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Theodore Beza: Savant or Scholastic?

In memoriam Richard Stauffer

The 1559 Genevan Academy statutes were heavily exegesis oriented, consisting primarily in commentary on the books of the Old and New Testaments. Starting from 1587 with Beza and confirmed in 1620 at the Reformed French Synod of Alès, *loci communes* were given over to a professor who taught these separate from the Old Testament exposition and from that of the New Testament. Thus the teaching of theology expanded to make Dogmatics the privileged science rather than the exegesis-oriented courses so characteristic of the first two decades of the young Genevan Academy. If indeed the early period contributed to making pastors into polemicists, the second "stimulated in the Reformed Churches of France a taste for controversy ... clearly shown during the quarrel provoked by the theses of Moise Amyraut on Hypothetical Universalism."[1]

I

The statutes of the Genevan Academy deserve careful scrutiny, for in addition to Latin, Greek, and Hebrew they also provided for the teaching of philosophy and theology. Calvin is now himself seen as the author of these statutes adopted by the City council in May of 1559.[2] As a student progressed through the seven classes of the secondary level *(schola privata)* French, Latin and Greek were stressed. The classical component included Cicero's *Amicitia,* Terence and a Latin catechism in the fourth class as well as study in Greek of Lucian's Dialogues on Death and Aesop's Fables in the second class.[3] The first class read Logic using the manuals of John Sturm

[1] R. Stauffer, Calvinism and the Universities, in: L. Grane (ed.), University and Reformation, Leiden 1981, 90. – I am grateful to Professor Lewis Spitz of Stanford for commenting on a draft of this paper.

[2] *Ibid.,* 80.

[3] H. Meylan, Collèges et Academies protestantes en France au XVIe siecle, D'Erasme à Théodore de Bèze, Genève 1976, 193. One should note that Luther cites an Aesop fable in his 1520 On Christian Freedom and prepared an edition of Aesop's fables for the schools. Thomas More translated Lucian. See the introduction to Vol. 3. I of the Yale edition, Translations of Lucian, New Haven 1974, especially pp. XLI-LV. Aesop was printed at Geneva in 1594 (Latin), 1596 (French) and 1598 (French). See P. Chaix, Alain Dufour et Gustave Moeckli, Les Livres Imprimés à Genève de 1550 à 1600, Genève 1966, *passim.* Calvin read and annotated his copy of Lucian in 1545.

and Conrad Neobar or Philip Melanchthon.[4] The University *(schola publica)* assigned the teaching of Aristotle's Ethics and Politics to the professor of Greek and Cicero's Rhetoric to the Arts professor.[5]

A closer scrutiny of those manuals on logic helps one to see the transition from exegesis to dogmatics at Geneva in this period. As early as March (1557) Beza suggested to Bullinger at Zurich that Peter Martyr's writings be edited "as a treasury ... for the public use in the church."[6] In 1563 he again urged that this be done in the form of *loci communes* in one volume "for the greatest use of the church *(utilissimum)*."[7] Calvin himself recommended that dialectic be taught with the nature of propositions and the figures of arguments.[8]

This triad of manuals agreed in many respects, except that Melanchthon and Neobar reproduce a list of predicables from the neo-platonist Porphyry. When it came to definitions, both, it seems, urged that the correspondence between the predicate of a sentence and its subject be seen in categories which would define a word *(sermo)* as "proprius, perspicuus and without ambiguity as to the significance of the members which it contains."[9] This led Theodore Beza into a theological debate over the doctrine of the Trinity and/or Christology in 1565/66. Apparently as Beza passed the phrase *"Deus et homo"* through these categories, it appeared to some that in describing Christ, Beza separated the individual from its species. Melanchthon's manual said that the definition of substance or essence was said "par rapport à l'individu et non à l'espèce."[10] Such a methodological dispute between exegetes and dogmaticians had different goals. The exegetes saw their interpretation resulting in *loci* while the theologians saw the result as *summae*.[11]

The details of Beza's concern are consistent with Calvin's rhetorical theology which established the Christian faith on a solid exegetical base. At Geneva in 1565/66, Beza was careful to employ an exegetical process in disputations which set limits to the scholastic construction of theological questions. In the lectures and disputations over certain questions in

[4] I. Backus, L'Enseignement de la Logique à l'Académie de Genève entre 1559 et 1565, RThPh 111 (1979) 154–55.

