‘As French as Wine’ – Sociological Indicators of Original Calvinism

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ABSTRACT

The paper explores, identifies and analyzes the concrete sociological indicators of original Calvinism as the specifically French Protestant Reformation, as well-established in the historical literature yet overlooked or downplayed in much of the sociology of (Calvinist) religion and ideology. The paper classifies them into five specific sociological indicators or proofs of originally French Calvinism as a specific religion and ideology. The indicators are, first, the earliest national French Calvinists, second, the initial national or regional Calvinist French theocracy, third, France’s early national wars of religion between Calvinism and Catholicism, fourth, the first French Calvinist national council, and fifth, the first official recognition and toleration of Calvinism in France. The paper aims to contribute toward complementing the current sociological literature in which analyses of the societal origin and setting of original Calvinism are relatively rare compared with those of derivative Calvinism in other national settings.
Original, orthodox or early Calvinism as a specific type of theology/religion and ideology/politics is—and its founder and leader was—if you will, ‘as French as wine (Champagne)’, namely France’s Protestant Reformation during the 16th century. Originally French Calvinism is an established fact in the historical literature (Benedict 1999; Elwood 1999; Heller 1986; Hobsbaum 1972; Kingdon 1964; Ramsey 1999; Scoville 1953; Walzer 1965), though somewhat overlooked or deemphasized in the sociology of religion centering on its derivative forms and its later developments in other societal contexts (Gorski 2003; Hillmann 2008), and almost ‘forgotten’ among the lay public in non-French or non-European settings such as America.

If this fact is correct and indisputable, then the question arises as to what are the concrete sociological and historical indicators or ‘proofs’ that original, orthodox, or ‘young’ Calvinism is precisely the religious, cultural, and ideological-political creation or phenomenon of 16th century French society as the ancien regime. These indicators are multiple, compelling, and intertwined and mutually reinforcing, well-known and redundant to historians and theologians, yet often omitted or downplayed in much of the sociological literature on Calvinism, so exploring and considering them can be of interest to many sociologists. For the present purpose they can be divided into the following five sociological indicators or ‘proofs’.

The first indicator or ‘proof’ of French Calvinism is that the first, earliest Calvinists with societal or national scope, organization, aspiration, and operation were those in 16th century France called French ‘Huguenots’. The second corollary indicator is that the initial national or regional, as distinguished from local, Calvinist theocracy and thus established church was that of Calvinists in France, i.e., the regions controlled by the ‘Huguenots’. The third related indicator is that the stage of the first wars of religion or religious revolutions of Calvinism against Catholicism on a societal or national scale was France. The fourth, more specific indicator is that the first major or the most important national, as distinct from regional or local, Calvinist synod or council took place in Paris. The fifth indicator is that Calvinism was first within non-Calvinist and other societies granted official recognition and toleration on a national scale precisely in France. All these sociological indicators specify, confirm, and express—in factor-analytic terms ‘load on’—what can be considered the overarching sociological indicator or ‘proof’ of French Calvinism. This is that Calvinism originates and initially operates and develops within French society under certain societal conditions and historical conjunctures, including the fact that its
founder was born, educated, and lived approximately half of his life in France. These specific sociological indicators of Calvinism as the Protestant Reformation of French society are considered in this order next (listed in Table 1), while the overarching indicator can be examined in a separate analysis.

Table 1. Sociological indicators of Original Calvinism as the French Protestant Reformation

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<th>Indicator</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. The first national Calvinists—French Huguenots</td>
<td>The first national Calvinist ‘Reformed Church’—the Huguenot church in Paris</td>
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<td>2. The earliest regional Calvinist theocracy—the Huguenot theocracy</td>
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<td>3. The initial national wars of religion between Calvinism and Catholicism—in France</td>
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<td>4. The first Calvinist national council—the synod of Paris</td>
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The remainder of the paper revolves around these sociological indicators of original Calvinism. Thus, separate sections consider such indicators as the first national Calvinists, the first Calvinist theocracy, original Calvinist wars of religion, the first Calvinist council, and the first official recognition and toleration of Calvinism. A last section provides conclusion.

The First National Calvinists—Enter the French Huguenots

As implied, a collective indicator that Calvinism originally constitutes precisely the French Protestant Reformation is that the first nationally organized Calvinist groups were so-called Huguenots in 16th century France prior or parallel to their local variants in Geneva following Calvin’s arrival, and before Dutch and German Calvinists, as well as those in Scotland (‘Presbyterians’) and England and early America (‘Puritans’). The Huguenots were the original nation-wide faces of Calvinism and thus of the ‘Reformed Church’, and Calvin’s first ‘children’, disciples, and ‘brothers in arms’, embodying and carrying out the Calvinist ‘French Reformation’ as the ‘revolution of the saints’ (Walzer 1965). In short, the Huguenots were not only early French Calvinists specifically, but also the first national, as different from local, Calvinists generally (Benedict 1999). Alternatively, the first not only French but all European Calvinists in national terms were precisely the Huguenots in various, particularly southern, regions of France. For instance, Hume describes the Huguenots, including their regional leaders, as the early ‘Calvinists’ in France and ‘French Protestants’ in general (also, Benedict 1999; Scoville 1953), particularly registering the ‘communion of the Hugonots (sic)’ in Paris itself, alongside those elsewhere (the ‘Protestants of the valleys’). In their own words, the French Huguenots belonged
to and defended the early “Reputedly Reformed Religion,” influenced by and following Calvin and becoming ‘members of his sect’ (Scoville 1953), establishing the ‘Protestant controlled regions of France’ (Benedict 1999). In sum, they were the first nation-wide adherents of ‘the emergent movement of French Calvinism’ (Ramsey 1999), simply the earliest organized Calvinists in France and Europe.

Historically, the Huguenots as the organized nation-wide or regional Calvinist movement reportedly emerged and operated in France, including Paris, during the early 1540s, while being instigated and directed by Calvin and his assistants (Beza, etc.) from Geneva during his entire exile (Ramsey 1999; Roelker 1972). To that extent, the Huguenots were in historical terms the truly first Calvinist national or regional, as distinct from Geneva local, movement, thus inspiring and preceding subsequent Calvinists in other European and non-European nations, including those in Holland, Scotland (‘Presbyterians’) and England (‘Puritans’) by several decades, and in Prussia and New England by almost a century.

On this account, as arch-Calvinists the Huguenots represented a sort of French proto-puritans, anticipating, influencing, and resembling English-American Puritans, though reportedly less ‘repressive’ than the latter, especially those in New England (Roelker 1972), as a sort of hyper-Calvinists (‘bigger Calvinists’ than Calvin himself and his first, Huguenot ‘children’). Hume registers that the Huguenots ‘so much resembled the Puritans in discipline and worship, in religion and politics’, and historically inspired and preceded the latter in terms of national emergence, organization, and strength, consistent with Calvinism in France preceding and theologically shaping Puritanism as its sectarian ramification in England (Elwood 1999; Heller 1986; Mentzer 2007; Walzer 1965). Also, in an article posthumously published, Weber (1978) observes that the Huguenots initiated and shared the ‘equally specific life-style’ of early Puritanism in North America. Predictably, the French Huguenots and English-American Puritans a la Cromwell et al. and Winthrop and his heirs (Shipton 1936), plus Scottish Presbyterians like Knox, Dutch, German, and other European Calvinists, became, as Hume suggests, ‘brothers in arms’, members of Calvinism’s extended ‘family’ or international movement (Sprunger 1982), simply ‘Calvinist saints’ (Walzer 1965; also Gorski 1993). They all reportedly exhibited mutual affinity, assistance, and understanding as ‘Reformed’ co-religionists (Scoville 1953). While both, as well as Scottish Presbyterians, were under Calvin’s theological and political mastery and made pilgrimage (e.g., French expatriates, early English Puritans, Knox, etc.) to his Geneva
theocracy, the Huguenots and generally Calvinists in France were and remained the first and oldest Calvinist ‘brothers’ and “saints” in historical terms before those in Holland and other countries (Hyma 1938). Notably, the ‘direct links’ of the Huguenots representing French Reformed Churches and even France as a cultural entity (Marcus 2001) with Calvin and his followers in Geneva were reportedly ‘far more substantial’ than those between the latter and any other early Calvinists (Benedict 1999). This specifically includes those between the Calvinists in Holland and elsewhere in Europe, with the possible exception of Scotland, and ‘the great Calvinist city on a hill’ (Benedict 1999) inspiring or anticipating Puritan ruled New England as Winthrop’s ‘shining city upon a hill’ (and Reagan’s similar neo-Puritan vision or description of America). In sum, within this ‘extended family’ of Calvinism, during his life and after Calvin’s ‘followers in France’ (Teall 1962) cum the Huguenots were his first ‘children’ or disciples and thus Calvinists.

In particular, the probably first permanent national or regional, as distinct from Geneva or Strasbourg local, Calvinist church was reportedly that of the Huguenots in France during the mid-16th century. Specifically, propelled and directed by Calvin from Geneva, including his sending pastors to France, the Huguenots founded the first national Calvinist church in, of all places, Paris (the aristocratic suburb of Saint Germain) in 1555—also the year of his total and final victory over ‘heretics’ in his Geneva theocracy—reflecting their growing numbers, organization, and strength in the capital (Ramsey 1999). In turn, the Paris Calvinist church, like those in Strasbourg and Geneva, inspired and historically preceded ‘Reformed’ churches founded in Holland and Scotland a few decades later (Gorski 1993) and Prussia afterwards, as well as their sectarian ramifications through Puritan sects in England and New England. This is another way to say that originally Calvinism was the 16th century French Reformation epitomized, after Calvin’s exile, by the Huguenot groups and churches as his ‘children’ and instruments of founding, expanding, and ultimately instituting the ‘Reformed Church’ as the ‘only true’ in France, thus implementing his vision of *Institution of the Christian Religion*. For instance, during the late 1550s Calvin himself referred to 300,000 ‘Reformed’ religionists cum the Huguenots in France, personally commanded by him and with reciprocal religious affinities and connections with his local Calvinists in Geneva and generally the ‘Swiss Protestant cantons’ (Scoville 1952). Notably, by 1562 reportedly more than a ‘thousand’ Calvinist congregations were probably ‘founded’ in France, more than in any other European country, confirming that Calvinism
expanded ‘more powerfully and more rapidly in France’ than elsewhere in Europe, including the Netherlands (Benedict 1999). And Calvin effectively founded the Reformed Church in the general sense of a religious organization and movement originally while living in France (Kingdon 1964; also, Heller 1986), including Paris (Hobsbaum 1972; Ramsey 1999), during the 1530s, and later expanded and coercively instituted it in Geneva and literally exported it elsewhere, including the Netherlands, England, and Scotland, until his death in 1564.

After Calvin’s death the numbers of the Calvinists cum Huguenots in France further increased reaching, for example, almost 2 million, around 10 percent of the French population by the late 17th century, as did consequently their cohesion, organizational capacity, strength, and influence within the French society, especially the economy (e.g., Samuel Bernard in Paris’ banking circles) and even in part politics (Herwarth, John Law, etc.) (Scoville 1953). No wonder, Hume refers to the Huguenots’ political and military ‘progress’ in France and by implication their economic success and wealth (Benedict 1991; Scoville 1953; Walzer 1965), and Weber (1978) explicitly emphasizes that ‘French bourgeois capitalism’ developed ‘closely linked with the Huguenot movement.’ In comparative terms, the Huguenots at least initially attained both ‘greater political strength’ and military capability than, for example, the Dutch and most other European, perhaps except for Scottish, Calvinists (Benedict 1999). Thus, the comparatively greater and ‘more rapidly established’ political and military power of the Huguenots, while facilitated by ‘weaker repression’ in France than in Holland and elsewhere, was indicated by ‘many more churches, numerical dominance in a number of communities, a larger number of noble, especially high noble, converts’, as well as the ability to raise armies before the civil war (Benedict 1999).

In terms of social stratification, the first Calvinist national, as distinct from Geneva local, class, specifically aristocracy, was what Weber calls the ‘Huguenot nobility’ in France. In this sense, it is the ‘Huguenot nobility’ that was the original Calvinist aristocracy and even class in general such that, as he remarks, the French Huguenots ‘were led by nobles’, as were subsequently ‘Scottish Calvinists’ as well as those in Holland (Gorski 1993). Moreover, reportedly ‘a far higher percentage’ of the French nobility embraced and joined Calvinism and became the ‘cause’s noble (military) leaders during its early development than in Holland, which incidentally casts doubt on presumed Calvinist ‘proto-republicanism’ (Benedict 1999; Black 1997; Gorski 1993).
Consequently, in terms of collective action, the first Calvinist revolutionary or organizing agent was precisely Weber’s ‘Huguenot nobility’ originally, though subsequently ceased, ‘fighting for Calvinism’ and dominating the latter (Heller 1986; Roelker 1972; Scoville 1953; Walzer 1965) in France from the 16th through the 17th century. In this sense, the ‘Huguenot nobility’ is a sort of original Calvinist army or leadership in virtue of leading the Huguenots in their struggles with Catholics (Benedict 1999), probably starting with the ‘tensions and conflicts’ between the two ‘in the streets of Paris in the 1540s’ (Ramsey 1999), thus prefiguring or coinciding with the nobles in Scotland and Holland as the leaders of the Calvinists in their anti-Catholic battles. The critical difference is that the Huguenots and thus Calvinism in France as the religious-political movement were defeated militarily (Acemoglu 2005) and largely discredited socially, albeit eventually tolerated (Bien 1961; Clarke 1957), while Dutch, Scottish, and English-American Calvinists (or Puritans) were ultimately triumphant, in these religious conflicts with Catholics and ‘heathen’, as in New England.

