

ist äußerst ausführlich (229–247) und erschließt sowohl die Einleitung wie auch den Kommentar.

Wer wissenschaftlich an Calvin arbeiten will, kann sich nur freuen, daß die Edition des Kommentarwerkes fortschreitet und auf einem solch hervorragenden Niveau von neuem zugänglich gemacht wird.

*Ernst Saxer, Dübendorf*

**Correspondance de Théodore de Bèze**, recueilli par Hippolyte Aubert, publié par Alain Dufour, Béatrice Nicollier et Reinhard Bodenmann, tome 17: 1576, Genève: Droz 1994 (Travaux d'Humanisme et Renaissance 286), XIX, 303 S., ISBN 2-600-00025-9, Fr. 66.30

N. M. Sutherland (*The Huguenot Struggle for Recognition*, New Haven 1980, p. 232) has described the years between the Peace of Monsieur (1576) and the death of Alençon (1584) as «possibly among the least familiar of the *ancien régime*». The fifty-five letters which are contained in this present volume of Beza's *Correspondance* shed light on this relatively unknown period in French, and we might add, German history. As in previous years, the Geneva–Zurich epistolary axis is of primary importance: one-third of the extant letters from this year are between Beza and Rudolf Gwalther, *antistes* at Zurich following the death of Heinrich Bullinger the previous year. Beza also writes frequently to Laurent Dürnhoffer and Christoph Hardesheim in Nürnberg, who have become the reformer's primary source for information about the Empire, Poland, and the Turkish threat. The reformer's two letters to Jean-Jacques Grynaeus, professor at Basel, are significant for what they anticipate: overcoming earlier suspicions of Grynaeus, Beza now suggests that they work together to remove the Lutheran Simon Sulzer from the Academy of Basel (#1191). In the years to come the two men will establish an active and intimate correspondence (numbering over 200 letters), forging important theological ties between their two cities.

Throughout 1576 Beza remains anxious about the ongoing theological crisis in Germany. Despite the reformers' attempts, the persecution of «crypto-Calvinists» continues in Electoral Saxony (see my reviews in *ZWINGLIANA XXI*, 1994). To add insult to injury, John Major has posted a poem on the door of the Academy of Wittenberg attacking the reformers of Geneva (appendix XIII), and Auguste of Saxony has commissioned Jacob Andreae – Beza's arch-enemy – to serve as the superintendent of his churches (#1209). Beza's pen, which can eloquently comfort an imprisoned Calvinist pastor (#1201), spares no venom in attacking Lutheran opponents: these *novi Papae* have transformed Germany into a theological wasteland («Septentrionalis Africa»), and will soon expel Luther himself (#1214, #1197). But what should be done? Gwalther dissuades

Beza from writing a manifesto against Auguste. Instead, Beza attempts to solicit support for the «crypto-Calvinists» among delegates to the imperial diet convened at Ratisbonne in June, even as he completes the second part of his *Quaestiones et Responsiones* addressing disputed sacramental issues. By the end of the year however, the German crisis has spread even to the Palatinate, once the bastion of reformed faith in the Empire. With the unexpected death of the Elector Frederick III in October, and the subsequent accession of his Lutheran son Louis VI, this Calvinist stronghold appears on the brink of collapse (#1225).