[5] Meylan, *op. cit.*, 193.

[6] Correspondance de Theodore de Bèze II (1556–1558), Genève 1962, 57.

[7] Correspondance IV (1562–1563) 162.

[8] Backus, *op. cit.*, 153.

[9] *Ibid.*, 160.

[10] *Ibid.*, 161.

[11] Fraenkel, De l'Écriture à la Dispute. Le cas de l'Académie de Genève sous Théodore de Bèze, RThPh 1977, 9.

Hebrews, the scholastic Beza reached back to the patristic period to defend the doctrine of faith against late medieval arguments of Roman theologians. This, as Fraenkel decribes it, helps one to solve the Gordian knot of the scholastic Beza and the rhetorical Calvin. Central to the theological dispute was an argument over the priority of *fides qua* versus *fides quae,* or the subject of faith versus the object of faith. Calvin had challenged Aquinas on this mater, that the sense of Romans 2:13 required that the *sermo auditus* be also the *sermo creditus,* as Beza himself was later to stress. At Hebrews 4:2 where the word of the gospel was of no value to men of the Old Testament, "not being mixed with faith *(non amixtus fidei),*" Beza depended on the ancient exegetical tradition. As Fraenkel points out, the interlinear gloss shows that "since the Jews did not believe, we do; the promises are therefore for us." The other possiblity for this text is to refer to Joshua's spies, whose reports were rejected, as the marginal commentary explains; "the Israelites were so forcibly struck by their account of the dangers awaiting them in Canaan that they lost courage." The *fides quae* of the interlinear gloss, i.e., the objective sense, and the *fides qua* of the marginal commentary or subjective sense raised a problem for the reformers. Does faith here become a human action and hence an addition to the gospel?

Fraenkel points out that in spite of that problem, and the attendant exegetical solutions available to the opponent, the respondent must defend this his third thesis. Beza goes beyond Calvin's position by doing away with the idea of faith as the means of salvation. Now since other well known writers such as John Eck in his *Enchiridion* argued that John 6:29 meant that "The work of God is this: to believe in the one he has sent," and since Calvin in the institutes thought this was a weak argument for faith as a work, collapsing of its own weakness, it is valuable to see that this is not Beza's opinion. Beza sought a rebuttal in this fashion; "he explains Christ's words by comparing them to those of a doctor who asks his patient to trust him instead of requiring that he pay his fee." Fraenkel helps one to see in this complicated matter how Beza goes back to the patristic period with his textual and exegetical discussions while the Roman controversialists use pre-tridentine arguments. Fraenkel's conclusion is valuable, that this illustrates an aspect of theological continuity in Beza, whose medical allusions are as rhetorical if not more so than the logical arguments of Calvin on faith and works.[12]

[12] *Ibid.,* 33–34. On Beza's 1565 lectures now see L. Perrottet, Chapter 9 of the Epistle to the Hebrews as Presented in an Unpublished Course of Lectures by Theodore Beza, JMRS 14 (1984) 89–96. On rhetoric in Calvin's sermons see R. Peter, Rhetorique et prediction selon

The first thesis took up the classical Augustinian theme of perseverance of the saints. Beza formulated his doctrine as follows, namely that the faithful do not transgress from the right path because the benefits of grace enable them to perceive their election from the love which follows after their obedience of faith. Defense of this thesis involved biblical and patristic arguments from Beza's writings as well as those of Calvin with examples taken from the lives of Abraham, Moses, Aaron, David and Peter. Beza summed up the argument in the aphorism taken from Christ's words to Peter in Luke 22:32: "I have prayed for you so that your faith not fail."[13] This prayer that Peter's faith not fail was to be the reformed source of strength, for as the text of Luke goes on to say, "and when you have come to yourself, you must lend strength to your brothers" (NEB).

