro-polities of the western borderlands of the Empire, power and jurisdiction were frequently contested between rival loci of authority and complicated by ties of alliance to neighboring territories. The Swiss Confederation, francophone at its western margins, was perhaps the most complicated political construction of all in an age of complex political arrangements, with its mixture of urban cantons, peasant leagues, allied territories and conquered lands subject to the authority of one or several cantons, all theoretically part of the Holy Roman Empire but in fact acknowledging its sovereignty only on the rare occasions when it served their interests to do so. Furthermore, the geo-political situation of the “pays d’entre deux” was anything but stable. In the fifteenth century, the emergence

of two dominant regional powers, the duchies of Burgundy and Savoy, brought a brief interlude of order, but the crisis of Valois Burgundy and the growing indebtedness and fragility of Savoy late in the century unsettled these borderlands anew. Seeking protection amid the uncertainty, many smaller places close to the Swiss Confederation signed pacts of mutual defense (*combourgeoisie*) with one or several of its cantons, then at the peak of their military power. The Habsburg-Valois rivalry of the sixteenth century then squeezed this region between two expansionist super-powers, precipitating first the Franco-Bernese conquest of the duchy of Savoy in 1536, then the progressive restitution of Savoyard lands after 1555. While certain areas experienced regime changes because of conquest, others saw internal shifts over the course of the century in the balance of power between the rival loci of authority within them. Table 1 therefore also notes the principal transformations undergone by these territories over the century and the duration of any treaties of *combourgeoisie* with Swiss cantons.

**Table 1. The French-Speaking Lands of Sixteenth-Century Europe**

monarchies

France

portions of composite monarchies, duchies or larger kingdoms

Francophone Netherlands (Artois, Hainaut, etc.)

Franche-Comté

Montbéliard (apanage of the duchy of Württemberg)

Channel Islands

duchies and counties

Lorraine and Bar

Savoy

Pays de Vaud taken by Bern in 1536

Chablais ruled by Bern 1536–1564

Pays de Gex ruled by Bern 1536–1564, becomes French in 1601

remainder ruled by France 1536–1555

Béarn

Orange

Sedan and Jametz (the latter taken by Lorraine in 1589)

Neuchâtel (occupied by Swiss Confederation 1512–1529, then allied to several cantons)

Salm

**Table 1 (cont.). The French-Speaking Lands of Sixteenth-Century Europe**ecclesiastical territories

Avignon and Comtat Venaissin

bishopric of Cambrai (taken by the Habsburgs and integrated into the Netherlands 1543)

bishopric of Liège

bishopric of Metz (taken under French protection in 1556)

bishopric of Toul (taken under French protection in 1552)

bishopric of Verdun (taken under French protection in 1552)

bishopric of Basel

bishopric of Geneva (prince-bishop ousted in stages 1525–1535; thereafter a free city allied to several Swiss cantons)

bishopric of Lausanne (taken by Bern in 1536)

Valais (power shifts over century from prince-bishop of Sion to privileged communities)

Swiss cantons or subject territories

Bern

Fribourg

*bailliages communs* of today's canton of Vaud (e.g. Orbe, Echallens)

free cities

Besançon (allied to several Swiss cantons 1518–1533)

Cambrai (taken by Habsburgs and integrated into Netherlands 1543)

Geneva (after c. 1525–1535; allied to several Swiss cantons)

Metz (taken under French protection in 1552)

Toul (taken under French protection in 1552)

Verdun (taken under French protection in 1552)

The polities listed in Table 1 descended rapidly in size from the kingdom of France, Europe's population giant with eighteen million inhabitants, to the duchies and counties of roughly three hundred thousand inhabitants that were Lorraine, Franche-Comté and Savoy, to free cities in the ten- to twenty-thousand range such as Metz, Besançon, and Geneva, and finally to tiny sovereign territories like the principality of Orange or the county of Salm. The focus here will be weighted toward all of the categories of smaller territories other than France in an effort to tilt the balance of the historiography back in their direction.

Before proceeding any farther, an important preliminary question must be addressed: given how different the everyday dialect spoken in rural Wallonia

was from that of Béarn or Savoy, does it even make sense to group all of the polities listed in Table 1 in a single francophone linguistic area? I believe it does. Sixteenth- and seventeenth-century observers did not have a single set of criteria that they used to determine what constituted a distinct language, but many were prepared to consider all of the varieties of *langue d'oc* and *langue d'oïl* as variants of the same language, unlike Breton, Basque, Italian or German. "All these regions speak the French language, even if it differs in a number of places, lower Brittany excepted, which has a separate language," wrote the cosmographer Sebastian Münster about France.<sup>5</sup> For Pierre Du Val, French and Gascon were the "principal idioms" of "the French language."<sup>6</sup> Elsewhere in early modern texts what Du Val called "idioms" were referred to as "languages". Mention can be found, for instance, of the "langue savoyarde" or the "langue forezien."<sup>7</sup> Modern champions of Occitania, or simply scholars using certain definitions of contemporary linguistics, might also classify Franco-Provençal and Occitan as languages distinct from French. But if they are classified as such, it must also be recognized that the great majority of urbanites and many in the countryside where they predominated understood the French of Paris and the Loire Valley well enough to be effectively bilingual. Furthermore, in the middle years of the sixteenth century, French came to be considered less "corrupt" and "barbaric" than Occitan or Franco-Provençal and displaced it as the language of administration and justice such places as Avignon and Savoy, although not Béarn.<sup>8</sup> The effective bilingualism of so much of the population and the growing prestige of the French of Paris and the Loire Valley made it possible for works of propaganda printed in that language to circulate easily across the divide between the *langue d'oïl* and the *langue d'oc*. They made it possible for refugee ministers from northern France to occupy the pulpit in Geneva, where a variant of Fran-

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5. Sebastian Münster, *Cosmographie universelle*, quoted in Paul Cohen, "Torture and Translation in the Multi-Lingual Courtrooms of Early Modern France," *Renaissance Quarterly* 69 (2016): 899–939, here 919.

6. Pierre Du Val, *Description de la France* (1663), quoted in *ibid.*, 919.

7. Paul Cohen, "Qu'est-ce que c'est que le français? Les destins d'une catégorie linguistique, XVIe-XVIIIe siècle," in Dominique Lagorgette, ed., *Repenser l'histoire du français* (Chambéry: Université de Savoie, 2014), 149.

8. Paul Cohen, "Langues et pouvoirs politiques en France sous l'Ancien Régime: cinq anti-lieux de mémoire pour une contre-histoire de la langue française," in Serge Lusignan, France Martineau, Yves-Charles Morin, Paul Cohen, ed., *L'introuvable unité du français. Contacts et variations linguistiques en Europe et en Amérique (XVIe-XVIIIe siècles)* (Quebec: Presses de l'Université Laval, 2012), 30–60, esp. 54–56. On language use in the peripheral regions of France and its borderlands in the sixteenth century, see also the same author's "Torture and Translation" (see note 5).

co-Provençal was the local *patois*. They explain why, when the inhabitants of the Waldensian valleys of Piedmont launched and financed Pierre Olivetan's vernacular translation of the Bible, they had it translated into French, not Franco-Provençal or Occitan. French subsequently became the liturgical language in the Reformed churches established throughout southern France. In the churches of still-autonomous Béarn, more effort was made to promote the use of the local tongue. A 1563 synod decreed that "all Béarnais and Gascon ministers shall preach in their language to the extent of their capability, and those who cannot shall try to speak it." The catechism and the Psalms were translated into Béarnais. But even here preaching seems often to have been in French and the Bible was never translated, whereas in the adjacent Basque-speaking regions of Basse Navarre and Soule ruled by the same dynasty, the Bible was translated, preaching was in Basque, and the difficulty of finding pastors who could speak the language impeded the new faith's effective implantation.<sup>9</sup> All of these considerations argue for treating Francophonia in the context of the Reformation as a coherent linguistic unit whose outermost limits reached as far as Béarn and the Waldensian valleys.<sup>10</sup>

## INITIAL OBSERVATIONS

Viewing the francophone Reformation through this broader lens immediately brings several phenomena into view. The first is the strikingly high percentage of early evangelical preachers and publicists who rapidly broke with the church of Rome rather than seeking reform from within the Catholic church who hailed from either French-speaking regions outside the kingdom of France or the eastern half of the kingdom. Guillaume Farel and two other early Protestant evangelists in Geneva, Antoine Froment and Antoine Saunier, all hailed from Dauphiné. François Lambert, the self-proclaimed "Luther for the French",

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9. Jean-François Courouau, "La Réforme et les langues de France," *Bulletin de la Société de l'Histoire du Protestantisme Français* [henceforward BSHPF] 154 (2008): 513, 517, 522–523; Mark Greengrass, "The Calvinist Experiment in Béarn," in Andrew Pettegree, Alastair Duke, Gillian Lewis, ed., *Calvinism in Europe, 1540–1620* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 119–142, here 132.

