

**Huguenot Prophetism, Clerical Authority, and the Disenchantment of the World,
1685-1710**

by

Jason Charbonneau

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fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of**

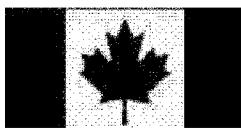
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Abstract

The sudden emergence of prophetism in the Huguenot community following the revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685 spurred a reassessment of the role of inspired prophecy in the administration of the French Reformed Church. Insofar as they claimed direct inspiration from God, the Huguenot prophets – many of whom were as young as 8 years old – superseded the authority of the regular clergy and threatened to break the Church's monopoly on the interpretation of divine will. This prompted a reaction from Calvinist clerics who sought to delegitimize the act of prophetism in the modern era by opposing it to the principles of rationalist thought and mechanistic philosophy. This thesis argues that the polemical exchanges between inspired prophets and regular churchmen acted as catalysts for the adoption of Enlightenment thought in the Calvinist community, contributing to the disenchantment of Huguenot religious culture in the eighteenth century.

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Introduction

When a 15-year-old Huguenot shepherdess from the rural fringes of the province of Dauphiné claimed possession by the Holy Spirit in February 1688, she triggered a crisis within the French Reformed Church. Isabeau Vincent painted the persecution of her coreligionists at the hands of the Catholic clergy in an apocalyptic light, and spoke of the True Church's imminent deliverance.¹ Citing Joel's prophecy, she promised that many more inspired prophets (*inspirés*) would come in her wake. Hundreds of men, women and children, some as young as eight years old, would receive the gift of prophecy in the following months and would seek to prepare their coreligionists for an apocalyptic battle with the Catholic Church.²

While this presented a delicate liability for the international Calvinist community, exercising control over the peasant prophets was not an option. Louis XIV's decision to revoke the Edict of Nantes in 1685 had dismantled all institutional structures in the Huguenot Church and sent the clergy into exile.³ No one could prevent the ministry of the *inspirés* from turning violent at the beginning of the eighteenth century when a second wave of prophets, assured of divine approval, commanded the murder of a Catholic *abbé*. The act sparked the bloody Camisard Rebellion (1702-1710) that ravaged the Protestant communities of the Cévennes mountains.⁴ Reports of deluded "fanatics" inciting disorder in the French countryside circulated

¹ Henri Plard, "L'apocalypse des camisards," in *Problèmes de l'Histoire du Christianisme* 8 (1979): esp. 57-9.

² *A Relation of Several Hundreds of Children and Others that Prophesie and Preach in their Sleep* (London: Printed for Richard Baldwin, next Door to the Black Bull in the Old Bayly, 1689), esp. 2; Garrett, *Spirit Possession and Popular Religion: From the Camisards to the Shakers* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987), 19-28.

³ Elisabeth Labrousse, "Calvinism in France, 1598-1685," in *International Calvinism, 1541-1715*, ed. Menna Prestwich (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985), 305-13; Solange Deyon, "La destruction des temples," in *La Révocation de l'Édit de Nantes et le protestantisme français en 1685: Actes du colloques de Paris (15-19 octobre 1985)*, ed. Roger Zuber (Paris: Société de l'Histoire du Protestantisme Français, 1986), 239-59; Philippe Joutard, "The Revocation of the Edict of Nantes: End or Renewal of French Protestantism?," in *International Calvinism*, 343-4.

⁴ Georgia Cosmos, *Huguenot Prophecy and Clandestine Worship in the Eighteenth Century* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005), 85-105; Liliane Crété, *Les Camisards* (Paris: Perrin, 1992), 55-75.

internationally, especially at the height of the rebellion.⁵ They tarnished the reputation of the Calvinist community and threatened to delay plans of ever re-erecting the institutions of the Huguenot Church in France.⁶ The situation worsened when three Camisard *inspirés* came to England after their surrender in 1705. Their bellicose pronouncements caused a public sensation in London and strained the delicate relationship between the refugee churches and their English superiors.

The controversy spurred the Calvinist community to revisit their position on the status of inspired prophecy. Prophetism had a rich history dating back well before Vincent, but Calvinist ecclesiology had never easily accommodated the ministry of *inspirés*.⁷ Calvin himself had legitimated the existence of the Reformed Church on the basis that God desired humans to rule over one another without direct interference from the Holy Spirit. The *Institutes of the Christian Religion* made clear that after the death of Christ (one of the last inspired prophets), God entrusted his subjects to human leadership:

Because [Christ] does not dwell among us in visible presence [Matt. 26:11], we have said that he uses the ministry of men to declare openly his will to us by mouth, as a sort of delegated work, not by transferring to them his right and honor, but only that through their mouths he may do his own work – just as a workman uses a tool to do his work.⁸

⁵ For contemporary coverage of the rebellion, see "L'événement au présent," in Philippe Joutard, *La Légende des Camisards: Une sensibilité au passé* (Paris: Gallimard, 1977), 49-66; Garret, *Spirit Possession*, 11.

⁶ French Calvinists were still trying to shake the reputation for social disturbance that they had gained in the early sixteenth century, and the prophets' exhortations to defiance of Catholic rule were an embarrassing liability. This reputation was most recently invoked by the Catholic apologist Louis Maimbourg just three years prior. The association of Protestantism and sedition was a polemic mainstay, dating back at least as far as the Affair of the Placards (1534). Myriam Yardeni, "French Calvinist Political Thought, 1534-1715," in *International Calvinism*, 315, 319, 329; Louis Maimbourg, *Histoire du calvinisme* (Paris: chez Sébastien Mabre-Cramoisy, 1682), 1-2.

⁷ Clarke Garrett, "Spirit Possession, Oral Tradition, and the Camsiard Revolt," in *Popular Traditions and Learned Culture in France*, ed. Marc Bertrand (Saratoga, CA: ANMA Libri, 1985), 43-8; Henri Dréville, *Lire et écrire l'avenir: l'astrologie au XVIIe siècle* (Seyssel: Champ Vallon, 1996), 11-2, 68-9; Charles Bost, "Les 'Prophètes des Cévennes' au XVIIe siècle," in *Revue d'Histoire et de Philosophie Religieuses* 5 (1925): 418, 421; Phyllis Mack, *Visionary Women: Ecstatic Prophecy in Seventeenth-Century England* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992).

⁸ John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, ed. John T. McNeill, trans. Ford Lewis Battles (London: S.C.M. Press, 1960), 2: 1053.

God had established the clergy to propagate Christian doctrine precisely because he no longer wished to inspire prophets to perform the same duty. Clerics were thus made the only consistent points of contact between God and Christian people. They were to act, in Calvin's words, as "interpreters of [God's] secret will and, in short, to represent his person."⁹ Like the French Monarchy, the Reformed Church was "established by the Lord forever," and left no room for other figures of authority.¹⁰ Even God functioned only to ensure that his representatives did not fall into error.¹¹

Though the Huguenot prophets were rejected from the established churches of both France and England, their ardent struggle for legitimacy pushed clerics of all denominations to confront unresolved questions regarding the role of prophecy in the modern Church. Prophets and their supporters engaged the public in print, thus inciting a response from ecclesiastical authorities attempting to contain the spread of "fanaticism," or "enthusiasm." The medium of print afforded both preacher and prophet a platform from which to propound their authority and provided a forum for dynamic exchange.

This thesis explores the body of polemical exchange between Huguenot prophets and church writers in the French and English contexts. The exchanges touched on the most fundamental questions underlying the notion of authority in the Christian community, and some of the most sensitive topics in seventeenth-century intellectual debate. Who could rightfully claim to speak for God? By what means did God reveal his will to humanity? What happened when Scripture and new revelation were found opposed to one another? Christian theologians of

⁹ Calvin, *Institutes*, 2:1053.

¹⁰ Calvin, *Institutes*, 2: 1056; Yardeni, "French Calvinist Political Thought," 315-8, 329-30; Denis Crouzet, "Calvinism and the Uses of the Political and the Religious (France, ca. 1560-ca. 1572)," in *Reformation, Revolt, and Civil War in France and the Netherlands*, ed. Philip Benedict et al. (Amsterdam: Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Social Sciences, 1999), 100-3.

¹¹ Calvin, *Institutes*, 2: 1055. "Through the ministers to whom [God] has entrusted this office and has conferred the grace to carry it out, he dispenses and distributes his gifts to the church; and he shows himself as though present by manifesting the power of his Spirit in this his institution, that it be not vain or idle."

all stripes were compelled to address these questions precisely at a time when traditional notions of the relationship between the natural and supernatural realms were unraveling, and when the "new philosophy" of the seventeenth century forced a reexamination of Christian doctrine. Indeed, the Huguenot prophets only incited the controversy that they did because they raised – and indeed, helped to resolve – some of the most pertinent questions in contemporary religious and intellectual debates.¹²

The following chapters focus on two fundamental points of theology raised in the debate: that of the dispensation of the miraculous "gifts" of the Holy Spirit – including tongues, faith healing, and prophecy – and that of the place of reason in interpreting divine revelation. It is argued that in redefining their stance on these issues, Catholic and Huguenot clerics alike embraced rationalist philosophy and cessationist doctrine, and explicitly opposed them to the notion of prophecy in the modern era. This thesis attempts to trace the development of these counterarguments to fanaticism through the controversy surrounding the Huguenot prophets to the point of their acceptance amongst "enlightened" Calvinist thinkers in the early eighteenth century.¹³

The question of miraculous gifts was absolutely essential to resolving the controversy surrounding the Huguenot prophets. If God could directly inspire his subjects with knowledge of his will, what need could there be for uninspired clerics who relied exclusively on a fixed corpus of revelation? Conversely, if God had indeed instated the regular clergy to act on his behalf, why

¹² Hillel Schwartz has made a similar point in reference to the affair of the Prophets in London in *The French Prophets: The History of a Millenarian Group in Eighteenth-Century England* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980), 70.

¹³ This is not primarily an intellectual history, however. It makes no attempt to document the emergence and development of these theological concepts on a strictly intellectual plane. The ideas underpinning both cessationism and enlightened rationalism appeared in learned discourse well before the *petits prophètes*, and scholars have already done much to trace their evolution over the course of the seventeenth century. This thesis seeks only to draw attention to the political motives behind the sudden embrace of these concepts amongst Calvinist theologians in the early eighteenth century by exposing the social and political implications of cessationist and rationalist theology.

would he continue to inspire prophets to voice his will directly? Though it was far from a point of dogma, the Protestant clergy had long suggested that God ceased to dispense such gifts sometime between the first and seventh centuries.¹⁴ This doctrine, known today as "cessationism," has a long and unexplored history, but became a common subject of debate in the early modern period.¹⁵ Calvin argued only that the prophetic office was no longer necessary in light of the fact that God had instituted the "ministry of men," but never ruled out the possibility of its emergence in his own time. Indeed, he entertained the possibility that it had continued since the time of Christ. In uncharacteristically equivocal fashion, he suggested in the *Institutes* that the prophetic "class," spoken of in Scripture, "either does not exist today or is less commonly seen."¹⁶ Jane Shaw and D. P. Walker have suggested that cessationism only became an established point of dogma towards the end of the eighteenth century.¹⁷

In Anglican theology, at least, cessationism developed within the context of confessional polemic. Walker and Jean-Louis Quantin have shown that insisting on the cessation of miraculous gifts became a convenient means of negating miracle stories in Catholic polemic, and of excusing the fact that Protestant reformers had not worked miracles with which to justify the divinity of their doctrine.¹⁸ But clerics found new cause to employ the same line of reasoning in

¹⁴ Walker, "The Cessation of Miracles," 111.

¹⁵ It has been nearly 25 years since D. P. Walker called for a more comprehensive investigation of the history of cessationism, yet his work remains the most advanced on the subject. D. P. Walker, *Unclean Spirits: Possession and exorcism in France and England in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries* (London: Scholar Press, 1981), 72-3; Jean-Louis Quantin, *The Church of England and Christian Antiquity: The Construction of a Confessional Identity in the 17th Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 130-9; D. P. Walker, "The Cessation of Miracles," in *Hermeticism and the Renaissance: Intellectual History and the Occult in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Ingrid Merkel and Allen G. Debus (Cranberry, NJ: Associated University Presses, 1988); Jane Shaw, *Miracles in Enlightenment England* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006), 2-4, 18, 21-33, 49-50.

¹⁶ Calvin, *Institutes*, 1057; Walker, "The Cessation of Miracles," 112.

¹⁷ Shaw, *Miracles*, 49-50; Walker, "The Cessation of Miracles," 112.

¹⁸ With reference to the Reformation, Walker argued that cessationism was a "fairly recent" English invention, and pointed to a dispute between the reformers Calvin and Melanchthon to illustrate the division of opinions over its theological validity. Jean-Louis Quantin has recently furthered Walker's argument in demonstrating the development of cessationism in response to Catholic polemic, but has also pointed to the existence of several mild cessationistic claims throughout the Middle Ages. Walker, *Unclean Spirits*, 72-3; Quantin, *Christian Antiquity*, 130-9.

response to claims of inspiration amongst Huguenot laymen. Indeed, the theological reaction to the Camisard refugees began at the pulpit, in the refugee churches most directly concerned with the French prophets. Huguenot Ministers increasingly came to argue that God no longer worked miracles, or inspired prophets, precisely because so many in their congregations claimed that he had done so.¹⁹

The advance of cessationism was also intimately linked to the development and popularization of Newtonian mechanics and natural philosophy. The notion that creation was a self-sustaining “machine” had become commonplace by the time of Vincent’s inspiration in 1688. Natural philosophers and church theologians had shown how God could have operated in a mechanistic universe without any recourse to direct supernatural intervention.²⁰ But the emergence of the Huguenot prophets provided preachers with the impetus to apply this naturalist perspective to the question of prophetism in the modern world. Thus clerical writers in both France and England attempting to account for the prophets’ “gifts” – speaking in tongues, or divination, for example – justified applying natural explanations to all miracle claims since the

¹⁹ My thinking on the dynamics of intellectual change is greatly informed by Jane Shaw. Framing her book as an investigation into the relationship between lived religion and high philosophy, Shaw claims that miracles and science grew together in eighteenth-century England. The popular, “lived” experience of miracles prompted intellectual discussion about their possibility. Shaw, *Miracles in Enlightenment England*, esp. 1-2, 9-10, 12-3, 49-50. Thomas A. Kselman made another similar argument nearly 30 years prior in a study of miracles and prophecy in nineteenth-century France: “...religion – understood as a set of attitudes, beliefs, and behaviours, which provide answers to questions of ultimate meaning – exists in a dynamic relationship with religious and political institutions... Popular religious traditions, invoked to deal with crises faced by individuals and communities, were monitored and to some extent absorbed by the Church... the Church did respond and adjust to demands that religion fulfill its traditional tasks of providing meaning and order.” See “Introduction,” in *Miracles and Prophecies in Nineteenth-Century France* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1983), esp. 7.

²⁰ It is often noted that Protestants were generally much more proactive in reconciling mechanistic philosophy and Christian doctrine. Francis Oakley, “Christian Theology and the Newtonian Science: The Rise of the Concept of the Laws of Nature,” in *Creation: The Impact of an Idea*, ed. Daniel O’Connor and Francis Oakley (New York: Scribners, 1969): 53-84; Richard S. Westfall, “The Rise of Science and the Decline of Orthodox Christianity: A Study of Kepler, Descartes, and Newton,” in *God and Nature: Historical Essays on the Encounter between Christianity and Science*, ed. David C. Lindberg and Ronald L. Numbers (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986), 218-237; Margaret C. Jacob, “Christianity and the Newtonian Worldview,” in *God and Nature*, 238-55; John Henry, “Religion and the Scientific Revolution,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Science and Religion*, ed. Peter Harrison (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 41-7; Gary B. Deason, “Reformation Theology and the Mechanistic Conception of Nature,” in *God and Nature*, 167-91.

death of Christ. Insisting on immutable laws of nature in tandem with a dogmatic assertion of cessationist doctrine reinforced the notion that the Church was the only channel of communication between God and the Christian people.

The use of reason in interpreting revelation also occupied a central place in the controversy surrounding the Huguenot prophets. Not only did divine inspiration entail a miraculous suspension of natural laws, it also necessarily entailed a suspension of human reason. The Huguenot prophets claimed complete passivity in their inspired trances, and thus made no use of their own intellect in relaying revelation to their auditors.²¹ As Chapter Two will show, the refugee minister Pierre Jurieu believed that divine inspiration could even raise deficient minds to perform on a greater intellectual level than those of learned theologians. The "inner light" of inspired prophecy was thus shown to be opposed to the rational methods on which learned theologians relied in creating doctrine.²² In response, the Calvinist community abandoned earlier reservations over rationalist philosophy and came to embrace human reason as the sole tool with which to approach religious matters.²³

Like cessationist doctrine, a rationalized theology helped to secure the clergy's monopoly on mediating revelation. Indeed, rationalism and cessationism made natural corollaries in this regard. Rationalist thinking tended to diminish the presence of supernatural forces in the world, thus supporting the notion that God had altered his ways since biblical times. Cessationism, in turn, restricted the means by which humanity could determine the will of God exclusively to the

²¹ Schwartz, *The French Prophets*, 31.

²² Gerard Reedy, "Spinoza, Stillingfleet, Prophecy, and 'Enlightenment,'" in *Deism, Masonry, and the Enlightenment*, ed. J. A. Leo Lemay (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1987), 50; Gerald R. Cragg, *Reason and Authority in the Eighteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1964), 28-30, 50-2.

²³ Reedy, "Spinoza, Stillingfleet," in *Deism, Masonry*, 50, 56; Walter E. Rex, *Essays on Pierre Bayle and Religious Controversy*, (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1965), esp. 98-9, 108, 111; Christina Pitassi, *De l'orthodoxie aux lumières: Genève: 1670-1737* (Geneva: Labor et Fides, 1992), 7-8; Michael Heyd, *Between Orthodoxy and Enlightenment: Jean-Robert Chouet and the Introduction of Cartesian Science in the Academy of Geneva* (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1982), 198-202.

rational interpretation of Scripture. Embracing these corollaries laid the foundations for the full embrace of enlightenment thought in the early eighteenth-century Calvinist community.

Taking up Michael Heyd's work of the mid-1990s, this thesis seeks to draw attention to the neglected contributions of inspired prophets and common churchmen in "disenchanting" the world on the eve of the Enlightenment.²⁴ The great debates on miracles, it has been shown, were driven by deists and "free-thinkers" who rejected church dogma and questioned ecclesiastical authority.²⁵ The conclusions offered here suggest that well before a free intellectual climate allowed for such brazen attacks on Christian teachings and Church legitimacy, the Huguenot prophets had posed a similar challenge. In response, clerics themselves paved the way for the acceptance of enlightened thought by rationalizing the supernatural elements of their forbearers' theology and encouraging extreme incredulity with regards to claims of divine intervention. In somewhat paradoxical fashion, then, the strongest advocates of the idea of a world permeated by the Holy Spirit set into motion the processes that would contribute to its decline in the eighteenth century.

For as profound an impact as it would have on European intellectual life, the prophetic movement began with humble origins. The Huguenots who did not seek refuge after the revocation of the Edict of Nantes – typically on account of a lack of money – were concentrated

²⁴ Heyd considers the disenchantment of the world as a component of "secularization," which also entails the "gradual decline of the Church and of the authority of the ecclesiastical establishment." I avoid the concept of secularization in favour of Weber's term in order to avoid such connotations. See below for more on this study's indebtedness and relationship to Heyd. "*Be Sober and Reasonable*": *The Critique of Enthusiasm in the Seventeenth and Early Eighteenth Centuries* (Leiden: Brill, 1995), 274-5. For a nuanced discussion of the relationship between secularization and disenchantment, see Charles Taylor, "Foreward," in Marcel Gauchet, *The Disenchantment of the World: A Political History of Religion*, trans. Oscar Burge (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999), ix-xi.

²⁵ James Dybikovski, "Free-thinkers and their Enemies: An Introduction," in *Scepticism, Clandestinity and Free-Thinking: Tenth International Congress on the Enlightenment* (26-27 July, 1999), ed. Gianni Paganini et al. (Paris: Champion, 2002), 215, 221; R. M. Burns, *The Great Debate on Miracles from Joseph Glanvill to David Hume* (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 1981); Colin Brown, *Miracles and the Critical Mind* (Exeter, Devon: Paternoster Press, 1984).

in the most remote regions of the Midi.²⁶ Particular clusters existed in the Dauphiné, the lower Languedoc and the Cévennes mountains.²⁷ Fearing assimilation into the Catholic majority, the scattered villages of shepherds, peasants, and craftsmen that populated the area sustained their religious practices in a clandestine setting. It was a time of great spiritual crisis, and the peasants could not help but think that the unprecedented intensity of Catholic hostility represented the "last persecution" spoken of in the book of Revelation.²⁸ Apocalyptic omens became regular sightings for despairing *nouveaux convertis* anticipating divine intervention.²⁹

Within a year, Huguenots began holding assemblies in the rugged wilderness – colloquially dubbed the *Désert* as a metaphor for both geographic isolation and religious hardship³⁰ – as forums for group worship and lay preaching. Some historians have argued that the emergence of lay preaching represented a collective return to earlier forms of Protestant piety, as well as a desire to reestablish some semblance of an ordered liturgy.³¹ Indeed, contemporaries were well aware of the way in which these innovations served to fill the void left by the exiled clergy. Two of the more radical ministers in exile, Pierre Jurieu and Claude

²⁶ Phillip Benedict's methodical survey has produced an estimated figure of 730 000 Huguenots on the eve of the first great dragonnades of 1681. The dragonnades further diminished this number, with the most pronounced effect on the nobility and the bourgeoisie. By the time of the revocation, the French Reformed Church had been virtually eliminated, and the clergy either converted, or pushed into exile. Raymond A. Mentzer and Andrew Spicer, "Epilogue," in *Society and Culture in the Huguenot World, 1559-1685*, ed. Mentzer and Spicer (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 225; Joutard, "End or Renewal?," 343-4; Samuel Mours, "Les pasteurs à la révocation de l'édit de Nantes," *BSPHP* 114 (1968): 67-105, 298-316; Phillip Benedict, "The Huguenot Population of France, 1660-1685: The Demographic Fate and Customs of a Religious Minority," *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society* 81, no. 5 (1991): 7-9, 77; Samuel Mours, "Essai sommaire de géographie du protestantisme réformé français au XVIIe siècle," *BSPHP* 111 (1965): 303-21, 112 (1966): 19-36.