As one reads on in Backus about the use of *loci,* one is impressed that these three manuals of Sturm, Melanchthon and Neobar do show variations on this topic. Aristotle saw these as dialectical principles in which the *loci* are used to distinguish the common genre from the properties of its species. Cicero, in his Topics saw this as the domain of the rhetorician whose task was to describe the intellectual canvas of the discourse. Melanchthon clearly prefers Cicero, whereas Neobar utilizes both the dialectical and the rhetorical.[14] Whatever one ultimately decides about Beza's preferences, he clearly did not side with Martyr against Melanchthon on this point.[15] The appearance of a dialectical method and the composition of *loci* is done following the rhetorical concerns of a Cicero, Quintilian and a Martyr, never to be divorced from an exegetical base in Beza's lifetime.

II

Recent study is divided over the role of reason in Melanchthon's preference for Aristotle. When Melanchthon wrote the Visitation Articles (1527–28), the final section urges study of Aesop's Fables in the second division and the Latin poet Terence, who was to be memorized. The third

Calvin," RHPhR 55 (1975), 249–72. On the Romans commentary see B. Girardin, Chapitre IV. Le Fonctionnement Rhétorique, Rhétorique et Théologique. Calvin Le Commentaire de l'Épître aux Romains, Paris 1979, 205–74.

[13] *Ibid.*, 25. See J. Bray, The Value of works in the theology of Calvin and Beza, SCJ 4 (1973) 77–86.

[14] Backus, *op. cit.*, 162.

[15] See Q. Breen, The terms "Loci Communes" and "Loci" in Melanchthon, ChH 16 (1947) 204–5, and C. Vasoli, Loci Communes and the Rhetorical and Dialectical Traditions, 24–28 in: J.C. McLelland (ed.), Peter Martyr Vermigli and Italian Reform, Waterloo 1980.

division must learn Virgil, Ovid and Cicero.[16] At that point, the classical and rhetorical base for education had been endorsed. In his Colossians commentary (1527?) Melanchthon discussed philosophy, especially at the *Locus Classicus* of chapter two and verse eight where the vain deceit "against which St. Paul warned was neither medical science (Galen?) nor civil custom." Human judgment must be permitted in such matters, said Melanchthon, going on to cite a Greek aphorism from Hippocrates.[17] He then separated his own views on creation from those of Aristotle on the world's eternality, as well as Epicurean atomic theory and Stoic necessity. Melanchthon sorts out philosophical discussions of God's will from human reason in civil matters. Philosophy seems to be restricted to such natural matters and civil mores. It is crucial to understand this definition which Melanchthon developed in revising his 1521 *Loci* to its third edition of 1544/45.[18] Melanchthon, here at least, quite clearly argued for the use of human reason and the will in civil existence, though he was quick to teach the weakness of those who ignored God's help in religious concerns.[19].

Between 1530 and 1554 Melanchthon continued to lecture on Aristotle and on free will/role of reason. It is the proportion of reason to revelation that is crucial in the 1535 *Loci* and its thirteen revisions to 1541. Three cases are joined together – "The Word, the Holy Spirit and the will, surely not being idle, but fighting against its infirmity."[20] One must remember that Luther called this 1535 edition pure theology and urged students to read it next to the Bible. In his 1553 comments on Aristotle's *De Anima,* Melanchthon reiterated his ethical concern:

> "The human will, unless it is renewed by the light of the Gospel and the Holy Spirit, is not able to produce a true fear of God, give a firm assent, trust or love of God, or achieve true patience and constancy in great perils."[21]

This new obedience and ethical concern was never inimical to Luther's reforming pinciple. Where his critics saw duplicity, Luther saw clarity, for the *Loci* were second only to Scripture, and Philip's Romans was equal to his own Galatians.

[16] C.S. Meyer, Melanchthon's Visitation Articles of 1528, JEH XXIII (1972): 321.