10. Cities such as Strasbourg, London or then-German-speaking Sainte-Marie-aux-Mines are however taken here to lie outside the boundaries of Francophonia even though they were home to French-speaking refugee churches of importance for the francophone Reformation as models of ecclesiastical organization and bases for the dissemination of the cause. It simply seems misleading to classify these localities as French-speaking or bilingual.

came from Avignon. Pierre Viret was born and raised in Orbe (Vaud). Jean Chatelain, executed in Metz in January 1525, hailed from Tournai, as did Marie d'Ennetières. Pierre Toussain, the reformer of Montbéliard, was born in Lorraine and held a canonry in Metz before abandoning it. Pierre Brully followed a similar life course, although he had been a Dominican friar in Metz. Calvin and Antoine Marcourt were Picards. It would seem not only that the new theology more quickly reached inhabitants of the eastern half of French-speaking Europe, as is only logical for a movement that came from the east, but also, since some of these early advocates of a wholesale transformation of the established church first encountered Protestant ideas as students in Paris, that those drawn to them from these regions were quicker to abandon hope for reform from within the church and to break with it than the "French of the interior", perhaps because it was easier for them to cross a border into a region that had already embraced the Reformation. Many of the first executions for Protestant heresy also took place in the eastern half of Francophonia: individuals were burned at the stake in Metz and Nancy in 1525, in Paris in 1526 and 1527, in Paris, Besançon, Liège and Tournai in 1528, and in Paris in 1529.<sup>11</sup> The victim in the last case, Louis Berquin, hailed from Artois.

Once they had broken with the established church, many of these men and women – or at least those who escaped early death – moved across political borders throughout Francophonia. Farel is the extreme case. After leaving France and passing through Basel in 1524, he preached during the next eight years in Montbéliard, Aigle, La Neuveville, Neuchâtel, Morat, Orbe, Grandson and other localities of today's Suisse Romande. After a quick side trip to the Val d'Angrogna in Piedmont to build links with the Waldensians, he then played a central role in winning Geneva, Lausanne and the Chablais to Protestantism between 1533 and 1536 and in shaping the new churches there. His life became more sedentary after he was expelled from Geneva in 1538 and became the principal pastor of Neuchâtel, a post he would occupy for the remaining 27 years of his life. He nonetheless left it whenever exciting new opportunities for evangelization presented themselves, travelling to Metz and its vicinity in 1542–1543 and 1565, to the bishopric of Basel in 1556–1557, and to his home town of Gap in 1561–1562. Pierre Viret was scarcely less mobile. He preached

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11. For sources see Table 3 below. Théodore Claparède, *Histoire de la Réformation en Savoie* (Geneva: Cherbuliez, 1893), 34, asserts that a dozen noblemen guilty of spreading heresy were also arrested and decapitated in Savoy in 1528–1529, but the evidence is questionable here.



and ministered in Orbe, Payerne, Lausanne, Geneva, Nîmes, Montpellier, Lyon and Orange before dying in Béarn. The Lorraine native Pierre Brully succeeded Calvin as pastor to the French congregation of Strasbourg in 1541, went to Metz in 1543 and was dispatched to Tournai in September 1544, where he was arrested and executed.

#### FIRST CONQUESTS BETWEEN THE ALPS AND THE VOSGES, 1530–1539

Another phenomenon that quickly comes into view when the angle of vision is widened to encompass all of Francophonia is the importance of bilingual territories controlled by rulers speaking another language as early locations of Protestant state churches and conduits for the wider penetration of Protestant ideas. The prime example is Bern. In the wake of Zurich, and contemporaneously with Basel, Saint-Gall and Schaffhausen, Bern adopted the Reformation and imposed it throughout its territory in 1528. Since its territory included a few French-speaking areas, the Bernese authorities recruited Farel and used him to oversee the implementation of the new church order in these areas, beginning in its small town of Aigle. Bern also governed several common lordships jointly with Fribourg. Pacts of *combourgeoisie* bound it to many other localities in the region, most importantly Neuchâtel, Geneva (from 1526 onward) and Besançon (from 1518 to 1533). Throughout the Swiss Confederation, the common lordships became religiously contested territories whenever some of their overlords embraced the Reformation while others remained loyal to the old faith, for the newly Protestant cantons asserted the principle that evangelical preaching ought to be permitted freely throughout these regions, while the Catholic cantons opposed this. To put a lid on the conflicts that quickly arose, the system of the “Plus” was developed according to which each community in the common lordships could decide its religion by referendum, a system quickly adopted as well by certain other small territories in the region. Like the Zurichers, the Bernese showed themselves willing to protect evangelical preachers when they sought to evangelize in the common lordships or in territories allied by pacts of *combourgeoisie*. It was this protection that not only allowed Farel to preach in so many parts of Suisse Romande between 1528 and 1534, but enabled him to do so in a particularly aggressive fashion that often saw him actively seek to provoke a conflict that would end in court or with his arrest, so that he could then defend his ideas before the local magistrates in an attempt to

demonstrate to them their conformity with the Bible. Bernese protection bailed him out of numerous scrapes, enabled him to win others like Viret to join him in spreading the new Gospel, and finally permitted him and his co-workers to establish Reformed worship via referendum or community action in the great majority of the localities in the Romand common lordships and the county of Neuchâtel, as well as several places in the bishopric of Basel such as La Neuveville and Diesse. In still another common lordship in the region, Echallens, a system of *simultaneum* was established according to which Catholics and Protestants shared the local church, holding services at different hours. Bernese protection was also what allowed Farel, Viret, and Froment to remain for long enough in Geneva to overcome substantial initial hostility in that city and win it for the cause via a 1535 popular uprising that installed Farel in the cathedral pulpit by force and impelled the city authorities to abolish the Mass and seize church property. A year later it was the Bernese conquest of the Pays de Vaud, the Chablais and the Pays de Gex that installed Reformed Protestantism as the only legally permitted faith in all three of these territories. Henceforward, virtually the entire region from the southern shores of Lake Geneva to the Jura as far north as the bishopric of Basel would be Protestant by law.<sup>12</sup> Since the Neuchâtel-Lausanne-Geneva triangle subsequently became by far the most important region of production of evangelical literature and ideas in French, and since the Calvinist tenor of the literature produced in this region would finish by marginalizing within the French-speaking world all other visions of what an evangelical reformation might look like, one sees Bern's fundamental importance for the francophone Reformation.<sup>13</sup> It may also be worth noting here

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12. The essential guide to the spread of the Reformation throughout Suisse Romande is *Guillaume Farel 1489–1565. Biographie nouvelle écrite d'après les documents originaux par un groupe d'historiens, professeurs et pasteurs de Suisse, de France et d'Italie* (Neuchâtel-Paris: Delachaux and Niestlé, 1930), chs. 3–12. Lionel Bartolini, *Une résistance à la Réforme dans le Pays de Neuchâtel. Le Landeron et sa région (1530–1562)* (Neuchâtel: Alphil, 2006) also reveals well the complex networks of protection and support that shaped the course of the Reformation in the region. For Geneva, Victor van Berchem, "Une prédication dans un jardin (15 avril 1533). Episode de la Réforme genevoise," in *Festschrift Hans Nabholz* (Zurich: Leemann, 1934), 151–170; and Henri Naef, *Les origines de la Réforme à Genève* (Geneva: A. Jullien, 1936) usefully supplement *Guillaume Farel*.

13. Highlighted already by Euan Cameron, *The European Reformation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 223–225. On the centrality of the Neuchâtel-Lausanne-Geneva triangle in the production of French evangelical propaganda 1530–1560: Gilmont, *Livre réformé au XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle* (see note 3); Philip Benedict, "Refugee Churches and Exile Centers in the French Reformation," in id., Silvana Seidel Menchi, Alain Tallon, ed., *La Réforme en France et en Italie. Contacts, comparaisons et contrastes* (Rome: Ecole Française de Rome, 2007), 535–552, here 543.

that many of the printers who played central roles in the Reformed conquest of French evangelical opinion after establishing shops in Neuchâtel and Geneva also hailed from France's eastern borderlands, Pierre de Vingle, the publisher of the placards of 1534, being another Picard, Jean Girard, Calvin's first printer in Geneva, a Waldensian *barbe* (pastor) from the Piedmont, Jean Crespin, the publisher of numerous works of history including the first Protestant martyrologies in French, from Artois, and Francois Perrin from Lorraine.<sup>14</sup>

But it was not only around Lake Geneva and thanks to Bern's extensive possessions and networks of influence that sovereigns speaking another language established Protestant state churches in French-speaking areas. This happened as well in the county of Montbéliard, an apanage of the dukes of Württemberg whose duchy was the scene of a political revolution in 1534 of fundamental importance for the fate of Protestantism throughout South Germany. Fifteen years earlier, duke Ulrich had been placed under imperial ban for his extreme violence against his vassals and neighbors, driven from Stuttgart, and replaced as direct overlord of the territory by Charles V. But in 1534, with Charles far away in Spain, Philip of Hesse and the Schmalkaldic League helped this "prince of thieves", as Johannes Reuchlin had once called him, regain his territory and transform himself into a champion of the Gospel by implementing a territorial Reformation. Ulrich then bridged the linguistic divide by sending to Montbéliard Pierre Toussain, who oversaw the transformation of the territory's church order in stages between 1537 and 1539. (See Table 2.) While broadly Reformed in theological outlook, Toussain parted company from Calvin on the issues of predestination and whether magistrates should punish heresy with death. Had the Neuchâtel-Lausanne-Genève triangle not already been won to the cause, Montbéliard might have become a center for the dissemination throughout French-speaking Europe of a version of Protestantism with a different accent.<sup>15</sup>

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14. Although two leading lights of the Paris publishing world, Josse Bade and Robert Estienne, became Calvin's preferred printers after arriving in Geneva in 1549 and 1550.