²⁷ Mours, "Géographie du protestantisme," op. cit.

²⁸ The idea of the "last persecution" comes primarily from an allegorical reading of the death of the "two witnesses" at the hands of beast, spoken of in Rev. 11.

²⁹ The most complete contemporary account of these omens comes from the *Lettres Pastorales* of refugee minister Pierre Jurieu, compiled by contemporaries and translated into English as *The Reflections of the Reverend and Learned Monsieur Jurieu...* (London: Richard Baldwin, 1689); see also, Robin Howells, "The World Upside-Down": Populism and Providence in the *Lettres Pastorales* (1686-95) of Pierre Jurieu," *Proceedings of the Huguenot Society* 24, no. 6 (1988): 499-501; Garrett, *Spirit Possession*, 17-19; Crété, *Les Camisards*, 35-6.

³⁰ Solange Deyon, "La Résistance protestante et la symbolique du désert," *Revue d'histoire moderne et contemporaine* 17 (1968): 242.

³¹ Garrett, *Spirit Possession*, 25; Schwartz, *The French Prophets*, 14, 16.

Brousson, welcomed the ministry of laymen precisely because they administered the duties that the regular clergy could not. Invoking the "extraordinary vocation" clause of the French Reformed confession of faith, Brousson asserted that "the sacraments can be administered by all those who are called to the preaching of the word of God... be they called by an ordinary vocation, as the ordinary pastors of the Church, or by an extraordinary vocation, as John the Baptist, Saint Paul, Apollonius, and many others in other times...."³²

The controversy surrounding the emergence of lay preaching, however, was soon overshadowed by stories of Isabeau Vincent, a 15-year-old shepherdess who claimed to relay the voice of God under possession of the Holy Spirit. Vincent made her inspired utterances exclusively from a dormant state in her farmhouse in the small village of Saou. Though ostensibly unaware of her surroundings, she delivered her inspired utterances as if addressing a congregation. Indeed, she was: for four months before her imprisonment, Vincent's inspirations regularly attracted crowds of Huguenot pilgrims who came to see her perform a quasi-pastoral role.³³

Contemporary witnesses expressed the opinion that Vincent's inspired ministry was divine compensation for the clergy's exile. Though eschatological predictions constituted an important component of her discourse, Vincent was primarily preoccupied with spiritual edification. She structured her discourse according to the Calvinist liturgy, inviting comparisons

³² Pierre Jurieu, "IV. Lettre pastorale (October 15, 1686)," in *Lettres pastorales*, 29; Claude Brousson, *Pièces Pieuses* (Au Désert, [s.n.], 1694), 38; *Confessions et catéchismes de la foi réformée*, ed. Olivier Fatio (Geneva: Labor et Fides, 1986), 125. Nous croyons que les Sacremens peuvent être administrez par tous ceux, qui sont appellez à la prédication de la Parole de Dieu... soit qu'ils y soient appellez d'une Vocation ordinaire, comme les Pasteurs ordinaires de l'Eglise, ou d'une Vocation extraordinaire, comme autrefois Jean-Baptiste, Saint Paul, Apollos, & plusieurs autres..." Apollonius of Tyana (ca. 15– ca. 100 CE) was a Greek orator and philosopher, often compared with his more famous contemporary, Jesus of Nazareth. These comparisons were typically negative, however, especially among clerics uncomfortable with the many similarities between accounts of his life and those of the life of Jesus as found in the Gospels. Pierre Bayle, *Dictionnaire historique et critique*, 6th ed., s.v. "Apollonius de Tyane" (Basle: Brandmuller, 1741), esp. 189; Christopher Jones, "Introduction," in *Life of Apollonius of Tyana*, ed. Christopher Jones (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2005), 1: 7-13.

³³ Charles Bost, "Prophètes des Cévennes," 404.

with regular church services from both historians and contemporaries.³⁴ One anonymous informant wrote that she offered, "very learned prayers, sings psalms as well as any can sing, gives sermons as well-informed as a capable minister, all while sleeping."³⁵ Other spectators remarked that her knack for spiritual edification surpassed even that of Huguenot ministers. "She has such beautiful expressions that one is ravished to hear them, and one seems to be in heaven," wrote a local informant to a friend in Lausanne. "It would be impossible for a minister to do better."³⁶ Vincent filled the void left by the clergy's exile, and so aptly that it seemed locals might no longer have had any need for their return.³⁷

The prophets that came in Vincent's wake accentuated the oratorical nature of trance preaching and became more comfortable with occupying positions of leadership. Their inspirations were both active and interactive. Spirit possession – which came to be a more spontaneous phenomenon accompanied by all manner of physical convulsions after 1689 – could be triggered by external stimuli: a skeptic's disapproval, for example, or the questions of curious spectators.³⁸ While still unable to recall what had transpired in their trance state, prophets became acutely aware of their prophetic gifts and the duties that came with them. *Inspirés* began to make appearances at clandestine assemblies, and turned them into forums for delivering divine inspirations. Their rising profile gradually eclipsed the work of lay preachers.

³⁴ Garrett, *Spirit Possession*, 21-5; Schwartz, *The French Prophets*, 17-8; Catherine Randall, "Reforming Calvinism? The Case of the Cévennes Camisards," *Fides et Historia* 36, no. 2 (Summer/ Fall 2004): 54.

³⁵ *Abrege de l'Histoire de la Bergère de Saou près de Crest, en Dauphiné* (Amsterdam: [s.n.], 1688). The quoted phrase comes from an unpaginated letter appended to the document as it appears in a compendium of publications currently held at the Bibliothèque de Genève (BGE), Ba 1910/ 31 (7). "Des Prières tres Doctes, Chante les Pseaum [sic] aussi bien qu'aucun chantre, fait des Predications aussi sçavantes qu'un habile Ministre le tout en dormant."

³⁶ *Abrege de l'Histoire*. "Elle a de si belles Expressions, qu'on est ravi de l'entendre, & l'on semble être dans le Ciel: il seroit impossible à un Ministre de faire mieux."

³⁷ The Camisards came to view the regular clergy with suspicion and disdain for having abandoned their pastoral duties and neglected to return in support of the rebels. Esprit Fléchier, *Fanatiques et insurgés du Vivarais et des Cévennes: récits et lettres, 1689-1705*, ed. Daniel Vidal (Grenoble: Jérôme Millon, 1996), 36, 99-100; Elie Marion, *Mémoires sur la Guerre des Camisards*, ed. Philippe Joutard and Charles Bost (Montpellier: Les Presses du Languedoc, 1983), 143-4.

³⁸ Garrett, *Spirit Possession*, 25-7.

As they secured divine authority in the eyes of their coreligionists, some of the older prophets began to issue more aggressive demands, including active forms of defiance. Assemblies were regularly harassed by regiments of royal troops, and the *inspirés* saw it as their duty to repel the attacks of these agents of the Antichrist. Alerted to the presence of incoming soldiers, one prophet assured his flock that the enemy's weapons would fall from their hands when fired. The emboldened Huguenots then drove them away after killing the enemy captain and nine of his soldiers by striking them with rocks. Tension came to a head on February 19, 1689, when a regiment of troops confronted a large assembly at the small settlement of Le Serre de la Palle in the Ardèche. The prophets declared that an army of angels "as white as snow and as small as the finger" would protect the assembly from all harm. The captain ordered his troops to open fire, and some three hundred Huguenots were killed in the ensuing conflict.³⁹

The massacre pushed the prophetic movement underground, but it did not extinguish it. Assemblies of *nouveaux convertis* continued to host *inspirés* in remote regions of the *Désert* for over a decade before they once again turned violent in the early eighteenth century.⁴⁰ In July 1702, a young wool-comber by the name of Abraham Mazel received a divine command to "take arms for the cause of God." The Holy Spirit ordered him to free his imprisoned coreligionists from the home of the *abbé* François de Langlade du Chaila, notorious for his cruel persecution of the Huguenots. Along with a small band of militiamen, Mazel stormed the house in the small village of Pont-de-Montvert, burnt it to the ground, and killed the fleeing du Chaila. The success of the operation was taken by all as a sign of God's favour.⁴¹

³⁹ Bost, "Prophètes des Cévennes," 418, 421; David de Brueys, *Histoire du fanatisme de nostre temps et le dessein que l'on avoit de soulever en France les mécontens des Calvinistes* (Paris: François Muguet, 1692), 123-9, 162-3; Fléchier, *Fanatiques et insurgés*, 65-72.

⁴⁰ Garrett, *Spirit Possession*, 28-30.

⁴¹ Abraham Mazel, *Mémoires sur la Guerre*, 5; Elie Marion, quoted in François-Maximilien Misson, *Le théâtre sacré des Cévennes ou récit de diverses merveilles partie nouvellement opérées dans cette partie de la province de*

The local *Intendant*, Lamoignan de Basville, hoped to deter other Huguenots from taking similar actions by publicly executing a number of suspected offenders. However, his actions only strengthened the resolve of the increasingly militant Huguenot peasantry convinced that the enemy sought to crush their religion by force. Bands of rebels retreated to the mountains of the Cévennes where they organized guerilla attacks on local parish churches.

The Camisard rebellion – so called for the garments, or *camiso*, the rebels wore into battle⁴² – was spontaneous in origin. There was no pre-meditated plan, no centralized leadership, and no formal list of grievances; the earliest rebels seem to have been motivated only by a desire to avenge the deaths of coreligionists who had suffered ecclesiastical and state persecution.⁴³ They targeted those who had cooperated with local authorities in suppressing assemblies and executing lay preachers. One *curé*'s local informant was found dead on the doorstep of his church with a sign on his chest: "thus will it be done to the traitors and persecutors of the children of God."⁴⁴ Only when the rebels realized that they had initiated a civil war did they organize themselves into more formal military units and agree to common demands: freedom of religion, or the reestablishment of Protestantism in France, for example. But the mission was always subject to change under divine command; the *inspirés* claimed that their timely and frequent inspirations guided every step of the military campaign.⁴⁵

⁴² Languedoc (London: Robert Roger, 1707), 85-6 ; Cosmos, *Huguenot Prophecy*, 89-90, 97-103; Crété, *Les Camisards*, 68-73.

⁴³ This is a speculative theory derived from the comments of Mazel in *Mémoires sur la guerre*, 30.

⁴⁴ Crété, *Les Camisards*, 74-85, 109. A meticulous record of all the Camisards' atrocities was kept by the nouveaux converti, Elie Salvaire, and published as "Mémoire sommaire de ce qui s'est passé de plus considérable, des désordres, incendies et meurtres des prêtres et autres personnes depuis la mort funeste de monsieur l'Abbé du Chaila et où je r'apporterai les églises et maisons brûlées," in *Relation Sommaire des désordres commis par les Camisards des Cévennes*, ed. Didier Poton (Montpellier: Les Presses du Languedoc, 1997); see also J.B. Louvreleuil, *Le Fanatisme renouvelé ou histoire des sacriliges, des incendies, des meurtres et des autres attentats que les Calvinistes révoltés ont commis dans les Cévennes, et des Chatiments qu'on en a faits*, 2 vols (Avignon: Seguin Ainé, 1868).

⁴⁵ Louvreleuil, *Le Fanatisme renouvelé*, 1: 51-2.

⁴⁶ Many of the Camisard inspirés were themselves child prophets in the wave of 1688-9. Crété, *Les Camisards*, 12-13; Schwartz, *The French Prophets*, 21.

The Camisard rebellion was hopeless from the very beginning. The rebels' guerilla tactics allowed them to avoid direct conflict with French troops for a time, but they were ultimately unsustainable against the overwhelming superiority of highly-trained royal troops. The Camisards held out hope for foreign intervention for nearly two years, but after several frustrated relief efforts, they began to acknowledge the inevitability of defeat.⁴⁶ With promises of amnesty, most of the Camisards surrendered in the fall of 1704. Small pockets of resistance held out as late as 1710 when Mazel – the first and last of the Camisards – was killed in combat.⁴⁷

In the end, the conflict left some 14,000 dead, and nearly 500 villages razed (mostly at the hands of royal troops) before the *maréchal de Villars* was able to pacify the situation.⁴⁸ The phenomenon of inspired prophetism, however, was not so quickly suppressed. The Huguenot prophets, and those whom they inspired, continued to exercise their prophetic gifts in other parts of Europe. Most notably, they initiated the sect of the “French Prophets” in England, which survived nearly to the end of the eighteenth century. Even in France, the sect of the “Multipliants” frustrated clerical efforts to reassert their authority in the public eye.⁴⁹ Only when a new generation of Huguenot ministers rebuilt the institutions of the French Reformed Church in the early eighteenth century did the Huguenot prophets submit to discipline from the pulpit.

⁴⁶ Crété, *Les Camisards*, 146-156, 236-40; Joutard, *La légende des Camisards*, 31-2.

⁴⁷ For more on the circumstances of the Camisards' surrender, see André Ducasse, *La Guerre des Camisards: La Résistance Huguenote sous Louis XIV* (Paris: Hachette, 1962), 153-82, esp. 175-9; Joutard, *La Légende des Camisards*, 25-33; Crété, *Les Camisards*, 244-9.

⁴⁸ By the end of April 1704, the Bishop of Nîmes, Esprit Fléchier, estimated some 4000 Catholics had been murdered, and 200 churches burned. The damage caused directly by the Camisards was exasperated by the *Maréchal de Montrevé*'s order to burn every village within the 32 parishes that comprised the area of the rebellion. 466 villages were razed as a result. Fléchier, *Fanatiques et insurgés*, 153; Walter C. Utt and Brian Strayer E. Strayer, *The Bellicose Dove: Claude Brousson and Protestant Resistance to Louis XIV, 1647-1698* (Brighton; Portland: Sussex Academic Press, 2003), 152; Crété, *Les Camisards*, 198-215; Schwartz, *The French Prophets*, 26.

⁴⁹ The Multipliants, who crystallized as a distinct sect sometime in 1719, are considered to be the last group of French *inspirés* to thrive before the reestablishment of ecclesiastical discipline. Such groups were typically composed of men and women of Protestant descent, but rejected denominational labels and clerical authority. Joutard, *La légende des Camisards*, 33-4; Daniel Vidal, “La secte contre le prophétisme: les Multipliants de Montpellier (1719-1723),” *Annales. Histoire, Sciences Sociales* 37, no. 4 (1982): 801-25, esp. 820-1; Bost, “Prophètes des Cévennes,” 411-2.

Despite the way in which it animated much of the prophetic movement, the tension between inspired prophets and clerical authority has received limited analysis in the secondary literature. Michael Heyd's statement that historians have been more interested in prophetism itself than the ways in which clerics and intellectuals have reacted to it remains as true today as it was when he made it nearly 20 years ago.⁵⁰ Indeed, the history of the Huguenot prophets and that of the Huguenot clergy have long been treated in isolation. The period of the *Désert* has garnered little interest from those historians preoccupied with the structures and ministry of the institutional Church. Those who have addressed this period directly typically focus on the phenomenon of the *grand refuge*, following the "great men" of the Huguenot community in their flight from France. Histories of the Huguenot diaspora have thus been largely intellectual in orientation, and heavily focused on themes of religious toleration and political sovereignty.⁵¹

Modern historical scholarship on the Huguenots of the *Désert* is greatly indebted to the work of Charles Bost in the early twentieth century. Bost was among the first to move beyond the institutional history of the French Reformed Church and focus attention on the popular religious culture of the Huguenot Midi.⁵² His work found an echo in the third quarter of the twentieth century when a number of French historians took an interest in the Huguenot prophets. Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie's famous *Les Paysans de Languedoc* (1966) devoted a chapter to the "savage rebellions" of the Camisards. He applied the concept of "deculturation" to the post-

⁵⁰ Heyd, *Be Sober and Reasonable*, 3.

⁵¹ Guy Dodge, *The Political Theory of the Huguenots of the Dispersion, with Special Reference to the Thought and Influence of Pierre Jurieu* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1947); Frank Puaux, *Les précurseurs français de la tolérance au XVIIe siècle* (1881; repr., Geneva: Slatkine Reprints, 1970); Élisabeth Labrousse, *Pierre Bayle*, 2 vols. (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1963); and more recently, Geoffrey Adams, *The Huguenots and French Opinion, 1685-1787: The Enlightenment Debate on Toleration* (Waterloo: Wilfred Laurier University Press, 1991).

⁵² Bost's most ambitious undertaking, the two-volume history of *Les prédicants protestants des Cévennes et du Bas-Languedoc 1684-1700* (1912) remains essential reading for students of the period, and continues to appear in the footnotes of modern scholars. His numerous publications on the lay preachers of the *Désert*, the *petits prophètes*, and Camisard *inspirés*, were among the first to attempt a reconstruction of the mental world of the Huguenot peasants in its own terms. Charles Bost, *Les Prédicants protestants des Cévennes et du Bas-Languedoc, 1684-1700* (1912; repr., Montpellier: Les Presses du Languedoc, 2001); "Le prophétisme en Dauphiné à la fin de 1688," *BSHPF* 56 (1907): 535-6; "Prophètes des Cévennes," op cit.

revocation Huguenot community, and was among the first to explain the convulsions of the prophets as communications in a "symbolic language."⁵³

The work of Philippe Joutard has greatly advanced the literature on the *Désert*. His *Journaux Camisards* (1965), a publication of several documents excerpted from the memoirs of Camisard refugees, highlighted the romantic struggle of the Camisard warriors against the oppression of the Sun King, attracting both public and scholarly interest.⁵⁴ Joutard's meticulous and wide-ranging historiographical study of the rebellion, *La Légende des Camisards* (1977) has become an indispensable resource.⁵⁵ This seminal study was the first to relate the peculiar history of the period to wider themes of confessional conflict, peasant revolt, and the rationalization of religious discourse, all while exposing the role of print, propaganda, and polemic in the representations of the war. It was followed closely by Hillel Schwartz's similarly meticulous study of opposition to the Camisard refugees in the early eighteenth century, which documented a shift towards medical conceptions of prophetism amongst lay and clerical writers.⁵⁶

A number of scholars working under the rubric of the "new" history of religion have since taken interest in the manifestation of prophetism emerging from the Huguenot Midi as a cultural experience. Earliest among them was Schwartz's meticulous study of *The French Prophets* (1980), which followed the "social or affective continuity of a millenarian ethos" from its origin in the *Désert* to its disappearance in mid eighteenth-century England.⁵⁷ Along with Clarke Garrett's similarly orientated survey of eighteenth century *Spirit Possession and Popular*

⁵³ Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie, *The Peasants of Languedoc*, trans. John Day (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1974), 265-86, 300-2.

⁵⁴ The *Journaux* also inspired the French director René Allio to adapt the story of the Camisard war to film in *Les Camisards* (1977). See Cosmos, "Holy War and the Apocalypse in Film Narrative: *Les Camisards*," in *Huguenot Prophecy*, 185; Philippe Joutard, *Journaux Camisards (1700-1715)* (Paris: Union Générale d'Éditions, 1965).

⁵⁵ Joutard, *La Légende des Camisards*, op. cit.

⁵⁶ Hillel Schwartz, *Knaves, Fools, Madmen and That Subtle Effluvium: A Study of the Opposition to the French Prophets in England, 1706-1710* (Gainesville: The University Presses of Florida, 1978), esp. 1-3.

⁵⁷ Schwartz, *The French Prophets*, op. cit.

Religion (1987), Schwartz' study has shown that the seemingly spontaneous eruption of prophetism in the Huguenot community was a manifestation of wider changes in popular religious culture and intellectual thought: the origin of a reawakening of popular piety in the eighteenth century.⁵⁸ Schwartz and Garrett, along with Daniel Vidal, have also emphasized the public appeal of ecstatic "performances," and explained their cultural clout in historical and anthropological terms.⁵⁹

Henri Bosc produced the definitive account of the Camisard rebellion in his 6 volume set, *La Guerre des Cévennes* (1985-1993).⁶⁰ Publications on the period of the *Désert* have since been more specialized.⁶¹ Linda and Marsha Frey have taken up the work of Le Roy Ladurie in discussing the revolutionary elements of the Camisard rebellion.⁶² Like that of Le Roy Ladurie, their work emphasizes the economic motives of the Camisards, and does little to elucidate the role of prophetism in the rebellion. Gregory Monahan has drawn attention to the largely unexplored roles of the Protestant nobility and the Catholic "Cadets de la Croix" during the Camisard rebellion.⁶³ More recently, Georgia Cosmos has offered a somewhat confused and unfocused analysis of myth-making and storytelling among Huguenot refugees in the English context, and Catherine Randall has followed exiles from the *Désert* to their settlement in the New World.⁶⁴

⁵⁸ Garrett, *Spirit Possession*, esp. 10-1; Schwartz, *The French Prophets*, esp. 8-9.

⁵⁹ Daniel Vidal, *Le malheur et son prophète: inspirés et sectaires en Languedoc calviniste (1685-1725)* (Paris: Payot, 1983), 87-111.

⁶⁰ Henri Bosc, *La Guerre des Cévennes, 1702-1720*, 6 vols. (Montpellier: Les Presses du Languedoc, 1985-1993).