[17] Melanchthons Werke IV, Frühe exegetische Schriften, hg. v. P.F. Barton, Gütersloh 1963, 230. 233.

[18] Cl. Bauer, Melanchthons Naturrechtslehre, AfR (1951) 100.

[19] Melanchthons Werke IV, 242.

[20] CR XXI, 373f.

[21] Melanchthons Werke III, *Liber De Anima* (1553) 354. Translation by M. Anderson, 1983. See J.M. Aubert, Melanchthon moraliste oecuméniques, RHPhR 62 (1982) 432–35.

Melanchthon's restless mind covered a variety of subjects. One of these was astronomy which came to the fore with Copernicus' famous 1543 treatise On the Revolution of the Spheres. Several of Melanchthon's circle read this work in informal discussion.[22] Melanchthon contributed prefaces to many scientific treatises.[23] He taught that God the Creator can be recognized from the order of heavenly motions.[24] What is valuable is to trace the ways in which Melanchthon taught that human reason can recognize God. After brief statements warning against elaborate discussions about the nature of God as in the *Loci* of 1521, Melanchthon shifted in the Romans of 1532 to mitigate the effects of the "truth in unrighteousness" at chapter one and verse eighteen. In verse nineteen Philip identified this natural knowledge with the law of nature which is "partly obscured by original sin."[25] The second edition of Romans (1540) gives a list of nine arguments for God's existence which testify that "God is the creator and sustainer of the natural order."[26] The third and final Latin edition of the *Loci* (1543/4) enlarged the section on Creation, using the simile of God as a ship-builder.

> "Human weakness, even if it considers that God is the creator, yet it afterwards imagines that, just as a craftsman goes away from a completed ship and leaves it to the sailors, so God goes away from his handiwork and leaves His creatures merely to their own direction".[28]

The list of arguments for God's existence is nine in number in this *Loci* of 1543/4. They were incorporated *verbatim* into the textbook on Physics (1549). Such arguments establish knowledge of the law, not of the Gospel. Melanchthon went on to a separate section on Providence in this 1549 Wittenberg text. Many of the five arguments for Providence "demonstrate that God has a care for mankind."[28]

Melanchthon developed his conception of natural law step by step until in the 1540s he incorporated it into the final Latin version of the *Loci*. Melanchthon altered his orientations to reason which are not so much

[22] R. S. Westman, The Melanchthon Circle, Rheticus, and the Wittenberg Interpretation of the Copernican Theory, Isis 66 (1975) 167–72.

[23] W. Hammer, Melanchthon, Inspirer of the Study of Astronomy; with a Translation of His Oration in Praise of Astronomy (De Orione, 1553), Popular Astronomy 59 (1951) 308–19.

[24] *Ibid.*, 318.

[25] Melanchthons Werke V, 70–71.

[26] J. Platt, Reformed Thought and Scholasticism, Leiden, 1982, 38.

[27] *Ibid.*, 23. CR XXXI, col. 638.

[28] *Ibid.*, 26. CR XIII, col. 204.

changes as they are shifts in proportion or a redirection of emphasis. The increased role given to natural reason via revisions of the *Loci* editions, Romans commentary and lectures on Aristotle's *De Anima* (1549) and Physics (1549) no doubt contributed to the charges that Philip Melanchthon had abandoned Luther's *sola fide.* Platt argues that Melanchthon, by introducing those arguments for the existence of God, "opens the door to their reproduction without the qualifications with which he hedges them about ... his two physical arguments are straightforward versions of scholastic proofs ... the way to Natural theology lies open ... tomorrow it may break out and take control. Melanchthon ... has helped pave the way for the rationalism that was to follow."[29] This writer prefers Luther's endorsement and Bornkamm's assertion of "proportion."[30] What others do with Melanchthon, as indeed they did with Calvin and Beza, cannot be charged to these protoprotestant thinkers.[31] Their method did not unhinge the door guarding the entrance to rationalism. To discuss the freedom of man's will is an ethical task of explanation unlike the nominalistic explorations of God's absoute will.