15. Harald Schukraft, "Le duc Ulrich de Wurtemberg, prince de la Réforme," in *La Réforme dans l'espace germanique au XVIe siècle. Images, représentations, diffusion* (Montbéliard: Société d'Emulation de Montbéliard, 2005), 69–85; Thomas A. Brady, Jr., *Protestant Politics: Jacob Sturm (1489–1553) and the German Reformation* (Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press, 1995), 81–86; John Viénot, *Histoire de la Réforme dans le pays de Montbéliard depuis les origines jusqu'à la mort de P. Toussain, 1524–1573* (Montbéliard: Imprimerie Montbéliardaise, 1900).

**Table 2. Changes in the Montbéliard Church Order, 1534–1577**

1534	Restoration of duke Ulrich in Württemberg
1535	Pierre Toussain arrives in Montbéliard
1537	Confraternities abolished and their revenue redirected to education
1538	Mass outlawed
1539	Ecclesiastical ordinance institutes a new liturgy shaped by Farel's <i>Maniere et Façon</i>
1548	Augsburg Interim imposed
1552	1539 church order restored
1577	Lutheran Formula of Concord imposed

### THE CHANNEL ISLANDS

The Channel Islands were still another French-speaking region to undergo a Reformation imposed on the initiative of a ruling prince speaking another language, first after Edward VI altered the English church order in a Protestant manner in 1549 and 1552, and then again after Elizabeth I restored the 1552 order in 1559. So marginal were these islands to the concerns of the English crown, however, that the authorities did not even take the trouble to have the *Second Book of Common Prayer* translated into French for liturgical use in Jersey and Guernsey. In consequence, the liturgy and institutions that took hold under Elizabeth were those of the Reformed churches of France.<sup>16</sup> As in Montbéliard, whose church was initially more Reformed than Lutheran even though Lutheranism prevailed in Württemberg, the need to rely on French-language pastors and books gave the church of this French-speaking satellite of a larger polity characteristics different from that of the larger territory to which it was subject – a further illustration of the value of paying attention to linguistic areas in recounting the story of the European Reformation. With Geneva already by now well established as the francophone Reformed city on a hill, however, the Channel Islands were too small and too feebly linked by commercial ties to the

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16. Darryl Mark Ogier, *Reformation and Society in Guernsey* (Woodbridge, Suffolk: Boydell, 1996).

Continent to play much of a role in fostering the wider spread of the Reformation in French-speaking lands, even if in 1559 a minister came monthly from there to pastor to a few Reformed congregations taking shape on the Cotentin peninsula of Normandy, and even if the islands subsequently served on several occasions as a place of refuge for Huguenot ministers driven from France in times of persecution.

#### THE FRANCOPHONE FREE IMPERIAL CITIES AND THE LIMITS OF BERNESE PROTECTION, 1530–1545

During the 1530s Reformed Protestantism became the established religion of Geneva, Montbéliard, the Chablais, the Pays de Gex, and nearly all of the county of Neuchâtel and the modern-day Pays de Vaud, but it also found that its chances of rapid success diminished sharply whenever it sought to expand beyond the reach of Bernese influence between the Alps and the Jura. This was not for want of trying. From their redoubts on the margins of the Confederation, the leading French-language reformers watched for opportunities to open a wider breach for their ideas and turned to the secular authorities of the lands in which they worked or mobilized their network of evangelical allies in search of support for persecuted brethren elsewhere. First Farel and Viret, then later Calvin and Beza as well, spoke or wrote to the Protestant authorities of Switzerland and Germany on at least four occasions to urge them to offer resettlement to the Waldensians of Piedmont and Provence facing intensified persecution (in 1535) or have them pressure the rulers of Savoy and France to treat their Waldensian subjects more mildly (in 1538–1539, 1540–1541 and 1557).<sup>17</sup> When Antoine Saunier was imprisoned in Pignerolo in 1535 on his way to the valleys of Piedmont, the Bernese claimed that he was under their protection and warned the duke of Savoy that if he was not released, they would have to “use similar rigor towards your subjects.”<sup>18</sup> In 1536, Farel swayed the Burgermeister and Council of Basel to ask the Protestant mercenary commander in French service, count William of Fürstenberg, if he might not be able to prevail

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17. Herminjard (see note 2), vol. III, doc. 521, 327–332; vol. V, doc. 752, 149; vol. VI, doc. 835, 124n, doc. 865, 226–230, 397n; vol. IX, doc. 745bis, 459–460; Arturo Pascal, “Le Ambascerie dei Cantoni et dei Principi Protestanti di Svizzera e Germania al Re di Francia in favore dei Valdesi durante il periodo della dominazione francese in Piemonte (1535–1559): contributo ad una Storia diplomatica dei Valdesi del Piemonte,” *Bollettino storico-bibliografico subalpino* 18 (1913): 80–119.

18. Herminjard (see note 2), vol. III, docs. 528–529, 351–355; vol. V, doc. 765, 221.

upon Francis I to free those held in his prisons on charges of heresy and to allow those who had fled the country for religion's sake to return home.<sup>19</sup> In 1537, the Avoyer and Council of Bern were induced to write to the Parlement of Dôle asking it in the name of "all divine and human laws, not to mention Christian charity," to release the women and children who had been taken into custody in the absence of their husbands and fathers, who had fled to Bernese territory for religious reasons.<sup>20</sup> Three years later, on the urging of the pastors of Montbéliard and Neuchâtel, the same authorities wrote to the officials of little Saint-Hippolyte admonishing them "by the power of the hereditary bourgeoisie that obligates you to us" to release two ministers "detained by you and held in narrow and harsh imprisonment" after being seized on the road between the two towns.<sup>21</sup>

Germany's free imperial cities proved particularly receptive to the Reformation message and were central hubs for its dissemination. In Geneva, the triumph of the Reformation went hand in hand with the consolidation of its status as a free city. It is not surprising, therefore, that the francophone reformers saw the most important French-speaking free imperial cities of Franche-Comté and Lorraine, Besançon and Metz, as particularly inviting targets for evangelization, and this even before Geneva had gained its independence and been won for the Reformation. When, at the beginning of 1524, François Lambert felt himself "called by the Lord to leave Saxony to [...] preach the Gospel" to those speaking his native tongue, the first city he struck out for was Metz. Quickly forced out of that city, he addressed himself from a safe distance eighteen months later to "the noble, powerful and celebrated city of Besançon, capital of the county of Burgundy" by dedicating to it a commentary on the lesser prophets published in Strasbourg. "May God see fit to light his flame in your midst, so that by your means first Burgundy and then all of France might fall victim to this fire!", he exhorted.<sup>22</sup> Despite early executions, the new faith soon won adepts in both cities. By the 1530s, evangelical groups including members of the urban elite had taken shape. A moment then arose in each when it looked to the francophone reformers as if conditions were ripe to win permission for Protestant worship. They mobilized support from the secular authorities of nearby territories and set out to win the city over. But in each case, their hopes would be dashed.

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19. *Ibid.*, vol. IV, doc. 578, 99–100. Fürstenberg subsequently became an important protector of the Piedmontese Waldensians and of evangelicals in and around Metz.

20. *Ibid.*, vol. IV, doc. 626, 224–225.

21. *Ibid.*, vol. VI, docs. 882–883, 276–278.

22. *Ibid.*, vol. I, doc. 155, 371, 373.

In Besançon, the decisive confrontation came between 1536 and 1538.<sup>23</sup> By 1536, Protestant sympathizers occupied several key positions of authority in the town. Tension ran high with the archbishop, at odds with the city over tax exemptions he claimed for wine produced on his domains. Following the arrest of a goldsmith found with a Bible printed in Neuchâtel that the suffragan deemed “false and riddled with errors”, the pastors of Neuchâtel, sensing an opportunity, had its council write the “magnificent, noble, prudent and wise lord governors and councillors of the imperial city of Besançon, our honored lords, singular friends and most agreeable good neighbors” asking them not only to return the Bible to its owner, but also to allow their ministers to come debate and rebut the suffragan’s false appraisal of it, which they called an affront to Neuchâtel’s honor.<sup>24</sup> By this date, it was a well-established tactic of Farel and his colleagues to seek to provoke a theological debate before the local authorities. The Besançon councillors did not take the bait, replying simply that Neuchâtel was misinformed and that they intended to “live in the future as in the past”. Neuchâtel turned to Bern for support, but the Bernese, who may have felt that their plate was already full enough after the recent seizure of Lausanne, Vaud, Gex and the Chablais, counselled patience.<sup>25</sup> This strategy seemed to work when the goldsmith received a light sentence from Besançon’s municipal court despite a letter from the Emperor urging severity. Calvin and Farel now dispatched the pastor of Aigle, Jean de Tournai, to see “if the harvest was ripe.”<sup>26</sup> But de Tournai could not gain admission to the city. In the town elections of the summer of 1537 Antoine de Perrenot de Granville pulled strings to assure the defeat of the anti-episcopal and anti-imperial party. The year after that, one of the leaders of this party, the municipal secretary Jean Lambelin, was executed on charges of heresy, fraud and subversion. By 1540 the religious orientation of the city authorities had changed so dramatically that the Bernese felt compelled to write to complain that “the other free cities of the Empire” do not handle heresy cases “as rigorously as you.”<sup>27</sup> The deep background to this turn toward the vigorous defense of the old faith was the reinforcement of ties between the city and the

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23. For Besançon’s history I have relied principally on *Histoire de Besançon, vol. I: Des origines à la fin du XVIe siècle* (Paris: Nouvelle librairie de France, 1964), chs. 5–7; Lucien Febvre, *Philippe II et la Franche-Comté* (Paris: Flammarion, 1970), ch. 14.