Analogously, the first national or regional, as distinct from Geneva local, Calvinist bourgeois or capitalist class was the ‘Huguenot bourgeoisie’ (Scoville 1953) or capitalists in France anticipating and influencing that in other societies, including Holland and New England, while coexisting with and eventually succeeding the nobility as the dominant class element and the leading military force of early French and other Calvinism. Recall Weber (1978) suggests that the French Huguenots anticipated and influenced the ‘specific life-style’ in economic and other terms of American Puritanism. Also, Weber (1978) observes that, following the revocation of the religious toleration Edict of Nantes in 1685, the Huguenots via emigration diffused their ‘typical qualifications’ and capitals not only to ‘countries with underdeveloped economies’, including by implication Prussia, Scotland, and Poland (Eisenstadt 1965; Gorski 1993), plus New England (Shipton 1936), but ‘especially’ to relatively developed Holland in which capital investment was ‘differently structured’ than in the Huguenot parts of France, or subordinated to ‘living the life of a rentier, enjoying ostentation and similar things’ unlike in the latter. A salient dimension implied by Weber of this process is the Huguenots’ reported ‘diffusion’ of more advanced technology from Calvin’s ‘French nation’ to Europe, including Switzerland, Holland, Germany, and England that were all more or less actually ‘behind France industrially and commercially’ (Scoville 1952) during the 16-17th centuries (e.g., 1685). On this account, the Huguenots as distinctly French Calvinists surprisingly appear as the earliest or most advanced
Calvinist capitalist entrepreneurs and innovators in Schumpeter’s sense, preceding or impacting via their technological diffusion those in other societies, including Switzerland, Holland, England, and North America. More precisely, they were the first capitalist proto-or pseudo-capitalist entrepreneurs and inventors since or so long as modern industrial capitalism was not fully established and feudalism abolished in France until the French Revolution (Markoff 1997) and in other societies, including England, until the Industrial Revolution (Clark, O'Rourke, and Taylor 2008; Crafts 1996) and its aftermath during the late 18th and 19th centuries, while both revolutions being directly or indirectly impacted and anticipated by the Enlightenment (Mokyr 2009).

The First National Calvinist Theocracy--the Huguenot Theocracy

A corollary indicator of original Calvinism as the French Reformed Church is that the Huguenots envisioned and whenever and wherever dominant instituted the first near-national or regional Calvinist and in that sense ‘Puritan’ theocracy in parts of 16th century France. The Huguenot arch-Calvinist theocracy was distinct from and also contemporaneous and parallel to Calvin’s local theocratic government in the Francophone city-state of Geneva, and prior and inspiring, at least as a vision, to those in other European societies such as Scotland and Holland during the late 16th century and England (transiently) and New England over the 17th century. First and foremost, Calvin and consequently his Huguenots and all followers cum considered evangelical theocracy, i.e., what Weber calls Bibliocracy, Divinely foreordained and hence themselves endowed with a sort of Diving Right to establish, defend, and expand it as what their compatriot Comte called the ‘reign of [Calvinist] Saints’ (also, Gorski 1993; Walzer 1965). Remember while still in France during 1533-6 Calvin designed and designated evangelical theocracy as Christiana respublica (Black 1997) or civitate Dei a la St. Augustine presented in the original edition of his major theological work. The Huguenots as what Weber calls Calvin’s ‘Church Militant’ and revolutionary sect (Scoville 1953) striving to ‘capture’ the state (Maurer 1926) and so total political power (Gorski 1993) in France and Europe fully embraced this design of their supreme theological and political leader, as did all subsequent Calvinists such as, alongside his local followers in Geneva, those in Holland, Scotland, and in part Prussia, and their Puritan versions in England and New England and Puritan-rooted evangelicals in America.
Moreover, the very title of Calvin’s *Institution of the Christian Religion* as the proper translation of the original Latin and French editions meant and stipulated ultimately the instituting via coercive imposition of evangelical theocracy cum *Christiana respublica*. This is because for Calvin and his Huguenot and all followers the ‘Reformed’ was the ‘only true Christian’ and thus to be solely instituted or officially recognized and established theocratic religion and church in French and any society. (The usual English translation *Institutes of the Christian Religion* apparently obscures this original theocratic meaning or implication of Calvin’s theological magnum opus.) Simply, for Calvin and the Huguenots *Institution of the Christian Religion* signified instituting it in the form of the ‘Reformed Church’ as the ‘only true’ and to that extent establishing theocracy or what Weber would call ‘monocracy’, and not as just one among multiple religions and churches or confessions (Gorski 2000b; Nischan 1994) coexisting and recognized or tolerated in society. To that extent, *Institution* meant institution via compulsory imposition of religious pure ‘monopoly’ (Ekelund, Hébert and Tollison 2002), monism, absolutism, and repression, including persecution (Gorski 2000b), rather than, as Calvinists and their descendants or admirers did and do claim, and ‘rational choice’ theorists of religion contend on theoretical grounds, of ‘competition’, ‘free markets’, ‘pluralism’, ‘liberty of conscience’, ‘toleration’, and the like.

Calvin and his Huguenots, like virtually all subsequent Calvinists, through their religious and political activities did prove or reveal what *Institution of the Christian Religion* essentially signified in its title and ultimately dictated by its theological argument. This is coercively instituting *Christiana respublica* and thus evangelical theocracy or monocracy as a form of religious monopoly, and not merely, as often naively assumed, the ‘Reformed’ religion and church as just one among multiple religions and churches or confessions, so putative religious ‘competition’ and ‘pluralism’ (‘confessionalism’). First, the fact that Calvin personally instituted and enforced an autocratic and Machiavellian ‘Reformed’ theocracy in Geneva (Byrne 1997; Eisenstadt 1965; Gorski 1993; Mansbach 2006; Swidler 1986; Walzer 1965) was the ultimate if local ‘proof in the pudding’ of what he really signified by *Institution*--and thus a proper subtitle or practical political ‘translation’ of this seemingly theological or ‘spiritual’ title--and also argued and advocated throughout this treatise. Second, his loyal French theocratic ‘children’ the Huguenots instigated and directed by Calvin from Geneva also revealed the true meaning, aim, or outcome of *Institution* when at the first national Calvinist synod in Paris year 1559 decided
that the ‘Reformed’ evangelical church could only be established as the ‘only true’ in France and Europe through the ‘extermination’ of other churches and groups such as Catholics and others (Heller 1986).

Therefore, like Calvin himself, the Huguenots effectively interpreted and politically ‘translated’ *Institution of the Christian Religion* into, first, *Institution of Calvinism through Imposition* as the ‘only true’ Christian religion, and second, *Extermination* of all other Christian and non-Christian religions and groups as what Calvin condemned as ‘infidels’. They hence attempted and partially and transiently succeeded in instituting Calvinist theocracy or monocracy enforcing religious ‘monopoly’, as did subsequent ‘Calvinist saints’ of virtually all places and times through their theological and political activities alike (Walzer 1965), from, alongside Calvin et al. in Geneva, those in Holland and Scotland through Puritans in England and New England to Calvinist-inspired evangelicals (“Dominion” theologians, etc.) in contemporary America. On this account, the Huguenots presented themselves as the first Calvinist would-be-theocrats or exterminators and ‘Church militant’ or revolutionary sect overall with national scope and ambition, thus their 1559 Synod perhaps being as fateful to the development and expansion—though seemingly the ‘best kept secret’--of Calvinism in France and beyond as Calvin’s 1533 ‘sudden conversion’ to the “Reformed” religion. For instance, the Calvinists in France, as in Holland, while demanding ‘toleration for their own services’ denied and eliminated it for Catholics by reportedly aggressive actions like closing ‘Catholic religious houses’ and eliminating the mass whenever in power (Benedict 1999). The French Calvinists therefore set Calvinism’s typical pattern of denying and destroying for others what it self-righteously demands for itself— religious tolerance and freedom, as observed even in the supposedly tolerant 17th century Dutch Republic in which the ruling Calvinist church denied liberty of conscience and toleration to non-Calvinists like Catholics and even Lutherans (Kaplan 2002). Also, recall Weber notes that since Calvin and his first ‘children’ the Huguenots Calvinism (including Calvinist Baptism) more than Catholicism and Lutheranism permits no liberty of conscience to non-Calvinists. His respected colleague Troeltsch (1966) specifically observes that the “Calvinistic Puritan states’ of America rejected for others--and so monopolized for themselves--liberty of conscience as ‘godless skepticism’, thus perpetuating well into the 19th century until the ‘disestablishment’ of Puritanism and even the 21st century, as in the observed ‘protototalitarian’
evangelical ‘Bible Belt’ (Bauman 1997), what Calvin’s Huguenots did in France, including Paris, centuries earlier.

In sum, the underlying meaning, apparent intent, or at least objective ultimate outcome of Calvin’s *Institution* is precisely *Institution of the Christiana respublica* cum Calvinist theocracy, as himself and his Huguenots and virtually all later Calvinists, notably English-American Puritans and US Puritan-rooted evangelicals, confirmed by their religious and political actions. In this respect, *Institution* signifies both the state or condition *and* the process or act of institution through violent or revolutionary imposition of Calvinism, thus not just, as it seems at first sight, an established institutional arrangement in Durkheim’s sense but, above all, instituting by imposing and coercing, including persecuting and exterminating non-Calvinists as Calvin’s ‘enemies of God’ (Gorski 2000b; Walzer 1965). Moreover, when first published in 1536, *Institution* did not and could not signify religious ‘institution’ in Durkheim’s sense, let alone ‘institutes’, because the Christian ‘Reformed’ religion was not yet instituted or established but only a vision or dream resulting from Calvin’s mysterious ‘sudden conversion’, and did instead mean the design for instituting or establishing it through imposition by coercion in the form of war of extermination or revolution and persecution. Simply, at that historical point for Calvin *Institution* had the dynamic meaning of process or revolutionary action (Walzer 1965) in the form of what Voltaire and Hume observed as Calvinist intrinsic civil or religious war rather than the static one of stationary condition or arrangement.

Predictably, for Calvin and his Huguenots and all later Calvinists *Christiana respublica* (also, Black 1997; Gorski 1993; Nischan 1994) must be by design cum ‘Christian’ Divinely preordained, and so they are entitled as God’s chosen saints-masters (the ‘elect’) to institute, enforce, and expand it in the name and for the ‘glory of God’. Historically, this inspires or anticipates the evangelical (e.g., Dominion theology’s) design and attempted reconstruction of what observers call ‘American Theocracy’ (Phillips 2006). The latter is predictably a la Calvin’s and Huguenot *Christiana respublica* designed and designated as ‘Christian America’ (Adorno 2001; Davis and Robinson 2009; Friedland 2002; Hedges 2006; Hout and Fischer 2002; Juergensmeyer 2003; Lindsey 2008; Munch 2001; Owens, Robinson, and Smith-Lovin 2010) deemed ordained by and dominion of God on Earth and so to be established and enforced by US ‘born again’ fundamentalists cum evangelicals by any effective means a la Machiavelli such as religious revolution or ‘holy’ war and at any human cost like executions and extermination of
‘infidels’ and ‘enemies of God’ (‘whatever it takes’). Comparatively, the Calvinist *Christiana respublica* converges or is comparable with the notion and system of ‘Islamic Republic’ also considered, established, and enforced as a Divine ordinance and the dominion or rule of God (Allah) in fundamentalist Islam (as in Iran, etc.). Thus, Weber implies this by comparing Calvin and Muhammad and Calvinism and Islam overall in terms of their ‘similar’ theocratic solutions to politics such as their shared entwined concept and activity of religious revolutions within society and ‘holy’ wars against ‘infidel’ societies.