III

The grand *pointe débarquer* for Beza is his continual defense of Aristotle's method in the face of opposition to its presence in the Genevan *curriculum.* When Pierre Ramus sought to become a Genevan professor, Beza blocked his appointment because Ramus rejected Aristotle. In a letter to Ramus of August 28, 1569 Beza defended the dialectic of the Academy and in a subsequent letter of July 1, 1572 to Joachim Camerarius, Beza

[29] *Ibid.,* 33.

[30] H. Bornkamm, Melanchthons Menschenbild, Philipp Melanchthon, hg. v. W. Elliger, Göttingen 1961, 85–86.

[31] See Platt, *op. cit.,* 34–43 for a discussion of Piscator's abridgement of Calvin. These Aphorisms were published in England in Latin (1595, 1630) and in English (1596). Abridgements of the Institutes appeared in Latin (1576, 1579) and in English (1580). A Latin *epitome* appears from Vautrollier's press in 1583 with a second emended edition in 1584. Vautrollier's also published an English translation, An Abridgement at Edinburgh in 1585/1586, and corrected and emended it in 1587. See on all of these STC.[2] 4426.4-4431. This process is to be distinguished in large measure from another moral science known as the Ramist dialectic, dear to William Perkins. See D. McKim, The Functions of Ramism in William Perkins' Theology, SCJ XVI (1985) 513–17. On the abridgements see further in J.T. McNeill and F.L. Battles, Calvin: Institutes of the Christian Religion, Philadelphia 1960, I. XLVIII-L.

called Ramus *"Pseudodialecticus."* Logic is essential to the evangelical cause in the training of the youth.[32].

Perhaps the 1620 acceptance of a separate professor of *loci communes* who no longer taught exegesis means that the crucial separation is not that of Beza from Calvin, but of dialectic from rhetoric. When the exponents of *loci communes* replace *loci* with *summae* as their theological curiosity overcame the warnings of Calvin himself against such speculation, dogmatics shifted away from Martyr's balanced *loci* toward a more dialectical statement resulting in the *Elenchus* of a François Turretini. The Beza who contributed a preface to Calvin's Commentaries on the Pauline Epistles and borrowed from Vermigli in 1558 to defend Calvin against Castellio did not himself betray the early Genevan consensus.[33] The defence of predestination did not turn it into a central dogma for Beza any more than an extensive treatment in the Institutes did so for Calvin.

Henri Meylan pointed out almost three decades ago that Beza twice described his conversion to Bullinger, once in February of 1550 and again with details in 1568, some twenty years after the illness which turned him away from his long hesitation. Indeed, in the preface of his *Abraham sacrificant* dated to 1 October 1550 at Lausanne, Beza admitted his sin and the abandonment of the *"relicta Aegypto"* which took place on 9 November 1548. It had been a parlous trek from Rome to Geneva.[34]. Roland Bainton more recently argues that Beza placed his assurance in God's Word rather than in an increase of good works which assured election. To troubled consciences Beza offered a sound foundation, "which I myselfe have often founde to be true in mine owne experience ... First we teach that the purpose of God must not be sought in the bottomlesse counsell of God but rather in the manifestation of it, namely in his vocation by the Word and Sacraments ..."[35].

Beza does seem to affirm a gift of grace, which endows the will with

[32] Correspondance X (1569): 174. T. Maruyama, The Ecclesiology of Theodore Beza: The Reform of the True Church, Genève 1978, 107 n. 10 [*Epistolae Theologicae* (1573): 315 in TT III, 282]. One problem seems to be Ramus' dialectical separation of syllogistic testing of propositions for truth, from the sequence of propositions and the method itself which ordered precepts from the general to the particular. See K.D. McRae, Ramist Tendencies in the Thought of Jean Bodin, JHI 16 (1955) 311–12.

[33] P.F. Geisendorf, Théodore De Bèze, Genève 1967, 64. 68. See also F. Wendel, Calvin et l'humanisme, Paris 1976.