⁶¹ Lilian Crété has since produced a more accessible history of the rebellion while synthesizing much of the secondary literature in *Les Camisards*, op. cit.

⁶² Marsha Frey, "The Camisard Insurrection: A Revolutionary Model?," *Proceedings of the Annual Meeting of the Western Society for French History* 13 (1986): 71-9; Linda Frey, "The Camisards: Litany of a Revolt," *Proceedings of the Annual Meeting of the Western Society for French History* 13 (1986): 61-70.

⁶³ W. Gregory Monahan, "Heroes or Thieves: Catholic Vigilantes in the War of the Camisards," *Proceedings of the Western Society for French History* 24 (1997): 365-76; "Between two Thieves": The Protestant Nobility and the War of the Camisards, *French Historical Studies* 30, no. 4 (1997): 537-58.

⁶⁴ Cosmos, *Huguenot Prophecy*, op. cit.; Catherine Randall, *From a Far Country: Camisards and Huguenots in the Atlantic World* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 2009).

Only three works to date have explored the theological and intellectual ramifications of Huguenot prophetism and clerical opposition. All three look exclusively at the "affair of the prophets" in London. Heyd's brilliantly conceived *Be Sober and Reasonable* (1995) offers a brief survey of the evolving intellectual critique of enthusiasm in the early modern period. The relevant chapter points to the emphasis on the importance of Scripture and reason in determining a prophet's divinity as indicative of the dawning enlightenment. Heyd's work has greatly informed the conceptual framework of this thesis. Shaw's similarly orientated *Miracles in Enlightenment England* (2006) explores the shifting conceptions of miracles in the context of the Huguenot prophets, but devotes its most thorough analysis to the high intellectual response later in the eighteenth century, rather than the immediate response of English clerics. Schwartz's *Knaves, Fools, Madmen* offers the most in-depth analysis, and thus the most overlap with the current study, but focuses on the medicalization of religious discourse on enthusiasm, a phenomenon that this thesis does not seek to explore.

This thesis is structured so as to juxtapose the ideas of inspired prophets and "sober" clerics and to expose the points of conflict between them. The first chapter thus introduces the figure of Jacques Massard, an early advocate of Huguenot prophetism and active *inspiré* in exile. His writings on the "Harmony of Prophecies" provide a glimpse into an underground culture of millenarian prophecy, and suggest that it embraced a much wider range of divinatory practices than previously imagined. Furthermore, his neglected role in publicizing and interpreting the inspirations of the *petits prophètes* sheds light on the wider appeal of their inspirations, especially amongst the Huguenot bourgeoisie in exile. Lastly, his application of prophetic utterances in critiques of the social order neatly illustrates the points of contention between supporters of Huguenot prophetism and the secular and ecclesiastical powers that claimed

dominion over them. This chapter takes the form of a microhistory of the life and work of Jacques Massard.

The second chapter explores the controversy over the emergence of lay preaching and inspired prophecy amongst both Catholic and Calvinist clerics between 1686 and 1692. It focuses heavily on the theology of the refugee minister Pierre Jurieu, one of the only clerics to have publicly defended these heterodox innovations. Jurieu's suggestion that God had directly illuminated the minds of Huguenot peasants drew scorn from clerics on both sides of the confessional divide, and demonstrated the incompatibility of divine illumination and ecclesiastical order. In response, clerics stressed the importance of reason in religious debate and scriptural exegesis. Much as Heyd has done in the English context, this chapter seeks to demonstrate the application of philosophical rationalism as an antidote to the problem of modern prophecy in seventeenth century France. It is argued that eighteenth century Calvinists came to embrace the role of reason in religion and downplay earlier doctrines emphasizing the immediate action of the Holy Spirit in response to the challenge of the *petits prophètes*.

Chapter Three follows the prophetic movement into England after the arrival of the three Camisard *inspirés* in 1706. It investigates the means by which English and Huguenot clerics discredited these troublesome refugees and stigmatized the notion of modern prophetism, even in the absence of any clear consensus on the doctrine of cessationism. Heyd has argued that the affair of the prophets marked the first instance in which clerics conceived of enthusiasm primarily as an usurpation of ecclesiastical authority.⁶⁵ This chapter argues that acknowledging the political dimensions of this popular phenomenon allowed clerics to fully grasp the importance of establishing the doctrine of cessationism, and helps explain its crystallization later in the eighteenth century.

⁶⁵ Heyd, *Be Sober and Reasonable*, 166.

This thesis offers a rare glimpse into a particular instance of conflict between the "lived" religious practices of the Huguenot people and the learned theological discourse of the Reformed Church.⁶⁶ It demonstrates how even when separated by exile, these two forces interacted to drive theological mutation and advance the disenchantment of the Huguenot Church. Only when the people and the clergy were so estranged did they expose the dynamics that generated their religious culture.

⁶⁶ The term "lived religion" is chosen over terms like "popular religion" so as to avoid associating practices of divination with certain segments of society. Robert Orsi, "Everyday Miracles: The Study of Lived Religion," in *Lived Religion in America: Towards a History of Practice*, ed. David Hall (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), esp. 6-7.

Chapter One, “The Harmony of Prophecies”: Jacques Massard and Millenarian Prophecy in the Huguenot Community, 1685-1693

The revocation of the Edict of Nantes sparked an explosion of millenarian prophecy in both learned and popular cultures. Historians have typically stressed the influence of the refugee minister Pierre Jurieu and his timely *Accomplissement des Prophéties* (1686) in defining this religious movement and infusing it with a sense of urgency.¹ Alongside this influential apocalyptic commentary, however, appeared the much more radical *Harmonie des Prophéties* (1686), a text that has gone virtually unnoticed in the scholarly literature.² As this chapter demonstrates, this eclectic millenarian treatise, along with its author, the exiled Huguenot apothecary Jacques Massard (1637?-1693?), may in fact have played a central role in the earliest manifestations of Huguenot prophetism. Massard’s case provides a rare glimpse into the undercurrents of Christian thought that circulated in Europe at the end of the seventeenth century, and thus serves as an ideal introduction to the radical edge of the prophetic movement.³

Massard took an interest in apocalyptic divination after the revocation of the Edict of Nantes forced him to flee his home town of Grenoble and find refuge in Amsterdam. Over the next eight years he articulated a grand theory on the "harmony" of all Judeo-Christian prophecies from Genesis to the modern day, before sharing his own divine revelations in disseminating news of the *petits prophètes*. Massard’s eclectic source base – which drew from biblical prophecies, astrological almanacs, and a history of inspired dreaming and trance preaching that spanned the Medieval and Early Modern periods – demonstrates that outside of the context of the established Church, the basis for millenarian views extended far beyond the biblical canon.

¹ See note 3 in Chapter Two for a historiographical brief on Jurieu’s influence on Huguenot prophetism.

² As well as in the sources presented in the following note, Massard is briefly discussed in Dréville, *Lire et écrire l’avenir*, 205-6.

³ Jacques Massard, *Harmonie des prophéties anciennes avec les modernes sur la durée de l’Antechrist & les souffrances de l’Église* (Cologne [Amsterdam]: chez Pierre Marteau, 1686).

This chapter provides a microhistorical investigation of the life and work of Jacques Massard with the intent of underscoring the incongruence between the divinatory practices of the Huguenot peasants and the culture of apocalyptic exegesis sustained by the Reformed clergy. The Huguenot prophets' millenarian views were not, like Jurieu's, rooted in a sober exegetical calculation.⁴ They were constantly renewed, reworked, and reaffirmed by a variety of divinatory traditions that had endured for centuries in spite of clerical denunciation. All of these practices had scriptural precedents, regardless of how contemporary theologians may have interpreted them. Both the Old and New Testaments are replete with examples of prophets falling into fits of ecstasy after receiving the prophetic "breath" of the Holy Spirit. The biblical figure Joseph successfully interpreted the inspired dream of the Pharaoh of Egypt, for which he won recognition as a prophet of God.⁵ Even astrology had a precedent in the New Testament. Luke wrote that Jesus had proclaimed that "signs" in the sun, moon, and stars would presage his return.⁶ Massard's work suggests that advocates of Huguenot prophetism, far from encouraging a turning away from Scripture, as was commonly claimed, saw perfect continuity between God's previous means of dispensing revelation and those of the current era.⁷

Massard's case thus not only helps to advance scholarly understanding of advocates' rationale for the conduct of the *petits prophètes*, but also helps to elucidate points of contention

⁴ The *petits prophètes* rarely gave precise dates in their eschatological predictions, and those that they offered were subject to change. One anonymous document that allegedly relates the words of an inspired child in the Dauphiné from November 1688 claimed that although God had promised to deliver the Huguenot community in September, he delayed his intervention after they failed to repent for their apostasy. The author claimed that if the Huguenots repented, they would be delivered by Christmas. *Histoire Admirable de ce qui est arrivé dès la 12 Novembre 1688 à Mornas en Dauphiné, dans la Bourgade Andrivés. Imprimé l'An 1689* ([n.l.]: [n.p.], 1689), 9.

⁵ Gen. 41; Dan. 5.

⁶ Luke 21: 25-7.

⁷ The debate over the question of whether or not the Huguenot prophets led people away from Scripture came to a head after three Camisard refugees escaped to England in 1706. The chrysalization of a new prophetic cult in London led the Anglican minister, Richard Kingston, to declare: "that Dispensation, or pretended new Gespel [sic], that lays Stumbling-Blocks before God's People, and draws them from the Scriptural Method of worshipping God, cannot be of a divine Power or Approbation." Richard Kingston, *Enthusiastick Imposters, No Divinely Inspired Prophets. The Second Part* (London: Printed for the Author and Sold by B. Bragge, at the Raven in Pater-Noster-Row, 1709), 176-7.

with the established clergy who overwhelmingly agreed that God's prior means of revelation had ceased with the closure of the biblical canon. In the face of clerical opposition, Massard proposed that God dispensed new revelation directly to the people as a means of bypassing the undeserved authority of human ecclesiasts. Even if it is an exceptional one, the case of Jacques Massard provides a glimpse into the mental world of a radical millenarian, and exposes the first signs of conflict between advocates of prophetism and their ecclesiastical superiors that would characterize the history of the Huguenot prophets.

Jacques Massard

Details on Jacques Massard's early life are scarce.⁸ His father, Pierre-Louis Massard, was a Calvinist from Grenoble, the capital city of the former province of the Dauphiné. He married Louise de Perdrix, with whom he had seven children , and worked as an apothecary in Grenoble. Jacques was the second child, born around the year 1637. He was raised Calvinist, but did not pursue an interest in theological matters. Rather, like many of his siblings, he took his father's profession. After he completed his education at the college of Grenoble, he was tested as a master apothecary in the year 1667. Soon after, he began his own practice.⁹ Over the next 12 years he developed a keen interest in the development and application of medical cure-alls,

⁸ The following biographical discussion is based largely on a few autobiographical comments in Massard's publications. A more transparent reconstruction of his biography can be found in the following pieces: A. P. Briquet, "Massard (Jacques)," *Bulletin du bibliophile et du bibliothécaire* 14 (1860): 999-1002; Paul Couturier de Royas, "Notes bibliographique sur Massard," *Petite Revue des Bibliophiles Dauphinois*, no. 6 (1908): 9-21; Claude Muller, *Les Mystères du Dauphiné* (Romagnat: De Borée, 2006), 267-8. Nearly everything known about Massard is based on the occasional self-reflexive comments provided in his published works.

⁹ Massard's date of birth is a rough calculation based on a comment made in his *Explication d'un songe divin de Louis XIV* (Amsterdam: chez Jean & Gillis Janssons à Waesberge, 1690), 112, at which point he claimed to be 52 years old. What little information is available on his family comes from the genealogical research presented in Royas, "Notes bibliographique," 9-10. Massard's affiliation with the Reformed religion is evident in all his religious works, but he makes specific reference to a Calvinist upbringing in his *Explication*, 104. The publication info on his next two medical treatises suggests he remained in Grenoble until at least 1680. Royas, "Notes bibliographique," 11. Massard's *Explication* was republished under the title *Rémarques curieuses sur plusieurs songes de quelques personnes de qualité* (Amsterdam: chez Jaques le Jeune, 1690). As both editions maintain the same format and pagination, all subsequent references will be made only to the *Explication*.

dubbed Panacea, or *Panacée* after the Greek Goddess of healing. At some point in this period, Massard developed an elixir he called "*la grande Panacée*." Through his own experimental research he found this to be the perfect cure-all; he claimed that it alleviated the effects of everything from venereal disease to hemorrhoids, and even regulated the bowels. So confident was he in the efficacy of his Panacea that he published the description of all the cures he obtained in his experiments between the years 1675 and 1679, and offered free trials to skeptical consumers.¹⁰ This elixir and other types of Panacea were the focus of his prolific early publishing career, which began in 1679 with the release of his *Panacée, ou discours sur les effets singuliers d'un remede experimenté*. To this was added a second part, published in 1680.¹¹

One of these works must have caught the attention of someone in the king's court, because Massard was soon after appointed to the *Académie des Nouvelles Découvertes*, of which the illustrious medical pioneer Nicolas de Blégny was both the founder and director.¹² The *Académie* was a forum for presenting new medical discoveries, which, judging by his interest in Panacea, must have appealed to Massard's curiosity. For this prestigious appointment, Massard was deeply grateful to his sovereign: "there is nothing which more obviously attests to the grandeur of the genius of Louis the Great, than the due discernment he exercises [in selecting] people for the positions to which he appoints them, of which principally consists the art of

¹⁰ Jacques Massard, *Vertus et usages de plusieurs Panacées, ou remedes universels* ([s.l.], [s.n.], 1679?), 3-5; Royas, "Notes bibliographiques," 13.

¹¹ *Panacée, ou discours sur les effets singuliers d'un remede experimenté, & commode pour la guerison de la pluspart des longues maladies; mêmes de celles qui semblent incurables* (Grenoble: chez l'auteur, 1679); *Seconde partie du traité des panacées, ou des remèdes universels. Avec un traité des abus de la médecine ordinaire... et les avis de Vanhelmont sur la composition des remedes* (Grenoble: chez P. Fremon, 1680); See Royas, "Notes Bibliographiques," 11-14 for a summary discussion of the content of these works.

¹² The second edition of the *Panacée*, published in 1681, mentions Massard's affiliation with the *Académie* on the title page. Royas, "Notes bibliographiques," 14-15; Jacques Roger, *The Life Sciences in Eighteenth-Century French Thought*, ed. Keith Rodney Benson, trans. Robert Ellrich (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1993), 146-7; for more information on de Blégny, see Albert G. Nicholls, "Nicolas de Blégny and the First Medical Periodical," *The Canadian Medical Association* 32, no. 2 (1934): 198-202.

reigning well.¹³ The appointment brought him to Paris, where he relocated his medical practice and continued to publish on the subject of Panacea.¹⁴

By all accounts, Massard seems to have enjoyed a successful medical career while earning himself an esteemed position in French society. The first and second parts of his *Panacée* were amalgamated for a second edition in 1681, then later reprinted in Amsterdam in 1686. This amalgamated version was also translated into English in 1685 and Dutch in 1687, attesting to the popularity of his work and his renown.¹⁵ Perhaps his most enduring contribution to medical knowledge, however, was in his advocacy of the controversial use of antimony. Despite a heated debate over its applications at the end of the 17th century, it would eventually become a medical standard. In a particular stroke of irony, it even once saved the life of Louis XIV.¹⁶

But Massard's burgeoning career was soon interrupted by the increasingly repressive anti-protestant policies of the Sun King. Perhaps, as a man of his social stature, Massard was unaffected by the *dragonnades* of 1681, but there was no escaping the consequences of the revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685. This marked a sharp rupture in his career. Though he never wrote on his personal troubles in this regard, it is clear that he fled the country immediately. Like so many Huguenot expatriates, he found refuge in the Walloon church of the Netherlands, a French-speaking Protestant community with close ties to France. The publication information given on all his subsequent works, as well as a short notice to the reader on one of

¹³ Massard, quoted in Royas, "Notes bibliographiques," 12. "Il n'y a rien qui témoigne plus évidemment la grandeur du Genie de Louis le Grand, que le juste discernement qu'il fait des personnes pour les emplois ausquels il les destine, en quoy consiste principalement l'art de bien Regner."

¹⁴ It is unknown how long Massard spent in Paris, but a short notice at the end of one of his medical publications indicates he maintained a practice there. Massard, *Vertus et usages*, 11.

¹⁵ Royas, "Notes bibliographiques," 14-17.

¹⁶ Royas, "Notes bibliographiques," 14; Roger, *The Life Sciences*, 14-16.

his medical treatises, indicate that he settled in Amsterdam no later than 1686. Here he remained at least until the year 1693, though the time and place of his death are undetermined.¹⁷

Like so many Huguenots whose lives were uprooted by the revocation, Massard must have searched for meaning in the calamitous events that marked the end of the Protestant religion in his native country.¹⁸ There can be little doubt that his exile triggered a spiritual crisis, fueled by the feelings of victimization and alienation in having been expelled from his native country. Massard's crisis would find resolution in the work of the illustrious minister and theologian Pierre Jurieu, and would take his career in directions he could not have anticipated a decade earlier.

Millenarianism and the Huguenots Diaspora

From exile in the neighbouring city of Rotterdam, the Huguenot minister Pierre Jurieu had an experience to parallel Massard's. Deprived of his professorship after the suppression of the Academy of Sedan and afraid to remain in France after the publication of a treatise condemning the actions of the French Catholic clergy, Jurieu had emigrated in 1681. Though it did nothing to disrupt his recent appointment at the new "Ecole Illustre" in Rotterdam, he could not help but see great spiritual significance in the revocation of the Huguenots' last rights of religion.¹⁹

¹⁷ Royas, "Notes bibliographique," 10. Royas searched the centralized files of the Walloon church of Leiden (comprising all records of baptism, marriage, and death of the French speaking population of the low-countries) and found nothing on Massard. He concluded it was likely that Massard did not die in Holland. Royas' last trace of Massard was a treatise published in Amsterdam in 1691. He was unaware of a publication from 1693 (discussed below), also from Amsterdam

¹⁸ Mentzer and Spicer, "Epilogue," 224-237; Joutard, "End or Renewal?," 339-368; Carolyn Lougee Chappell, "The Pains I Took to Save My/His Family": Escape Accounts by a Huguenot Mother and Daughter after the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes," *French Historical Studies* 22, no. 1 (Winter, 1999); Garrett, *Spirit Possession*, 15-34.

¹⁹ Robin Howells, *Pierre Jurieu: Antinomian Radical* (Durham: University of Durham, 1983), 29-30, 35-6.

If it was not already on his mind in the increasingly bleak period preceding the revocation, he must have immediately recalled the work of his grandfather, the renowned Huguenot theologian Pierre du Moulin (1568-1658) who had predicted a series of cataclysmic events at the end of the seventeenth century. In his *Accomplissements des Prophéties*, first published in 1612, du Moulin had declared that the destruction of the papacy – the "fall of Babylon" – would take place in the year 1689.²⁰ His prediction was based on a historical application of the book of Revelation, which Christian exegetes had long believed to describe the apocalyptic struggle between Christ's faithful 'witnesses' and the Antichrist that would precede the Second Coming. Like generations of commentators before him, du Moulin identified the "beast" of Revelation (commonly thought to represent the Antichrist) with the "Papal Empire," and established the date of its demise according to a timeline of the Antichrist's reign culled from the book of Daniel.

To date the apocalypse based on a "mystical decoding of history"²¹ was nothing new in itself, but du Moulin's particular conclusions were.²² His treatise remained topical, warranting two further editions in 1631 and 1660.²³ It would also, it seems, resonate with the peasants of the Midi following the revocation of the Edict of Nantes; when the *Intendant* Basville gathered the *nouveaux convertis* of the Protestant stronghold of Alès to exhort them to submit to the king's

²⁰ Pierre du Moulin, *Accomplissement des Prophéties*, 3rd ed. (Geneva: pour Pierre Chouët, 1660), 351-60. For an analysis of du Moulin's original 1612 edition, see Schwartz, *The French Prophets*, 15.

²¹ Jacques Solé, *Le débat entre Protestants et Catholiques Français de 1598 à 1685* (Paris: Aux Amateurs des Livres, 1985), 3: 797.

²² For a history of apocalyptic commentaries on Revelation, see Irena Backus, *Les sept visions et la fin des temps. Les commentaires genevois de l'Apocalypse entre 1530 et 1584* (Geneva: [Revue de Théologie et de Philosophie], 1997); Luc Racaut, "Religious Polemic and Huguenot Self-Perception and Identity," in *Society and Culture*, 38-9.

²³ For more on the enduring legacy of du Moulin's commentary on Revelation see; Solé, *Le débat*, 3: 810-11; Bost, *Les Prédicants protestants*, 1:178-80.

authority, he found it expedient to dismiss du Moulin's idea that their troubles would only last another two or three years.²⁴

Jurieu, however, did not put the same degree of trust in his grandfather's work as did the peasants of the Midi. "[Du Moulin's prediction] would be entirely coincidental if it were to occur. Because the foundation on which it is based is entirely destitute of solidity..."²⁵ In his own *Accomplissement des prophéties* (1686), he returned to Revelation in hopes of deciphering God's "particular promises" for the deliverance of the church. While ultimately unable to arrive at a precise date for the beginning of the millennium, Jurieu was clear that the revocation marked the "last persecution" of the True Church spoken of in Revelation 11.²⁶ Even if it provided few original insights, Jurieu's *Accomplissement* rejuvenated millenarian expectations amongst the downtrodden Huguenots in the *Désert* and the diaspora.²⁷

Whatever he inspired in the long term, Jurieu had a much more immediate impact on the life of Massard. It is unclear if Massard was familiar with the theologian's work beforehand, but

²⁴ Bost, *Les Prédicants protestants*, 1:179; see also the anonymous account in *Fragment de la Guerre des Camisards*, ed. Marius Tallon (Nîmes: C. Lacour, 1994), 7.