On this account, Calvin’s initial vision and eventual institution, as in Geneva, of *Christiana Respublica*, while not entirely original and basically taken from the ‘Dark Middle Ages’ (Black 1997; Nischan 1994) like some identical visions a la Augustine’s ‘city of God’, determined both the Huguenots’ blueprint and temporary realization of French Calvinist theocracy cum the ‘only true’ Christian church and those of all subsequent generations of Calvinists. Recall these theocratic visions and their implementations involve, for example, alongside Calvin’s Geneva, Calvinists in Holland and Scotland and Puritans in England and New England, all designing, instituting via coercion or revolution, and enforcing Calvin’s medieval and Huguenot *Christiana Respublica* through their “Christian [Holy] Commonwealths” as historical instances of the dead ‘golden past’ or ‘paradise lost’ within Calvinism. Yet, the vision of *Christiana Respublica* seemingly resurrects from its presumed death through US ‘reborn’ evangelicals in their design and even, as in the Southern ‘Bible Belt’, institution via coercive imposition --including persecution, discrimination, and exclusion of ‘infidels’ (Edgell, Gerteis and Hartmann 2006)--of the ‘American Christian Republic’, simply ‘Christian [evangelical] America.’

To that extent, the latter design and designation historically revives the spirit or ghost of Calvin—and even literally as in the ‘Bible Belt’ (e.g., the Texas state substituted Calvin for ‘ungodly’ Jefferson in the public school history curriculum in 2011)--and his first ‘children’ the Huguenots, and thus exhibits a sort of theocratic-republican commonly unsuspected (‘shocking’?) French point of origin and connection. In passing, comparatively, it appears as a functional equivalent or formal analogue of the notion and system of ‘Islamic Republics’ (Iran, Taliban-ruled regions, conceivably Egypt, Turkey, etc.), as exemplified by the observation that the US death penalty and generally penal system, above all in the South, is a ‘functionally equivalent’ to those in Islamic republican theocracies like Iran in terms of its frequency of
executions (Jacobs, Carmichael, and Kent 2005) for sins or crimes—equated in both systems—and by implication its religious bases and sanctifications (Biblical and Koran Sharia law respectively).

At this juncture, the point is not so much that US revived evangelicalism a la Calvinist-rooted Dominionism (Davis and Robinson 2009; Hedges 2006; Juergensmeyer 2003) redesigns and reconstructs ‘Christian America’ establishing the ‘Dominion of God on Earth’ as to trace its root or precedent and thus place it in historical perspective and the global ‘extended family’ of Calvinism since Calvin and his Huguenots. Hence, the point is that original Calvinism’s vision of Christiana respublica was simply ‘made in France’ not only in the sense that Calvin (re)recreated and ‘reformed’ it from its medieval prototype while still living there. It was also in that the Huguenots were the first national Calvinist group to adopt this design of evangelical theocracy, thus preceding other Calvinists in Holland, Scotland, Prussia, their Puritan variants in England and New England, and ‘born again’ evangelicals in modern America. Specifically, while Calvin (re)invented and ‘reformed’ it 1533-5 and formally stated it in 1536 (the first edition of Institution), the Huguenots likely adopted the medieval vision of Christiana respublica and his other doctrines during the 1540s, as indicated by their activities during that time in Paris and elsewhere (Ramsey 1999; also, Roelker 1972), notably their militancy (Heller 1986). They thus preceded in this respect, for example, Calvinists in Holland and Scotland by a few decades (the 1560s-80s), and by a century or so those in Germany (the 1640s), as well as Puritans a la Cromwell and Winthrop in England and colonial America (the 1630s-40s).

On this account, at least as a vision of institution of the ‘Christian Religion’ via coercive imposition and persecution, Calvinism’s first theocracy with national scope or ambition was historically the Huguenots’ Christiana Respublica envisioned by their original and permanent master Calvin, perhaps during his 1533 ‘sudden conversion.’ The Huguenot Christiana respublica hence preceded and to some degree inspired those in subsequent Calvinist societies, such as Holland and Scotland, Puritan England and New England, and evangelical ‘Christian’ America, while being parallel and linked to its local Geneva form. Calvin and his Huguenots regarded theocracy designated Christiana respublica or otherwise—civitas Dei, the ‘Christian Commonwealth’, ‘Government of God’, ‘Kingdom of Christ’, etc.—as God’s commandment and hence themselves as Divinely ‘elected’ to institute, enforce, and expand it first and foremost in
French society, as did later Calvinists, including Puritans, and their descendants in non-French, notably Anglo-Saxon, societies (Gorski 2000a; Walzer 1965).

Consequently, Calvin and his Huguenots acted accordingly. They attempted and partly succeeded to fulfill the Divine ‘commandment’ of evangelical theocracy first and above all in France, as well as adjacent Francophone areas like Geneva as a local experiment and prelude to its total, national form in ‘our French nation’. Weber observes that ‘for Calvinism the Biblical theocracy, in the Presbyterian form, was divinely ordained. However, it could establish a theocracy only for a limited time and only in local areas: in Geneva and New England, incompletely among the Huguenots, and in the Netherlands.’ Of course, Weber knew that the ‘Biblical theocracy’, however incomplete, among the Huguenots in France was the first Calvinist national or regional theocracy, preceding those in the Netherlands and New England, plus Scotland, and in the Puritan version England (curiously omitted), and coinciding with that of Geneva as the first local form coercively instituted and enforced personally by Calvin in a French cultural area. Recall from the 1540s and his exile in Geneva as the ‘command post’ and the local ‘City of God’ (Benedict 1999), ‘Father Calvin’ personally directed the Huguenots in their religious and political activities, including the first national Calvinist Synod and wars of religion, in France, just as later instructing and educating Calvinists in Europe overall, especially Scotland (Knox et al.) and partly England (early Puritans), in what Voltaire and Hume calls Calvinist inherent civil and religious war.

Yet, somewhat ironically, Calvin’s ‘French children’ were most successful in establishing their Calvinist theocracy in parts of France precisely after the death of their ‘father’ (1564). This meant that he did not probably die totally ‘happy’ for he did not live long enough to see ‘our French nation’ becoming Christiana respublica or civitas Dei in macroscopic terms and thus under the rule of the ‘Reformed’ church after his micro-model of Geneva. Hume observes that the Huguenots created an ‘empire within empire’27, including ‘fortified towns’, in France, and to that extent a proto-Calvinist and generally ascetic Protestant theocracy. In other words, they established the theocratic ‘Huguenot state within a state’ encompassing ‘the United Provinces of the Midi’ in France (Benedict 1999). Hume thus suggests that the Huguenots were the first, along with Calvin et al. in Geneva, Calvinist theocrats, sectarians, and ‘determined zealots’ driven by Calvinist ‘religious zeal’ and forming a ‘sect’. Moreover, a Calvinist cum Huguenot regional leader, in close constant contact with Calvin and his associates (Beza) in Geneva,
became no less than the king of France, triumphantly entering Paris during the 1580s, though
later adjuring Calvinism and reconverting to Catholicism. Hume observes that a ‘professed
Hugonot’, the regional ‘king of Navarre’ became ‘next heir to the crown’ and then (also,
Benedict 1999; Kingdon 1964; Ramsey 1999; Roelker 1972) ‘assumed the government, by the
title of Henry IV’ in 1589 and ‘marched directly to Paris’ and its suburbs (‘and having taken the
suburbs sword in hand, he abandoned them to be pillaged by his soldiers’) assisted, as also
Simmel implies, with a ‘body of English’ Protestants.

In sum, the Huguenot near-national or regional theocracy in France preceded and
probably inspired--though Calvin’s local Geneva form was certainly more manifest, enduring,
and influential--many subsequent Calvinist theocracies in Europe, Great Britain, and America.
For example, it did by several decades that in Holland and Scotland during the late 16th century,
by around a century or so their Puritan versions in England temporarily and New England during
mostly the 17th century. To be sure, Weber’s incomplete theocracy of the Huguenots in France
was short-lived and collapsed by the 1590s with their defeat (Acemoglu 2005; Benedict 1991;
Scoville 1953) in what they, as both Voltaire and Hume observe, largely initiated or provoked as
the wars of religion or civil war. Yet, this applies in the long run to virtually all such theocracies
or, in Weber’s words, ‘Calvinistic state churches’, i.e., disestablished and superseded, as in the
Netherlands and New England, militarily defeated and then discredited, as was the Puritan
theocracy in England, or substantively changed and moderated as Presbyterian-rulled Scotland,
perhaps with the single partial remaining exception of evangelical ‘Christian’ America (the
‘Bible Belt’, Utah, etc.).

To restate what Pareto diagnosed and predicted for aristocracies or oligarchies, ‘Calvinist
and related theocracies as a rule do not last permanently’, which are after all intrinsically
aristocratic or oligarchic systems defined by what Comte calls the ‘reign’ of selected ‘best’ or
few saints-masters (e.g., Calvin et al. as the ‘elect’). It remains to be seen whether the Pareto rule
will prove ultimately true even for putative exceptions like the apparently perennial (undying)
Puritan-rooted vision and dream of ‘Christian America’ as the “Biblical garden” (Gould 1996) as
well as seemingly permanent Islamic theocracies in Iran, Saudi Arabia, etc. If the rule is valid, it
predicts that these Calvinist, Islamic, and any existing theocracies and/or aristocracies will be, to
use Calvin’s own words, ‘predestined’--though not by his ‘omnipotent’ God but by what even
Puritan Parsons calls the ‘God of [societal] evolution’--to extinction or transformation beyond
recognition. In this context, Weber’s incomplete and transient Calvinist theocracy of the Huguenots does not indicate its irrelevance compared to such more enduring theocracies as in Scotland and New England within the ‘extended family’ of Calvinism from Calvin in 16th century Paris to 21st century evangelical America. Rather, this first Calvinist theocracy, like these others as also the dead ‘golden past’ or ‘paradise lost’, confirms and exemplifies a sort of iron sociological law or historical pattern that ‘theocracies do not last’ at least within Western modernity, notably modern liberal-secular democracy.

**Initial Wars of Religion between Calvinism and Catholicism in France**

A related sociological or historical indicator of original Calvinism being the French Protestant Reformation is that the first Calvinist-Catholic society-wide or national wars of religion (Juergensmeyer 2003) erupted and enfolded in France. These represented the wars of religion or civil wars between *French* Calvinists cum the Huguenots and Catholics during the mid and late 16th century. These ‘French wars of religion’ (Clark 1998) reportedly formed the ‘archetypal conflicts of 16th-century France’ (Lachmann 1989) and even the ‘most searing and destructive crisis’ before the French Revolution (Benedict 1999). Hence, they anticipate and precede their subsequent forms in Europe and America, while being related and parallel to the local conflicts between the converted ‘Reformed’ and Catholic groups in Geneva during Calvin’s theocratic rule. Specifically, France’s wars of religion between Calvinism and Catholicism in the substantively sense of recurring and intensifying violent religious conflicts and constant tensions were reportedly initiated or heralded in Paris over the 1540s (Ramsey 1999), while in formal terms starting or culminating at a national scale in 1561-2, for example, the official beginning of the First Civil War (Benedict 1999). Therefore, they likely inspired and definitely preceded or to some extent coincided with virtually all other Calvinist religious wars against Catholics as well as other non-Calvinists. For example, these include the Calvinist anti-Catholic wars in Holland and Scotland (the 1560-80s), their analogues, involving also Calvinists vs. Lutherans, in Prussia (the 1640s), and their Puritan versions by Cromwell’s Puritans against both Anglicans and Catholics in England and Ireland (the 1640-60s), as well as their ramifications or proxies in 17th-18th century New England versus non-Puritans as well as the ‘heathen’ Native Americans and America during and after the ‘Great Awakening’ and other evangelical revivals up to the early 21st century.
More specifically, what Spencer would call the first Calvinist ‘offensive’, preemptive national war of religion was that of the Huguenots both in purely military and general sociological terms. It was militarily in that, as Hume observes, the ‘rebellious Hugonots’, notably ‘leaders of the Hugonots’, decided ‘to strike a blow before the Catholics were aware of the danger’33 (also, Roelker 1972) revealing ‘Calvinist militancy’ and the ‘revolutionary character of the French Calvinist movement’, including the ‘para-military system’ of the Huguenots34 (Benedict 1999). Sociologically, this was the first Calvinist preemptive religious war in the sense that the ‘advent of Calvinism’ in France during the 1530s caused or resulted in ‘decades of civil war’, substantively enfolding over the 1540s and formally open or climaxing during the 1560s-90s (Ramsey 1999), in virtue of the Calvinist movement acting ‘aggressively’ for religious and political ‘reform’35 (Benedict 1999). This implies that the Huguenots’ rebellion, incited and directed by Calvin from Geneva (Benedict 1999; Heller 1986; Ramsey 1999; Walzer 1965), against Catholics and the monarchy in France, is the earliest form of Calvinist anti-Catholic rebellions and eventually revolutions with national, as distinct from local, range or ambition. In other words, what Hume describes as the ‘seditious insolence’ of the Huguenots resulted in the first national or regional Calvinist sedition and eventually, though just partly successful or failed, rebellion and revolution. As his French Enlightenment colleague Voltaire observed, en passant the foremost protector of French Calvinists (e.g., Jean Calas) from state repression on the principle of religious tolerance (Bien 1961; Clarke 1957), Calvinism “from its very nature necessarily produced civil wars and shook the foundations of states,” and it did so by the agency of the Huguenots first precisely in France.