[34] H. Meylan, La conversion de Bèze ou les longues hésitations d'un humaniste chrétien, reprinted in his D'Érasme à Théodore de Bèze, Genève 1976, 165–67.

[35] Cited from Questions and Answers in: R. Bainton, Calvin, Beza and the Protestant Work Ethic, RefJ 32 (1982) 20–21.

understanding. This ability to understand and to will rightly "must bee wholly attributed too the newecome grace: whereby ... he prepareth to make himselfe ready to understand aright, to will aright, and to doo aright, when he hath receiued the grace..."[36] Thus Bainton concludes that Beza "is as remote as Calvin" in urging agitated persons to increase their good works to ensure their election.[37].

In 1550 Calvin appealed to Beza to assist in the French version of the Bible under preparation in Geneva. Budé, the great French humanist, was in charge of Job, Psalms and books of Solomon. Calvin supervised the rest, asking Beza to translate the apocryphal books. This Beza undertook with his Lausanne colleagues in 1553. Soon an annotated Bible was underway as well in which Beza agreed to accept at Calvin's suggestion the New Testament assignment in October of 1552. This same Beza defended predestination at I Timothy 2:3 where opponents of Calvin used against him the phrase "that all may come to a knowledge of the truth." Calvin said that such arguments are false because the apostle simply means "that there is no people and no rank in the world that is excluded from salvation."[38] The message is intended for all without exception. Beza made sure in his translation by substituting "certains hommes" in place of "tous les hommes."[39] In his notes the phrase was explained similarly to Calvin, that God's goodness is seen in the "saving of all sorts of men."[40]

When in 1587 Beza urged that the *loci communes* be assigned to a separate professor, *sans doute* it was Vermigli's *loci* which he had in mind, those which in 1558 Beza found so useful to answer Castellio on the classical question whether God was the author of sin. Beza urged that this collection from Peter Martyr's commentaries be compiled into a single source, which soon appeared in London Latin editions (1576/1583), two Zurich editions (1580/1587) and an expanded Basle edition in three parts (1580/1581/1582). That Pierre Aubert produced four Geneva Latin editions in 1623, 1624, 1626 and 1627 may well suggest that the new professors of dogmatics made good use of Vermigli. In the Palatinate three editions of Martyr's *loci* appeared in 1603, 1613 and 1622. These seven Swiss editions alone suggest that the transition from *loci* to *summae* had not yet taken place well into the seventeenth century.

[36] A/booke of Chr-/stian Questions and answers. /.. Imprinted at London, by William/How, for Abraham Veale (1572), 30 *verso* – 31 *recto*.

[37] Bainton, *op. cit.*, 21.

[38] Calvin, Commentaries on ... Timothy, Titus, and Philemon, Grand Rapids 1979, 54.

[39] Geisendorf, *op. cit.*, 72.

[40] Note to I Timothy 2:3 in: Geneva Bible New Testament, London 1607.

One of those *loci* is taken from Martyr's lectures on Aristotle's Ethics which compares divinity with philosophy. Martyr turns to Cicero with approval that God "both planted light in our minds, and both sowen in us the seeds which are the originals of all sciences. Whereupon Cicero in the first booke of his Tusculane questors, saith, that Philosophie is the gift and invention of the gods."[41] On the question whether philosophy would spoil one through vain deceit, Martyr responds to St. Paul in Colossians 2:8 as follows: True philosophy is the special gift of God while corrupt philosophy is the result of "vaine cogitations that devised the world to be compact of the concourse of such small and indivisible moates as we see in the sunne-shine, and to consist as it were of no ground."[42] Such atomic theory or the Stoic doctrine of fate as well as the "Academics" doubt or the Epicurean "idle and inoccupied deity" form the content of St. Paul's vain deceit. In the end it seems that Beza shared Martyr's concern for proper method to describe a different content than that available to Aristotle's happy man.[43]