24. Herminjard (see note 2), vol. VI, doc. 597a, 455.

25. *Ibid.*, vol. IV, docs. 605, 613, 173–175, 194.

26. Febvre, *Philippe II et la Franche-Comté* (see note 23), 282.

27. Herminjard (see note 2), vol. VI, doc. 879, 270.

Emperor in the decade following Granvelle's selection to the post of municipal judge in 1527. As Charles V's close advisor, he was able to obtain numerous imperial favors for the city and to convince it not to renew the 1518 pact of *combourgeoisie* with Bern, Fribourg and Solothurn when this expired in 1533. In 1536 Besançon's Council even decreed that the bells should be rung every day at noon to summon the city's habitants to kneel and pray for the Emperor. If Geneva had turned Swiss in the decade prior to 1536, Besançon had turned Imperial. It could disregard appeals to friendship and good neighborliness from Neuchâtel and Bern.<sup>28</sup>

In Metz, what would prove to be the first of two key showdowns came in 1542–1543 and involved a larger cast of external actors.<sup>29</sup> Here, a significant evangelical group that met regularly to read the Bible and sing psalms seems to have taken shape by 1538. Its network of contacts encompassed Farel, Calvin, Toussain, Martin Bucer in Strasbourg and Ambrosius Blaurer in Constance. After the 1541 Diet of Regensburg confirmed the Nuremberg Recess, Metz's evangelicals presented an initial request for rights of worship to the city's Council of Thirteen. When one of theirs, Gaspard de Heu, was named Maître-Echevin the following year, hopes for obtaining freedom of worship increased and they presented another request. De Heu also encouraged Farel to come preach, which he did just outside the city walls and then at de Heu's country house at Montigny-lès-Metz, before being forced to stop each time by a hostile majority within the Council of Thirteen. Some months later he resumed again twenty kilometers away at Gorze, whose chateau had recently been placed under the command of William of Fürstenberg. This Protestant condottiere also was embroiled in a lawsuit with the city over an affront to his honor. His suit and the question of whether the Protestants could assemble for worship became intertwined. In a form of dispute resolution often used in the Empire, a panel of mediators was convoked to resolve these disputes. As all this was unfold-

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28. The allusion is of course to Thomas A. Brady Jr., *Turning Swiss: Cities and Empire 1450–1550* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), which however leaves the French-speaking Imperial cities out of its account.

29. The pertinent documentation has now been assembled together with much helpful commentary in Guillaume Farel, *Traité messins*, ed. Reinhard Bodenmann, Françoise Briegel, Olivier Labarthe, vol. 1 (Geneva: Droz, 2009), 3–17, 229–371; vol. 2, forthcoming. I thank Olivier Labarthe for providing me access to volume 2 before its publication. Until the second volume appears, the pages by Henri Strohl in *Guillaume Farel* (see note 12), 483–503, remain the best introduction to the events in Metz. Also useful are Henri Tribut de Morembert, *La Réforme à Metz, vol. I: Le Luthéranisme 1519–1552* (Nancy: Annales de l'Est, 1969), chs. 6–9; Brady, *Protestant Politics* (see note 15), 174–181.



ing, Metz's Protestants sought and won backing from Strasbourg, Frankfurt, Hesse and the Schmalkaldic League. The Catholic majority in the Council of Thirteen turned to the duke of Lorraine, the bishop of Metz, the regent of the Netherlands Mary of Hungary, and the king of France. Finally, the matter was resolved less through mediation than through force. At the behest of the Cardinal of Lorraine, bishop of Metz and former abbot of Gorze, duke Claude de Guise dispatched his son François d'Aumale with troops. The assemblies at Gorze were broken up, several participants were killed, and Farel had to flee in disguise in a leper's cart. The mediators' decision gave permission for Protestant assemblies to resume in Metz itself, but the Council of Thirteen stalled this by appealing to the Emperor. Farel meanwhile summoned Calvin to Strasbourg, from whence the two of them solicited Metz to permit a disputation. Charles V, now back from Spain and determined to act against German Protestantism, overruled the grant of worship rights to Metz's Protestants. No disputation was arranged, and Calvin returned to Geneva.

The ample literature on the Reformation in the German free imperial cities has shown that where these cities were located amid duchies that remained predominantly loyal to Rome and in close proximity to lands under direct Imperial rule, their governors often either hesitated for a long time before declaring for the Reformation, as in Augsburg, or never transformed the local church in a Protestant direction despite a strong Protestant presence in the city, as in Cologne.<sup>30</sup> In Metz and Besançon, too, the regional balance of power between the rival confessions seems to have weighed heavily in determining the course and outcome of the Reformation-era struggles. The support from nearby Protestant territories rallied by the evangelicals in both free imperial cities was outweighed by the strength of the Emperor and other nearby Catholic powers. The show-down of 1536–1538 did not put an end to all Protestant opinion in Besançon. Small numbers of residents would continue to be drawn to the cause in subsequent decades, especially during its greatest period of expansion throughout Francophonia during the 1560s. The city would experience a significant alarm

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30. Friedrich Roth, *Augsburgs Reformationsgeschichte*, 4 vols. (Munich: Ackermann, 1901–1911), vol. 2 (1904); Andreas Gössner, *Weltliche Kirchenhoheit und reichsstädtische Reformation. Die Augsburger Ratspolitik des "milden und mileren weges" 1520–1534* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1999); R.W. Scribner, "Why Was There No Reformation in Cologne?" *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research* 49 (1976): 217–241. More broadly, Christopher W. Close, *The Negotiated Reformation. Imperial Cities and the Politics of Urban Reform, 1525–1550* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009) emphasizes the importance of regional political and power constellations in shaping the course and fate of urban reform efforts.

in 1575 when residents banished for heresy organized from Montbéliard an expeditionary force of Swiss and Palatinate soldiers that attempted to surprise the city with the aid of sympathizers within the walls. But this attempt failed and Catholic uniformity was ultimately successfully imposed. In the case of Metz, on the other hand, the showdown of 1542–1543 would not permanently determine the city's confessional makeup, since the regional balance of power would change when the French crown moved in as the city's protector in 1552. What happened then will be examined later.

#### UNDERGROUND DISSEMINATION OUTSIDE THE BERNESE SPHERE OF DOMINION, 1535–1560

The Protestants' failure to establish and win toleration for regularly assembling churches in either Besançon or Metz prefigured more than a decade of difficulties for the cause in French-speaking Europe. After six regions became largely or exclusively Protestant between 1530 and 1539, the years from 1540 to 1559 witnessed just one such triumph, in the Channel Islands. In 1544, a network of "brothers" in Tournai and Valenciennes contacted Bucer and Calvin for help in combating some Anabaptists who had appeared in the region. They sent Pierre Brully to Tournai in response. He was arrested and burned.<sup>31</sup> Within the kingdom of France, in Sainte-Foy in Guyenne in 1541 and in Meaux in 1546, adepts chose one of their own to oversee regular secret worship services. The gatherings quickly came to the attention of the authorities, arrests and executions followed, and the groups were broken up and scattered.<sup>32</sup> In Lyon, Troyes and Bourges, clandestine conventicles that took shape in the late 1540s managed to celebrate the sacraments at least intermittently while remaining under the radar of the authorities, but organizationally speaking this was the best the cause could do until the number of clandestine churches began to multiply

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31. Gérard Moreau, *Histoire du Protestantisme à Tournai jusqu'à la veille de la Révolution des Pays-Bas* (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1962), ch. 2.

32. Jean Crespin, *Histoire des martyrs persecutez et mis à mort pour la verité de l'Evangile, depuis le temps des Apostres jusques à present (1619)*, 3 vols., ed. Daniel Benoit (Toulouse: Société des livres religieux, 1885–1889), vol. I (1885), 348–352; Henry Patry, ed., *Les débuts de la Réforme protestante en Guyenne 1523–1559: Arrêts du Parlement* (Bordeaux: Camille Jullian, 1912), 1, 4–5, 8–9; [Theodore Beza], *Histoire ecclésiastique des Eglises Réformées au Royaume de France*, 3 vols., ed. G. Baum, E. Cunitz (Paris: Fischbacher, 1883–1889) (henceforward HE), vol. I (1883), 67–70.

after 1555.<sup>33</sup> Insofar as it is possible to speak of the continued expansion of Protestantism in French-speaking Europe between 1540 and 1555/1560 – and a degree of expansion did take place – it took the form of the clandestine diffusion of Reformed publications in ever greater numbers from the cause's bases around Lake Geneva, the winning of secret converts to these ideas in a growing number of localities, and the already-noted tendency for Calvin's ideas and the Genevan model of worship and church organization to marginalize all rival visions of what a truly evangelical church might look like.