²⁵ Jurieu described du Moulin's work as one of the last assaults on the "Antichristian Empire" before more prudential Protestants opted to submit to the authority of the "papist princes." But despite a unanimous scholarly opinion to the contrary, he did not agree with his grandfather's reading of history. Beginning with Bost, historians have insisted that Jurieu was in complete accordance with du Moulin's prediction that Babylon would fall in 1689. Bost cites the passage in which Jurieu claims his grandfather's calculations were incorrect, but takes this to mean that Jurieu made different calculations to arrive at the same number. Joutard cites no sources in his assertion. Schwartz makes the unique claim that Jurieu proposed April 1689 as the month the True Church would be delivered, and cites Jurieu's apology for the *Accomplissement* to support this. Here Jurieu expresses his hope that the deliverance of the church will come in 1689, but insists that one could only arrive at such a precise date through speculation: "j'espere aussi quelque chose de grand en l'année 1689. Mais cela ne va pas au delà de l'espérance & de la conjecture... je craindrois fort que le mort des deux Témoins ne fût pas encore arrivée..." Finally, Crété, in an apparent effort to reconcile these erroneous views with the text of the *Accomplissement* itself, suggests Jurieu predicted the deliverance of the church in 1689, and the fall of the Antichristian Empire between 1710 and 1720. Pierre Jurieu, *Aplogie pour l'accomplissement des prophéties* (Rotterdam: Abraham Acher, 1687), 8-9; Jurieu, *Accomplissement*, 1 :***r-v, 2: 184-7, 198-202; Bost, *Les Prédicants protestants*, I:178; Joutard, *La légende des Camisards*, 26; Schwartz, *French Prophets*, 16; Crété, *Les Camisards*, 38; see also Robin Howells, "Introduction" in *Lettres pastorales adressées aux fidèles de France qui gémissent sous la captivité de Babylon* (Zürich: Georg Olms Verlag, 1988), xxx. "Ce seroit une rencontre tout à fait causelle si la chose arrivoit. Car le fondement sur lequel il bâtit est tout à fait destitué de solidité."

²⁶ Jurieu, *Accomplissement*, 1: *12v-**r, 2: 183; *Aplogie*, 8-9.

²⁷ Howells, "The World Upside-Down," 503.

there can be no doubt that the *Accomplissement* had a profound impact on his career. He never acknowledged a debt to Jurieu, but the date of Massard's next publication, the ambitious apocalyptic treatise, *Harmonie des Prophéties Anciennes avec les Modernes sur la durée de l'Antechrist & les souffrances de l'Eglise* (1686), leaves little doubt that it was a response to the *Accomplissement*.²⁸ In any case, its publication was the beginning of what would be a brief but productive excursion into biblical exegesis and prophetic interpretation.

The Harmony of Prophecies: Massard's theory on the Dispensation of Revelation

The *Harmonie* was the first in what became a five-part series of millenarian treatises published between 1686 and 1688.²⁹ In it, and in its subsequent volumes, Massard devised a theory that extended God's revelation beyond the confines of Scripture and legitimated the emergence of prophets in the modern era on the basis that they progressively unveiled the mysteries of Scripture according to the needs of the people. The fact that he did this two years before the inspiration of Isabeau Vincent suggests that Huguenot prophetism was not simply a reactionary movement devoid of any deeper theological underpinnings. Rather, it was part of a longer and wider-ranging search for insight into the circumstances of the end times, insight that the regular clergy were unable to provide on the basis of Scripture alone.

Like Jurieu, Massard made heavy use of the book of Revelation in his work, insisting that it contained "particular promises" for the present age.³⁰ Whatever his debt to Jurieu in this regard, his interpretation of the book was certainly original. To Massard, the war between the Beast (the papal antichrist) and the two Witnesses (the Protestants of France) had begun in 1684,

²⁸ Massard, *Harmonie*, op. cit. This work was reprinted in 1687.

²⁹ The other treatises in the series were published under the title *Harmonie et accomplissement des prophéties sur la durée de l'Antechrist et les souffrances de l'Église*.

³⁰ Massard, *Harmonie*, *4r.

and would last for 30 years. These years would be the most devastating in Huguenot history. Following the biblical precedent of the Hebrews in Egypt, the True Church would only find its deliverance after the cruelty of the "Pharaoh" (Louis XIV) reached its greatest extremity. Only in 1714, after the death of all Protestants in the states of "papist princes," would the two witnesses be resurrected and begin their reform of the Anti-Christian Empire. This gradual process would reach its culmination in 1759 with the Second Coming of Christ.³¹ In the meantime, the papacy would be destroyed, the French monarchy would become Protestant, and the Turkish Empire would convert to Christianity. Compared with Jurieu's rather vague expectation of the fall of the papacy between 1710 and 1720, this was a very well-developed chronology.

But there were many more significant differences between the *Harmonie* and Jurieu's more orthodox exegesis that would relegate Massard's ideas to the margins of Reformed theology. In the preface to his work, Jurieu confessed to his readers that he had not read any of the modern commentaries on Revelation aside from that of Joseph Mede, "who had at other times appeared to [him] inspired for the interpretation of prophecies."³² Nor did he lend too much credence to the recent prophets whose visions, "of an uncertain and dubious origin," spoke of apocalyptic events in the near future.³³ Rather, he took pride in the fact that he consulted only "Revelation itself."³⁴ Massard, however, had a more inclusive understanding of Revelation. He

³¹ As with Jurieu's *Accomplissement*, Massard's complex vision of the future is haphazardly unveiled throughout the work. For the ideas discussed here, see Massard, *Harmonie*, **6r-**7v, 53, 39 86, 259, 264-5, 285-6.

³² Joseph Mede, a fellow of Christ's College Cambridge, is typically considered, along with Heinrich Alsted, to be one of the first mainstream Reformed millenarians. His apocalyptic exegesis, the *Clavis apocalypтика* (1627), enjoyed tremendous success and frequent reprints throughout the seventeenth century. Despite Jurieu's ambiguous claim that he appeared "inspired for the interpretation of prophecies," Mede made no such claim. His work was a sober calculation of the apocalypse based solely on Scriptural exegesis and historical application. Howard Hotson, *Paradise Postponed: Johan Heinrich Alsted and the Birth of Calvinist Millenarianism* (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2000), 3-9.

³³ Jurieu, *Accomplissement*, 1: *4r-*5v. Jurieu's rather ambiguous attitude to prophecy and inspiration is discussed below, and in the following chapter.

³⁴ Jurieu, *Accomplissement*, 1: **11r. "Dans cette vuë je me suis attaché à lire, non pas les Auteurs qui ont commenté l'Apocalypse, mais l'Apocalypse même, avec les seuls commentaires de Joseph Medde, homme qui m'avoit paru autre fois inspiré pour l'interprétation des prophéties." This is, of course, not entirely true, since he makes explicit

reasoned that the name "revelation" belonged as much to the last book of scripture as it did to the prophets and interpreters who continued to unveil its mysteries over the following centuries.³⁵ He thus embraced the divinations of prophets both "ancient and modern" (his oft-repeated catchphrase) on the basis that they all proceeded "from the same spirit."³⁶

The array of prophets and interpreters from which Massard draws in this regard is stunning. He extends the canon of biblical prophets to include, among others; Brigit of Kildare, Hildegard of Bingen, Joachim of Fiore, Elisabeth of Hungary, Catherine of Siena, Jean de Roquetaillade, Girolamo Savonarola, Christopher Kotterus, Nicholas Drabicius, James Ussher and, his favourite, the ever-popular Nostradamus. This seemingly indiscriminate collection of saints, prophets, pastors and exegetes is puzzling; they came from a variety of national contexts and time periods; some claimed prophetic vision, others merely applied themselves to the sober interpretation of prophetic texts; others still read the stars for insight into the future. But whatever their own immediate concerns and divinatory methods, Massard believed them all to overlap in their work towards the advancement of the Reformation and the preparation for the apocalypse.

Many did so simply by critiquing the church of their time and calling for reform, hence the inclusion of Brigit of Kildare and Savonarola, for example.³⁷ But after the beginning of the "Great Reformation" of 1508 (by Massard's chronology), at which point the true church resurfaced from centuries of oppression under papal rule, God sent "a swarm of witnesses, as

reference to du Moulin's commentary elsewhere in his work. This omission may be explained as nothing more than an absent-minded mistake, but it is also worth considering that it was a rhetorical strategy used to play up Jurieu's 'spiritual purity;' dissociating himself from the learned discourse on Revelation may have helped Jurieu appear more 'inspired' in his interpretation of the text. While the *petits prophètes* had of course not yet emerged, they would use a similar strategy to argue that their pronouncements could only have come from God, and not the fallible reasoning of mankind.

³⁵ Massard, *Harmonie*, 3. Massard consciously borrowed this idea from the theology of Jan Amos Comenius (see below).

³⁶ Massard, *Harmonie*, 266.

³⁷ Massard, *Harmonie*, *9r-v, 235.

much prophets as interpreters who removed these mysterious seals under which many prophecies of Scripture were veiled."³⁸ These inspired individuals, by various means, established the righteousness of the Reformation and spoke of its accomplishment in the last days when all would embrace the true Christian religion.³⁹

Massard's opaque line of reasoning, coupled with the lack of any religiously orientated publications before 1685, make it difficult to determine the exact origins of his theology. It is possible that Massard's interest in prophecy predated his flight from France, but this is unlikely. By the time Massard had completed his education, the Sun King's control of the publication and circulation of heretical print had nearly reached its apex.⁴⁰ Protestant texts could always sneak past the censors, but the chance of getting caught with a contraband book, especially in the closely monitored capital city of Paris, was too great a risk for someone with an idle curiosity in its contents.⁴¹

It is more likely that Massard's exposure to historical prophecy began upon reading Jurieu's *Accomplissement*. This would explain his unrelenting preoccupation with the obscure early seventeenth-century prophets, Nicholas Drabicius, Chirstopher Kotterus, Christiana Poniatovia and their more renowned spokesman, the Moravian theologian Jan Amos Comenius (1592-1670), all of whom Jurieu mentioned in his preface.⁴² With his interest piqued, it can be reasonably assumed that Massard turned to Comenius' controversial *Lux in Tenebris* (1657),

³⁸ Massard, *Harmonie*, *5r, 3-4: "...une nuée de témoins, tant Prophètes qu'Interprétes qui ont levé ces cachets mystérieux dont plusieurs Prophéties de l'Ecriture Sainte étoient voilées."

³⁹ Massard, *Harmonie*, *6r.

⁴⁰ Alfred Soman, "Press, Pulpit, and Censorship in France before Richelieu," *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 120, no. 6 (Dec. 29, 1976): 463; Joseph Klaits, "Censorship Under Louis XIV," *Proceedings of the Western Society for French History* 2 (1974): 104-116.

⁴¹ Henri-Jean Martin, *The French Book*, trans. Paul Saenger and Nadine Saenger (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), 15.

⁴² Jurieu, *Accomplissement*, 1: 4r-*5v.

which presented the lives, inspirations, and millennial predictions of the three said prophets.⁴³

With only minor variations in chronology, Massard's predictions on the destruction of the papacy, the conversion of the Turks, and the unification of Catholics and infidels under the banner of the Reformed religion could all be found here.⁴⁴

There are other reasons to suspect a direct engagement with Comenius' work. First, Comenius' desire for universal Reformation, a central theme in many of his works, makes him an obvious influence on Massard.⁴⁵ Moreover, during his time in Amsterdam between 1656 and 1670, Comenius began frequenting assemblies of mystics, "fanatics," and radical reformers intensely critical of all established Churches. These influences led him to reproach the Protestant clergy for making the anti-scriptural argument that revelation had ceased with the New Testament, and to defend millenarian prophecy on the basis that it supplemented the cryptic messages contained in Revelation.⁴⁶ There is a plausible connection with Massard here in informing his later criticisms of the Protestant clergy (see below) and his theory of the "harmony" between prophecies, assuming that he read beyond the *Lux in Tenebris*. In any case, this work would not have been difficult to locate; two further editions in 1659 and 1665, and an English translation in 1664 attest to its popularity.

The other more obvious source for Massard's predictions is Nostradamus's collection of *Centuries*. There is no link to Jurieu here, but that Massard managed to apply Nostradamus's work should come as no surprise, given the sixteenth-century astrologer's enduring renown.

⁴³ Jan Amos Comenius, *Lux in Tenebris... Submissis de statu Ecclesiae in terris... per Christophorum Cotterum Silesium, Christianam Poniatoviam Bohemam et Nicolaum Drabnicum Moravum revelationibus vere divinis, ab anno 1616 usque ad annum 1656 continuatis* (Amsterdam: [s.n.], 1657); For more on the controversy surrounding this work, see Wilhelmus Rood, *Comenius and the Low Countries: Some Aspects of Life and Work of a Czech Exile in the Seventeenth Century* (Amsterdam: Van Gendt & Co., 1970), 198-226; Hotson, *Paradise Postponed*, 15-17, 24.

⁴⁴ The German prophets had originally predicted the end of the papacy in the year 1666.

⁴⁵ Craig D. Atwood, *The Theology of the Czech Brethren from Hus to Comenius* (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania University Press, 2009), 366-397.

⁴⁶ Rood, *Comenius and the Low Countries*, 204-10.

Nostradamus' *Prophéties*, first published in 1555, underwent dozens of further editions by the time of Massard's writing.⁴⁷ And invoking the authority of his name in hopes of lending credibility to one's own vision of the future was by no means Massard's innovation.

Nostradamus' prophecies were endlessly exploited throughout the seventeenth century for a wide variety of political ends.⁴⁸ At least two other French-language tracts published in 1688 and 1698 employed the *Centuries* in the service of predicting the outcome of the Sun King's reign.⁴⁹ An English treatise published in 1691 did the same for the political situation across the channel.⁵⁰

Even if Massard was unoriginal in his selection of sources, he created a theology that was perhaps more unique than the sum of its parts. It has already been shown that he developed a unique chronology of the end times, but it was his explanation as to how this chronology was revealed, and what function it served for the Huguenot people, that made Massard stand out from other Protestant millenarians. The "harmony" of all Judeo-Christian prophecies that Massard insisted upon throughout his work had not always been clear to the world. The progressive unveiling of biblical prophecies, driven by generations of prophets, exegetes, and astrologers, proceeded according to the changing needs of the Christian people. Just as God assured the hopeless captives in Babylon that they would be freed, and sent an angel to comfort Jesus in his

⁴⁷ For a complete list of the editions of Nostradamus's *Prophéties*, see Edgar Leoni, *Nostradamus: Life and Literature*, 2nd ed. (New York: Nosbooks, 1961), 77-85.

⁴⁸ For a thorough discussion of Nostradamus's application in the seventeenth century, see Dréville, "Jeux de mots, jeu de faux," in *Lire et écrire l'avenir*, 68-93; Bernard Capp, *Astrology and the Popular Press: English Almanacs, 1500-1800* (London: Faber and Faber, 1979), 18, 29, 32, et passim.

⁴⁹ Dréville, *Lire et écrire l'avenir*, 206.

⁵⁰ *The Predictions of Nostradamus, before the year 1558, foretelling the trial and death of Charles I, the parliamentary and Protectorian government, the burning of London in sixty six, the great plague & Dutch War at the same time, King James departure, King William and Qu. Maries reign, the humiliation of the King of France by the Confederacy, the reformation of that kingdom, and the return of the French Protestants: considered in a letter to a friend* (London : Printed for John Cross and are to be sold by R.B., 1691).

time of greatest suffering, God would soon explain to the Huguenots what part they would play in his grand plan.⁵¹

But God did not unveil his plans for the apocalypse for the consolation of the Huguenot people, as Jurieu would have it. Rather, he did so to provide them with vital and timely information necessary for guiding them through the "last persecution" of the True Church: "the knowledge of all these great events and their circumstances is extremely necessary for us, to carry us to repentance and to help us to avoid the cruel persecutions and the massacres that must come to the faithful in all the states of the Antichrist."⁵² The mandate to "sortir de... cette Babylone mystique," which Jurieu also highlighted, was of central importance here. Indeed, it was one of only "four or five" truths essential for all Christians to derive from Scripture.⁵³ Most theologians had insisted on the impenetrability of apocalyptic prophecies, but Massard insisted that deciphering these cryptic passages (with the help of non-canonical prophets) was crucial to winning the war against the Antichrist. As if to respond to those who argued that humanity could never know the hour of the apocalypse, Massard asserted that "the knowledge of prophecies is much more necessary before the time of their accomplishment than after they are accomplished."⁵⁴ Prophecies did not preclude human agency; indeed, they invited human participation as a means of accomplishing what they had predicted.

Given the supreme importance of the content of Christian prophecies, canonical or otherwise, Massard claimed that God pitched them all so as to be understood by the *simple* and learned alike:

⁵¹ Massard, *Harmonie*, 4-6.

⁵² Massard, *Harmonie*, 11. "La connaissance de tous ces grands événements & leurs circonstances nous est extrêmement nécessaire, pour nous porter à la repentance & nous faire éviter les cruelles persécutions, & les massacres qui doivent arriver aux fidèles dans tous les Etats de l'Antechrist."

⁵³ Massard, *Harmonie*, *4v-*6r. Massard does not go into detail in discussing the significance of this passage, but it is likely that he interpreted it, as Jurieu had, as a mandate to avoid the temptation of apostasy.

⁵⁴ Massard, *Harmonie*, 2. "La connaissance des Prophéties est beaucoup plus nécessaire avant le temps de leur accomplissement qu'après qu'elles sont accomplies."

We see by Scripture itself that all that is necessary to salvation is clearly taught... We can say the same thing of prophecies. Those that are necessary for our salvation are written in a manner clear enough so that the faithful can benefit from them. They are more or less obscure according to our diverse needs.⁵⁵

The Christian prophecies of ancient and modern times were tailored to the needs of the people precisely so that they could be acted upon. Only those points of faith not necessary to salvation were hidden in obscurity.⁵⁶

The truth, then, was not something to be dug out of dusty old tomes and discussed behind closed doors. It was widely accessible and self-evident, through text or living voice. It could not be monopolized by figures of authority or kept from the people, even by the agents of the Antichrist: "God never left himself without testimony, amongst the very enemies of his name, so that they would be without excuse towards his majesty."⁵⁷ Even when worldly authorities actively tried to bury, obscure, or manipulate the meaning of revelation, God dispensed new prophecies to turn his people back to the truth. Raising laymen to the prophetic office was God's way of bypassing the corrupted teachings of human authorities and voicing his will directly to the people. "God never fails to give rise to prophets in his church [according to] its needs, and when his wisdom judges it necessary."⁵⁸ The same spirit that granted prophetic vision to Isaiah, Daniel, and St. Jean inspired Hildegard of Bingen, Catherine of Siena, and Nostradamus to reform the teachings of their day and unveil successive phases of God's plan for humanity.

With the prophet as their guide, the people were made accountable to God alone, and were never left to suffer the abuses that ecclesiastical authorities imposed on them. Massard's theory of dispensation made God's will inherently unstable. Scripture was an invaluable source

⁵⁵ Massard, *Harmonie*, 11-12.

⁵⁶ Massard, *Harmonie*, 12.

⁵⁷ Massard, *Harmonie*, *9v. "Dieu ne s'est jamais laissé sans témoignage, parmi les ennemis mêmes de son nom, afin qu'il soient sans excuse envers sa Majesté."

⁵⁸ Massard, *Harmonie*, 266. "Dieu ne manque jamais de susciter des Prophètes à son Eglise dans ses besoins, & lors que sa Sagesse le juge nécessaire."

of divine revelation, but did not represent a timeless guide to proper godly conduct, as Huguenot theologians would argue. Revelation could never be perfected or canonized, as its dictates were always subject to change. God's will evolved according to the circumstances in which his people found themselves, and his prophets were the agents of this evolution.

Already one can see a well-developed theology that explicated the necessity and function of modern prophets, two years before Isabeau Vincent incited the first wave of *petits prophètes*. Massard had already found the harbingers of the latest dispensation in Kotterus and Nostradamus, but he would soon catch word of the child prophets who would announce it to the world. Massard's invocation of the prophecy of Joel (as quoted by Saint Peter) in the second part of his *Harmonie et accomplissement* would soon take on new meaning: "and it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophecy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams."⁵⁹

Massard and the Berègre de Crest

In early February, 1688, a 15-year-old shepherdess from the rural fringes of the province of Dauphiné claimed to have received the gift of prophecy.⁶⁰ From a dormant state in her father's farmhouse, she exhorted gathered crowds to repent for their apostasy following the Edict of Nantes, and promised them a timely deliverance from the current persecution of the Huguenot

⁵⁹ Massard, *Explication*, 105-6; Acts 2: 17. The citation of this prophecy from the book of Acts, and not that of Joel, is significant for its inclusion of the line "in the last days." It was this version that Vincent quoted in her first inspired utterances, and it soon became a touchstone for all the supporters of the *petits prophètes*. The original prophecy as written in Joel 2:28 begins, "and it shall come to pass afterward..." (KJV). It is possible that Massard's citation of this verse actually inspired Vincent to take up the act of prophecy, but in the lack of any evidence that Massard's work ever penetrated the region, this can go no further than speculation.

⁶⁰ For a more detailed description of Vincent's prophecies and popularity, see Garrett, *Spirit Possession*, 19-21; Schwartz, *The French Prophets*, 17-8; Crété, *Les Camisards*, 55-6.