IV

Olivier Fatio demonstrates that between 1583 and 1595 a precise definition of theology as found on Lambert Daneau's *Compendium* constitutes a new methodology. This concern to segregate sacred doctrine from sacred scripture was not a concern of Calvin, Melanchthon, Martyr, Hyperius nor Musculus.[44] It would seem that Daneau interacted with Zanchi, who in 1591 presented a definition that oriented theology around a double knowledge of God; i.e., 1) as He is in Himself and in His nature *(in se ipso et in sua natura),* or 2) as He is outside Himself and in His effect *(extra se et in suis effectis). In se* presents God in two ways, as essence (unity and trinity) or attributes (simplicity, immensity, eternity, all powerfull).[45] Daneau's reflection does not lead to full imitation of this scholastic content as Fatio more recently argues:

[41] Peter Martyr Vermigli, Common Places (1583), Part 2, 300, col. 2.

[42] *Ibid.,* Part 2, 302, col. 2.

[43] M. Anderson, Peter Martyr Vermigli: Protestant Humanist. J.C. McLelland (ed.), Peter Martyr Vermigli and Italian Reform, 84.

[44] O. Fatio, Méthode et Théologie. Lambert Daneau et les débuts de la scholastique réformée, Genève 1965, 150–53.

[45] *Ibid.,* 152.

"He remained, nevertheless, more reserved than Zanchi with regard to metaphysics ... Zanchi began his own doctrine of God with definitions in the light of which he understood Scripture .. Daneau, on the other hand, presented a less speculative theology in spite of its method and rationalizing character. He made a point of beginning with Scripture ..."[46].

The shift to *Elenchi* such as that of François Turretini would be a more subtile process as fresh *loci* that focused on the nature and attributes of God replaced the exegetical ones of Vermigli. Zanchi himself denies that this theological interest in the nature of God came from Vermigli. One cannot fault Beza for this transition when one explores the content of the *loci* which he preferred. That preference with its polemical context is qualitatively different than the controversy raised by the penchant for dialectical speculation about the nature and attributes of God which Richard Stauffer finds so characteristic of Geneva after 1620.[47] As Beardslee puts it,

"Speculative logic had triumphed over the soteriological insight of the Reformation ... in which he [Turretin] separates predestination from soteriology ... a doctrine which .. is introduced even before the doctrine of creation ... he obscures it for practical religion ..."[48]

The teaching of Dogmatics from these fresh *loci* now viewed as *elenchi* not only stimulated the spirit of controversy, but also lowered the linguistic competency for Theology students in Greek and Hebrew,[49] thereby severing the links with exegesis which Vermigli and Beza were careful to maintain. In Vermigli's case, the use of historical and legal arguments were also mitigating factors against construction of those dogmatic systems against which Melanchthon and Calvin *(contra Socinus)* cautioned.[50] François Turretin, for example, first discussed the essence of God and his attributes, then the Trinity, then the decrees of God before he approached the subject of predestination. The knowledge of God is not any longer the starting point as in Calvin.

[46] *Lambert Daneau* in: J. Raitt (ed.), Shapers of Religious Traditions in Germany, Switzerland, and Poland, 1560–1600, Yale, 1981, 116.

[47] Stauffer, *op. cit.*, 90.

[48] See J.W. Beardslee III, editor and translator, Reformed Dogmatics, New York 1965, 18–19.

[49] *Ibid.*, 91.

[50] M. Anderson, Royal Idolatry: Peter Martyr and the Reformed Tradition, AfR 69 (1978) 183–85 on Judges. R.M. Kingdon, The Function of Law in the Political Thought of Peter Martyr Vermigli, B.A. Gerish (ed.), Reformation: essays on Calvin and the Reformation in honor of Ford Lewis Battles, Pittsburg 1981, 159–72.