The best source for tracing the geography of this underground growth is undoubtedly the "livre des habitants" maintained by Geneva's authorities between 1549 and 1560 to keep track of the religious refugees pouring into the city to escape persecution.<sup>34</sup> Fifty years ago, Robert Mandrou produced an illuminating but impossible-to-reproduce map representing the place of origin of the five thousand people recorded in that volume through, for every locality from which at least one new inhabitant came, a circle of a size proportional to the number of those who left it.<sup>35</sup> If one traces the sixteenth-century border of France over that map, it immediately becomes apparent that many more refugees came from inside the kingdom of France than from the French-speaking lands just outside its borders, even though these latter were often closer to Geneva.<sup>36</sup> For instance, 207 new inhabitants came from French-controlled Champagne, but only 59 from Lorraine, the neighboring province immediately to the east then outside the Valois kingdom; 157 new inhabitants came from the French duchy of Burgundy, but only 36 from Imperial Franche-Comté and the free city of Besançon to its east. Descending to the level of individual cities, more than a hundred arrived from Rouen, 46 from Troyes and 43 from Meaux, but the French-speaking town outside the kingdom's contemporary borders to send the

33. *HE*, I, 72–3, 101; Natalie Zemon Davis, "The Protestant Printing Workers of Lyons in 1551" in Berthoud, ed., *Aspects de la propagande religieuse* (see note 3), 247–257; Penny Roberts, *A City in Conflict: Troyes during the French Wars of Religion* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1996), 52–54; Jonathan Reid, "French evangelical networks before 1555: Proto-churches?," in Benedict, Seidel Menchi, Tallon, eds., *Réforme en France et en Italie* (see note 13), 108–116; Archives d'Etat de Genève, Registres du Consistoire, 17, f. 126v (1 août 1560).

34. Paul-F. Geisendorff, ed., *Le livre des habitants de Genève, I: 1549–1560* (Geneva: Droz, 1957).

35. Robert Mandrou, "Les Français hors de France aux XVIe et XVIIe siècles," *Annales: Economies, Sociétés, Civilisations* 14 (1959): unpaginated folded map.

36. For the purpose of identifying immigration to Geneva for religious reasons, the cloud of Savoyard localities immediately to the south of Geneva that appears on Mandrou's map must be overlooked, as this was the city's traditional economic recruitment basin.

most refugees to Geneva, Avignon, sent only 16. Nearby Valréas, also in Papal territory, sent a further eight, as did Orange, underscoring the importance of Protestantism in and around the Comtat Venaissin, not to mention the danger of living too close to the Pope's inquisitors. The other francophone towns from outside the kingdom to send the most refugees to Geneva were Tournai, Arras and Valenciennes in the Netherlands (9, 7 and 6 immigrants respectively), and Saint-Mihiel, Metz and Vézelize in Lorraine (7, 5 and 4). The tally of those who left an area for Geneva is not a perfect measure of clandestine Reformed Protestantism's dissemination across French-speaking Europe; for the Netherlands in particular, the numbers underestimate the strength of the movement, since the majority of those who fled the particularly intense persecution there went to nearby German cities or England. Even keeping this caveat in mind, the map nonetheless strongly suggests that the band of territories running from Namur and Liège in the north though Savoy in the south was less touched by Protestantism's clandestine diffusion in this period than all of the kingdom of France except Lower Brittany, the Massif Central and the thinly populated southwestern Landes. Southeastern Belgium's French-speaking areas were also less touched than the northwestern ones. Here is an interesting pattern revealed through our wider lens that cries out for further investigation and elucidation.

A few preliminary hypotheses might be advanced. One possibility is that the spread of heresy could be controlled more efficaciously in small duchies, prince-bishoprics and free cities than in the vast kingdom of France. To judge by the number of executions for heresy or Protestant-linked sedition, however, the repression does not seem to have been especially severe in Lorraine, Franche-Comté or Savoy, although it certainly was, as is already well known, in the Habsburg Netherlands, and also in the bishopric of Liège, where alarm bells were triggered (as in the Habsburg provinces) by the success of Anabaptism in the 1530s and 1540s and the events of the 1566 "Wonderyear". (See Table 3 and recall that France had a population roughly 60 times larger than the three eastern border regions and larger still in proportion to the Walloon regions.) The low number of executions in Lorraine revealed by Table 3 might particularly surprise in light of its dukes' reputation as staunch defenders of Catholicism, and it may be that the impression of moderation in this case is simply an illusion; the archives of repression have been less well studied for Lorraine and may be less well preserved. But it is also the case that, while duke Antoine crushed the local expression of the 1525 Peasants' War in one of the worst bloodbaths of that event, and while his court poets would continue to praise this deed for de-

Table 3. Executions for heresy or sedition/iconoclasm linked to Protestant agitation in Francophone Europe

	France	Savoy	Lorraine	Besançon	Franche-Comté	Liège	Tournaisis	other Walloon provinces
1520–1529	4	12?*	2	1	1520–1529	1520–1529	1	1
1530–1539	65	2	1–4?	1	1530–1539	1		
1540–1549	177		2		1540–1554	8	21	30
1550–1559	154	9	1					
1560–1569	unknown (500?)		5–6	1	1555–1566	5	3	30
1570–1579				18	1566–1575	7	24	200
1580–1589					1580–1589			
1590–1599					1590–1599			
1600–1609				1	1600–1609			

\* These executions are mentioned only by Claparède, *Réformation en Savoie* (see note 11), p. 34, on the basis of a letter of the bishop of Aosta.

Sources: William Monter, *Judging the French Reformation: Heresy Trials by Sixteenth-Century Parliaments* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1999); id., “Heresy Executions in Reformation Europe, 1520–1565”, in Ole Peter Grell, Bob Scribner, ed., *Tolerance and Intolerance in the European Reformation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), esp. 55; Febvre, *Réforme et Inquisition en Franche-Comté* (see note 39), esp. 153; *Histoire de Besançon* (see note 23), I, 618–32; for Lorraine: Hugues Marsat, “Jean Errard, entre loyauté dynastique et engagement confessionnel. En guise d’introduction à l’étude des calvinistes lorrains (XVIe–XVIIe siècles)”, *BSHPF* 153 (2007): 12n (which notes a “petit nombre indéterminé” of executions in 1539); id., “Charles III et les Protestants” (see note 37): 173; William Monter, *A Bewitched Duchy: Lorraine and its Dukes, 1477–1736* (Geneva: Droz, 2007), 42.

cares, the most recent studies of the policies of the duchy's rulers from Antoine to Charles III suggest that the subsequent rulers and regents often tolerated at their courts people known to hold Protestant ideas and were more given to forbid and at times actively disperse Protestant assemblies than they were to have recourse to the death penalty for heresy.<sup>37</sup> Of course, effective thought control need not rely on frequent executions; tight surveillance of religious observance and banned books can suffice. In this context, the fact that several inhabitants of Besançon were banished in 1558 for failing to "receive their creator at Easter" and that one man was expelled in 1573 for having corresponded with religious exiles living in Montbéliard may be telling signs of particularly tight surveillance in at least that city; I know of no cases of people banned from France for failing to take Easter communion, even though parish priests were occasionally ordered to report non-communicants.<sup>38</sup> More careful comparative studies of the everyday surveillance of belief in these territories are needed before we can dismiss the possibility that the authorities prevented the spread of heresy in the region running from Liège to Savoy by keeping particularly close watch over the population. It seems clear that they did not burn it out.

Another explanation for the relative weakness of Protestantism in the French-speaking territories from the Meuse to the mountains of Savoy might lie in their low level of urbanization and distance from sixteenth-century Europe's main commercial routes. Lucien Febvre's century-old but still outstanding analysis of the repression of heresy in Franche-Comté not only highlights the relative autarchy of that province; it shows that the only localities within it that gave rise to multiple heresy trials before the Parlement of Dôle were Moirans, Orgelet and Lons-le-Saunier, three stops on the route from Geneva to Dijon, and the little market town of Saint-Amour, on the road from Lyon to Lons. Commercial links with the wider world, especially with Lyon and Geneva, clearly promoted such limited penetration as Protestantism achieved

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37. Hugues Marsat, "Charles III et ses protestants (1559–1608)," *Annales de l'Est* 63 (2013): 169–189, here 170, 174–178; Alain Cullière, "L'esprit de réforme dans l'entourage de Charles III," paper delivered at the international conference "Les protestantismes en Lorraine (XVIe–XXIe siècle)," Nancy, 3 november 2016.

38. Maurice Cadix, *Essai historique sur la Réforme à Besançon au XVIe siècle* (Montauban: Imprimerie coopérative, 1905), 110, 143. Similar vigilance is suggested by a Liège law of 1539 forbidding inhabitants to correspond with relatives banished for religious reasons, but it is not known how it was enforced. Léon-E. Halkin, *Réforme Protestante et Réforme Catholique au diocèse de Liège: Histoire religieuse des règnes de Corneille de Berghes et de Georges d'Autriche princes-évêques de Liège (1538–1557)* (Liège: Faculté de philosophie et lettres, 1936), 93.

in Franche-Comté.<sup>39</sup> Low urbanization and relative commercial isolation also characterized some of the large blank spaces inside France on the Mandrou map, most notably the Massif Central and the Landes.<sup>40</sup>

Still another hypothesis might be that Francophonia's eastern borderlands had a distinctive religious sensibility that made them resistant to Protestantism. René Taveneaux famously labeled the lands of ancient Lotharingia Europe's "dorsale catholique", and preliminary results of a collective research project undertaken by scholars from eight universities throughout the region suggest that it may have been characterized by a unique mix of religious orders and devotional practices from the Middle Ages onward.<sup>41</sup>

Finally, one can wonder if the refugee community in Geneva did not prioritize the kingdom of France as it organized its increasingly sophisticated network for disseminating clandestine propaganda. France's size clearly made it the prize to shoot for.