Church.⁶¹ Her inspired conduct regularly drew crowds of pilgrims who had longed for spiritual edification since the destruction of the Huguenot temples. They found consolation in her sermons, as well as a spurring call to resist the temptation of apostasy.⁶² Her voice literally commanded the authority of God. Invoking the prophecy of Joel to which Massard had drawn attention two years prior, she claimed that "it is not me who speaks, it is the Spirit that is in me[;]
in [these] last days your young will prophecy and your old men will dream dreams."⁶³

For as much as she offered consolation and instruction, Vincent's inspiration was not simply a stand-in for pastoral care. Other elements of her discourse were more action-oriented, encouraging feelings of disdain for the enemies of God and offering guidance on resisting their assaults. After exposing the abuses of the Catholic clergy, she insisted that taking part in "popish" services could only corrupt the true believer. She commanded her coreligionists to take up the duties that the Huguenot ministry had abandoned in exile, and to withdraw amongst themselves to maintain the purity of the True Church: "do not associate with the infidels... above all do not take communion with them[;]
rather, give communion amongst yourselves... obey the commandments of God and not those of men."⁶⁴ Vincent reminded the Huguenot people that their actions would not only determine the salvation of their souls, but the future of the entire Christian Church. Just as their sins had invited the current persecution, their faith and repentance could likewise hasten the apocalypse and invite divine punishment on their persecutors: "if you pray, you will earn mercy... the wicked will cry out aloud, [but] God will no longer listen to them[;]
he will destroy them by his hand..."⁶⁵

⁶¹ *Abrégé de l'histoire de la bergère de Saou près de Crest en Dauphiné* ([Amsterdam], [s.n.], 1688), 8.

⁶² *Abrégé de l'histoire*, 10-11.

⁶³ *Abrégé de l'histoire*, 7. "Ce n'est point moi qui parle[,] c'est l'Esprit qui est en moi[;]
és [sic] derniers temps vos jeunes gens prophetizeront & vos anciens songeront des songes."

⁶⁴ *Abrégé de l'histoire*, 4, 6, 10. "...obeïssez aux commandements de Dieu & non pointa ceux des hommes..."

⁶⁵ *Abrégé de l'histoire*, 4, 7-9, 12. "Si vous priez, vous gagnerez la miséricorde.. les méchants auront beau crier, Dieu ne les écouterá plus, il les exterminera sous sa main...."

News of Vincent's inspiration spread rapidly in the provinces of the Languedoc, but only became an international sensation through two critical sources. First was the anonymous *Abrégé de l'histoire de la bergère de Saou*,⁶⁶ which emerged from Amsterdam in September 1688. The second was Jurieu, whose immensely popular *Lettres pastorales* had helped to spread news of Huguenot persecution to Protestant readers across Europe since their inception in 1686.⁶⁷ However, scholars have typically given too much credit to Jurieu in disseminating news of Vincent and the child prophets she inspired. He made only brief mention of the shepherdess's conduct in two letters published in the month of October 1688. What's more, he did not in fact relay what she had said, but only pointed to her miraculous trance preaching as a sign of God's favour of the Huguenot community.⁶⁸ As the *Accomplissement* had made clear, everything that the Huguenots of the Midi needed to know regarding their current persecution could be culled from the book of Revelation. Modern prophets played no role in unveiling God's plan for the end times beyond acting as apocalyptic omens.

Massard, by contrast, was immediately aware of the shepherdess' significance for the dispensation of revelation. Having already formulated a theological explanation for her arrival, Massard devoted himself to bringing the story to light. He claimed to have been the first to have written, or otherwise disseminated, an account of Vincent's inspiration: "I gave the public before Mr. Jurieu the history of the *Bergère de Cret*, in *feuille volante*."⁶⁹ Unfortunately, this piece is no longer extant, so his claim is impossible to confirm. Nevertheless, it was likely that this *feuille*

⁶⁶ Cited above. I have consulted two separate editions of this work, both bound within a single volume currently held at the Bibliothèque de Genève (BGE), Ba 1910/ 31 (7). The text is fully reproduced in Henri Manen and Philippe Joutard, *La Pervenche: une foi enracinée* [Valence: Imprimerie réunies, 1972], 64-78. The authors have concluded that this text was the foundation of most reports written on the subject of Isabeau Vincent.

⁶⁷ Howells, "The World Upside-Down," 493-5; see also Chapter Two.

⁶⁸ Howells, "The World Upside-Down," 501; Jurieu, "IV. Lettre Pastorale (October 15, 1688)," in *Lettres Pastorales*, 3: 32.

⁶⁹ Massard, *Explication*, 107. "J'ai donné au public avant M. Jurieu l'histoire de la *Bergère de Cret*, en feuille volante."

volante formed the basis of the *Abrégé de l'histoire de la Bergère de Saou*. There are several reasons to believe Massard may also have had a hand in printing, if not writing, this text. First is the place of publication. At least one edition reveals this to be Massard's new base of operations, Amsterdam. Second is a vague reference contained in Massard's later work. Speaking in 1690 of an unidentified book he planned to publish, he claimed that "in the first book that I will reveal, I will join an abridged relation [*Relation abrégée*] of the *Bergère de Cret...*"⁷⁰ It is likely that this was a reference to the *Abrégé de l'histoire*.

More clues regarding Massard's authorship are contained in the text itself. Two editions of the *Abrégé de l'histoire* are held in the Bibliothèque de Genève, each with slight variations. Appended to one – otherwise a third-person account of Vincent's speech and behaviours – is the *Nouvelles prédictions que la Bergère a faite sur les trois derniers mois de l'Année 1688 touchant Angleterre*.⁷¹ The piece is without doubt the work of an unaffiliated author seeking to take advantage of Vincent's ballooning renown. For one, the author writes in the first person, despite presenting his or her work as that of the illiterate shepherd girl. Second, beyond the title there is absolutely no mention of Vincent or the events she set into motion. Rather, the document takes the form of an astrological prognostication for the remaining months of 1688.⁷² The simple fact that its author attempted to turn the young *inspiré* into a practicing astrologer betrays a commitment to the harmonized vision of all forms of divination so prevalent in Massard's work. The author's citation of the words of the Old Testament prophet, Isaiah (66: 10), also seems telling in this regard.⁷³

⁷⁰ Massard, *Explication*, 108. "Dans le premier livre que je mettrai au jour, j'y joindrai une Relation abrégée de la *Bergere de Crest...*"

⁷¹ *Abrégé de l'histoire*, 17-21.

⁷² The prognostications are for the months of October, November, and December, suggesting this edition of the *Abrégé de l'histoire* was published in September 1688. This leaves lots of time for Massard to have gathered information on the shepherd girl and draw something up for publication.

⁷³ *Abrégé de l'histoire*, 20-21.

It is another edition of the *Abrégé de l'histoire*, however, that casts off any doubt of the positive connection with Massard. After several pages describing assorted miraculous events purported to have occurred in the Dauphiné are the 35th, 53rd, and 56th sixains from Nostradamus' 11th *Centurie* in manuscript.⁷⁴ The fact that Nostradamus' predictions should be appended to an account of Vincent's prophecies is in itself indicative of Massard's influence, but the selection of the sixains is particularly telling. Two of these – sixains 35 and 53 – were referenced in the *Harmonie*.⁷⁵ Here he discussed sixains 32 to 37 to demonstrate Nostradamus' supposed prediction of the Antichrist's attack on the Huguenot community. The famous astrologer had predicted everything, claimed Massard, from the missions of the dragonnades to the revocation of the Edict of Nantes. Sixain 35 in particular he claims to have predicted the horrors that befell the Huguenot community, and to have warned other Protestant nations to be on their guard against the "barbary of the Roman clergy."⁷⁶

But it is sixain 53 that establishes Massard's influence beyond the shadow of a doubt.

Copied faithfully from the 11th *Centurie*, it reads:

Plusieurs mourront avant que Phenix mure
Jusqu'a six cens septante est la demeure
Passé quinze ans, vingt & un, trente-neuf
Le premier est suiet à maladie
Et le second au fer danger de vie
Au feu, à l'eau, est suiet trente-neuf.⁷⁷

In the *Harmonie*, Massard claimed that this sixain must be interpreted along with its predecessor. Together, they predict the gradual erosion of the terms of the Edict of Nantes beginning in 1670, its revocation in 1685, a second St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre in 1691, and the continuation

⁷⁴ *Centurie XI* was very likely a forgery by Nostradamus' grandson, Vincent Seve, introduced in the 1605 edition of Nostradamus's *Prophéties*. Leoni, *Nostradamus: Life and Literature*, 71.

⁷⁵ Massard, *Harmonie*, *12v-**3v, **8v-9r, 8, 168.

⁷⁶ Massard, *Harmonie*, **2r.

⁷⁷ *Abrégé de l'histoire*. The quoted passage comes from a manuscript paper appended to the document. Compare this with the version of the sixain as it first appeared in the 1605 edition of the *Prophéties* as provided in Edgar, *Nostradamus*, 798.

of this "butchery" until the year 1709.⁷⁸ Evidently Massard took "*six cens septante*" from the second line to stand for the year 1670, the beginning of the erosion of the Edict of Nantes, and added "*quinze ans*" to arrive at 1685, the date of the revocation. No use of the remaining numbers, 21 and 39, however, could explain how the author arrived at the years 1691 and 1709. Despite this oblique calculation, several lines added at the end of sixain 53 as copied in the *Abrégé de l'histoire* employ the same chronological framework: "the last three verses of this sixain mark the three different states [estates?] of the Protestants of France from the year 1685 to the year 1709 inclusively."⁷⁹ Surely two authors could not have come to the same conclusions individually.

Taken together, the additions to these two editions of the *Abrégé de l'histoire* show that Massard had some influence in publicizing Vincent's prognostications. In the case of the almanac, whether Massard wrote it himself – and it would be his only known venture into the practice of astrology – or simply convinced the printer to have it published alongside the *Abrégé de l'histoire*, the parallel with Massard's work is too close to be dismissed as coincidence. In the case of the Nostradamus manuscript, Massard's authorship is beyond doubt. His heavy-handed marriage of Vincent's inspired statements with the practice of astrology reflects his determination to achieve the "harmony of prophecies," even by his own engineering.

The Effusion of the Holy Spirit

As news of Vincent's inspiration spread throughout the province of Dauphiné, other children began to emulate her conduct. Inspired children appeared spontaneously in all parts of the province: "like Mushromes, spring up all in a night," as one English commentator

⁷⁸ Massard, *Harmonie*, **3v, 8-10.

⁷⁹ *Abrégé de l'histoire*. "Les trois derniers vers de ce Sixain marquent les trois Etats differens des Protestans de France, depuis l'an 1685 jusques en l'an 1709 inclusivement."

observed.⁸⁰ By the end of 1688, 60 children had received the gift of prophecy in the village of Mornas, not far from Vincent's home.⁸¹ They were quickly dubbed the "*petits prophètes*," a name that served as an allusion to the minor prophets of the bible as well as to their youth. Not all were children, however. The age range of the prophets – from as young as 8 to as old as 65 – seemed to prove the accomplishment of Joel's prophecy, just as Vincent had predicted.⁸²

Following the trail of the roaming *inspiré*, Gabriel Astier, the prophetic movement spread into the neighbouring province of the Vivarais by January of 1689.⁸³ After Astier's example, the prophets' began pairing their inspirations with physical convulsions. Gasping, moaning, falling to the ground and shaking became the culturally-recognized signs of spirit possession. The transition to a state of possession was a symbolic display of the pains it took for the Holy Spirit, in all its glory and purity, to enter into the flawed and tainted human body. But despite Astier's innovations, all prophets in his wake would commit to Vincent's model of passively relaying the direct Word of God.⁸⁴ Few would continue to deliver inspirations from their sleep, as Vincent had, but the Holy Spirit that possessed their bodies left them incapable of controlling their thoughts and actions. Upon regaining control of their functions, they were unable to recall what had transpired during their possession, or the words that God made them speak.⁸⁵

In the lack of any common liturgy, the content of the prophets' inspired dreams and statements was fluid and varied. All tended to encourage repentance and prayer while warning against the dangers of going to Mass. Most also included some prediction for the reestablishment

⁸⁰ *A Relation of Several Hundreds of Children*, 2.

⁸¹ Schwartz, *The French Prophets*, 18; *Histoire Admirable*, 10-12, 14-15

⁸² *A Relation of Several Hundreds of Children*, 14, 35.

⁸³ Manen and Joutard, *Une foi enracinée*, 54.

⁸⁴ Garrett, *Spirit Possession*, 26-7.

⁸⁵ Charles Bost, ed., "Une lettre de Hollande relative à 'la bergère de Crest' (1688)," *BSPH* 87 (1938): 291; Jurieu, "III. Lettre Pastorale (October 1, 1688)," in *Lettres Pastorales*, 3: 21; *The French Prophet's Declaration; or, and Account of the Preachings, Prophecies and Warnings of Elie Marion* (London: Printed for R. Smith in Cornhill, [1707]), 2-3.

of the Protestant religion in France and the destruction of the wicked.⁸⁶ Prophets spoke often of death and destruction and hinted at the coming of a violent persecution, during which God would make his people immune from harm.⁸⁷ Their visions were replete with images of fire, war, and armies of angels, but vague on the circumstances of the Huguenots' miraculous deliverance.⁸⁸ Only some were able to offer insight into the means by which God would deliver his people, albeit in cryptic fashion. One prophet received a vision in which she saw an angel carry William of Orange to France, followed closely by 100,000 Christian soldiers.⁸⁹

Scholars like Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie, Clarke Garrett, and Daniel Vidal have drawn attention to the affective power of the prophets' ecstatic convulsions. They insist that these "performances" acted as cathartic outlets for social and psychological stress, symbolic gestures of death and despair, and mechanisms for strengthening social cohesion. Large assemblies in which participants received the "breath" of the Holy Spirit en masse were thus means by which entire communities could dramatize their desperation.⁹⁰ Contemporary sources also suggest that hearing the voice of God come unmediated from the mouths of innocent and ingenuous children strongly resonated with those Huguenots who for years had only ever heard it tainted by Catholic priests.⁹¹ The great appeal of the prophets' trance preaching and prognostication would have made all other divinatory practices seem superfluous in comparison. Indeed, the *petits prophètes*

⁸⁶ *Histoire Admirable*, 12-13.

⁸⁷ *Histoire Admirable*, 14, 19.

⁸⁸ *A Relation of Several Hundreds of Children*, 26.

⁸⁹ Schwartz, *The French Prophets*, 19; Garrett, *Spirit Possession*, 20-1, 24, 26-7; Bost, "Le prophétisme en Dauphiné," 535-6.

⁹⁰ Le Roy Ladurie's famous thesis, later revised, was present in earlier versions of *Les Paysans de Languedoc*, 2 vols. (Paris: S. E. V. P. E. N., 1966), 614-624. Le Roy Ladurie introduced the term "deculturation" to describe the forced suppression of Huguenot culture, and not just the Protestant religion. This would make Massard every bit as much a victim as the Huguenots remaining in France since he was forced to reestablish himself in a foreign country. Le Roy Ladurie, *The Peasants of Languedoc*, 272; Frey, "The Camisard Insurrection," 71; Garrett, *Spirit Possession*, 22-3, 25, 27-8; Schwartz, *The French Prophets*, 28-30; Vidal, *Le malheur et son prophète*, 87-111.

⁹¹ For a discussion of the popular appeal of the *petits prophètes* and the context in which they emerged, see Manen and Joutard, *Une foi enracinée*, 58-64; Schwartz, *The French Prophets*, 31.

and their religious assemblies showed no interest in any forms of divination Massard advocated in his work.

For the rest of his publishing career, Massard struggled to stay relevant in the atmosphere of apocalyptic anticipation. Though he never abandoned his belief in Nostradamus' relevance for contemporary politics, his later works moved further from astrology and closer to the interpretation of prophetic dreams, which the *petits prophètes* had shown to be God's preferred means of revelation in the present era.⁹² Massard suggested, as Vincent had allegedly done, that the inspiration of the Huguenot children represented the beginning of the accomplishment of Joel's prophecy, to which he had alluded in the second part of his *Harmonie*.⁹³ Even while the prophetic movement was losing momentum in the Midi, Massard was convinced it would soon extend to all of humanity: "this effusion of the Holy Spirit that God extended to the Apostles, the day of the Pentecost, was but a sample of that which God must now pour out *on all flesh*".⁹⁴

The first bit of evidence Massard offered in support of this assertion was quite sensational. In a fascinating forgotten historical episode, King Louis XIV had a description of a puzzling dream published in the *Histoire journalière* on the 17th of November, 1689. He and his court offered to pay 20 000 *pistoles* to anyone who could offer a satisfactory explanation of its meaning.⁹⁵ This prompted Massard to publish a brief interpretation of the king's dream, as well as those of two Huguenot refugees, in January 1690. Not one to let historical parallels go

⁹² Massard, *Explication*, 115-6; Scholars interested in the history of dreams, though focused mainly on the anglophone world, have shown that many believed in the predictive power and divine origins of 'inspired' dreams well into the eighteenth century. Keith Thomas, *The Decline of Popular Magic: Studies in popular beliefs in sixteenth and seventeenth century England* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1971), 128-30; Peter Burke, "L'*histoire sociale des rêves*," *Annales* 28 (1973): 329-42; Janine Rivière, ""Visions of the Night": the Reform of Popular Dream Beliefs in Early Modern England," *Parergon* 20, no. 1 (2003): 109-138.

⁹³ Massard, *Explication*, 105. Massard makes this claim in his *Explication*. The volume of his *Harmonie* in question is unavailable for consultation.

⁹⁴ Massard, *Explication*, 108. "Cette effusion de Saint Esprit que Dieu répandit sur les Apôtres, le jour de la Pentecôte, n'a été qu'un échantillon de celle que Dieu doit répandre maintenant *sur toute chair*."

⁹⁵ Massard, *Explication*, 1-3.

unnoticed, he pointed to the biblical precedents for such an offer in Belshazzar and the Pharaoh of Egypt. "I will nevertheless give to the king the same response that [Daniel] gave in other times to Balthazar[:] *keep your gifts, grant your presents to another, nevertheless I will read the writing of the king, and will give to him the interpretation.*"⁹⁶ It was a good opportunity to take such a noble stance, to be sure, since it is unlikely that the king was looking for Huguenot talent when he extended the offer.

Not surprisingly, Massard's interpretation of Louis XIV's dream merely confirmed what he had already stated elsewhere in the *Harmonie*. He described the king's dream as "an abridgement, and a divine clarification of all the prophecies of the apocalypse that are not yet accomplished... It is what I have proven in an infinity of places from the Harmony of Prophecies..."⁹⁷ The king's dream spelled out the conversion of his successor to Protestantism in 1710, and the actions that he would take to advance the Reformation. He would reform the Catholic Church, convert the "*Princes infideles*," and finally, unite the world under the Reformed religion.⁹⁸ The dream was a premonition of the end of the Antichrist's reign, delivered to the "Pharaoh" who had worked so hard to support it. It was also, however, one last chance for the king to alter his allegiances. Massard explained that God had made Comenius deliver the prophetic warnings of his prophet, Drabicius, to the king as a way of commanding him to end

⁹⁶ Massard, *Explication*, 1-3. "Je ferois néanmoins au Roi la même réponse que ce Prophète fit autrefois à Belsatzar. Garde tes dons, & baille tes présents à un autre, néanmoins je lirai l'Écriture, & je lui endonnerai l'interprétation." This biblical episode comes from Dan. 5. Massard stretches the parallel here, as Balthazar had asked Daniel to interpret writing which had mysteriously appeared on his palace wall, not a dream. The more relevant parallel of Joseph and the Pharaoh comes from Gen. 41.

⁹⁷ Massard, *Explication*, 2, 5. "On peut dire que c'est un abrégé, & un éclaircissement Divin de toutes les Prophéties de l'Apocalypse qui ne sont pas encore accomplies... C'est ce que nous avons prouvé en une infinité d'endroits de l'*Harmonie des Prophéties*..."

⁹⁸ Massard, *Explication*, 4-5.

his war against the Reformed community. The king, however, ignored the commandment. The dream was God's final warning of what would occur if he continued to persecute the faithful.⁹⁹

In a somewhat heavy-handed manner, Massard tied the king's dream to the coming of the *petits prophètes*: "God gave rise to these *petits prophètes* to make known to Louis XIV that he persecutes his Church, and that this great God will take a great and terrible vengeance... [the *petits prophètes*] predicted the continuation of the war on France, and that the king of France will eventually be joined to King William to destroy the Pope."¹⁰⁰ In this way, the king, along with the refugees whose dreams Massard interpreted in the same publication, had become recipients of the same "effusion of the Holy Spirit" promised for the end times. Even across national, linguistic, and confessional barriers, they all became direct recipients of the Word of God that the Catholic clergy had withheld from them.

Massard saw a particularly strong parallel between the prophets of the Dauphiné and the female refugee whose dream he had interpreted alongside that of the king's. God gave her "ecstasies [*ecstases*] similar to those of the *petits prophètes* of Dauphiné" and made her pray aloud for extended periods of time. "Sometimes also she takes a text of Holy Scripture, that she explains perfectly well, and then makes a beautiful prayer. Nevertheless, she does not remember the next day."¹⁰¹ This description of her behaviour conforms perfectly to the standard account of Vincent's prognostications. Moreover, the content of the refugee's dreams was in perfect accord

⁹⁹ Massard, *Explication*, 5-7. Massard almost certainly learned of this historical episode from reading Comenius' *Lux e Tenebris*.

¹⁰⁰ Massard, *Explication*, 7-8. "Dieu a suscité ces *petits prophètes* pour faire sçavoir à Louis XIV qu'il persecute son Eglise, & que ce grand Dieu en prendra une grande & terrible vengeance... Nous rémarquerons seulement en cet endroit, qu'ils ont prédit à la France la continuations de la guerre, & que le Roi de France se joindra enfin au Roi Guillaume pour détruire le Pape."