Therefore, the Huguenots as French Calvinists under the supreme command and inspiration of Calvin from Geneva set the pattern or precedent for the Calvinist typically offensive, preemptive religious or civil war. This is the model and practice of wars of religion or civil wars launched by the Calvinist ‘Church militant’ or revolutionary sect through armed rebellions. This was also witnessed subsequently or almost simultaneously via social contagion in Holland and Scotland, and then in the Puritan form England Cromwell’s rebellion-revolution, and colonial and contemporary America through the ‘Great Awakenings’ and other evangelical revivals, including the fundamentalist revival of the 1980s-2010s.

As known, French Calvinists were eventually defeated in their preemptive ‘strike’ and religious war, i.e., national rebellion and sedition against Catholicism and the monarchy in
France (Acemoglu 2005; Elwood 1999; Ramsey 1999), thus attempting but failing to fulfill Calvin’s vision of ‘our French nation’ as *Christiana respublica*. Yet, by their original and ‘growing militancy’ (Heller 1986), they inspired or prefigured virtually all subsequent enactments of these Calvinist wars of religion, rebellions and seditions (Walzer 1965), and related militant actions in other societies (Elwood 1999) in which Calvinists have been almost totally victorious, as in Holland, Scotland, temporarily England\(^{36}\), New England, and America, or partially so like in Germany. Alternatively, to understand and explain subsequent or derivative Calvinist wars of religion against Catholics and generally non-Calvinists presupposes considering their original form in France. This initial Calvinist war helps understand and counterfactually predict or anticipate, for example, those in Holland, Scotland, and in part Prussia (plus anti-Lutheran), their Puritan versions in England (also and mainly anti-Anglican) and proxies in New England (additionally and mostly against pre-Christian ‘heathen’, Quakers, etc.) and usually anti-Catholic evangelical revivals such as the ‘Great Awakenings’ and the fundamentalist revival of the 1980s in America. In this sense, Calvinism’s religious war on Catholicism and rebellion against the political system in 16\(^{th}\) century France is a sort of ‘mother’ or prototype and inspiration—for Calvinists/Puritans and other Protestants—of all such intra-Christian ‘fraternal’ wars of religion and their proxies in Europe and beyond, spanning from the late 16\(^{th}\) century (Holland, Scotland) through the 17\(^{th}\)-18\(^{th}\) centuries (Germany, England, New England) to the 20\(^{th}\)-21\(^{st}\) century (evangelical America, the ‘Bible Belt’, Northern Ireland).

Furthermore, the Calvinist anti-Catholic war in France was what Simmel would call the first total, as different from limited, religious or civil ‘war of extermination’ by definition unconstrained by any rules, involving Calvinism against its enemies. This is what Hume implies in observing that during the 1560s the French ‘civil wars were renewed with greater fury than ever, and the parties became still more exasperated against each other. Fourteen armies were levied and put in motion in different parts of France; each province, each city, each family, was agitated with intestine rage and animosity. The father was divided against the son; brother against brother; and women themselves, sacrificing their humanity as well as their timidity to the religious fury, distinguished themselves by acts of ferocity and valor. Wherever the Hugonots prevailed, the images were broken, the altars pillaged, the churches demolished, the monasteries consumed with fire [though] plunder, desolation, and bloodshed attended equally the triumph of both parties.’ And the ‘strike a blow before’ or rebellion element suggests that the first Calvinist
preemptive and in that sense offensive war of extermination against Catholics and other enemies on a national scale was precisely that of the Huguenots, fulfilling or consistent with their Synod’s declaration of ‘extermination’ of ‘Papists’ and all enemies as the only efficient method of ‘institution of the Christian (Reformed) religion’ a la Calvin.

At this juncture, the first Calvinist total wars of extermination in France and later beyond were Clausewitz’s ‘continuation’ of the ‘politics’ and theology of ‘extermination’ of ‘enemies of God’ by ‘other means’, as described by Hume and others. In short, in terms of societal scope, the Huguenots’ religious war against Catholics in France was the first instance or act of society-wide Calvinist wars of religion. In terms of type of war, it was the first instance or act of Calvinist offensive, preemptive wars of religion. In terms of scale and intensity of war, it was the first instance or act of Calvinist total wars of extermination. In this sense, the Huguenots invented the model and initiated the practice of Calvinist national, preemptive, and total wars of religion originally in France, and subsequently also observed in other societies, like Holland, Great Britain, and colonial and contemporary America.

In respect of such wars of religion, hence virtually everything originates and begins in late medieval French society of the middle 16th century, substantively the 1540s, formally the 1560s, marking the start of the war or open total conflict between French Calvinists and Catholics (Heller 1986). To that extent, the period of the 1540s substantively and that of the 1560s in France formally or openly anticipates and precedes virtually all subsequent instances of Calvinist, including Puritan, anti-Catholic and in part anti-Lutheran and anti-Anglican wars of religion. Recall these instances are Calvinism’s victorious war against Catholicism and the Spanish empire in Holland (Goldstone 1986; Gorski 1993) and the Catholic monarchy in Scotland (Gorski 2000a) during the second half of the 17th century (the 1560-80s), and the double anti-Catholic and anti-Lutheran failed ‘Calvinization’ of Prussia in the 1640s (Eisendstadt 1966; Nischan 1994). They also include their variants in Anglo-Saxon Puritanism such as the 1640s Puritan initiated civil war against Anglicanism and the monarchy (Elwood 1999; Goldstone 1986; Gorski 2000a; Hillmann 2008a; Moore 1993) and the Dutch-imported 1688 Calvinist ‘Glorious’ Revolution against Catholicism in England (Byrne 1997; Champion 1999), New England’s ‘Biblical Commonwealth’ from the 1630-1830s with its constant of anti-Catholic (and anti-Quaker) persecution, intolerance, and sentiment (Merton 1939; Shipton 1936), and its vestige in contemporary America, particularly the post-bellum ‘Bible Belt’ characterized with
persistent and vehement anti-Catholicism (as witnessed in Southern Baptism and other Puritan-based sects). Alternatively, to better understand and analyze these fateful events and times in Calvinism’s wars and usually victories against Catholicism in Europe, notably Holland, Great Britain, and America may be instructive to go back and reexamine the period of the 1540-60s and the second half of the 16th century overall in France, i.e., the eruption, course, and outcome of the original war of religion between French Calvinists and Catholics. For in a sense the French civil war substantively of the 1540s and formally of the 1560s is Act 1 of or prelude to all these Calvinist anti-Catholic and other (anti-Lutheran, anti-Anglican, anti-secular, etc.) wars of religion. Conversely, the latter are reenactments or consummations, specifically revenges, of the former in which Calvinism was eventually militarily defeated by Catholicism in alliance with the monarchy.

In Clausewitz’s words, virtually all wars of religion or violent conflicts of Calvinism, including Puritanism, against Catholicism, from Holland and Prussia to Great Britain and America (the ‘Bible Belt’), are the ‘continuation’ or escalation and extension of the original Calvinist anti-Catholic war or politics of militancy and hostility in 16th century French society by ‘other or rather identical means’. Hence, the fact that the first national Calvinist anti-Catholic war of religion and thus religious revolution happened in France demonstrates that Calvinism originally was the Protestant Reformation in French society. Conversely, this shows that Calvinism initially was not, as widely supposed, the Reformation in Switzerland (Geneva did not become part of the Swiss confederacy until the 19th century), or, as occasionally believed, Germany (Strasburg, Prussia) and, conflating it with its sectarian derivative ‘Puritanism’ or its Scottish name ‘Presbyterianism’, in England or Scotland, let alone early America.

In general, Calvinism as what Weber calls the ‘Church Militant’, as a ‘more militant Protestant movement (than Lutheranism)’ (Heller 1986), originated and developed in 16th century French society, simply was ‘made in France’, just as Lutheranism had been in Germany before. Specifically, this holds true of Calvinism as what Weber also terms the design and practice of, first, religious, invariably ascetic and theocratic, revolution within society and, second, total ‘holy’ war against ‘ungodly’ societies or intra-societal groups. These are mutually related and reinforcing attributes and outcomes forming a theocratic-warlike complex that Calvinism since its inception in France during the 1530s shared, in Weber’s view, with Islam only among the world religions--and Calvin himself in Paris/Geneva with Mohammed in Medina.
as the respective founders and masters-warriors--and consequently revived Puritan-rooted evangelicalism, especially in contemporary America, shares with also resurging Islamic fundamentalism (Friedland 2002; Juergensmeyer 2003; Turner 2002). To that extent, the initial Calvinist religious revolution occurred, though ultimately unsuccessful or partly successful, in 16th century France, linked and parallel to its local proxy and ‘rehearsal’ in Geneva’s ‘conversion’ to Calvin’s ‘Reformed religion’ as both a political ideology and revolutionary movement (Eisenstadt 1965; Swidler 1986; Walzer 1965). Therefore, it predated and likely inspired Calvinism’s subsequent religious-political ‘disciplinary revolutions’ (Gorski 2003; Loveman 2005; Hillmann 2008a) in Europe, notably Holland and in part Prussia and, via their Puritan and Presbyterian versions, in Great Britain and New England and America overall, including the post-bellum Southern ‘Bible Belt’ through and after the ‘Great Awakenings’. Relatedly, the first form or proxy of the Calvinist total ‘holy’ war against ‘ungodly’ groups and by implication societies was witnessed exactly in France during the 16th century, predictably in the form of anti-Catholic wars seeking no less than, as the first Synod of Calvinism ordered, the ‘extermination’ of ‘Papists’ and all other non-Calvinists (Heller 1986).

On this account, the first religious-political revolutionaries and ‘holy’ warriors of Calvinism were simply the ‘children’ of France predating and likely inspiring various later generations of revolutionary and warlike, militant Calvinist ‘saints’ in Europe, including Puritans and Presbyterians a la Cromwell, Knox, and Winthrop et al. in Great Britain and America, as well as contemporary US and other fundamentalists cum evangelicals and sectarians. In this respect, Calvinism’s intertwined and mutually reinforcing complex of religious ascetic-theocratic revolution and ‘holy’ anti-Catholic war of ‘extermination’ in late medieval French society was the ‘mother’ or Act 1 of virtually all subsequent Calvinist ‘disciplinary revolutions’ in Europe, including their Puritan and Presbyterian variations in Great Britain and America. Conversely, the latter were replays or continuations and extensions of the former in different societal settings and historical conjunctures. Hence, Calvinists born and acting in 16th century France are the prototype or model, simply ‘parents’ of virtually all later-day Calvinist, including Puritan, revolutionaries or ‘disciplinarians’, ‘holy warriors’, and ‘saints’ as in Europe and America, up to present times, and conversely, the second being the ‘children’ or heirs of the first, of course, above all, of Calvin.
If so, then fully understanding and explaining Calvinist ‘disciplinary revolutions’ and/or ‘holy’ wars in Europe and their Puritan and Presbyterian variants in Great Britain and America since the Reformation to present times necessitates giving due consideration to Calvinism’s original design and act or attempt of religious ascetic-theocratic revolution and war of extermination of ‘Papists’ in medieval French society of the 16th century. For simply everything in this respect begins or originates here and then, France of the 1540-60s. Similarly, reconsidering or remembering the first revolutionary and militant Calvinists from medieval France can help understand and explain better the ‘ways and means’ of various subsequent Calvinist ‘saints’, revolutionaries and/or ‘holy’ warriors, including those in post-Calvin Geneva, Holland, and in part Prussia, as well as their Puritan and Presbyterian subtypes like Cromwell in England and Knox in Scotland and Winthrop et al. in New England and their revived evangelical heirs in contemporary America, especially, but not solely, the South following the ‘Great Awakenings’ and the civil war. Conversely, without due consideration to Calvinism’s original religious revolution and revolutionaries, ‘holy’ war and warriors, and ‘saints’ exactly ‘made in France’, their subsequent Calvinist-Puritan forms or ramifications beyond the French societal setting cannot be fully and accurately understood and explained because their point of origin and source, or model and precedent is not considered. For instance, it may be difficult to fully grasp and explain the successful Calvinist ‘disciplinary revolution’ in Holland of the 1580s, the Presbyterian revolutionary victory over Catholicism and consequent dominance in late 17th century Scotland, and the ultimately unsuccessful Calvinization of Lutheran-Catholic Prussia during the 1640s without considering or simply knowing Calvinism’s original attempted and eventually failed religious revolution or anti-Catholic war of extermination of the 1540-90s in France, as the missing source or link. This also applies to Puritan revolutions and ‘holy’ wars such as Cromwell’s 1640s revolution and ‘crusade’ (Goldstone 1986; Gorski 2000a) in England, Winthrop et al.’s theocratic rule (Kaufman 2008; Stivers 1994) and war of extermination against the ‘ungodly’ Native Americans (Mann 2005; Munch 2001), Quakers, ‘witches’, etc., induced and sanctified by ‘austere Calvinism’ (Kloppenberg 1998) since the early 17th century, and contemporary Puritan-inspired evangelical ‘revolutionaries’ and ‘holy warriors’. They are incompletely understood, explained, or predicted, i.e., analyzed out of context or precedent, if the first Calvinist revolution and ‘holy’ war of France starting during the 1540-60s is not taken into account or forgotten.
In sum, the original Calvinist revolution and ‘holy’ war in 16th century France provides the indispensable societal context and historical precedent for studying virtually all subsequent Calvinist, including Puritan, revolutions and ‘holy’ wars as the twin attribute of Calvinism cum Weber’s ‘Church Militant’, up to present times. Generally, that Calvinism is originally the French Protestant Reformation is confirmed by the fact that the first Calvinist ‘Church Militant’ defined by the composite of entwined and mutually reinforcing religious revolution and ‘holy’ war was formed in 16th century France, before the formation of such ‘Reformed’ churches in other societies, including Holland and Prussia, as well as their sectarian ramifications in Puritan sects and their Presbyterian versions in Great Britain and America.