#### THE FRENCH SPRING, 1554–1571

Around 1554–1555, the phase that we have just described characterized above all by the clandestine diffusion of Reformed ideas gave way to a second period of rapid change whose central phenomenon was the creation of structured Reformed churches, most often established independently of the secular authorities, that quickly attained rights of worship in six of the territories listed in Table 1. The great tectonic shifts of this period would have aftershocks in the form of recurrent civil war in France and the Netherlands that would continue until the end of the century and at times modify the terms of the initial rights granted. The years between 1554 and 1571 – especially the five years 1561–1566 – were nonetheless those when the most fundamental alterations took place. They will be focus of the pages to follow. The epicenter of change now moved to France.

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39. Lucien Febvre, *Notes et documents sur la Réforme et l'inquisition en Franche-Comté* (Paris: Champion, 1911), esp. 95.

40. The same cannot be said for Lower Brittany, the last region inside France that stands out on the Mandrou map as exceptionally impervious to Protestantism. It enjoyed one of its greatest periods of commercial activity and prosperity in the sixteenth century. For this Breton-speaking portion of the province, language, not commercial isolation, holds the explanatory key.

41. The Agence Nationale de la Recherche project "Chrétientés lotharingiennes – Dorsale catholique, IXe-XVIIIe siècles" began in 2014 and involves researchers from the universities of Artois, Liège, Luxembourg, Lorraine, Franche-Comté, Lyon, Chambéry and Milan. I thank Yves Krumenacker for information about its still provisional early results.

What happened in the kingdom overflowed its borders and set the tone for the entire region.

What happened in France itself has long been at the center of the story of the French Reformation and so can be summarized in staccato form. 1554: Calvin begins to encourage those who have seen the light not simply to abstain from participating in idolatrous Catholic practices, but to establish churches of their own guided by a consistory, as some Parisians do in the following year. 1558: Calvin establishes contact with members of the court aristocracy drawn to the faith; soon noble conversions become so numerous that Blaise de Monluc will write that at the beginning of 1562 “every good mother’s son wanted a taste.” 1559: a meeting subsequently recognized as the first national synod of the French Reformed churches establishes a system to federate the assemblies established to date into a structured whole capable of coordinated action at the national level. During the summer of 1560, and then with still great intensity and audacity from early 1561 to early 1562, over five hundred new local churches take shape and see their membership grow rapidly. Many dare to begin assembling in public. Some, especially in Languedoc and Aquitaine, take over churches for their own use, drive out the Catholic clergy and bring an end to the celebration of the Mass. During the short reign of Francis II (July 1559 to December 1560) a fraction of the noble converts, leading pastors and ordinary church members plot together to drive the king’s in-laws of the house of Guise from the dominant position within the Conseil Privé and force a relaxation of the enforcement of the laws against heresy. When their efforts fail but Francis II dies, the churches through their synodal network multiply requests and petitions to the new regency government that they be allowed to defend their beliefs before the king, granted freedom of worship, and given buildings in which to assemble.<sup>42</sup> Ultimately, their persistence and strength is such that the January 1562 Edict of Saint-Germain grants them legal toleration. But this edict cannot hold. The First Civil War breaks out a few months later. It ends in March 1563 with another edict granting toleration on modified terms. The

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42. These initiatives, less well known than the other aspects of the history of these years, are illuminated in Philip Benedict, Nicolas Fornerod, ed., *L'organisation et l'action des Églises réformées de France, 1557–1563: Synodes provinciaux et autres documents* (Geneva: Droz, 2012). For the general growth and political action of the Reformed churches, see Lucien Romier, *La Conjuración d'Amboise* (Paris: Perrin, 1923); id., *Catholiques et huguenots à la cour de Charles IX* (Paris: Perrin, 1924); Crouzet, *Genèse* (see note 4), chs. 4–5; and Hugues Daussy, *Le parti huguenot. Chronique d'une désillusion (1557–1572)* (Geneva: Droz, 2014), part 1.



cycle of the religious wars has begun, a cycle in which Reformed worship will be formally outlawed, although never fully closed down, on several further occasions, only to see its toleration confirmed at each conflict's end. While the cycle of violence would last for a generation, France can be legitimately considered a bi-confessional country from January 1562 onward.<sup>43</sup>

But France was not the only territory where Calvin encouraged the foundation of counter-churches and to which pastors went forth from Geneva to head them. The already-established contacts between the Neuchâtel-Lausanne-Geneva triangle and the Waldensians of Piedmont made the once and future duchy of Savoy a second prime target for "missionary" activity. Between 1555 and 1559, 21 ministers left the NLG Triangle or Montbéliard for the Waldensian valleys to build and direct churches on the Genevan model there, meeting a demand for regular preaching and services that was so strong that when the first ministers sent from Geneva arrived early in 1555 expecting to work in secret, they were pressured by the inhabitants to preach openly by day.<sup>44</sup> When the 1559 peace of Cateau-Cambrésis restored most of the duchy to Emmanuel-Philibert, he sought to close these churches and re-impose Catholicism by force. In response, the inhabitants of the valleys took up arms so effectively that they forced him to cede them rights of worship by the peace of Cavour of 6 June 1561. Savoy thus became *de jure* bi-confessional seven months before France, a step that in turn influenced the latter country, since the peace of Cavour was known in Paris within a month of its promulgation and discussed at the special assembly of notables and judges of the Parlement of Paris held in July to deliberate on how to treat the crime of heresy. The spirit of resistance of the Waldensian valleys would also be transmitted to some French churches: one article of the peace of Cavour banished several militant French-born pastors who later vigorously advocated for the Huguenot war cause in 1562.<sup>45</sup> For his part,

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43. The changing legal situation of the Reformed churches between 1562 et 1598 is concisely summarized in Benedict, "Settlements: France" (see note 4), 436–438; id., "Les vicissitudes des Eglises réformées de France jusqu'en 1598," in Michel Grandjean, Bernard Roussel, ed., *Coexister dans l'intolérance* (Geneva: Labor et Fides, 1998), 69–73, shows when certain churches actually met.

44. Daniele Tron, "La creazione del corpo pastorale valdese e la Ginevra di Calvino," *Bollettino della Società di Studi Valdese* 127 (2010): 77–162, esp. 132.

45. Cornel Zwielerlein, "La Pace di Cavour nel contesto europeo," in Pawel Gajewski, Susanna Peyronel Rambaldi, ed., *Con o senza le armi. Controversistica religiosa e resistenza armata nell'età moderna* (Turin: Claudiana, 2014), 67–99; Philip Benedict, "Prophets in Arms? Ministers in War, Ministers on War: France 1562–74," in Graeme Murdock, Penny Roberts, Andrew Spicer, ed., *Ritual and Violence: Natalie Zemon Davis and Early Modern France, Past and Present Supplement 7* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 163–196, here 174, 186–188.

Emmanuel Philibert quickly learned the lesson that it was better to permit Reformed churches where they had become solidly established than to try to close them down at a high cost in human life. After Bern restored the Chablais and the Pays de Gex to him by the 1564 treaty of Lausanne, he faithfully respected the clauses of the peace that decreed that the Reformed church would retain its 28-year-old status as the sole legally established religion of these areas.

Events also moved ahead quickly in Metz, now under French protection yet still part of the Empire. During his 1552 *chevauchée d'Austrasie*, King Henry II had cast himself as the defender of the liberties of the free cities of Metz, Toul and Verdun. Once he and his lieutenants took control of Metz, they needed to build loyalty in the city and avoid alienating the German Lutheran princes who had supported their intervention. They restored to the city councils men who had been stripped of their posts on suspicion of Protestantism and opened a bit more space for private prayer groups. After a minister from Geneva came in 1557 and laid the foundations for a more structured church, several of those involved in the 1541–1543 attempts to obtain rights of worship resumed the effort. Appealing to the 1543 adjudication that had given them use of two churches for worship before it was overruled by Charles V, and soliciting the aid of Farel, Calvin and nearby Protestant princes and cities, they drafted a first request for rights of worship in 1558 that met with the governor's refusal. Two years later, under Francis II, they developed a plan that exactly matched that adopted at the same time by the churches of the French synodal network and that must have derived from communication with them: the church would send its own representatives to the Estates-General to be held in Orléans in December so that it could present its request to the king at the assembly. The governor talked them out of this, but no sooner had Francis II died than some sixty *bourgeois* agreed to sign a new petition and dispatch two spokesmen (one of them the famed Hebraist Emmanuel Tremellius) to take it in person to the new king. In the new political context of the regency of Charles IX, and with their hand strengthened by the 1543 adjudication in their favor, they were able to convince the royal Council to grant them rights of worship in May 1561, eight months before the Edict of January did the same for the entire kingdom.<sup>46</sup> From then until the Revocation, except for a few brief periods later in the Wars of Religion, Metz housed an important, legally tolerated Reformed minority.<sup>47</sup>

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46. *HE* (see note 32), III, 542–558.