¹⁰¹ Massard, *Explication*, 106. "Dieu a continué aussi de lui donner quelquefois en dormant des *ecstases* semblables à celles des *petits prophètes* de Dauphiné... Quelquefois aussi elle prend un texte de l'Ecriture sainte, qu'elle explique parfaitement bien, & fait ensuite une belle priere. Neanmoins elle ne s'en ressouvent point le lendemain."

with that of the king's, and even those of the *petits prophètes*.¹⁰² Evidently Massard did not see the prophetic phenomenon that manifested itself in the Midi as something culturally or geographically specific, as it turned out to be.¹⁰³ Rather, it was a matter of personalized revelation between God and the various individuals he chose to execute his will. Massard and his fellow refugees were as much a part of the effusion of the Holy Spirit as any Huguenot peasant.

Massard as *inspiré*

Caught up in the excitement of his new prophetic career, Massard claimed to have received the Holy Spirit himself sometime in the winter of 1689.¹⁰⁴ Modeling his inspiration on Vincent's precedent, Massard claimed to have become the occasional recipient of prophetic dreams. Having already penetrated God's plans for the apocalypse, these dreams did little to alter Massard's understanding of present times, but they bestowed upon him a "mission" to "make known to men some of [God's] mysteries, & the terrible events that must arrive in the world."¹⁰⁵ Evidently he had already taken on this responsibility himself, but now it had become a divine mandate. With this, Massard completely effaced the fine line between prophet and interpreter that he straddled in the early years of his theological career.

If Massard had ever managed to win some respect as the interpreter of prophetic visions, he won only ridicule as their recipient. Self-reflexive comments in his later works suggest that his "mission" was poorly received. In 1690, he wrote: "the slander has so strongly prevailed against the divine insights with which it has pleased God to illuminate me, that I pass for

¹⁰² Massard, *Explication*, 103.

¹⁰³ For more on the cultural and geographic specificity of the French prophets' success, see Schwartz, *The French Prophets*, 53-4; Garrett, *Spirit Possession*, 3-5.

¹⁰⁴ In the *Explication*, published in January 1690, Massard claimed to have first announced his inspiration in March 1689.

¹⁰⁵ Massard, *Explication*, 115. "...De faire connaitre àux hommes quelques uns de ces mystères, & les terribles evenemens qui doivent arriver dans le monde."

ridiculous and that my profession has been rendered absolutely useless."¹⁰⁶ By the next year, the public reaction only grew worse: "everyone so strongly redoubles their mockery against me that I am seen forced to remain in solitude... to avoid their bothersome and insolent taunts."¹⁰⁷ As a prophet, Massard made enemies on both sides of the confessional divide.

The cause of his mockery, according to Massard, was the increasingly popular belief that God no longer dispensed his miraculous "gifts" as he had in previous times: a doctrine known today as cessationism.¹⁰⁸ Massard had already come to the defense of modern prophecy nearly two years before Vincent's inspiration in the second part of the *Harmonie*, but the public's dismissive reaction to the *petits prophètes* and his own inspirations doubled his frustration.¹⁰⁹ By the time he published his *Explication*, Massard was deeply concerned that the "false belief" of cessationism had poisoned the minds of the protestant clergy: "I was brought up in the Reformed religion, and taught by ministers who support that God no longer communicates to men *the gift of prophecy*, that he no longer sends them visions, and that he no longer makes wonders or miracles."¹¹⁰ Massard found this to be offensive to both God and reason: "because from my earliest youth, I saw, and knew, that this doctrine of Protestants has no foundation in Holy Scripture, or even in right reason."¹¹¹ Scripture, he claimed, provided the "express

¹⁰⁶ Massard, *Explication*, 57. "La calomnie a si fort prévalu contre les *lumières divines* dont il a plu à Dieu de m'éclairer, qu'on m'a fait passer pour ridicule et qu'on m'a rendu ma profession absolument inutile."

¹⁰⁷ Massard, quoted in Briquet, "Massard (Jacques)," 1000. "Tout le monde redoubla alors si fortement leur moquerie contre moi, que je me suis vu forcé de demeurer dans la solitude... pour éviter leurs railleries importunes et impertinentes."

¹⁰⁸ Debate over the doctrine of cessationism occupied a central place in the controversy over the *petits prophètes* and the Camisard prophets. Massard's views are characteristic of other supporters of modern prophecy in this period. See Chapter 3 for a more comprehensive analysis of the cessationism debate as it related to Huguenot prophetism.

¹⁰⁹ Massard, *Explication*, 105. Massard claims here that, "il y a trois ans que j'ai donnée au public une Apologie pour les Prophètes modernes, dans la preface de la seconde partie. J'ai cité en cet endroit le texte fameux de Joël que St. Pierre rapporte au ch. 2. Des Actes des Apôtres x. 17."

¹¹⁰ Massard, *Explication*, 104. "Quoi que J'aie été élevé dans la Religion Reformée, et enseigné par des Ministres qui soutiennent que Dieu ne communique plus aux hommes *le don de prophetie*, qu'il ne leur envoie plus de visions, & qu'il ne fait plus de prodiges ny de *miracles*."

¹¹¹ Massard, *Explication*, 104-5. "Car dès ma plus tendre jeunesse j'ai vû que, & conû, que cette doctrine des Protestans n'a aucun fondement dans l'Ecriture sainte, n'y même dans la droite raison."

commandment” that God would continue to impart his gifts on humanity in the prophecy of Joel. Ignoring this promise, protestant ministers tended to reject all claims to inspiration on the basis of theoretical assumptions about the extent of God’s involvement in the world, failing to “try the spirits whether they are of God” as commanded in 1 John. 4:1.¹¹²

The “ignorance and incredulity” of the Protestant clergy was a grave offence to God. To Massard, it made them more despicable than even the Jewish rabbis, who had “never had the thought to support that there must no longer be prophets.”¹¹³ This was not, in his eyes, a uniquely French problem either. Referring to the expulsion of three of the *petits prophètes* from the University of Geneva after a display of their inspiration, Massard claimed that “the Genevan Ministers are no more suited than those of this country to discern the spirits, and ... are no better intentioned, with regards to modern prophets, than other Protestant Ministers.”¹¹⁴

Falling back on an old polemical tradition, Massard reduced the incredulity of the clergy to their propensity for the sins of pride and vanity. Not the most articulate of writers, Massard quoted extensively from a French translation of the seventeenth-century German prophet John Engelbrecht’s *divine vision et Révélation des trois Etats* to express his resentment for the learned culture of his day.¹¹⁵ Like Massard, Engelbrecht was shocked by the ungodliness and vanity of the learned and the ordained:

I would never have believed that one could find people so evil amongst Christians, and particularly amongst the doctors... because it is not only the people, but it is principally the doctors, and even the ministers who are opposed to [my] divine work... those who are

¹¹² Massard, *Explication*, 104-5. On page 104, Massard suggests St. Paul gave a “commandement exprez” on this matter, but later refers only to St. Peter’s mention of Joel’s prophecy. It is very likely that Massard meant St. Peter in both cases. This divine mandate was frequently cited in the ‘affair of the French prophets’ in London (see Chapter Three).

¹¹³ Massard, *Explication*, 103-4. “Néanmoins les Ministres de la Synagogue, n’ont jamais û la pensée de soutenir, qu’il n’y devoit plus avoir de Prophets.”

¹¹⁴ Massard, *Explication*, 108. “Les Ministres de Genève ne sont pas plus habilles que ceux de ce pais pour discerner les esprits, &... ne sont pas mieux intentionnez, pour les prophètes modernes, que les autres Ministres Protestans.”

¹¹⁵ John Engelbrecht, *Divine Vision et révélation des trois Etats, l'ecclesiastique, le politique, et l'oeconomique* (Amsterdam: Arents, 1680).

reputed by the people as persons who apply themselves to the advancement of the honor, and the work of God, are the same who are the true enemies, deep in their hearts... the scholars, and those who are learned, are in general impious and wicked in their hearts... Because their hearts are full of falsity, of hypocrisy, of pride, of hate, of envy, of greed, and of love of the world.¹¹⁶

In citing Engelbrecht, Massard not only challenged the authority of those typically considered to be leaders in the Reformed community, but he drew attention to a history of anti-clericalism among inspired prophets. The antagonism between the inspired and the ordained did not begin with Engelbrecht, either. Massard insisted that ever since the clergy's foundation in the early years of the Christian Church, they seemed to have worked tirelessly to suppress God's messengers: "in all times, the ordinary ministers have rejected those who had an extraordinary vocation."¹¹⁷ According to Massard, the struggle continued to his own day.

The established Christian Church tended only to impede the popular reception of God's revelations, just as the Pharisees had prevented the Jewish people from receiving the message of Jesus. Quoting Engelbrecht once again, Massard drew a parallel between his own ministry and that of Christ:

Before Christ came to the world the Pharisees were considered as good people [*gens de bien*], but after this divine light arrived there, and it shone in the shadows, it revealed that the doctors of the Law, and these Pharisees were impious, excepting some of them. It is the same at present that the light of God by my means shines anew in the world... We have not seen for many centuries God have his Word announced by common people, and the unlettered, as he issues it now by my ministry.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁶ Engelbrecht, quoted in Massard, *Explication*, 113-4. "Je n'aurois jamais crû qu'onût pû trouver des personnes si mauvaises parmi les Chrétiens, & particulierement entre les Docteurs... Car ce n'est pas seulement le peuple, mais ce sont principalement les Docteurs, & les Ministres mêmes qui s'opposent à moi sans cet ouvrage Divin... ceux là qui sont reputez par des peuples pour des personnes qui s'appliquent à l'avancement de l'honneur, & de l'œuvre de Dieu, ce soit ceux la même qui en sont les vrais ennemis, jusques dans leur cœur... les sçavans, & ceux qui ont étudiés sont pour le general impies, & méchans dans leur cœur... Car leur cœur est rempli de faussété, d'hypocrisie, d'orgueil, de haine, d'envie, d'avarice, & d'amour du monde."

¹¹⁷ Massard, *Explication*, 103. "Il n'y a pas sujet de s'en étonner, puisque de tout tems les Ministres ordinaires, ont rejettés ceux qui avoient une vocation extraordinaire."

¹¹⁸ Engelbrecht, quoted in Massard, *Explication*, 113-4. "Avant que Christ vint au monde les Pharisiens ont été considerez comme des gens de bien, mais apres que cette Divine lumiere y fût venuë, & qu'elle fût relui dans les tenebres, il parût alors que ces Docteurs de la Loi, & ces Pharisiens avoient été des impies, excepté quelques uns d'entr' eux. Il en est de même à présent que la lumiere de Dieu par mon moyen luit de nouveau dans ce monde..."

With the corruption of the clergy near complete, reform could only come from below. Just as Jesus – a simple carpenter with no formal religious training – had been chosen by God to lead his people back on the path to salvation, he chose men like Engelbrecht and Massard to deliver to the people what their ecclesiastical superiors would not. Though he did not make the parallel explicit, one cannot help but also read this citation of Engelbrecht as a statement in defense of the *petits prophètes*. These "common" and innocent peasant children were, after all, the lowliest of Christians: as far removed from the lofty pretensions of Christian theologians as possible.

If a theological education or an ecclesiastical appointment had no inherent value, then the direct inspiration of God was the only true claim to spiritual authority, regardless of the recipient's social status. From Massard's theological perspective, the inspired "*gens de rien*"¹¹⁹ of the French countryside had greater sway in Christian doctrine than the most esteemed theologians in either Paris or Geneva. They joined the ranks of generations of inspired messengers who had worked to advance the Reformation in spite of clerical opposition. But unlike their historical predecessors, they would have the privilege of seeing God's work completed. Massard concluded his quotation of Engelbrecht's work with a warning of what was about to occur: "the time is come, and will no longer be differed, that God will come to men in his just anger, and that he will visit them, with punishments so terrible that there have never been equal, since the universal flood, until at present."¹²⁰

Certainly the initial chaos of the Camisard rebellion would have seemed to prove Massard's predictions for the end times, but it is unlikely he lived long enough to catch word of

depuis plusieurs siècles, on n'a pas vu, que Dieu ait fait annoncer sa parole par des personnes simples, & idiotes, comme il la publie à présent par mon ministère."

¹¹⁹ As Joutard notes, the term "*gens de rien*" was widely employed by French Catholic commentators to describe the low social stature of the Huguenot *inspirés*. Joutard, *La légende des Camisards*, 81-2.

¹²⁰ Massard, *Explication*, 115. "Le tems est venu, & ne sera plus differé, que Dieu viendra aux hommes en sa juste colere, & qu'il les visitera, par des châtiments si terribles qu'il n'y en a jamais été de semblables, depuis le deluge universel, jusques à présent."

it. After a few years of rehashing essentially the same apocalyptic predictions he had made in the *Harmonie*, he vanished from historical record. The last extant publication with which he is credited was another application of Nostradamus' prophecies to the future of the French state, published in 1693.¹²¹ In this brief exposition, Massard predicted the imminent death of Louis XIV. It was his final act of defiance against the king that suppressed his culture, ruined his career, and drove him into exile. This prophecy did not find its accomplishment until 1715, long after Massard disappeared from public attention, and just five years after the death of the last Camisard prophet proved to the world that the “fall of Babylon” would not begin by the hands of the Huguenot peasants.

Conclusions

Exceptional as it may have been, Massard’s case provides a glimpse into the culture of divination that underpinned the prophetic movement at the end of the seventeenth century. Massard shared with Jurieu and the Huguenot peasantry a belief that God had written his will in the world around them: in the changing of the weather, the movement of stars, and the course of human affairs. God often left his mark in subtle ways; at other times, he suspended the laws of nature to work truly miraculous feats. In any case, the pious believed that by various means, they could “read” his will in what he had made transpire.¹²² Just as Massard’s active interest in prophecy and astrology predated the emergence of the *petits prophètes*, the troubled Huguenots of the Midi had actively searched for signs of new revelation years before Vincent appeared, and indeed, for years after.¹²³

¹²¹ Massard, *Relation exacte et curieuse des malheurs extremes et prochains tant de Louis XIV que de toute la France prédis par Nostradamus* (Amsterdam : Imprimé pour l'auteur, 1693).

¹²² Dréville, *Lire et écrire l’avenir*, 10-12, 19-20; Hotson, *Paradise Postponed*, 1-2.

¹²³ Garret, *Spirit Possession*, 30; Schwartz, *The French Prophets*, 21

The fact that divine wonders, widely taken to be omens of the apocalypse, became a regular occurrence in the three years after the revocation of the Edict of Nantes is often overshadowed by the sudden emergence of trance preaching in 1688.¹²⁴ The omens – the frequent sighting of angels, and hearing of psalms in the sky, for example – provided insight into God's plan for the Huguenot people when the Calvinist clergy had abandoned them, and when Mass offered only a twisted version of God's Word. One witness remarked that the celestial choirs she heard proclaimed “the praises of God, at a time when these wretched men forbid it to Reformed Christians.” Much like the *petits prophètes*, these omens were both harbingers of disaster as well as signs of God's favour. The same witness believed the sound of trumpets to have been “the sign of a cruel war that will be made in little time... against those who make it to us today....”¹²⁵ Jurieu referred to several freak acts of nature wherein Catholic churches burst into flame and processions were struck by lightning. He collected such stories and redistributed them in his *Lettres pastorales*, insisting that they were “very telling signs,” marked by the “the hand of God” to presage the deliverance of the True Church.¹²⁶

Placing them in this context of apocalyptic omens elucidates the connection between Massard's astrological predictions and the account of the *Bergère de Crest* alongside which it appeared. Before news of the child prophets diffused throughout the Midi, Vincent's inspiration was, as Jurieu suggested, simply another sign of divine favour, like the infant who had recently

¹²⁴ The most complete contemporary account of these omens comes from Jurieu's *Lettres* cited below, and collected and translated into English as *The Reflections of the Reverend and Learned Monsieur Jurieu...* (London: Richard Baldwin, 1689); see also, Howells, "The World Upside-Down," 499-501; Garrett, *Spirit Possession*, 17-19; Crété, *Les Camisards*, 35-6.

¹²⁵ Mlle. Jean Des-Vignolles, quoted in Jurieu, "IV. Lettre Pastorale (October 15, 1688)," in *Lettres Pastorales*, 3: 30. "...Entonnent les louanges de Dieu, dans le tems que ces malheureux les deffendent aux Chrétiens reformez."

"La marque d'une cruelle guerre qui va être faite dans peu de temps... contre ceux qui nous la font aujourd'hui..."

¹²⁶ Howells, "The World Upside-Down," 500-1.

sung God's praises from the cradle.¹²⁷ Astrological signs were simply another means by which God expressed himself. Indeed, there is at least one account aside from Massard's that describes a prophet's mention of celestial movements as harbingers of the Huguenots' deliverance.¹²⁸

Even Massard's insistence on the "harmony" between the various practices he endorsed should not be considered exceptional. Rather, it speaks to the permeability of the boundaries between the different methods of divination widely considered legitimate means of accessing divine insight.¹²⁹ Contemporary theologians scorned the plurality of divinatory practices for their ungodly nature¹³⁰, but their supporters put faith in them precisely because they believed them to have had divine origins. Even Nostradamus drew a hazy line between his own astrological practice and the work of the *inspiré* on the basis that both ultimately owed their power to "revealed inspiration." If he distanced himself from biblical prophets, he shared with them a common gift in having been "inflamed by the Holy Spirit and the prophetic breath."¹³¹

Massard's social stature, too, is a reminder that belief in modern divination was not confined to the *menu peuple*. As late as 1697, the Catholic theologian, Jean-Baptiste Thiers, claimed that superstitions were, "universally dispersed throughout the Christian world... they find acceptance with the greats; they hold sway amongst the middling people; they are in vogue

¹²⁷ Jurieu, "IV. Lettre Pastorale (October 15, 1688)," in *Lettres Pastorales*, 3: 32; Cosmos, *Huguenot Prophecy*, 67-8.

¹²⁸ Bost, "Le prophétisme en Dauphiné," 535. Bost reproduces a document in which a witness reports a prophet saying that "dans trois mois il doit arriver des choses espouventables, qu'il doit paroistre quelques étoiles ou comètes que ne seront vues que des méchants, qui les doit faire fondre comme la cire auprès du feu..."

¹²⁹ Dréville, *Lire et écrire l'avenir*, 11; Patrick Curry, *Prophecy and Power: Astrology in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1989), 34.

¹³⁰ The Catholic theologian Jean-Baptiste Theirs displayed a great awareness of the variety of "superstitions" and rooted them in the same selfish and demonic impulses that lead good Christians into heresy. *Traité des superstitions selon l'Ecriture sainte, les décrets des conciles, et les sentiments des saints Pères, et des théologiens, seconde édition* (Paris: chez Antoine Dezallier, 1697).

¹³¹ Nostradamus, "Épître à César," in *Les premières centurie ou propheties*, ed. Pierre Brind'amour (Genève: Droz, 1996), 23-4, 4-5. The English translation provided here owes a great deal to Brind'amour's footnotes and modern French rendition of Nostradamus' words. "Non que je me vueille attribuer nomination ni effect prophétique, mais par revelée inspiration, comme homme mortel esloigné non moins de sens au ciel, que des piedz en terre: Possum errare, falli, decipi: suis pecheur plus grand que nul de ce monde, subject à toutes humains afflictions. *Soli numine divino afflati praesagiunt, & spiritu prophetico particularia.*"

amongst the common people. Each kingdom, each province, each diocese, each town, each parish, has their own.”¹³² Schwartz has shown that wealthy, educated urbanites in eighteenth-century London embraced the prophetic movement introduced by three Camisard refugees with as much enthusiasm as the peasants of the Midi.¹³³ Among them was Nicolas Fatio, the internationally renowned mathematician and close friend of Isaac Newton.¹³⁴

Though increasingly marginalized throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, astrology in particular occupied an important role in establishing eschatological chronologies amongst the learned.¹³⁵ Howard Hotson has shown that Johann Heinrich Alsted, widely considered a foundational millenarian in the mainstream Reformed community, made some of his most precise predictions for the apocalypse on the basis of astrological considerations and the same theory of “great conjunctions” employed in the *Nouvelles prédictions*.¹³⁶ Alsted too explicated the “harmony” between Scripture and astrology in providing insight into the end times.¹³⁷ Opinions on modern divination were not cleanly divided along class lines, and cannot be neatly correlated with education.

Opinions were, however, more neatly divided between clergy and laymen. Massard’s repudiation of the Protestant ministry for their cessationist leanings suggest that the anti-clerical

¹³² Theirs, *Traité des superstitions*, aij. “Universellement répanduës dans le monde Chrétien... Elles trouvent accès chés les Grands; elles ont cours parmi les personnes médiocres; elles sont en vogue parmi le simple peuple. Chaque roïaume, chaque province, chaque diocèse, chaque ville, chaque paroisse, a les siennes propres...”

¹³³ See the table of French Prophets in London with university educations in Schwartz, *The French Prophets*, 328.

¹³⁴ Newton and other natural philosophers also seem to have lent some credence to the predictive powers of astrology, and did not so sharply distinguish the practice from the discipline of astronomy as Westerners do today. Charles Domson, *Nicolas Fatio de Dullier and the Prophets of London* ([s.l.], Arno Press, 1981); *Prophetic Extracts* (London: Printed for G. Terry, no. 54, Paternoster-Row, 1795), 46-8; Curry, *Power and Prophecy*, 138ff, esp. 142-7; Rhonda Martens, *Kepler's Philosophy and the New Astronomy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), esp. 3; Schwartz, *The French Prophets*, 233, 242, 250.