The First Calvinist Council—‘Let’s Go to Paris’

As indicated, another indicator of original Calvinism as French Protestantism is that the first major Calvinist church council or Synod was held in France during the middle 16th century. It hence set the pattern or precedent for all subsequent Calvinist synods in other countries such as Holland and Germany, as well as the Puritan ‘confessions’ in England (and Scotland) and New England all taking place during the 17th century. Above all, the first Synod of French Calvinists convened in, ‘of all places’, Paris 1559 on May 26 (Heller 1986). Historically, the Synod preceded by about half a century what Weber emphasizes as the crucial Calvinist Synod of Dort in Holland during 1618–19 (Foster 1923) and the international Synod of Calvinism in Dordrecht in today’s Germany in 1618 and by almost a century the Puritan 1647 ‘Westminster Confession’ in England (Jonassen 1947) and its consequent equivalent, the ‘Cambridge Platform’ of 1648, in New England. In any event, it was the first national Synod of Calvinism, preceding more or less and likely influencing various other Calvinist synods in Europe, notably Holland (e.g., the general Synod at Emden of 1571, the provincial 1574 Synod of Dordrecht, and the national synod at Middelburg in Zeeland of 1581; cf., Hyma 1938). Thus, first within Calvinism the French Calvinists in 1559 reportedly established a ‘structure of representative government’ with a national synod as well as provincial synods, predating by two decades and likely inspiring a ‘similar regime’ instituted for the Netherlands in 1578 (Black 1997). Therefore, the Synod represented the ‘1559 national constitution of the French Reformed Church’ (Valeri 1997) as the original, first process of such kind within Calvinism, thus antedating and prefiguring those in other countries, including Holland, Scotland, and England by several decades, and colonial America and in part Germany (the Prussian court) for almost a century or so. In this respect,
‘Reformed churches in Geneva and France’ represented the first regional and national Calvinist churches respectively, just as the so-called ‘French Consistory’ did the first institution of such a kind on a national or regional level within Calvinism\(^\text{37}\) (Valeri 1997).

Geographically, the Synod in a way confirmed that Paris, the future city of artistic and other ‘ungodly’ pleasures, liberties and ‘lights’, thus everything Calvin et al. detested and condemned as ‘corruptible’, had become in part and temporarily Calvinist ‘Reformation Paris’ (Ramsey 1999). By contrast Calvin and his heirs or admirers like Rousseau deliberately and methodically recreated and extoled neighboring French-speaking Geneva as ‘anti-Paris’, i.e., ‘Christian Sparta’ (Garrard 2003), just as his Puritan followers like Winthrop with his ‘austere Calvinism’ did construct New England ( Kloppenberg 1998) and Puritan-inspired US evangelicals reconstruct modern America, especially the South cum the ‘Bible Belt.’\(^\text{38}\)

Second, the 1559 Synod in France was essentially Calvin’s ‘brain child’, as he effectively directed or crucially influenced it from Geneva. The Synod’s organization and proceedings as well as outcomes confirmed that Calvin even in exile remained the undisputed theological and political master of original Calvinism in France (Ramsey 1999) as well as his perpetual obsession with the latter as the prime societal target for the (process of) ‘institution of the Christian (Reformed) religion’ and Christiana respublica. Thus, not only was Calvin’s ‘hand’ involved directly or indirectly in the organizing and (secret) proceedings of the Synod, but also his ‘spirit’ was ever-present crucially shaping its main outcomes, testifying to his continuing dual theological and organizational-political leadership of French Calvinism even if nominally from outside France. No wonder, virtually all of the Synod decisions and outcomes in matters of theological dogma and religious belief, church administration or government, and religious-political action revealed Calvin’s ‘spirit’ and ‘strict guidance’ (Walzer\(^\text{39}\) 1965). With respect to theological dogma and religious belief, the Synod confirmed Calvin’s doctrines of omnipotent God, Divine predestination, the depravity of humans and the necessity of purging them from their corruption, Christiana respublica, etc. For instance, the Synod’s ‘Confession of Faith’ adopted that of Calvin (from 1557) which he had also sent to the King of France, again revealing his incessant obsession with and dream of France as the ‘Reformed’ nation, even after two decades in exile. In respect of church administration, the Synod embraced Calvin’s idea of ecclesiastical government ruled by God’s electi as basically himself and his associates, and enforcing strict “Discipline” on the reprobate involving all others.
Notably, in terms of religious-political action, the Synod carried to its ultimate conclusion Calvin’s vision of *Institution of the Christian Religion* via imposition of the ‘Reformed’ faith as the ‘only true’ in French society and all societies and thus *Christiana respublica*. As noted, the Synod reportedly reached the conclusion that evangelicalism in the form of the ‘Reformed’ religion could be instituted as the ‘only true’ Christian church in France only through the method of ‘extermination’\(^{40}\) (Heller 1986) of non-Calvinists like Catholics (‘Papists’) and others, inciting Calvinists to corresponding acts and eventually the full-blown Calvinist-Catholic wars of religion, formally starting or climaxing shortly afterwards. In Clausewitz’s terms, the Synod’s declaration and subsequently Calvinists’ application of the method/war of extermination against non-Calvinists in France was the ‘continuation’ of Calvin’s ‘politics’ or theology of ‘institution of the (Reformed) religion’ and *Christiana respublica* by ‘other means’. In addition, it was the ‘continuation’ and notably extension of Calvin’s local ‘politics’ of institution via coercive imposition of the ‘Reformed religion’, simply theocracy from Geneva as a local setting to France as a national state. Presumably, from the stance of the Synod, like French Calvinism overall, Calvin himself politically proved in Geneva during 1541-64, just as he stipulated in his theological injunctions\(^{41}\) already in 1535, that the ‘institution of the (Reformed) religion’ as the ‘only true’ and *Christiana respublica* is only possible and complete through applying the method of ‘extermination’ of non-Calvinists. Recall Hume observes that in Geneva Calvin ‘burned’ his Arminian critic Servetus in 1553 for ‘heresy’ dating from their encounter in Paris two decades ago (Hobsbaum 1972) and various other ‘heretics’ and ‘libertines’ later to totally establish his ‘godly’ rule. This success apparently proved to his followers in France and beyond that ‘extermination’ is the only effective method of ‘institution of the (Reformed) religion’ and thus *Christiana Respublica*.

In this sense, in reaching its conclusion of ‘extermination’ the Synod had already Calvin’s both theological injunction and political local ‘proof in the pudding’ from Geneva. It also had French Calvinism’s negative national ‘proof’, its experience or realization by 1559 that the act and state of ‘institution of the (Reformed) religion’ is what Weber would call an ‘impossible contradiction’ and contemporary economists ‘impossibility theorem’ without applying the method/war of ‘extermination’ or persecution (Gorski 2000b) against non-Calvinists. Hence, the Synod’s conclusion of ‘extermination’ is best understood and explained, specifically rendered predictable, by considering Calvin’s theological doctrine formed in France
and his political activity in Geneva, as well as French Calvinism’s prior organization and operation. In sum, the conclusion was continuous and consistent with what Calvin preached and did in France already in 1533-36 and practically accomplished in Geneva, as well as his French followers attempted, experienced, and realized prior to the Synod—simplistically but accurately for it, ‘no extermination or persecution, no institution of the Reformed religion’ and thus *Christiana respublica*.

On this account, the 1559 Synod’s conclusion is Calvinism’s first declaration of society-wide or national war of extermination and persecution of non-Calvinists and in that sense of the Calvinist revolution as the only efficient method of what Calvin theologically stipulated and politically practiced as the process of ‘institution of the (Reformed) religion’ and thus *Christiana respublica* in society. Conversely, it is the first Calvinist official overt or implicit rejection or suspension of non-violent, non-militant, and non-revolutionary, and even, falling short of extermination, violent, militant methods of ‘institution of the (Reformed) religion’ and *Christiana respublica* in society as ineffective and incomplete. In this sense, the place and time of Calvinism’s first declared national war of extermination and so social revolution, and alternatively of rejected peaceful religious-conflict resolution in society, was no other city than Paris 1559. In historical terms, the 1559 Paris Calvinist Synod may be the ‘best kept secret’, especially hardly known or emphasized outside France like Anglo-Saxon settings, in the historical development and operation of Calvinism. Yet, the above indicates that, alongside Calvin’s ‘sudden conversion’ of 1533-4, it is a fateful event, especially on the account of its outcomes, in Calvinism and its ramifications like Puritanism, evangelicalism, and hence, even if unknowingly, for historically Calvinist societies, including Puritan New England and evangelical America.

Specifically, by virtue of its outcomes the 1559 Synod in France set the pattern and historical precedent for virtually all subsequent Calvinist synods in other societies such as those in Holland and Germany of 1618, and also the Puritan ‘confessions’ in England and New England during the 1640s. First, with respect to theological dogma and religious belief, all the subsequent Calvinist synods, from that Dort in Holland to England’s and New England’s own Puritan confession, followed this Synod in embracing, maintaining, and defending ‘by word and sword’ Calvin’s dogmas of omnipotent God, Divine predestination (versus ‘heresy’ like Arminianism), the depravity of humans and the imperative of their purification--hence
‘Puritanism’ in England and New England--and *Christiana respublica*, including implicitly its Calvin-produced ‘Confession of Faith.’ In respect of church administration, all these synods of Calvinism and their Puritan ‘confessions’, as did the Synod, adopted and reformulated Calvin’s vision of ecclesiastical government of God’s *electi* comprised of a few Calvinist masters as what Weber calls the ‘spiritual aristocracy of the predestined saints of God’ and “Discipline” imposed on the *reprobati* composed of the ‘eternally damned remainder of humanity’. In terms of religious-political action, virtually all these synods and confessions overtly or implicitly reached, as had the Synod before, the conclusion that the ‘extermination’ or persecution of non-Calvinists is the only or most effective method of ‘institution of the (Reformed) religion’ and *Christiana respublica* in these societies. This was especially witnessed in the Puritan confessions and consequent activities in England such as Cromwell’s extermination of Catholics and even partly Anglicans and New England, including the Puritans’ attempted extermination or genocide of Native Americans, persecution of Quakers and ‘witches’, etc. In sum, the 1559 Paris Synod reaffirmed that, first, original Calvinism was French Protestantism, more precisely evangelicalism as Biblical fundamentalism ‘made in France’, and second, that the exclusive or optimal Calvinist method of establishing the ‘Reformed’ Christian religion as the ‘only true’ latter was ‘extermination’ or persecution.