47. In 1564, Metz became the only tri-confessional city under the authority of the king of

One wonders to what extent the Metz Protestants' recourse from 1541 onward to this ultimately twice-successful strategy of petitioning for rights of worship may have inspired Calvin and the churches of the French synodal network to try the same kind of initiatives in France, and above all whether the second success in May 1561 did not encourage the remarkable multiplication of similar petitions observable in the kingdom over the following eight months.<sup>48</sup>

A petition was also drafted in the duchy of Lorraine around the same time. A later hand wrote "1560" on the surviving copy, but it probably dates to the second half of 1561 or the first months of 1562, since it urged the duke to follow "the example of several kings and princes and princes who are your neighbors, friends, relatives and allies" who have allowed their subjects to live "in Christian liberty". Signed by over 150 inhabitants of Saint-Mihiel and vicinity in the name of "the vassals, bourgeois and subjects of Lorraine and the Barrois who wish to live according to the Gospel word of Jesus Christ", it also asked that they be allowed to present their confession of faith to the duke (a longstanding goal of their French brethren as well) and that he accord them "temples" or permission to build ones themselves.<sup>49</sup> In the Barrois, at least one important nobleman, Antoine de Nettancourt, sieur de Bettancourt, received a minister from Geneva. Other nobles of the region were won the cause and protected churches on their fiefs. Groups of Protestants also came into view around 1562 in Lorraine in Vic, Pont-à-Mousson and Saint-Nicolas-du-Port.<sup>50</sup>

But the spillover of organization and activism from France and Metz also alarmed the ecclesiastical authorities of the Three Bishoprics. The Count-Bishop of Verdun, Nicolas Psaume, reacted particularly vigorously. A devoted advocate of Catholic reform who resided in his bishopric except when at Trent for the Council, Psaume had already been able, when the French moved in, to reclaim the right to oversee the appointment of the city's officials that previous absentee bishops had let slip from their grasp. Evangelical ideas had

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France when he granted residency to a small number of Jews.

48. Benedict, Fornerod, *Organisation et action* (see note 42), lxxxvii-lxxxviii, xcvi-xcviii, 12, 114. I have now found traces of at least fifteen *requêtes* drawn up at the local, regional or national level in the second half of the year 1561.

49. "Supplique adressée par les Réformés du Barrois au duc de Lorraine, de Bar et Gueldre, pour obtenir la liberté du culte public 1560", BSHPF 11 (1862): 423-424.

50. Peter Wilcox, ed., "L'envoi de pasteurs aux Églises de France. Trois listes établies par Colladon (1561-1562)," BSHPF 139 (1993): 354-377, here 355; Hugues Marsat, "Frontière et protestantisme. Le cas campano-lorrain aux XVIe-XVIIe siècles," *Annales de l'Est, Numéro Spécial 2009: Lorraine et Champagne, mille ans d'histoire*: 297-315; Charles Chapelier, *La Lorraine et la Réforme* (Saint-Dié: C. Cuny, 1917), 39.

previously scarcely penetrated the city. Now support for them came primarily from the soldiers of the French garrison, beginning with the new governor François de Boucart. In response, Psaume took a series of steps that ensured close control of local opinion. He required all residents, beginning with the nobility and local magistrates, to sign a printed confession of Catholic faith. He obtained Boucart's dismissal. He convinced the cathedral chapter, Senate and populace to swear to work together for the defense of the faith. Seeking to mobilize Imperial channels, he wrote to the Emperor Ferdinand to ask him to write a letter of protest against the growing indulgence toward heresy of French policy. Finally, once the First Civil War broke out, he personally supervised the reinforcement of the city's defenses that prevented a Huguenot effort to take it by surprise in September 1562.<sup>51</sup> Neither in the city nor in the remainder of the prince-bishopric was Protestant worship ever tolerated. The new faith made only marginally greater inroads into the city and prince-bishopric of Toul; there, all that a small group of believers in Toul itself could ever obtain was that lesser degree of toleration that involved the right to leave the city to worship in a nearby location where services were permitted without running the risk of banishment for doing so.<sup>52</sup>

These developments in the greater Lorraine region prompt further reflections. First, the events in Verdun and its bishopric show what effect a concerned, resident prince-bishop could have in his lands and supports the idea that rulers of small territories could exercise particularly close thought control when they made this a priority. Second, having noted the failure of Protestantism to win rights of worship in either Toul or Verdun, we can now compute the bottom line for the French-speaking free imperial cities as follows. After Geneva threw out its bishop, six cities could convincingly claim this status, four of which (Cambrai, Metz, Toul and Verdun) lost their autonomy in the 1540s and 1550s. Of these six, just one, Geneva, became exclusively Protestant, and just one other, Metz, bi-confessional.<sup>53</sup> The contrast is striking with the German

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51. Bernard Ardura, *Nicolas Psaume 1518–1575. Evêque et Comte de Verdun. L'idéal pastoral du Concile de Trente incarné par un Prémontré* (Paris: Editions du Cerf, 1990), 141–143, 173–178.

52. "Requête des protestants de Toul au roi de France (1571)," BSHPF 52 (1903): 554–556, here 555. "Auslauf" was a common form of second-order toleration in central Europe after the Reformation. See Benjamin J. Kaplan, *Divided by Faith: Religious Conflict and the Practice of Toleration in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 2007), 161–171.

53. Good studies are lacking concerning Cambrai's experience of the Reformation, but it is known that this free city absorbed by Charles V into his territories in 1543 never was much troubled by heresy.

free imperial cities, of which more than half experienced a full municipal Reformation and nearly a further quarter came to permit two faiths.<sup>54</sup>

The surge of Protestant growth and push for legal recognition that was so strong in France in 1560–1562 did not simply spill over into Lorraine. It extended beyond the kingdom's northern border as well. September 1561 witnessed the famous *chanteries* in Tournai: crowds of Reformed believers marched through the streets singing psalms. Similar demonstrations had by then already taken place in a number of French cities. Soon thereafter, Guy de Brès drew up a confession of faith indebted to that adopted by the first French national synod of 1559 and tossed it over the walls of the town citadel to bring it to the attention of the governing authorities. Again, his action had French precedents: copies of the French confession had been secretly delivered to the Palais de Justice of both Rouen and Rennes in June 1560 with a similar end in view.<sup>55</sup> The rare Walloon churches able to take shape despite the harsh persecution that prevailed in the Habsburg Netherlands not only took inspiration from the actions of their French co-religionists; they looked across the border for concrete assistance. The first printed editions of the Belgic confession were published in Rouen and Lyon. Paul Chevalier, a native of Mons, would receive pastoral training in Rouen, Paris and Orléans before returning to the Low Countries to preach and ultimately face martyrdom in Lille in 1564.<sup>56</sup> The chanteries were rapidly suppressed and Chevalier executed, but when the repression in the Low Countries temporarily faltered in 1566, the iconoclasm of that summer touched a number of Walloon cities between Saint-Omer, Bethune and Valenciennes, with Tournai once again emerging as a particular center of Protestant strength. The agitation did not, however, penetrate farther into the interior.<sup>57</sup>

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54. Bernd Moeller, *Imperial Cities and the Reformation: Three Essays* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1972), 41.

55. Moreau, *Tournai* (see note 31), ch. 5; Nicolaas H. Gootjes, *The Belgic Confession: Its History and Sources* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007), 15–17, 33–50; Benedict, Fornerod, *Organisation et action* (see note 42), lxxxvii–lxxxviii.

56. Jean-François Gilmont, “Premières éditions françaises de la Confessio Belgica (1561–1562)”, *Quaerendo* 2 (1972): 173–181; id., “La seconde édition française de la Confessio Belgica ([Lyon: Jean Frellon], 1561)”, *Quaerendo* 4 (1974): 259–260; Léon-E. Halkin, Gérard Moreau, “Le procès de Paul Chevalier à Lille et Tournai en 1564”, *Bulletin de la Commission Royale d’Histoire* 131 (1965): 1–74.

57. Good maps of the iconoclasm can be found in Geoffrey Parker, *The Dutch Revolt*, (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1977), 77; and Solange Deyon et Alain Lottin, *Les casseurs de l’été 1566. L’iconoclasm dans le Nord de la France* (Paris: Hachette, 1981), 39. Lille, Arras, Douai and Cambrai were all also bypassed. On Lille: Robert Du Plessis, *Lille and the Dutch Revolt: Urban Stability in an Era of Revolution, 1500–1582* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), ch. 6.

According to Alphonse Verheyden, the special tribunal subsequently established by Philip II to punish those guilty in this year of sedition, iconoclasm, Calvinism or Anabaptism, the so-called “Council of Troubles”, would indict 1070 people from the Tournaisis and 826 from Hainaut but only 43 from Namur, 42 from the Artois and 43 from Luxembourg.<sup>58</sup> Once more the southeastern Netherlands stand out as little touched by the Reformed movement.

French events and practices also spilled over into the principality of Orange and the Papal territories around Avignon – unsurprisingly, since neighboring Languedoc, Provence and Dauphiné were all centers of Huguenot agitation in the period 1560–1562. Armed Huguenot nobles invaded and seized part of the Comtat Venaissin in 1560. Orange’s Reformed church took shape in the spring of 1561 and grew so strong so quickly that the Catholic clergy were driven from the city and the Mass abolished before the end of the year, just as in so many nearby towns in Languedoc. During the First Civil War both the Comtat and the principality of Orange witnessed massacres and the passage of troops.<sup>59</sup>

Elsewhere in Francophonia, these years when Protestantism attracted so many of the leading French nobles also saw the conversion of the *princes souverains* Jeanne d’Albret, queen of Navarre and sovereign viscountess of Béarn, and Henri-Robert de La Marck, duke of Bouillon and count of Sedan.