¹³⁵ Curry, *Prophecy and Power*, 34, 138-9; Dréville, *Lire et écrire l'avenir*, 11.

¹³⁶ *Abrégé de l'histoire*, 18-20. An example of one such reference is as follows: “en suite nous trouvons le Soleil en Conjunction avec Saturne environ à 27. degrés de Libra.” The author, likely Massard, follows with a discussion of what such a conjunction entails on Earth.

¹³⁷ Hotson, “Volumen coelestis sive astrologicum: astrological history,” in *Paradise Postponed*, 41- 84, esp. 56, 82-4.

sentiments that emerged in London after 1706 had their roots in the *Désert* context.¹³⁸ Massard's case demonstrates that even before Vincent's inspiration, the Huguenots and their clerics had been divided over questions of what constituted revelation, and who had the right to interpret it. In the sense that the Huguenot prophets claimed to issue unmediated divine commands, their spiritual authority simply could not be superseded by clerics who relied exclusively on indirect sources of revelation. But even their interpreters – those who, like Massard, contextualized and clarified the cryptic language of astrologers, dreamers, and trance preachers – could be just as dangerous. Certainly they contested the clergy's definition of the canon, but they also often tended to think in more political terms than their inspired subjects.

In a particularly lucid discussion of the political application of mediated inspirations, an anonymous writer in London claimed that, "when the Prophet's Credit is once well fix'd, he may venture, by the help of his Friends, to correct what is amiss either in Church or State..."¹³⁹ The same author watched as Nicolas Fatio turned the senseless ramblings of the French prophets into pointed critiques of Crown and clergy: "from general Harangues against Babylon, and Antichrist, [the prophets] came, in a little time, to declare against Crowns and Churches; against the Tyranny of the Priesthood..."¹⁴⁰ Likewise, Massard turned the eschatological broodings of ecstatic peasant children into divine commands for the king to renounce his religion and sever his country's ties with the Catholic Church. Unlike many of the prophecies themselves – typically vague, mystical, and void of context – Massard's interpretations were precise, lucid,

¹³⁸ The fact there are so few hints of anti-clerical sentiments in the early years of the prophetic movement can be attributed to the fact that so many of the early sources were mediated by ministers in exile. Nevertheless, some sources hint at anti-clericalism even amongst the *petits prophètes*. The Camisard refugee Elie Marion also expressed some disdain for the clergy in his memoir, produced before the end of the rebellion. Fléchier, *Fanatiques et insurgés*, 36, 99-100; Elie Marion, *Mémoires sur la Guerre*, 143-4; for more on anti-clericalism in London, see Chapter 3, as well as Heyd, *Be Sober and Reasonable*, 9, 166, 168-9.

¹³⁹ *Clavis Prophetica; Or, a Key to the Prophecies of Mons. Marion and the other Camisars* (London: Printed, and Sold by J. Morphew near Stationers-Hall, 1707), A6.

¹⁴⁰ *Clavis Prophetica*, A4, 10-11.

and politically engaged. Such statements provoked clerical refutation, and ultimately provided the impetus for the polemical debates that transformed Huguenot religious culture at the turn of the eighteenth century.¹⁴¹

¹⁴¹ Heyd makes a similar argument, though he does not so directly frame the struggle as one strictly between inspired prophets and clergymen; see Heyd, *Be Sober and Reasonable*, 8-10, 189-90.

Chapter Two, Reason, Religion, and Revelation: Pierre Jurieu and the *petits prophètes*

When the refugee minister Pierre Jurieu (1637-1713) suggested that God had actively inspired Huguenot laymen to take up the pastoral office following the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, he unwittingly engaged himself in one of the most important intellectual debates of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. His support of lay preaching and prophetism in the Midi incited a harsh rebuke from Catholic churchmen who saw these popular initiatives as acts of resistance to the Edict of Fontainebleau. Jurieu's critics did not dwell on typical matters of confessional controversy, but exposed the socially destabilizing potential of unregulated religious practices predicated on direct contact with the Holy Spirit. This raised pertinent theological questions over the extent of God's involvement in the Christian Church, the role of human authority in mediating revelation, and the limits of human reason in matters of religion. The controversy that Jurieu incited brought these questions into a public forum.

This chapter explores the polemical exchanges between Jurieu and his most vocal opponents, theologians David-Augustin de Brueys (1640-1723) and Paul Pellisson (1624-1693). Jurieu argued that God's grace had prepared the otherwise-incapable peasants of the Midi for ministry, prophetic or otherwise, by "illuminating" their minds with a sound understanding of Scripture. But the idea that God had bypassed the regular channels of communication between God and people simply could not be squared with contemporary notions of a divinely sanctioned social order. In order to defend the Church's monopoly on the interpretation of revelation, Catholic writers virtually denied the possibility of divine illumination in the modern era, and argued the fundamental importance of human reason in informing religious beliefs.

The discussion of the popular phenomena of the Midi represents an early forerunner to some of the most substantial Enlightenment debates of the eighteenth century insofar as it

engaged with questions over God's involvement in human affairs. But grounded in a series of social and political events, it was driven as much by practical social and political concerns as by strictly intellectual curiosity, or the opposition of secular and religious principles. The polemic was animated by the real-world opposition of lived religious practices involving immediate contact with the Holy Spirit, and models of ecclesiastical authority that positioned learned clergymen between God and Christian people. In virtually denying the possibility of immediate contact with the Spirit, Jurieu's critics not only made a profound philosophical statement, but pushed to eliminate all means of accessing God's will that rivalled biblical exegesis. It is argued that this push contributed to the advancement of rationalist theology in the eighteenth-century Huguenot Church, and ultimately paved the way for a view of the world in which God's will was strictly confined to the pages of Scripture, and its interpretation monopolized by those who bore the stamp of institutionally-sanctioned authority.¹

Reason and Revelation

Jurieu's crucial role in the history of the *petits prophètes* has not gone unnoticed in the scholarly literature. Indeed, it is often overstated. Nearly every account of the prophetic phenomena in the Midi begins with a reference to the publication of Jurieu's infamous apocalyptic exegesis, *L'Accomplissement des prophéties* (1686).² Historians typically hold this landmark treatise, which inaugurated the "last persecution of the true church" at the hands of the

¹ Walter Rex has argued that the slow development of rationalist thinking began with John Cameron in the early seventeenth century and culminated in a "crisis of faith" in the work of Pierre Bayle, who ultimately reconciled enlightened thought with Calvinist orthodoxy. Christina Pitassi has explored the rather rapid acceptance of enlightened thought in Genevan theology between the "apogee of orthodoxy" in 1679 to the death of seventeenth-century theology's "gravedigger", Jean-Alphonse Turrettini in 1737. Rex, *Essays*, esp. 98-9, 108, 111; Pitassi, *Orthodoxie aux lumières*, 7-8; Heyd, *Between Orthodoxy and Enlightenment*, 198-202.

² Pierre Jurieu, *L'Accomplissement des prophéties, ou la délivrance prochaine de l'Église*, 2 vols. (Rotterdam: Abraham Acher, 1686).

papal Antichrist and predicted the imminent deliverance of the Huguenot people, to be the inspiration for the earliest prophetic utterances.³

In addition, Jurieu's immensely popular *Lettres pastorales*, one of the only sources on the actions of the Huguenot peasants following the revocation, are also believed to have strengthened their resolve to sustain religious practice in the face of royal persecution.⁴ Jurieu published a letter on the first and fifteenth day of every month for nearly three years, beginning in September 1686. Each letter was printed in two formats: eight pages in quarto and 24 in duodecimo – and disseminated clandestinely in France. Their brevity, rapid publication, and clandestine distribution made them an ideal medium for timely reflections on current events. Contemporary reports suggest that they circulated widely, and held particular appeal amongst the *menu peuple*. A Catholic missionary in the Vaunage claimed to have found "men and women who know almost all of Jurieu['s work], and who would be ready to enter into debate against anyone on the real presence, [or] on images, and who do not know the most basic elements of

³ There is some evidence to suggest that Isabeau Vincent was familiar with the conclusions of Jurieu's *Accomplissement des prophéties* (see Chapter Two). Garrett points to Vincent's promise of an imminent deliverance as evidence that she was aware of Jurieu's predication. The contemporary Catholic historian, David-Augustin de Brueys, claimed that Vincent revealed a knowledge of an unspecified 'pastoral letter' of Jurieu's in responding to one of her interrogators in Grenoble. Charles Bost claimed that Vincent caught word of Jurieu's millenarian chronology after the conclusions of his commentary spread by word of mouth, and in abbreviated form by way of his famous *Lettres pastorales*, into the remote regions of the Midi. Nearly all the major works on the subject since Bost have made a similar argument. Even if this theory is accurate, Jurieu cannot be solely held to blame for inspiring all claims of supernatural intervention. Howells rightly points to the fact that Huguenots in various regions of the Midi had claimed to have experienced divine phenomena – angelic voices in sky, for example – since 1685. "Jurieu's apocalyptic promise touched a chord in the oppressed (and among the refugees) because it gave particular and authorised form to what they wanted to believe." Brueys, *Histoire du fanatisme*, 106; Bost, *Les prédicants Protestants*, I:178; Garrett, *Spirit Possession*, 20; Joutard, *La Légende des Camisards*, 26; Schwartz, *The French Prophets*, 16; Crété, *Les Camisards*, 38; Randall, *From a Far Country*, 15; Howells, "The World Upside-Down," 503.

⁴ Jurieu was not the only Huguenot pastor at the time to have taken to the enterprise, but his work would define the genre of the *Lettre pastorale* that Elizabeth Labrousse has argued crystallized in response to the suppression of Protestant worship in France. Howells suggests that Jurieu also modeled his *Lettres* on those of Bishop Bossuet, while drawing comparisons with the letters of St. Paul and St. Peter. After a brief flirtation with the medium at the beginning of the year, Jurieu devoted himself to writing a new letter every 15 days beginning on September 1, 1686. He would continue uninterrupted until July 1, 1689, then briefly resume his commitment between November 1694 and January 1695. Élisabeth Labrousse, "Les premières 'Lettres pastorales,'" in *La Révocation de l'Edit de Nantes et la protestantisme français en 1685*, ed. Roger Zuber (Paris: Société de l'Histoire du Protestantisme Français, 1986), 229-238; Robin Howells, "Introduction," in *Lettres pastorales*, xiii-xv; Howells, "The World Upside Down," 494; Bost, *Les Prédicants protestants*, 1:96.

Christianity.⁵ Jurieu himself boasted that his letters "were read and savoured by the common people, and people without learning, with as much return as by others."⁶ His popular following has earned Jurieu a reputation as the "voice of the people" in modern scholarship.⁷

No doubt this reputation was well earned. His populist orientation, however, was to be found less in his direct support of the liturgical innovations of the Huguenot peasants and more in the radical theological system that legitimated them.⁸ Robin Howells, Jurieu's foremost modern biographer, has aptly distilled many of the philosophical theories on which Jurieu's populism rested. Though there is some inevitable overlap with his study, this chapter makes no attempt to place Jurieu's radical theology within some pre-existing tradition, or to reconcile contradictory statements into a coherent system. Rather, it focuses specifically on Jurieu's notion of grace, which allowed individual Christians to access divine truths independently of their rational faculties.⁹ Well before the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, Jurieu had established himself as an "antinomian radical," a distinct fideist, and a firm believer in "special providence"

⁵ Quoted in Plard, "L'apocalypse des camisards," 51. "Des hommes et des femmes, qui savaient presque tout Jurieu par cœur, qui étaient prêts d'entrer en dispute contre tout le monde sur la présence réelle, sur les images, et ne savaient pas les premiers éléments du christianisme."

⁶ Howells, "Introduction," in *Lettres pastorales*, xvi; Jurieu, "XVI. Lettre Pastorale (April 15, 1688)," in *Lettres pastorales*, 2: [1]24. "Elles ont été leues et goûtees par les simples, & par les gens sans lettres, avec autant de fruit que par les autres."

⁷ Howells, "The World Upside Down," 505.

⁸ Though he had expressed belief in the efficacy of prophetism in order works, Jurieu's defence of the popular phenomena in the Midi was not as assertive as is often presumed. The number of publications that make specific reference to the illicit *Désert* assemblies and the *petits prophètes* represent a very small fraction of his total literary output – a small fraction even of his *Lettres*. He discussed the assemblies in only five *Lettres* between 1686 and 1688. He made mention only of the first and most famous child prophet, Isabeau Vincent, in his two *Lettres* from the month of October, 1688, before prophecy became a large-scale phenomenon. Howells, "The World Upside Down," 496-501.

⁹ Many past studies of Jurieu have attempted to distill nascent theories of popular sovereignty, and other political philosophies. There is some merit in this approach, but this chapter accepts, along with Howells, that the only theory to bind all of Jurieu's eclectic writings is his principled rejection of all coherent theological systems: a form of antinomianism, according to Howells. In trying to reconcile the Godly ends of Mary Stuart's reign with her ostensibly irreligious conduct, Jurieu claimed that, "in all the great examples [of God's work] there is something that breaks the rules." God didn't hold himself to binding rules, so neither did Jurieu. Howells offers a succinct summary of this notion of grace in the introduction to his edition of Jurieu's *Lettres*, but nowhere does he attempt to relate this to the phenomena of lay preaching or prophetism. Howells, "The World Upside Down," 493-507; Howells, "Introduction," in *Lettres pastorales*, xxix; Howells, *Antinomian Radical*, esp. 65-73; Dodge, *The Huguenots of the Dispersion*, op. cit.; Yardeni, "French Calvinist Political Thought," 333-4.

(divine intervention).¹⁰ These elements combined made for a destabilizing theology that was inherently at odds with the regulated operation of the ecclesiastical establishment.

Jurieu's hugely controversial theological career was emblematic of the wider conflict between conservative and liberal opinion that dominated late seventeenth-century Calvinist thought. Up until the Synod of Dort (1618-9), theologians were determined to preserve, and occasionally interpret, John Calvin's theological system as laid out in the *Institutes*. By the 1620s, however, philosophical rationalism began to divide Calvinist thinkers into opposing camps. On one side were the conservative thinkers, who continued to insist on the primacy of faith over reason, and the will's dependency on God's grace. The rising sect of "liberal Calvinists," more willing to reconcile rationalist philosophy with Calvinist doctrine, insisted that it was reason that produced faith, and that reason was thus the only means by which humanity could interpret God's will.¹¹ The tensions between these two views came to a head in the so-called "Pajon affair" of the late 1660s, at which point Jurieu declared himself the enemy of all rationalist thought. Claude Pajon, a student of the controversial rationalist, Moïse Amyraut, argued that in so far as they were "reasonable creatures," human beings had all they needed to find God's truths independently of grace. The "natural" knowledge of God implanted in all human minds could not but lead people to the truth, so long as they had access to God's Word. Reason and scripture, man's greatest gifts from God, were the only components necessary to produce a true (Reformed) Christian.¹²

¹⁰ The term "antinomian radical" is Howells'. See above footnote. My definition of "fideism" comes from Antony McKenna, "Scepticism at Port-Royal: The Perversion of Pyrrhonian Doubt," in *The Return of Scepticism from Hobbes and Descartes to Bayle: Proceedings of the Vercelli Conference (18-19 May, 2000)*, ed. Gianni Paganini (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2003), 257.

¹¹ Rex, *Religious Controversy*, 87-9; Heyd, *Orthodoxy and Enlightenment*, 4-11; Pitassi, *Orthodoxie aux lumières*, 11, 21-2.

¹² Pajon's innovations bore many similarities to those of John Cameron (1579-1623), and Moses Amyraut (1596-1664), both of whom had advocated the primacy of the intellect (reason) over and above the will (faith) in the process of conversion. All these views overturned, to some extent, the doctrine established at the synod of Dort

Though he had earlier enjoyed a close relationship with Pajon and his students, Jurieu quickly became one of Pajon's most vocal critics. Along with a handful of conservative ministers, he advocated for disciplinary action. He joined a group of seven delegates in Paris in 1677 to discuss how the Church was to condemn these new ideas, and lectured against the "pajonist" heresy in Sedan.¹³ Jurieu was a self-professed traditionalist. He claimed to represent Calvinist orthodoxy as established at Dort, where it was resolved that God's grace was "irresistible," and guided individuals to truth regardless of their own cooperation.¹⁴ In establishing an individual's use of reason as the cause of his or her faith, Jurieu believed that Pajon had not only contravened Calvinist orthodoxy, but undermined the absolute sovereignty of God, a central tenet of all Protestant thought.¹⁵ An account of the "Pajon affair" in one of Pierre Bayle's letters suggests that Jurieu feared that Pajon wanted to "deny the ongoing support of the divine and establish man in a sort of independence," a heresy made all the more offensive by his recruitment of younger sectarians.¹⁶ It was Jurieu's mission to ensure that mankind continued to recognize the extent of God's involvement in human lives.

Against thinkers like Pajon, Jurieu maintained that reading Scripture was not an entirely rational process. Scripture was a sort of medium through which God could dispense his grace and guide the reader to truth. Jurieu laid the groundwork to this theory in the *Accomplissement* while discussing the exegetical method he employed to interpret Revelation. In disclosing his

(1618-9) that held that God extended his irresistible grace to prepare the soul for conversion. Oliver Fatio, "Claude Pajon et les mutations de la théologie réformée à l'époque de la Révocation," in *le protestantisme français en 1685*, 213-4; Rex, *Religious Controversy*, 80-5, 92-5, 104; Heyd, *Orthodoxy and Enlightenment*, 66-9.

¹³ Howells, *Antinomian Radical*, 19-20; Elizabeth Labrousse, *Pierre Bayle* (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1963), 2: 154-7.

¹⁴ Howells, *Antinomian Radical*, 18.

¹⁵ Deason, "Reformation Theology and the Mechanistic Conception of Nature," in *God and Nature: historical essays on the encounter between Christianity and science*, ed. David C. Lindberg and Ronald L. Numbers (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986), 170-1.

¹⁶ Labrousse and Howells both suggest that Jurieu's voice can be heard through Bayle's words. Pierre Bayle, quoted in Labrousse, *Pierre Bayle*, 2: 155; Howells, *Antinomian Radical*, 20. "...nier le concours actuel de la Divinité, et à établir l'homme dans une espèce d'indépendance."

motives, he claimed that he was moved by some irresistible force to interpret the cryptic language of the text, despite an earlier confession that it was nearly impenetrable to man's intellect: "I felt myself pushed by a type of violence, which I could not resist."¹⁷ Later, he voiced an expectation that the truth would be "revealed" to him, and not simply worked out exegetically. He claimed to have applied himself to the text "to see if the Holy Spirit would not teach [him] about the imminent ruin of the Antichristian Empire...."¹⁸ This required not the typical tools of the biblical exegete, but a spirit of humility and piety. Personifying the text, he claimed that, "one must search in order to find, one must ask in order to receive, one must humbly and devoutly knock on the door to the heavens, before it opens."¹⁹

The metaphor of Revelation as the "door to the heavens" was appropriate in this case, because at other points Jurieu seemed to suggest that the source of his findings may not have been Revelation at all, but rather God. Speaking of his struggle with the text, he claimed: "...God, along the way, opened my eyes in a way that gave me more consolation than I could express. For after having consulted hundreds of times the eternal truth, with profound humility and great attention, it at last responded to me..."²⁰ Such passages give the reader the distinct impression that Jurieu was more of a prophet than an interpreter: the passive recipient of divine revelation, rather than the active exegete.

Jurieu elaborated on this exegetical method in his two *Lettres* from September 1687. The theories he devised denied all human beings – even up to the most learned theologian – the

¹⁷ Jurieu, *Accomplissement*, 1: *2v-3v ; Brueys, *Histoire du fanatisme*, 33-4. "Je m'y suis senti poussé par une espèce de violence, à laquelle je n'ay pu résister."

¹⁸ Jurieu, *Accomplissement*, 1: *5r-5v. "Pour voir si le S. Esprit ne m'apprendroit point de la ruine prochaine de l'Empire Antichrétien..."

¹⁹ Jurieu, *Accomplissement*, 1: *3r. "Il faut chercher afin de trouver, il faut demander afin de recevoir, il faut humblement et dévotement frapper à la porte des cieux, afin qu'elle s'ouvre."

²⁰ Jurieu, *Accomplissement*, 1: **11v- ***3r. "Dieu, en chemin m'a ouvert les yeux d'une manière qui m'a donné plus de consolation que je ne le saurois dire. Car après avoir consulté cent & cent fois la vérité éternelle, avec une profonde humilité et une grande attention, enfin elle m'a répondu..."

ability to reach religious truth without God's active support. In response to a recent tract on the *différends de la Religion* by the king's official historian, Paul Pellisson, Jurieu puzzled over the means by which the common people could be assured of the essential Christian truths.²¹ There were some truths, like the existence of one God, that were so obvious as to "strike the spirit" of any individual, but the finer points of religion were not equally accessible to the learned and the unlearned alike.²² Pellisson had suggested, in orthodox Catholic fashion, that those without the education necessary to investigate matters themselves were to rely on the infallible authority of the Church doctors. Rejecting this authority, Protestants were naturally at a disadvantage. They were forced to conduct rigorous "examinations" (*examens*) of all points of doctrine, and were sure to misconstrue many of the essential Christian truths so long as they relied on this method.²³

Who could rightfully claim the authority to interpret the will of God? This, of course, was a crucial point of confessional controversy originating in some of the earliest Reformation debates.²⁴ Sixteenth-century reformers accused Catholics of relying on the authority of fallible human minds in making scriptural exegesis the monopoly of the clergy. In an attempt to ground their theology in something more solid than human reason, Calvinist reformers claimed that their readings of Scripture were guided by the Holy Spirit. To Calvin, this process hinged on one's initial acceptance of Scripture made possible only by the "inward testimony" of the Holy Spirit:

the testimony of the [Holy] Spirit is more excellent than all reason... the Word will not find acceptance in men's hearts before it is sealed by the *inward testimony* of the Spirit. The same Spirit, therefore, who has spoken through the mouths of the prophets must penetrate into our hearts to persuade us that they faithfully proclaimed what had been divinely commanded... Scripture indeed is self-authenticated; hence, it is not right to

²¹ Paul Pellisson, *Réflexions sur les différends de la Religion, avec les Preuves de la Tradition Ecclésiastique et diverses Traductions des Saints Peres sur chaque Point contesté* (Paris: chez Gabriel Martin, 1686).