In France, events seem more favorable for the reformed. During the Spring of 1576, Beza carefully follows the progress of the Protestant armies as they march toward Paris, unleashed by Prince Condé and Duke Casimir the previous Fall. The Peace of Monsieur and resulting Edict of Beaulieu in May – concluded largely through the efforts of Alençon – represented a royal capitulation granting liberal terms to the Huguenots. There are other reasons for optimism: a large number of the «elect» remain in the kingdom of France; even in Paris («in media Babylone») Huguenots gather secretly to worship (#1181). So too, in February, Henry of Navarre under the pretext of a hunting expedition has fled the court and renounced the Catholic religion before a Huguenot assembly (#1187, #1190). But Beza remains cautious, skeptical about the viability of the peace, suspicious of Alençon and hostile to the court: «Itaque pax concepta est, de cujus exitu foelici nulla pene spes est» (#1206). He wonders about Navarre's sincerity (#1204) and complains about Condé's advisors (#1203). He sends to Gwalther documents relating to the formation of a Catholic league in Paris (#1229). Huguenots are almost entirely absent from the Estates General convened at Blois in late November, further fueling Beza's fears of a renewal of hostilities. If war breaks out again, he predicts, «nihil praeter ultimum tanti regni excidium expectari potest» (#1229).

While witnessing the drama of international politics, the *Correspondance* also provides insights about the person of Beza himself. In a letter of condolence to Hardesheim on the death of his wife, Beza speaks affectionately of his own wife of thirty-three years who «quamvis sterili, tamen longe charissima...» (#1188). Elsewhere, Olevianus responds to a (lost) letter from Beza in which the Genevan reformer had recommended his own practice of hunting as an «honesta recreatio» and an antidote to «melancholia aut tristitia» (#1183). Beza's preface to *Joannis Calvinii Tractatus Theologici*, dedicated to William of Nassau, serves as an eloquent apology for Calvin's life, theology, and «vehementia» (#1193).

This fascicle of Beza's *Correspondance* achieves the level of excellence set by previous volumes. Once again, each letter is handsomely presented, with detailed *résumés* and extensive notes. The appendices have been expanded, reflecting a wise editorial decision to begin signaling collective letters addressed to Beza, as well as those written by him on behalf of the *Compagnie*.

The erudition reflected in the annotations is breathtaking: this volume is particularly enriched by the imprint of B. Nicollier's knowledge of Hubert Languet's correspondence, and R. Bodenmann's study of the works of Daniel Toussain and Rudolf Hospinianus (note the discovery in #1198 that Toussain was the author of the anonymous treatise *Ein billiche und nothwendige Klog von der andern Babylonischen Gefängnuß...*). The editors are probably incorrect in assuming that the Bernese mercenaries who participated in Casimir's campaign in France did so without the consent of the authorities (see Albert Gobat's *La République de Berne et la France pendant les Guerres de Religion*, Paris 1891). Nonetheless, this present volume of Beza's correspondence contributes substantially to our knowledge of the embattled reformed communities, perched precariously between Lutheran Germany and Catholic France in the last quarter of the sixteenth century.

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A visitor to the Bibliothèque publique et universitaire in Geneva can still see a painting of Theodore Beza, achieved in 1577, showing the fifty-eight year old reformer with a long grey beard and an impassive look upon his face. The impassivity of the portrait is in stark contrast to Beza's correspondence from this same year, filled with the anxiety of a man who believes that the «hora potestatis tenebrarum» is at hand (#1251). Three-quarters of the fifty-two extant letters from 1577 are written by Beza; as in previous years, his correspondents are from throughout Europe, from as far away as Scotland and Poland, and as near as Neuchâtel and Montbéliard. In addition to frequent letters to Rudolf Gwalther (Zurich), Lorenz Dürnhoffer (Nürnberg), and Simon Grynaeus (Basel), Beza will correspond regularly in 1577 with the Landgrave Wilhelm IV of Hesse, whose son had come to study in Geneva the previous year.

Beza's fears about the efficacy of the Edict of Beaulieu – expressed frequently in his correspondence the year before – are realized in 1577. Following the example of the Estates General at Blois, Henry III outlaws reformed worship in early January and decrees that, henceforth, only the Catholic religion will be permitted in France. In subsequent months, the dukes of Damville and Anjou (Alençon) waiver, and then «defect» to the king, even as the Huguenots prepare for a resumption of war. Anjou's conquest of La Charité and ruthless sack of Issoire provided painful proof of his treachery (#1265,