V

In a recent discussion, Jill Raitt turns to Beza's commentary on Job, given as lectures in Geneva from January 23, 1587. His purpose in these lectures was to look for a model of fidelity when Savoy bockaded Geneva's port and Geneva could not pay its professors, nor could students return to the Academy in the heavily walled city.[51] Beza's lectures make clear that the link between Christian behaviour and doctrine "is forged of trust resting on God's fidelity."[52] In his little book of household prayers whose original French version is lost, Beza states that prayer is the key while faith is the hand to the heavenly Father's treasury. This prayer cheers us in adversity as we refresh ourselves for the daily round of legitimate duties. In the Job commentary Beza deals with Job's conscience, that he was indeed righteous. Here "Beza does not deal with an anxious desire to know whether one is elect or not ..."[53]

In a long letter near the end of 1568, Beza comments on judicial astrology. Though men allow their curiosity to overcome their powers of observation, it is nonetheless true that even their superior reason when applied to the understanding of events is to be judged or weighed by eternal causes.[54] The editors of the Correspondance note that here, "Beza introduces the idea of predestination, election and the providence of God like Calvin's lengthy development in the corresponding passage [Advertissement contre l'Astrologie judiciare (1549)]." In this letter Beza does nothing of the sort, but distinguishes primary causes from those secondary causes which the vain discourse of these false mathematicians would arrogate to themselves. In 1579 Beza's *De Peste* gave practical pastoral advice, for to flee the plague would be to flee that means by which God brings a good end to pass, namely, that pastors practice their Christian duty. Let man helpe man, Citizen Citizen, that needeth any helpe of his, according too his power ... And for faithful Pastors to forsake but one poore sheepe at that time when as he most of al needeth heavenly comfort, it were too shameful, nay too wicked a part.[55]

[51] J. Raitt, Beza, Guide for the Faithful Life, SJTh 39 (1986) 85.

[52] *Ibid.*, 87.

[53] *Ibid.*, 104.

[54] Correspondance IX (1568), 210–11.

[55] Theodore Beza, A shorte learned and/pithie Treatize of the/Plague, wherein are handled these two questions: The one, whether the Plague bee infectious, or no: The other, whether and howe farre it may of Christians bee shunned by going aside. A discourse very necessary for this our tyme, and country; to sa- tisfie the doubtful con-sciences of a great number; 5 lines London: Thomas Dawson for George Bishop, 1580. Petersbourgh Cathedral Library Copy. Sig. D2 (r–v).

In the end what motivated Beza was Calvin's own comment on Hillary of Poitiers, "Leave to God the privilege of knowing himself; for it is he only who is able to bear witness of himself who knows himself by himself alone. And we shall be leaving him what belongs to him if we understand him as he declares himself, and ask nothing at all concerning him except through his word" [Institutes (1539) I.13.21].

Richard Muller concedes that Turretin's codification of Reformed dogma represents a catholicizing tendency in its concern to fully systematize the original Reformation theology in a scholastic form "without detriment to the original message of Protestantism." Yet the very attempt to describe both "the God who truly is and his self-revelation" can be itself a departure from the exegetical tradition practiced by Beza who controlled such speculation about the "God who truly is" through his return to patristic and textual concerns. For Beza, as for Calvin, God is truly known in the self-revealing scriptures by which the glory of God is seen in the face of Jesus Christ.[56]

The burden of proof still lies with those who see Theodore Beza as Calvin's *bête noir.* They have yet to demonstrate their contention from the full range of Beza's writings that the methods he used to defend Calvin were the Achilles heel of the Reformed Tradition. As David Steinmetz has well said, *"...the image of Beza in particular and of Protestant scholasticism in general need fundamental re-thinking and reinterpretation. The tendency to deplore the return of Protestant thinkers to Aristotelian metaphysics and to regard the reintroduction of scholasticism as an abandonment of the insights of the Reformation may, after all, prove to be historically naive and to rest on a misconception of scholasticism and of the Reformation itself."*[57]

Marvin W. Anderson, St. Paul

[56] R. A. Muller, Scholasticism Protestant and Catholic: Francis Turretin on the Object and Principles of Theology, ChH 55 (1986) 205.

[57] D. Steinmetz, Reformers in the Wings, Grand Rapids 1981. Preface.