In the end, the powerful Protestant movement in Hainaut and the Tournaisis was enfeebled by the repression of the duke of Alva and wiped out after Philip II regained control of the region with the assistance of the Union of Arras in the late 1570s. The few small Reformed churches in the duchies of Lorraine and Bar withered away over the course of the reign of duke Charles III (1545/1559–1608). But in four of the tiny principalities listed in Table 1, Béarn, Orange, Sedan and Salm, the new Reformed churches acquired lasting legal recognition. In Béarn they even became the sole religion of state.

58. Alphonse L.E. Verheyden, *Le Conseil des Troubles* (Flavion-Florennes: Le Phare, 1981), 133. Verheyden’s numbers are known to exaggerate the actual number of victims slightly since he did not always match up multiple references to the same individual under different spellings of their name.

59. Marc Venard, *Réforme protestante, Réforme catholique dans la province d’Avignon au XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle* (Paris: Editions du Cerf, 1993), 470–484; Eugène Arnaud, *Histoire des Protestants de Provence du Comtat Venaissin et de la Principauté d’Orange* (Paris: Grassart, 1884), vol. 2; [Jean Perrat], *La chronique d’un notaire d’Orange*, ed. Léopold Duhamel (Paris: Champion, 1881), 118–137; Wilhelmus F. Leemans, *La Principauté d’Orange de 1470 à 1580. Une société en mutation* (Hilversum: Verloren, 1986), 439–445; Loys de Perussiis, *Discours des guerres de la Comté de Venayscin et de la Provence: ensemble quelques incidents* (Avignon: P. Roux, 1563), passim.

These last four little territories form another group that it is interesting to isolate for further examination. In each, the ruling house, or at least one branch of it, became Protestant, yet in each instance the chronological and causal relationship between the ruler's conversion and the establishment and legal recognition of a Reformed church was different. In Orange, prince William of Nassau, "William the Silent", had not yet broken with Catholicism when the Protestant fever that washed across the Midi swept the Mass aside in December 1561; his rejection of Rome only came after he was caught up in the Dutch Revolt. During the first French Civil War, Orange was the scene of one of the conflict's worst butcheries of Protestants early in the fighting, then saw new violence late in the war when the Huguenots retook it. It was to calm passions and permit the return of the city's surviving Catholics that William first issued a decree redefining the principality's religious status quo in the wake of this conflict. Drawing inspiration from the French Peace of Amboise, he established a regime of toleration for both faiths. Over the next half century, the terms and realities of the coexistence established in August 1563 would be altered more than once but ultimately survive (See Table 4).

**Table 4. Changes in the Principality of Orange's Religious Situation and Legislation, 1561–1609**

1561	(December) Catholic clerics driven out and Mass abolished in the city of Orange
1562	(June) Orange taken by Catholic forces
1563	(March) Orange taken by Protestant forces (August) Edict of pacification restores Catholicism, grants Protestants a church in Orange and the right to build others in Courthézon, Jonquières and Gigondas
1567	All government offices divided evenly between Protestants and Catholics
1568	Charles IX of France seizes the principality; Reformed worship outlawed
1570	Principality restored to William of Nassau
1572	New edict of toleration and equal division of government positions
1578	Amid fighting in the area, Protestant forces impose the Huguenot captain Hector de Miribel, Sr de Blacons, as governor; he imposes Protestant domination
1583	Ruler's edict places charity under the control of the Reformed church deacons
1598	Peace of Vervins confirms the previously contested right of succession of William's eldest son Philip-William of Nassau, raised a Catholic at the court of Madrid; he orders the restoration of Catholicism and creation of a Parlement composed of judges evenly divided between the two faiths
1607	Alexandre de Miribel, Sr de Blacons, removed as governor, allowing the implementation of the edicts of 1572 and 1598
1609	Bishop returns to Orange

Sources: Arnaud, *Histoire des protestants de Provence* (see note 59), vol. II, 151–268; S. Amanda Eurich, "Religious Toleration and Confessional Identity: Catholics and Protestants in Seventeenth-Century Orange," *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte* 97 (2006): 252–254.

While in the turbulent Midi Protestant domination came before the ruler's conversion, the sequence was reversed at Sedan, in the zone of weak spontaneous Protestant diffusion. Here the duke of Bouillon evolved toward open adherence to the Reformed church between 1560 and 1562, partially under the influence of his wife Françoise de Bourbon-Montpensier. When he abandoned his attempt to govern Normandy in a spirit consistent with the Edict of January amid the First Civil War and withdrew to his lands late in 1562, it was he who first established Sedan's Reformed church. Three months later he procured its first pastor



and decreed freedom of worship for both it and the Roman church, prohibiting anybody at the same time from “forcing and constraining one another to live contrary to their conscience and religion.” A second Reformed church was founded soon after in the neighboring seigneurie of Jametz, also a possession of the de La Marck family. The legal principles laid down in 1562–1563 prevailed until 1685, although the duke felt compelled to add ten years later that nobody should take advantage of freedom of conscience to live “in religious incertitude,” but instead must “follow one of the two religions, the Reformed or the Roman.”<sup>60</sup>

Béarn’s Reformation was a complicated mix of reformation from above and below. Pau’s first Reformed church was founded by preachers protected by Jeanne d’Albret and her husband Antoine de Bourbon but took shape before the queen herself publicly proclaimed her attachment to the faith by participating in the Lord’s Supper at Christmas 1560. After she cast her lot openly with the cause, she could only advance it cautiously at first in face of hostility from the great majority of the population and the territorial Estates. Key measures included outlawing Catholic processions in public spaces, proclaiming liberty of conscience, and instituting a system comparable to the *Plus* in Switzerland whereby Reformed worship could be substituted for Catholic in individual communities by majority vote. But the Third Civil War in France (1568–1570) became a crusade against the new heresy not just within the kingdom, but also in the sovereign or semi-sovereign enclaves just around it. In addition to outlawing Reformed worship throughout his lands in 1568 (no nationwide ban had accompanied the previous two civil wars), Charles IX ordered the church of Metz to close and sent troops into both Orange and Béarn. In the Pyrenean *vicomté* the faith was saved in extremis by Huguenot forces from Southwestern France who rode to its rescue, drove out the invading Catholic troops, and gave Jeanne d’Albret grounds to convict for treason and seize the property of those who had supported the invasion. With the Catholic opposition in Béarn decapitated, she could then abolish the Mass and establish a new Reformed state church whose parameters would be defined by a church order of 1571.<sup>61</sup>

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60. Pierre Congar, Jean Lecaillon, Jacques Rousseau, *Sedan et le pays sedanais. Vingt siècles d'histoire* (Paris: FERN, 1969), 187; Georges Gillier, “Jametz (Heurs et malheurs d’une petite ville protestante au XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle),” BSHPF 101 (1955): 26–32.

61. Nicolas de Bordenave, *Histoire de Béarn et Navarre*, ed. Paul Raymond (Paris: J. Renouard, 1873); Philippe Chareyre, *La construction d'un Etat protestant. Le Béarn au XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle* (Pau: Centre d'Etude du Protestantisme Béarnais, 2010).

We lack a good study of the little county of Salm, located on the edge of the Vosges between Lorraine and Alsace, but it seems well established that the two branches of the ruling family that jointly governed this territory each went their own way at the Reformation without losing the ability to collaborate. The counts of Salm remained loyal to Rome; the branch of the *Rhingraves* embraced Lutheranism. Such was the domination of Reformed theology within francophone Protestantism, however, that when a Protestant preacher arrived in Badonviller in 1555, organized worship first in private houses, then in the covered market, and finally was given permission to share the local church and granted a subsidy by their lordships, he did so after the fashion of Geneva. The regime of *simultaneum* thus established continued after the branch of the Rhingraves returned to Catholicism in 1591 but gave way under pressure from missionary preachers and a change of policy on the part of the ruling family in 1625.<sup>62</sup>

Table 5 draws up a final balance sheet of the changes that had occurred by the end of this second period of rapid expansion of Reformed churches. Of the 30 francophone polities that existed at the beginning of the century and were listed in Table 1, 7 had become exclusively Protestant, at least *de jure*, 14 had remained exclusively Catholic, at least *de jure*, and 9 saw the legal recognition of two organized Christian faiths. Since several of the polities listed in Table 1 had been absorbed into larger territories in the interim (e.g. the Three Bishoprics, Cambrai, the prince-bishopric of Lausanne), the proportions between these three categories could also be expressed as 5 : 8 : 8. Most of the territories that became exclusively Protestant were quite small, and the Reformed were also a small minority in the two largest bi-confessional princedoms, France and Savoy. Hence, these proportions in no way indicate the percentage of Europe's French-speaking population that had become Protestant. They nonetheless underscore that the shaking unleashed by the Reformation had touched nearly every francophone polity, no matter how small it might be, and transformed the religious situation of many.

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62. G. Sare, ed., "Correspondance des Comtes de Salm de 1550 à 1600," *Bulletin de la Société Philomathique des Vosges* 16 (1890–1891): 75–80; Chapelier, *Lorraine et la Réforme* (see note 50), 60–69; Odile Jurbert, "La Réforme en Lorraine du Sud au XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle," in Louis Châtellier, ed., *Les Réformes en Lorraine (1520–1620)* (Nancy: Presses Universitaires de Nancy, 1986), 57–83, here 67–69.