**The First Official Recognition and Toleration of Calvinism—France**

An indirect or implied indicator of original Calvinism as French Protestantism is that it was first officially recognized and tolerated in France through various edicts and other measures permitting some extent of institutional recognition and toleration of Calvinists. These edicts span from Calvin’s last years in France through his exile and after his death. The best known and most important is the edict of Nantes of 1598, yet not the only one but anticipated and preceded by various edicts and other acts of direct or indirect recognition and toleration of Calvinism. For instance, historical research shows that even before the edict of Nantes, during 1560-63 the French state sought to ‘pacify’ Calvinism by permitting ‘rights of worship to the ‘new religion’’ and so ‘some measure of religious toleration and military protection’42, thus effectively accepting the ‘existence of two religions’ in the same society (Benedict 1999). Also, afterwards Calvinism was able to gain ‘renewed rights of worship at the end of each civil war’ (Benedict 1999).
The earliest edict allowing some degree of recognition and toleration on Calvinism, indirectly through renunciation or suspension of persecution, of Calvinists was the Edict of Coucy issued by Francis I, the same king to whom Calvin dedicated the first and all editions of *Institution of the Christian Religion*. Curiously, the Edict was issued in 1535 (July 16), the very year when Calvin substantively completed the original Latin version of this theological magnum opus as well as founded and organized his religious-political movement in a wide network of early Calvinists and sympathizers in France, notably Paris. The Edict specifically announced the cessation of persecutions of Protestants, including emerging Calvinists like Calvin’s network, as well as earlier Lutherans and others (Anabaptists), and granted pardon to those abjuring their ‘errors’. As such, the Edict of Coucy during Calvin’s last full year in France represented the first government act of prohibition or suspension of persecution and to that extent indirect or partial recognition and toleration of Calvinism and generally Protestantism within a non-Calvinist, non-Protestant (Catholic) and any European state, before, for instance, Germany (Catholic-Lutheran-Calvinist), England (Catholic-Anglican-Puritan), Holland (Catholic-Lutheran-Calvinist), Scotland (Catholic-Presbyterian), and others. At least, by prohibiting or suspending persecutions against early, embryonic Calvinists and other Protestants, the Edict first officially, though unwittingly, announced the arrival of Calvinism at the religious and political scene of France and Europe overall, thus before Calvinist movements in these other societies, including the city-state of Geneva. Therefore, in a way the French government officially, though unwittingly or ironically, certified that France was the ‘home’ of Calvinism even if condemned as ‘heresy’, and that Calvinists, starting with Calvin and his early followers, were its ‘children’, however ‘heretic’ and rebellious and seditious (Walzer 1965). Of course, for Calvin himself the Edict was far from being the sufficient condition for the recognition and toleration and especially the act of ‘institution’ of the ‘Reformed Religion’, and even for preventing persecutions of himself and his followers, though the fact that he did not suffer Servetus’ fate in Geneva under his rule indicates that he had been subjected to the lower intensity or risk of persecution than commonly supposed.

However, Calvin would probably acknowledge or register that the Edict of Coucy even as a negative prescriptive injunction against persecution, rather than positive prescriptive stipulation of recognition and toleration, was the first act of this kind in relation to his ‘Reformed Church’ and generally within the ‘Christian religion.’ Arguably, the Edict reached the maximum and was perhaps ahead of its time, because for a Catholic state to prohibit or suspend the
persecution of and thus indirectly recognize and tolerate the ‘Reformed’ religion during the height, spread, and heat of the Reformation in 1535 was probably the maximal outcome or realistic expectation for Calvinists and pre-Calvinist Protestants, just as conversely, the latter doing the same with respect to Catholics. That it was a sort of sociologically relative maximum under these conditions is indicated by the fact that there was no contemporaneous and even, as Hume points out, subsequent Protestant, including Calvinist, equivalent of the Edict, namely the official prohibition but rather positive injunction\(^4\) (Clark 1998) of persecution of Catholics in most ‘Reformed’ societies, including initially Germany and especially Holland (Gorski 1993; Hsia and Nierop 2002) and England (Godstone 1986; Gorski 2000a), nothing to say of Calvin’s Geneva. After all, both pre-Calvinist Protestants and emerging Calvinists sanctimoniously denied Catholics in ‘Reformed’ societies, including Calvin’s Geneva, what they were granted in a ‘Papist’ state like France, i.e., the official prohibition or suspension of persecution and thus indirect recognition and toleration, at the time of the Edict of Coucy and even, as Hume registers for England, of the other later edicts in France, including the final crucial Edict of Nantes. In turn, the 1535 Edict of Coucy anticipated and was restated in a more positive form of recognition and toleration of the ‘Reformed Religion’ by these subsequent edicts, notably the Edict of Nantes. At any rate, Calvinism’s, as well as pre-Calvinist Protestantism’s, first recognition and toleration in the indirect negative form of proscription of persecution is to be traced to the royal Edict of Coucy of 1535 which officially confirmed France as the home of the ‘Reformed Religion’ and Calvin et al. as its ‘children’.

The second royal Edict on Calvinism reaffirmed and reinforced its predecessor with respect to the prohibition or suspension of persecution of the ‘Reformed Religion’ in France. Also, interestingly the Edict was issued by, for example, Catherine de Medici seeking separation of the ‘question of religion’ from the ‘political order’ (Benedict 1999), while Calvin lived in and directed the French Calvinist movement from Geneva, specifically in 1562 (January 28) (Roelker 1972). The Edict prohibited by an order to the national Parliament all persecutions of the ‘Reformed’ and any religion, and notably ordered releasing Calvinist and other Protestant prisoners. On this account, the Edict went further than its 1535 opening and anticipated the Edict of Nantes as the closure in this respect, and was, like these two, the relative sociological maximum under given social conditions and ahead of its time\(^4\) (Roelker 1972), especially when compared with Calvin’s own treatment of Catholic and other ‘heretics’, including his burning of
Servetus for heresy, and, as Hume emphasizes, the severe persecution and the persistent denial of recognition and toleration of Catholics in England during those and later times (except for a short reprieve during Queen Mary’s rule over the 1550s). Therefore, the 1561 Edict initiated the first explicit positive prescription of recognition and toleration of Calvinism by a non-Calvinist state and within a non-Protestant Catholic society during the same year. This occurred in the form of holding a National Council (“Colloquy” at Poissy) at which Calvinists in France and beyond were invited and represented by their leading ministers\(^45\) (Roelker 1972), including Calvin’s key associate in Geneva Beza feely giving sermons in Paris, including no less the royal court, plus laymen, alongside the representative of the French Catholic Church, royal family, nobles, and the Council of State. Reportedly, it therefore affirmed acceptance of the ‘existence of two religions’ (Benedict 1999) and thus recognized (multi) confessionalism (Gorski 2000b; Nischan 1994) indicating religious pluralism and negating church monopoly in French society. Notably, France’s Chancellor reportedly stated that “a man may be a citizen without being a Christian”, referring to French Calvinists and other Protestants. The statement thus declared the first official recognition and toleration of Calvinism and Protestantism overall, and perhaps the modern principle of religious tolerance and pluralism\(^46\) (Benedict 1999), seemingly ahead of the historical time and social space\(^47\), especially when compared with Calvin-Beza’s Geneva and Hume’s dark picture of England in this regard at the time and long afterwards.

That the French Chancellor’s statement at the Council was in advance not only of the times but in part nowadays is indicated by the observation that almost five centuries later most contemporary US evangelicals would deny or overlook that “a man may be a citizen (American) without being a Christian” (Adorno 2001; Edgell et al. 2006; Friedland 2002; Hedges 2006; Juergensmeyer 2003), an utter impossibility, contradiction, and prohibition in the evangelical design and reconstruction of ‘Christian America.’ Moreover, the Chancellor’s very definition of ‘Christian’ is evidently all-inclusive, universalistic encompassing all Christians regardless of their specific ‘confession’ of Christianity--Orthodox, Catholic, Lutheran, Calvinist, others--thus in advance not only of these and later times of confessional persecutions in Europe (Gorski 2000b). It is also in advance of US evangelicals’ redefining of ‘Christian’ a la Calvin’s particularism to include only Protestant ‘evangelicalism’ and exclude any other Christianity, including, though some variations, Catholicism as ‘anti-Christian’, not to mention non-believers, agnostics, and liberal secularists as supremely ‘un-American’ and thus, following this
exclusionary logic, deserving ‘godly’ exclusion and discrimination in society (Edgell et al. 2006), if not death, as in Puritan New England following Geneva’s model. And expressing the Chancellor’s striking statement of religious tolerance and universalism, the National Council granted and the year of 1562 marked the first official recognition and thus toleration, notably the right of free assembly of Calvinism and Protestantism overall, thus meeting virtually all the main demands of Beza and the other Calvinist representatives.

Yet again, even this new legal status and freedom was apparently not enough for Calvin and his French followers, notably his vision of institution of the ‘Reformed Religion’ in France, rejecting the ‘gift’ at the National Council as trivial and instead launching their preemptive war of religion in the same year their church was for the first time officially recognized in this state! This confirms that Calvin and his followers in France and all places and times, including Puritans in England and New England and US evangelicals, understood *Institution of the Christian Religion* as the act of institution of the ‘Reformed Religion’ via imposition like coercion and persecution as the ‘only true’ Christian faith and church and thus of evangelical theocracy a la *Christiana respublica* and the like (‘Christian America’). And they did and do act accordingly, i.e., as ‘holy’ warriors, revolutionaries, or radical ‘saints’ for the ‘glory of God’ and belonging to the ‘Church militant’. Apparently, in this historical and societal context nothing short of complete institution of the ‘Reformed Religion’ as the ‘only true’, i.e., *Christiana respublica*, via coercive imposition in France could satisfy Calvin and his disciples, including his assistant Beza attending the Council, just as Islamic fundamentalists cannot be placated by anything but ‘Islamic republic’, and Nazis and other fascists in interwar Europe could not be pacified by any concessions other than total Nazi/fascist rule and conquest.

Simply, what Weber calls ‘radical Calvinism’ (also, Benedict 1999. Elwood 1999; Gorski 1993; Walzer 1965), like any religious and political radicalism--including Islamic and evangelical fundamentalism, Nazism and fascism--could not by design and definition be satisfied or pacified at this point by anything other than total victory in its built-in and constant religious war or revolution and the resulting coerced total institution of the ‘Reformed Religion’ in French and other societies. This factor of Calvinist ‘radical and uncompromising principles’ (Harrold 1936), simply radicalism (Gorski 1993; Walzer 1965), ‘a radical disregard’ for ‘negotiated settlements’ (Benedict 1999), helps explain and understand why despite being granted the first legal recognition and toleration, notably the right of free association, in France at the National
Council, in its aftermath French Calvinists under Calvin’s incitement and leadership opted (Roelker 1972) for preemptive religious war of extermination as the only effective method of attaining their ultimate end of coercive institution of their religion, yet eventually an instrument and path of self-destruction by their military defeat.

The third Edict on Calvinism in France was even more consequential in explicitly providing institutional recognition and toleration of the ‘Reformed Religion’, thus going further than the previous two, while reaffirming the 1561 National Council’s decisions unrealized or rejected by, above all, Calvinists (plus some extreme Catholic groups). In Hume’s historical account, the third Edict was issued also by Catherine de Medici in 1570, and according to other studies in 1576 (Ramsey 1999). At any rate, Hume suggests that the Edict, first, granted explicit and relatively broad toleration, notably ‘liberty of conscience’, to French Calvinists cum the Huguenots, second, these ‘had no ground of complaint against the French court’ (sic) but were instead instigated and supported by England’s Protestant rulers (e.g., Queen Elizabeth); third, the latter denied to their Catholics what they demanded for Protestants in France, and, fourth, as a corollary, was the exceptional act in this respect in post-Reformation Europe and beyond, including, as Troeltsch (1966) remarks, Calvinist/Puritan New England, for long afterwards. Reportedly, this ‘edict of toleration’ expressed the state’s ‘policy of limited toleration of Protestantism’ by explicitly permitting to its members the ‘right to have temples and to hold religious services in any location at any time’ (Ramsey 1999).

The last, best known, and most important of these edicts on Calvinism in France was the Edict of Nantes issued in 1598 formally ending the wars of religion through its acceptance by French Calvinists (Elwood 1999; Scoville 1953). If not its precedents, then at least the 1598 Edict of Nantes represents the first explicit and for long time only form of official recognition and toleration of Calvinism or Protestantism and any religion overall in Europe (Elwood 1999). This is indicated after all by the fact that Calvinists in France finally and fully accepted an edict on Calvinism (Elwood 1999), following their suspicion toward the previous edicts and the 1561 National Council’s decisions. For instance, Hume suggests that through the Edict the French state afforded and practiced ‘a toleration’ to the Huguenots even after the military ‘victory’ over them (also, Acemoglu 2005), that was ‘the only avowed and open toleration which at that time was granted in any European kingdom.” He then contrasts this situation to the apparent medieval darkness in respect of religious toleration in England where ‘moderation towards the Catholics’
was, as he sarcastically put it, the ‘greatest of crimes’ at that time and for long afterwards to the point of, as Simmel puts it, the ‘cruel suppression of the Irish Catholics in England’ as well as Ireland and Scotland (also, Clark 1998; Lake 1987). Admittedly, the Edict of Nantes granted or promised ‘all Protestants equality of opportunity in all professions, public office, and economic employments’, resulting in Huguenots’ positions in ‘public office’ such as ‘important financial posts in the government and Mazarin, Fouquet, and Colbert’ (Scoville 1953), although this promise was not completely fulfilled during the 17th century. In sum, the Edict of Nantes was the earliest fully open or prototypical ‘act of religious toleration’ (Ramsey 1999) of Calvinism and religion overall in Europe, granting ‘the status of a protected religious minority within an officially Catholic society’ (Elwood 1999) to Calvinists. It thus provided the first full legal protection or toleration and recognition (Benedict 1999) of Calvinist and other minorities in terms of religion among European societies.

Conclusion
One wonders what is the sociological relevance of the preceding historical indicators or facts about original, early Calvinism? The sociological relevance of these indicators is that they indicate and confirm that original Calvinism was specifically the Protestant Reformation and generally religious and political revolution of a specific type society or social system. The social system in question is late medieval--rather than modern--French society or the feudal ancien régime of France during the 16th century, and not any other, including German, Swiss, English, Dutch, and related European societies.

These historical indicators therefore indicate that in sociological terms Calvinism is originally the creation of French society, simply the spiritual and political product ‘made in France’ and in that sense really as ‘French as wine or more precisely Champagne’. The same holds true of its founder and master, Jean Calvin who was born, raised, lived almost half of his life in France, and remained deeply and ‘forever French’ even when in self-imposed exile, yet in Francophone settings anyway. On this account, Calvinism is such a creation or phenomenon of French society as is, for example, the Enlightenment (and the 1789 Revolution), even though the latter emerged as the antidote to what it considered the lethal poison of Calvinist and other religious fanaticism, superstition, oppression, and war (Artz 1998; Benedict 1999). Alternatively, the indicators indicate that, from a sociological perspective, it is French society, specifically the
medieval *ancien regime* of France, that constitutes the collective creator in Durkheim’s sense as well as the original societal setting of Calvinism as a specific type of religion, ideology, and political movement. Therefore they confirm the major assumption and finding of the sociology of religion and knowledge, especially in Durkheim’s and Mannheim’s versions respectively, namely that religions and ideologies possess essential societal origins and foundations.

Directions for further research include more sociological analyses of the societal sources and milieu of original, ‘young’ Calvinism in French society (Benedict 1999; Heller 1986; Mentzer 2007; Ramsey 1999; Walzer 1985. This direction would balance or complement the present sociological literature’s emphasis on derivative, mature Calvinism, including Puritanism, Presbyterianism, neo-Calvinism (Black 1997; Hiemstra 2005; Hollinger 1980), etc., in non-French societal environments such as Holland, Germany, Great Britain, America, etc., in which it subsequently expanded and even more or less ruled or dominated (Clemens 2007; Goldstone 1986; Gorski 2003; Hillmann 2008a,b; Jenness 2005; Zaret 1985). To the extent that this emphasis tends to overlook or blur the societal source and context of original Calvinism as medieval French society’s specific Reformation or religious-political revolution, such research would represent a useful corrective and contribution to the sociology of (the Calvinist) religion.

**KEYWORDS:** Calvinism, Reformation, Huguenots, Theocracy, Wars of Religion, Catholicism

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NOTES

1 Scoville (1953,439) registers the ‘effect of [Calvin’s] views on Huguenot behavior’, in particular the ‘relationship between Calvinist doctrine (as it was interpreted by Calvin’s disciples) and the highly successful economic activities of his followers in France’. Namely, in his view, the ‘theological doctrines of Calvinism were such as to predispose their response and allow them to seek “compensation” for their penalization in economic activity’ (Scoville 1953,445).

2 Benedict (1999,7) observes that the Protestants in France ‘already represented a majority of the population of some cities.’

3 Formally, ‘Huguenots’ was an old French term used to describe growing and increasingly organized and strong Calvinist groups in France during the 1540-50s (Ramsey 1999). But even in this formal sense, ‘Huguenots’ were the first nation-wide organized Calvinists preceding, for example, those in Scotland, England, and Holland at least by few decades, Prussia by almost a century, and New England by also nearly a century.

4 Ramsey (1999,8) observes that ‘from 1541 until his death in 1564, Calvin would direct the development of the highly organized communities of French Huguenots from his exile in Geneva.’ For instance, in his view, ‘Calvin’s doctrine of the Eucharist made the profound differences between the new Huguenot religion of transcendence and traditional Catholicism in Paris in the 1540s tragically clear’ (Ramsey 1999,835). Also, Roelker (1972,399) suggests that ‘by the mid-1550s there existed a French Reformed Church, led in theological and ecclesiastical respects by Calvin, from Geneva.’

5 In the enthusiastic appraisal of the Cambridge History of the Reformation, ‘what the French Revolution did later for the European peoples, the Huguenot did for Protestantism. He made his faith illustrious; his example became infectious, and the Churches of other lands loved to emulate the Reformed Church of France. The Protestants failed in France, yet it is doubtful whether without their failure there the Reformed Church could have prospered. The Huguenots had grown numerous, potent, respected, feared, and disputed with Catholicism the supremacy of the kingdom. And Calvin had done it.’

6 Roelker (1972, 409) proposes that ‘although simplicity and self-discipline were stressed in the Huguenot style of life, there was no organized, repressive “puritanism” in the French courtly and aristocratic circles which became strongholds of reformed belief. If the word “Calvinist” is used to indicate the spiritual orientation of some members of the French Renaissance aristocracy, it should not thereby connote an atmosphere like that of Salem in The Scarlet Letter.’

7 Shipton (1936,235) reports that ‘the Huguenots had been assimilated by New England society. The Puritan clergy had fostered the migration of 1718, delighted at the reinforcement of pious Protestants.’

8 Hume suggests that ‘nothing but the imputation of idolatry, which was thrown on the Catholic religion, could justify, in the eyes of the Puritans themselves, the schism made by the Hugonots and other Protestants who lived in Popish countries.’ In particular, he observes that Cromwell during his rule (the 1640s-60s) expected that the Huguenots ‘would meet with better treatment while he engaged in a close union with their sovereign.’

9 Walzer (1965,2) includes in the Calvinist saints the ‘Genevan, Huguenot, Dutch, Scottish, and Puritan’ saint.
Scoville (1953, 442) reports that ‘Huguenot merchants enjoyed a distinct advantage over Catholic merchants in the trade with such Protestant countries as England, Holland, Switzerland, and certain German states. The foreign Protestants preferred to transact their business with non-Catholic Frenchmen.’

Scoville (1952, 392) remarks that with Calvinism as the ‘official religion the (Dutch) Republic opened her doors to the Huguenots who tried to escape from the persecution of Louis XIV’. Also, he observes that ‘despite her reputation for religious bigotry, Massachusetts acted toward (the Huguenots) much better than did Rhode Island and Connecticut, according them no worse treatment than close surveillance in war time. the Huguenots had been assimilated by New England society. The Puritan clergy had fostered the migration of 1718, delighted at the reinforcement of pious Protestants’ (Scoville 1952, 228-35). Overall, according to Scoville (1952, 408), ‘there were two important waves of Protestant immigration from France: the first occurred during the fifty years preceding the Edict of Nantes (1598), and the second came a century later when the Edict was revoked’.

Hyma (1938, 326) implies this by observing that Dutch Calvinists ‘naturally followed’, alongside Calvin’s ‘mother-church’ in Geneva, the ‘Huguenot churches’ in virtually all respects, including the ‘attitude displayed toward the accumulation of capital or its equivalent.’

Marcus (2001, 735) mentions a seemingly minor but symptomatic instance of such cultural links between France and Calvinists in French-speaking Geneva: Clement Marot, a court poet of King Francis I, ‘found that his psalms were also being used without his permission for a Huguenot psalter in Geneva [as] Calvin sought to compile a hymnal for the laity.’

Calvin founded the first ‘reformed’ church in Strasbourg during his exile in 1538.

Ramsey (1999, 9) observes that ‘in the capital, French Calvinism had become a small but organized force. By the 1550s, the profile of Huguenots in the capital was changing. In 1555, a permanent church was organized according to Genevan regulations in the wealthy outlying quarter of Saint-Germain at the home of a nobleman. Most importantly, the appeal of the reformed faith reached into the elite of the state officials in the Parlement, and even to the princes of the blood’.

Gorski (1993, 278) notes that the first Calvinist church ‘on Dutch soil had been founded in 1572.’

Scoville (1953, 424) notes that ‘after Henry IV terminated some thirty-six years of intermittent fratricidal warfare between Catholics and Protestants by signing his famous Edict of Nantes in 1598, the number of French Protestants increased and reached its peak around 1665 (in 1680-85 between 1,500,000 and 2,000,000). Hence, shortly before Louis XIV revoked the truce, the Huguenots accounted for roughly 10 per cent of the total population.’

Benedict (1999, 20) observes that ‘the Huguenots initially commanded greater political strength [than the Dutch Calvinists] [plus] were always able to fight their opponents to enough of a standstill to extract renewed concessions of toleration at the end of each conflict.’

Benedict (1999, 10) suggest that ‘the aims and actions of the Reformed Protestants in France and the Netherlands were virtually identical, but in the face of weaker repression the Reformed established a position of political strength more rapidly in France, with many more churches, numerical dominance in a number of communities, a larger number of noble, especially high noble, converts, and mechanisms in place for raising troops well before the onset of civil war.’

Weber observes that ‘at the height of their great struggles, the French Huguenots (and Scottish Calvinists) were led by nobles, but the Puritan Revolution was successful because of the cavalry provided by the rural gentry. Ultimately, the French (British and Scottish) nobility completely dropped out from the Calvinist religion in which it had originally played a considerable role. (For) the routinization of prophetic religion had the effect of separating the nobility from the circle of religious enthusiasm (generally). (As), the Huguenot (and Scottish) nobility later stopped fighting for Calvinism, and everywhere the further development of ascetic Protestantism became the concern of the citizen middle classes. The (rising bourgeoisie) not only failed to resist this unexampled tyranny of Puritanism but even developed a heroism in its defense’.

Gorski (1993, 275) remarks that in Holland the ‘first phase of the (Calvinist) revolt (1559-68) was essentially a rebellion of the nobility’.

Benedict (1999, 17) registers that the ‘rebel armies’ in France as well as Holland had the Calvinist ‘cause’s noble leaders [plus] contingents supplied by foreign princes who intervened out of a combination of religious solidarity and strategic interest.’

Benedict (1999, 17-8) comments that the Huguenots lacked ‘expressions of a proto-republicanism that both hostile contemporaries and sympathetic twentieth-century historians have wanted to see within the Protestant movement.’

Scoville (1953, 424-5) notes that ‘at the outset, Protestantism had appealed to Frenchmen in all social and economic classes - the intellectual and professional ranks, the peasantry, the artisan and commercial groups in cities,
and the nobility. During the latter half of the sixteenth century and until 1629 the nobility exerted a strong influence. At one time or another from a third to a half of the nobles turned from Catholicism to Protestantism. With the end of the Religious Wars in 1598 and after the fall of La Rochelle the most powerful noblemen abjured their new faith and re-entered the Catholic Church. French nobility ceased to dominate the Protestant movement after 1629 and had little at all to do with it after 1685.’

25 Gorski (1993,280) registers that Calvinism imposed its ‘special status as the “only publicly recognized church” in Holland since the late 16th century and observes that the ‘Catholics were particularly hard hit: church properties and buildings were confiscated and Catholic priests were forced to “convert” or flee.’

26 Fittingly, the founder of Dominion theology, seeking to establish ‘God’s Dominion’ in society cum ‘Kingdom on the earth’, in America is reportedly a US Calvinist, Presbyterian theologian Dutch-born Cornelius Van Til (Juergensmeyer 2003,27-8).

27 Hume adds that ‘most of the province of Normandy was possessed by the Hugonots’ and that Orleans was the ‘seat of the Hugonots’ power’, mentioning the ‘leaders of the French Protestants’ (Condé, Coligny, Anetelot). In his account, the ‘Hugonots, though dispersed over the whole kingdom, formed a kind of separate empire; and being closely united, as well by their religious zeal as by the dangers to which they were perpetually exposed, they obeyed with entire submission the orders of their leaders, and were ready on every signal to fly to arms. The Hugonots, who, being possessed of many privileges, and even of fortified towns, formed an empire within (the French) empire. Rochelle (was) the most considerable bulwark of the Protestants.’

28 Benedict (1999,4) notes the ‘emergence of the Protestant Henri de Navarre as the heir apparent to the throne of France’ (after 1584) and Ramsey (1999,214) refers to the Calvinist regional ruler of Navarre when registering that the ‘royal succession crisis in the 1580s and 1590s threatened to bring a Protestant to the throne of France precisely at a time when the monarch’s failure to eradicate heresy had already compromised the institution of the monarchy itself.’ Also, Kingdon (1964,394) refers to the Calvinist ‘court of Navarre [whose] young prince who was eventually to become King Henry IV of France’, as does Roelker (1972) also noting the King’s ‘conversion (1593)’ to Catholicism.

29 Hume adds that Henry IV ‘employed this body of English in many other enterprises. [Henry] was far from being a bigot to his sect; and as he deemed these theological disputes entirely subordinate to the public good, he had secretly determined, from the beginning, to come some time or other to the resolution required of him. He had found, on the death of his predecessor, that the Hugonots, who formed the bravest and most faithful part of his army, were such determined zealots, that if he had at that time abjured their faith, they would instantly have abandoned him to the pretensions and usurpations of the Catholics.’ Generally, Simmel remarks with respect to the Huguenots that ‘it is sufficient for one of the internal parties to increase its hostility to Spain or England. Savoy [Geneva] or the Netherlands, and the other at once joined this foreign power—without regard to harmony or disharmony between that power and its own positive aims.’ For example, he notes that ‘in the quarrels between France and Spain, the Huguenots placed themselves at one time at the service of the king, when the struggle turned against Catholic Spain and its friends in Europe. On another occasion, when they were oppressed by the kind, they joined Spain directly.’

30 Lachmann (1989, 152-3) adds that these wars of religion in France consisted in ‘the struggle between Protestant and Catholic nobles to control provincial institutions, clerical tithes, and urban governments’.

31 Benedict (1999,20 suggests that ‘as the most searing and destructive crisis between the Hundred Years’ War and the Revolution, [the Wars of Religion] became an object lesson in the horrors of fratricidal division [seen] by Enlightenment [etc.] to show the danger of religious “fanaticism”.’

32 Ramsey (1999,36/62) suggests that ‘the tensions and conflicts between Catholics and Huguenots in the streets of Paris in the 1540s’ anticipated and led to the ‘Wars of Religion’ in France during the 1560s.

33 Hume adds that in 1566 the ‘king and queen mother were living in great security at Monceaux, in Brie, when they found themselves surrounded by Protestant troops, which had secretly marched thither from all quarters. The sect which Charles had hoped at one blow to exterminate, had now an army of eighteen thousand men on foot, and possessed, in different parts of the kingdom, above a hundred cities, castles, or fortresses; nor could that prince deem himself secure from the invasion threatened him by all the other Protestants in Europe.’

34 Benedict (1999,7) observes that ‘the para-military system instituted by the Huguenots came to be more tightly controlled by the hierarchy of church synods and assemblies as the onset of the Civil Wars approached.’

35 Benedict 1999,1-6 remarks that ‘the rapid development of a Calvinist movement militat[ed] aggressively for a reform of Church and society’ and represented ‘one of the fundamental precipitants of conflict’ in France (and Holland), while showing a ‘radical disregard for established authority and negotiated settlements.’ For example, the
Calvinists moved ‘aggressively to change the religious order of a number of towns in southern France even before the outbreak of the Wars of Religion’ (Benedict 1999,7).

30 According to the Cambridge history of the Reformation, ‘England never became Lutheran, Zwinglian, or Calvinistic; and she would have resented dictation from Wittenberg, Zurich, or Geneva as keenly as she did from Rome, had the authority of Luther, Zwingli, or Calvin ever attained the proportions of that of the Roman Pontiff.’

31 Valeri (1997,140) adds that the ‘major platforms of Reformed churches in Geneva and France reflected the economic implications of this disciplinary emphasis’. Also, in this view ‘the French Consistory replaced the seigneur in Protestant areas as the agency of correction and social arbitration [for example] Peter Viret and the Calvinist Consistory in Lyon’ (Valeri 1997,134).

32 The probably last remaining ‘anti-Paris’ or ‘Christian Sparta’ in modern Western society is the ‘Bible Belt’, alongside Mormon-ruled Utah, while Geneva has become more similar to Paris in cultural terms, just as has, for that matter, even more another early Calvinist city, Amsterdam.

33 Walzer (1965,44) refers to an ‘early Huguenot synod’ held and making its decisions ‘under Calvin’s strict guidance.’

34 Heller (1986,237) registers that in 1559 ‘a Calvinist synod at Chalons-sur-la-Saone (near Paris) concluded that the evangelical religion could not be established without the extermination of papists, parlementaires and nobility. Such incitement led to attacks on aristocratic chateaux by rural folk.’

35 For instance, in the original version of his Instituo Calvin (1536, 4,336,473) uses the terms ‘to exterminate’ (exterinandum, exterinanda), to be ‘eliminated’ and ‘exterminated’ (eliminentur & exterminentur), including the ‘discipline of excommunication’ (disciplina excommunicationis), by ‘church ministry’ (ecclesiae ministerio), etc. Further, in the final French edition he personally translated and rewrote, Calvin (1560,699) enthusiastically proposes (citing for support various passages from the Bible) that ‘all iniquities be exterminated from the city of God’ (tous les iniijues soyent exterminiez de la ville de Dieu). For instance, Calvin’s (1560,332) list of ‘iniquities’ and their human subjects that are to be ‘exterminated’ (exterminé) includes ‘first vanity, pride and ostentation’ (orgueil, fierté et ostentation), ‘then also avarice, intemperance, and superfluity’ (avarice, intempérance, superfluité) and ‘all delights’ (délèces), along with ‘other vices which engender the love of ourselves’ (l’amour de nous-mesmes). Notably, Calvin (1560, 432) proposes that ‘all impiety polluting this saint and sacred Name of God perish: that all detractions and murmurs and also the mockeries obscuring or diminishing this sanctification be exterminated’ (toute impiété laquelle pollue ce sainct et sacré Nom, périsse: que toutes detractions et murmures, et aussi les moqueries qui obscurcissent ou diminuent cette sanctification, soyent exterminées). Finally, Calvin proposes a sort of final solution to this ‘impiety’ declaring directly the extermination of ‘ungodly’ humans themselves: ‘the people who are alienated from God, who is the only fountain of life, have deserved the same ruin as the devil, to be totally exterminated’ (les homes estans aliénez de Dieu, qui est la seule fontaine de vie, ont mérité une mesma ruine que le diable, pour estre du tout exterminé).

36 Benedict (1999,6) observes that ‘in France, the crown’s willingness to end each civil war on terms that granted the Reformed some measure of religious toleration and military protection [so] the Protestants gained legal recognition as a tolerated minority within a monarchy.’ Thus, during 1560-63, ‘the French crown broke dramatically with its centuries old tradition of defending the kingdom from heresy, and showed itself willing to accept the existence of two religions in the country’ (Benedict 1999,15). In his view, ‘by granting toleration to the Protestants created a situation where their subsequent uprisings appeared to most of the population as disloyalty and sedition’ [Benedict 1999,15].

37 For instance, Clark (1998) registers ‘a large number of penal laws enacted against Roman Catholics during the last decade of the 17th century and the first decade of the 18th century’ in Ireland ‘and the penal laws against Roman Catholics in the Scottish Highlands and Western Islands.’

38 Roelker (1972,401) comments that by the ‘so-called Edict of January (1562)’ Calvinists ‘were granted the right of public worship for the first time’. Also, Roelker (1972, 400) observes that in 1561 under the regency of Catherine de Medici the ‘royal chapel was used for Calvinist services alternating with the Mass [such that] tracts from Geneva read, and the sermons of Theodore de Beze [were] attended by the Catholic ladies of the court.’ The latter curious event is equivalent to Calvin allowing Catholic priests at his own Geneva proxy court, which he and his heir Beza (Roelker 1972) from 1564 never did, thus confirming that the Edict of 1562, like those before and after, was ahead of its time, notably Calvinist-rulled states, in terms of religious toleration and pluralism.

39 Roelker (1972,400) remarks that in the summer of 1561 Catherine de Medici ‘held the Colloque de Poissy as a further conciliatory gesture, hoping that some kind of compromise or accommodation could be worked out between the invited Catholic prelates and reformed theologians’ In the account provided by the Cambridge history of the Reformation, ‘Already on July 25 (1561) a proclamation had been issued inviting the Protestant ministers to the
assembly at Poissy. It was to be a National Council. The Protestants were represented at the “Colloquy” by twelve ministers, including Beza, François de Morel, the president of the first National Synod, and Nicolas des Gallars, the minister of the French Protestant Church in London, and by twenty laymen.’ In this account, ‘Beza persuaded the government to send letters to the provincial magistrates enjoining them to allow the Protestants to meet in security.’

46 Benedict (1999, 19-20) suggests that ‘leading royal councillors such as Michel de L’Hospital quickly formulated a justification for religious toleration in France that was embraced by the crown.’

47 According to the Cambridge history of the Reformation, the Chancellor of France, ‘far in advance of his time, he enunciated modern principles of religious toleration (“a man may be a citizen without being a Christian”). The right of assembly free of molestation was granted to (Protestants). Thus Protestantism for the first time in France obtained legal recognition. (Yet) The religious war had begun.’

48 Benedict (1999,13) registers the ‘increasingly radicalized Calvinist movement’ in France after 1572.

49 Gorski (1993,276-7) emphasizes ‘Calvinist radicalism’ in Holland in that the ‘radical Calvinists were unwilling to compromise (with Spain) on the religious question’ such that ‘at no less than three junctures, their intransigence sabotaged chances for a negotiated, religious peace with Spain.’

50 Roelker (1972,402) notes that ‘in spite of titanic conciliatory efforts by Catherine and her more moderate advisers, civil war could not be long postponed. In March 1562, all of the Huguenot leaders, male and female, were obliged to flee the court, and, on April 2, the Prince de Conde issued a call to arms from Orleans.’

51 Hume remarks that the ‘Hugonots, though they had no ground of complaint against the French court, were thought to be as much entitled to assistance from England, as if they had taken arms in defence of their liberties and religion against the persecuting rage of the Catholics. [So] of all European nations, the British were at that time, and till long after, the most under the influence of that religious spirit which tends rather to inflame bigotry than increase peace and mutual charity.’ By contrast turn, he observes that in France ‘an edict had been published, granting a toleration to the Protestants. A toleration under some restrictions was anew granted to the Protestants; a general amnesty was published. The two religions, in France, as well as in other parts of Europe, were rather irritated than tired with their acts of mutual violence; and the peace granted to the Hugonots. The king, notwithstanding his extreme animosity against the Hugonots, was obliged, in 1570, to conclude an accommodation with them, to grant them a pardon for all past offences, and to renew the edicts for liberty of conscience. The terms of the peace were religiously observed to them; the toleration was strictly maintained; all attempts made by the zealous Catholics to infringe it were punished with severity; offices, and favors, and honors were bestowed on the principal nobility among the Protestants; and the king and council everywhere declared that, tired of civil disorders, and convinced of the impossibility of forcing men’s consciences, they were thereupon determined to allow every one the free exercise of his religion’.

52 In Hume’s words, the then queen of England Elizabeth, ‘who recommended toleration to Charles [king of France], was determined not to grant it in her own dominions, not even to her [Catholic] husband.’ Hume adds that ‘France itself was constrained to bear, not only with the religion, but even, in some instances, with the seditious insolence of the Hugonots; and when the French court applied for a reciprocal toleration of the Catholic religion in England, the protector [Cromwell], who arrogated in everything the superiority, would hearken to no such proposal.’

53 Weber’s colleague and theologian Troeltsch refers to ‘the Calvinistic Puritan States of North America’ in which liberty of conscience was ‘explicitly rejected’ as ‘godless Skepticism’, thus dispelling the Puritan cherished myth, still widely believed in the US, of religious freedom, tolerance, and pluralism or ‘markets’ and ‘competition’ a la the ‘rational choice theory’ of religion.

54 Ramsey (1999,12) refers to peace and by implication the Edict in 1576 that ‘finally granted Protestants the right to have temples and to hold religious services in any location at any time, with the exception of the region of Paris.’

55 In Hume’s account, the ‘victory, however, over the Hugonots, was at first pushed by the French king with great moderation. A toleration was still continued to them; the only avowed and open toleration which at that time was granted in any European kingdom. (In England) Montague (was) censured for moderation towards the Catholics, the greatest of crimes.’

56 Lake (1987,52) notes that during the 1610s, thus two decades after the 1598 Edict of Nantes in France and in the eve of the 1618-9 Dort Calvinist Synod, English King ‘James and his advisers regarded as tantamount to anarchy’ formal religious toleration even within Calvinism (e.g., of Arminian ‘heresy’) both in England and Holland, let alone of non-Calvinists like Catholics still condemned and persecuted as ‘papists’.

57 Scoville (1953,440) argues that ‘entry into judicial, top military, and administrative positions became less and less free for (Calvinists) throughout the seventeenth century.’ But this is qualified, if not contradicted, by the observation that ‘those Huguenots who succeeded in gaining a foothold in public office or who achieved some position of favor and prominence used their influence in so far as possible to place their brethren in a similar rank. Sully and Herwarth appointed a large number of fellow Protestants to important financial posts in the government and
Mazarin, Fouquet, and Colbert readily employed Protestants in important positions because of their honesty and zeal, and these in turn favored others of their religion whenever the occasion permitted' (Scoville 1953,441).

58 Ramsey (1999,62) adds the ‘extraordinarily complex Edict of Nantes (w)as an act of religious toleration (so potentially) a rational solution to the vicious passions of the Wars of Religion. Many of its measures were, in fact, never fully implemented and cannot be construed as ending the Wars of Religion in any practical or definitive way’.

59 As also known, the edict of Nantes was revoked in 1685 (Clark 1998), but this does not diminish its historical relevance for the recognition, survival, expansion, and development of Calvinism in France and beyond.