²² Jurieu, "II. Lettre Pastorale (September 15, 1687)," in *Lettres Pastorales*, 2: 12.

²³ Pellisson, "Introduction, ou Premier Traité, De l'examen de ces Differends en général," in *Reflexions*, 9-19; Jurieu, "I. Lettre Pastorale (September 1, 1687)," in *Lettres Pastorales*, 2: 4-5.

²⁴ G.R. Evans, *Problems of Authority in the Reformation Debates* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), esp. 1-2.

subject it to proof and reasoning... Let us, then, know that the only true faith is that which the Spirit of God seals in our hearts.²⁵

Bypassing the human intellect, Calvin gave the authority to find the truth in Scripture to all individuals. Faith was the only prerequisite.²⁶

There can be no doubt that Jurieu's response to Pellisson's polemic was informed by Calvin's theology. But it was also wildly innovative, and took the notion of the "inward testimony" to its furthest extreme. Not only did it assure the believer of the authenticity of Scripture, but it illuminated their interpretation of it. In response to Pellisson, Jurieu agreed that the faithful Christian must indeed conduct an examination, but only one based on "feeling" (*sentiment*).²⁷ He later called this an "examination of diligence" (*examen d'attention*) to distinguish it from Pellisson's *examen de discussion* (Jurieu's term).²⁸ Pellisson's examination involved taking in as many views as possible, assessing the supporting argumentation, and weighing the pros and cons of each position. It depended entirely on reason. Indeed, Pellisson

²⁵ John Calvin, *Institutes*, 79-80. Emphasis added. Under Calvin's guidance, this idea was entrenched in French Reformed theology at the first national synod (1559), where representatives from all the Calvinist churches of France drew up the Confession of La Rochelle. The fourth article, which follows a list of canonical books, reads: "we know these books to be canonical, and the sure rule of our faith, not so much by the common accord and consent of the Church, as by the testimony and inward illumination of the Holy Spirit, which enables us to distinguish them from other ecclesiastical books..." "The Evangelical Protestant Creeds, with Translations," in *The Creeds of Christendom, with History and Critical Notes*, ed. Philip Schaff (New York: Harper, 1878), 3: 361-2.

²⁶ At certain points, Calvin's language seemed to imply that exegetes were to receive divine "illumination," or inspiration, in the same way that biblical prophets had once done. This was certainly not his intent; Calvin had insisted on multiple occasions that the gift of prophecy (to say nothing of miracles in general) ended with Jesus, since he had fulfilled all Old Testament prognostications. Expanding the definition of the term "prophet" to include all Christians with a sound understanding of scripture and a skill for preaching, however, may have lead to some confusion, especially given his insistence that all knowledge of Scripture was attained by God's guidance. To add a further layer of confusion, his successor, Theodore Beza, famously deemed Calvin a prophet just months after his death in 1564 on the basis that he had predicted events accomplished after his passing. This blurry line that early Calvinist reformers drew between prophet and inspired exegete would allow Jurieu to push the boundaries of Calvinist orthodoxy in the years after the revocation of the Edict of Nantes. Max Engammare, "Calvin: A Prophet without a Prophecy," *Church History* 67 (1998): 644-5.

²⁷ Jurieu, "I. Lettre Pastorale (September 1, 1687)," in *Lettres Pastorales*, 2: 5.

²⁸ Jurieu, "II. Lettre Pastorale (September 15, 1687)," in *Lettres Pastorales*, 2: 13.

argued that in deviating from the authority of the Catholic Church, Calvinists had no other means of determining the truth of their religion beyond individual human reason.²⁹

Such analyses, claimed Jurieu, would surely lead to atheism, since many fundamental Christian truths could not possibly be proven this way. Jurieu spoke disparagingly of the limits of the human intellect in comparison to the power of faith in guiding one to true religion:

...even in things for which we know the truth by the authority and by the testimony of God, if one wanted to push the difficulties to their furthest extremes, we would ruin all certainty... we are always in the midst of the traps that our weakness and our ignorance set for us. And that is what constitutes the excellence of faith[:] to be certain in the midst of all the difficulties.³⁰

The human mind had crippling weaknesses for which only faith could compensate. Limiting oneself to an examination that relied only on these weaknesses would be to deny the very key to certain knowledge, as if “God abandoned us to ourselves, as if the light of God did not lead his elect in the way of the truth.”³¹

Jurieu insisted that faith allowed for another method of establishing correct doctrine. He encouraged Christians seeking certainty in religion to, “read with a holy diligence [*sainte attention*] the holy and divine word of God” often and intently.³² They could expect to establish the truth “by the simple impression that the objects make on our soul,”³³ much in the same way that light impressed itself on the eye at the moment of contact.³⁴ That is, though one was

²⁹ Pellisson, “Introduction,” in *Reflexions*, 12-4.

³⁰ Jurieu, “II. Lettre Pastorale (September 15, 1687),” in *Lettres Pastorales*, 2: 12. “...même dans les choses, dont nous savons la vérité par l’autorité & par le témoignage de Dieu, si l’on vouloit pousser les difficultés jusqu’à la dernière précision, on ruineroit toute certitude... nous sommes toujours au milieu des pièges que notre foiblesse & notre ignorance nous tendent. Et c’est en quoi consiste l’excellence de la foi, de s’assurer au milieu de toutes les difficultez.”

³¹ Jurieu, “II. Lettre Pastorale (September 15, 1687),” in *Lettres Pastorales*, 2: 14. “...comme s’il n’y avoit pas de Grace, comme si Dieu nous abandonnoit à nous même, comme si la lumière de Dieu ne conduisoit pas ses élues dans le voie de la vérité.”

³² Jurieu, “II. Lettre Pastorale (September 15, 1687),” in *Lettres Pastorales*, 2: 13. “Elles lisent avec une sainte attention la sainte & divine parole de Dieu. Elles la méditent, elles la remanient souvent, & ne s’en lassent jamais.”

³³ Jurieu, “I. Lettre Pastorale (September 1, 1687),” in *Lettres Pastorales*, 2: 5. “...par la simple impression que les objets font sur notre âme, quand nous les regardons avec attention.”

³⁴ Jurieu, “II. Lettre Pastorale (September 15, 1687),” in *Lettres Pastorales*, 2: 12.

expected to approach the matter earnestly, one would receive the truth passively: “the Christian truths are lights that are made seen by themselves.” Jurieu adamantly denied that there were any significant doctrines (i.e., essential to salvation) that those genuinely seeking the truth could not establish by this method.

Like Calvin's inward testimony, Jurieu's examination was accessible to all by the grace of God, and could prove what evidence and argumentation would not possibly establish with any degree of certainty. It was to be employed not only to access those truths “above the senses,” but those that were “against the senses,” or contrary to reason.³⁵ It was thus a sure means of reaching certainty in religion independent of all worldly authorities, and notwithstanding the limits of rationality. “When a devout soul seriously seeks its salvation, [and] reads the Holy Scriptures after prayer with a very humble disposition, God never abandons it to the opinion of error.”³⁶ No level of human learning could compete with the illumination of the Holy Spirit. In fact, a “villainous education” could even prevent God’s grace from achieving its effect.³⁷ One particular passage succinctly articulates Jurieu’s understanding of the relationship between faith and reason, and the irrelevance of human learning in guiding believers to the truth:

I maintain that devoted souls make an examination a hundred times more useful, than that which the learned make with books of controversy. It is that alone that produces faith, even in the learned. Because one must acknowledge that there is indeed a difference between the science of theology, and knowledge of the faith... thus when there would be in Scripture as many dangerous traps as these [Catholic apologists] want to convince you [there are], the danger would only be for the arrogant and condemned, who only proceed in their reading with a spirit of recklessness and pride, and not at all for the faithful and elect who are lead by a spirit of *lumière* and humility.

³⁵ Jurieu, “II. Lettre Pastorale (September 15, 1687),” in *Lettres Pastorales*, 2: 12

³⁶ Jurieu, “II. Lettre Pastorale (September 15, 1687),” in *Lettres Pastorales*, 2: 14. “...quand une âme dévote cherche sérieusement son salut, lit l’Écriture sainte après la prière avec une disposition très-humble, Dieu ne l’abandonne jamais à l’esprit d’erreur.”

³⁷ Jurieu, “II. Lettre Pastorale (September 15, 1687),” in *Lettres Pastorales*, 2: 12. “Les véritez Chrétiennes sont des lumières qui se font voir par elles mêmes.”

Even if theologians were generally better at accessing Christian truths, Jurieu argued, it was because they tended to rely on examinations of diligence.³⁸ Jurieu had thus devised a theological system in which education, reason, and argumentation counted for nothing. Instead, the search for religious truth depended entirely on the individual's personal relationship with God. This proved a dangerous concept.

Lay Preaching and Clandestine Assemblies in the Huguenot Midi

If he devised his theories on the inward illumination of the Holy Spirit in idle speculation, then Jurieu was given the opportunity to apply them in the years following the revocation of the Edict of Nantes when he turned his attention to the burgeoning popular phenomenon of the *Désert* assemblies. The assemblies consisted of large crowds of Huguenot laymen (upwards of 1400 participants, if Jurieu's figures are to be trusted)³⁹ who had agreed to meet in remote regions to sing psalms and witness lay preaching. Several had met on an *ad hoc* basis throughout Louis XIV's reign, but they proliferated in number after the minister Claude Brousson's attempt to organize a resistance effort in 1683, and then again following the revocation.⁴⁰

In many ways, the assemblies represented a political crisis for the Huguenot establishment. Though they were often defended as an effort to preserve public forms of worship, and were in certain aspects a return to some of the earliest forms of Calvinist worship, as some historians have argued, they directly contravened the terms of the Edict of

³⁸ Jurieu, "II. Lettre Pastorale (September 15, 1687)," in *Lettres Pastorales*, 2: 13. "Je soutiens que les âmes dévotes font un examen cent fois plus utile, que celuy que les Sçavants font par des livres de controverse. C'est là le seul qui produit la foy, même dans les Sçavants. Car il faut remarquer qu'il y a bien de la différence entre la science de la Théologie, & la connoissance de la foy."

³⁹ Jurieu, "III. Lettre Pastorale (October 1, 1686)," in *Lettres Pastorales*, 1: 24.

⁴⁰ Howells, "The World Upside Down," 495; Walter C. Utt and Brian E. Strayer, *The Bellicose Dove: Claude Brousson and Protestant Resistance to Louis XIV, 1647-1698* (Brighton: Sussex Academic Press, 2003), 21; Crété, *Les Camisards*, 22-3.

Fontainebleau.⁴¹ This made Huguenot authorities, reluctant to substantiate the enduring Calvinist reputation for political sedition, very uncomfortable. For this reason, among others, most Huguenot authorities outside of France declined to comment on the phenomenon.⁴² But the Walloon Church of Holland, of which Jurieu had been a leading member since his flight from France in 1681, was not so directly implicated in the political crisis and saw no issue in allowing Jurieu to voice his opinion.⁴³ His voice, however, was to stand on its own.

Jurieu first announced his support of the assemblies in one of the first of his *Lettres* dated October 1, 1686. He praised them on the premise that their public nature honoured God more effectively than clandestine worship, and better protected the people from the temptation of going to Mass (a great concern in Jurieu's early letters).⁴⁴ He finished the letter by exhorting all his Huguenot readers to imitate the "tireless zeal" of the "poor mountaineers" who initiated the gatherings.⁴⁵

But he did not just read godly means from godly ends. Jurieu had assumed divine intervention from the very start. In his first mention of the phenomenon, he asserted that, "God roused up from amongst them persons who without education or erudition were placed at the head of these assemblies to instruct them...."⁴⁶ In his next letter, he offered one such example in the figure of Isaac Vidal, who began to preach after hearing a voice command him to "*go console my people....*" Jurieu entertained the possibility that this was an effect of the man's imagination,

⁴¹ Garrett, *Spirit Possession*, 25; Catherine Randall, "Reforming Calvinism?", 53-4, 65.

⁴² Howells offers several other reasons why Huguenot authorities may have wanted to shun, or at least avoid discussing the assemblies in "The World Upside Down," 495-6.

⁴³ The Walloon church did, however, chastise Jurieu for his unorthodox and disrespectful treatment of Revelation in the *Accomplissement*. Howells, *Antinomian Radical*, 42-3, 51.

⁴⁴ See also Jurieu's letter from March 15, 1688, quoted in Howells, "The World Upside Down," 498: "Dans les assemblées communes ceux qui ont de la connaissance en fournissent aux autres: un seul qui aura du zèle sera capable d'en réveiller mille qui n'en auront pas. On se console mutuellement, on se fortifie, on s'anime... les vertus Chrétiennes se communiquent encore plus aisément que les passions humaines, à cause que l'esprit de Dieu entre là-dedans et vivifie les moyens dont nous nous servons pour ranimer la piété et le zèle."

⁴⁵ Pierre Jurieu, "III. Lettre pastorale (October 1, 1686)," in *Lettres pastorales*, 1:24.

⁴⁶ Pierre Jurieu, "III. Lettre pastorale (October 1, 1686)," in *Lettres pastorales*, 1: 24. "Dieu leur suscita du milieu d'eux des personnes qui sans étude & sans science se mirent à la tête de ces assemblées pour les édifier..."

but clearly assumed divine origins.⁴⁷ Here he also presented the story of the recently martyred Fulcran Rey⁴⁸, whose "mediocre" erudition would have left him incapable of proper preaching without supernatural aid:

He was still only a student of theology, [and] the misfortune of the times had prevented him from receiving ordination; but an extraordinary vocation made up for this defect. He understood that... God, who draws his praise from babies at the teat, would be able to use him to instruct his children, notwithstanding his youth and the mediocrity of his erudition.⁴⁹

God's "extraordinary vocation" created spiritual leaders from uneducated peasants. As Jurieu claimed, "God chose the weak things of this world to confuse the strong."⁵⁰ This was a standard biblical allusion (1 Cor. 1:27), but this particular application made a bold statement. The notion that God had actively subverted the ecclesiastical hierarchy of the Huguenot world – traditionally grounded in notions of class, education, and institutional sanction – was politically destabilizing.⁵¹

However, Jurieu's suggestion that God might have inspired a lay minister was not as radical as might first appear. The notion of an "extraordinary vocation" was in fact entrenched in

⁴⁷ Pierre Jurieu, "IV. Lettre pastorale (October 15, 1686)," in *Lettres pastorales*, 1: 27. Jurieu claimed not to have not whether this voice was a product of the man's imagination or a genuine "voix du Ciel." The proceeding discussion, however, makes it clear that Jurieu felt it to be the latter. Jurieu did not himself identify the man as Vidal. Howells, "The World Upside-Down," 498. "...Va consoler mon peuple..."

⁴⁸ Bost, *Les Prédicants protestants*, 1: 144-151.

⁴⁹ Pierre Jurieu, "IV. Lettre pastorale (October 15, 1686)," in *Lettres pastorales*, 29. The mention of God drawing praise from babies at the teat is likely a reference to one of several miracles reported concerning babies making inspired utterances 'in good French.' See Cosmos, *Huguenot Prophecy*, 68-9; John Lacy, *A Cry from the Desart or Testimonials, of the Miraculous Things Lately come to pass in the Cévennes, Verified upon Oath, and by other Proofs. Translated form the Originals. The Second Edition* (London: Printed for B. Bragg at the Black Raven at Pater-Noster Row, 1707), 116, 118. "Il n'étoit encore qu'Étudiant en Théologie, le malheur des tems l'ait empêché de recevoir l'ordination; mais une vocation extraordinaire suplœa à ce défaut. Il comprit que... Dieu qui tire sa louange des enfans qui sont à la mammelle, pourroit bien se servir de lui pour édifier ses enfans, nonobstant se jeunesse & la mediocrité de sa science."

⁵⁰ Pierre Jurieu, "III. Lettre pastorale (October 1, 1686)," in *Lettres pastorales*, 1:24. "...Dieu a choisi les choses foibles de ce monde pour confondre les fortes."

⁵¹ Howells makes a similar argument in "The World Upside Down," 495-6.

Huguenot ecclesiology by the Confession of La Rochelle (1559). Article 31 established the importance of a regular ministry while allowing room for exceptional circumstances:

We believe that no person should undertake to govern the Church upon his own authority, but that this should be derived from election, as far as it is possible, and God will permit. And we make this exception especially, because sometimes, and even in our own days, when the state of the Church has been interrupted, it has been necessary that God *raise up [susciter]* men in an *extraordinary manner* to restore the Church which was in ruin and desolation. But, notwithstanding, we believe that this rule must always be binding: that all pastors, overseers, and deacons should have evidence of being called to their office.⁵²

This “extraordinary vocation” clause was almost certainly intended as an apology for Calvin’s irregular precedent; Calvin was never a student of theology, was never “called” to office, and had no witness to his vocation. Thus, his ecclesiastical authority could only be justified on the basis that the Church was in “ruin and desolation” before his ministry.⁵³ Nevertheless, the wording of the article seems almost to have predicted the circumstances in which the Huguenot population found itself under the personal reign of Louis XIV. It was vague in describing exactly what an extraordinary vocation entailed, but the striking parallel with the current situation was evidently too much for Jurieu to ignore.

Only the equally zealous minister Claude Brousson, however, joined Jurieu in invoking the extraordinary vocations clause. Citing the scriptural precedents of John the Baptist and Saint Paul (both of whom were believed to have received some extraordinary “gift” for preaching), Brousson counted the Huguenots of the Midi among those whom “the Spirit of God raises, [and] fills with light [*lumière*], zeal and piety” in cases of necessity.⁵⁴ The majority of refugee

⁵² “The Evangelical Protestant Creeds,” in *The Creeds of Christendom*, 3: 377.

⁵³ Engammare, “Prophet without a Prophecy,” 659-60.

⁵⁴ Claude Brousson, *Pièces Pieuses* (Au Désert, [s.n.], 1694), 38. “Nous croyons que les Sacremens peuvent être administrez par tous ceux, qui sont appellez à la prédication de la Parole de Dieu... soit qu'ils y soient appellez d'une Vocation ordinaire, comme les Pasteurs ordinaires de l'Église, ou d'une Vocation extraordinaire, comme autrefois Jean-Baptiste, Saint Paul, Apollos, & plusieurs autres, dont il est parlé dans l'Écriture ; & comme ceux que l'Esprit de Dieu suscite, qu'il remplit de lumière, de zèle & de piété, & qu'il appelle au Saint Ministère dans les cas extraordinaires, c'est-à-dire, dans les Païs où il n'y a point de Pasteurs ordinaires, ou lorsque les Pasteurs ordinaires

ministers, however, were evidently not prepared to surrender their vacant offices to uneducated laymen, no matter how effectively they defended their flock from the temptations of apostasy. After all, it would be difficult for any pastor to argue why anyone else could rightfully perform the same duties that he had speedily abandoned in the face of persecution.⁵⁵ Perhaps Jurieu acknowledged the hypocrisy of his exhortations when he later backed off on his initially unequivocal support of lay preaching: "we [the exiled ministry] will hope that you will not be reduced to the necessity of making pastors by extraordinary means, while there are so many made by ordinary ways."⁵⁶ It was Jurieu's first warning that the irregularities of the Huguenot peasantry's underground religion were spiralling beyond control.

From *prédicants* to *prophètes*

It should be noted that Jurieu had no intention of permanently subverting the regular church hierarchy. Indeed, he pointed reassuringly to the fact that lay preachers followed the ecclesiastical model of the Huguenot church, and accepted the suspension of regular church practice only in "cases of necessity."⁵⁷ But as Jurieu continued to voice his approval when prophets replaced preachers as the focal point of the assemblies, it became clear that he was prepared to accept any liturgical innovations that appeared to arise by godly means. As it had

se sont corrompus & égarez de la droite voie, ou qu'ils ont cessé de prêcher l'Évangile au peuple: Car alors, comme il est dit dans le 31 Article de la Confession de Foi de toutes nos Églises, Dieu lui-même suscite par son Esprit de nouveaux Pasteurs..."

⁵⁵ Howells, "The World Upside-Down," 495-6; Schwartz, *The French Prophets*, 61; Crété, *Les Camisards*, 41.

⁵⁶ Pierre Jurieu, "XV. Lettre pastorale (April 1, 1688)," in *Lettres pastorales*, 2: 119. "Nous espérons que vous ne serez pas réduits à la nécessité de vous faire des Pasteurs par des voyes extraordinaires, pendant qu'il y en a de tout faits par les voyes ordinaires."

⁵⁷ Pierre Jurieu, "IV. Lettre pastorale (October 15, 1686)," in *Lettres pastorales*, 1: 27. "...il ne faut pas vous imaginer qu'ils ayent commis aucune irrégularité. Car il est constant que la véritable vocation dépend du peuple & du choix des assemblées. La mission d'un Pasteur par l'autre n'est qu'une forme, qui doit être observée dans le tems de la paix de l'Église, mais dont on se peut passer dans les cas de nécessité."

been in the case of lay preaching, his support was based on the notion that God could, and did, counteract human deficiencies to prepare even the lowliest peasant for pastoral duties.⁵⁸

Jurieu's belief in the efficacy of modern divination was laid out in his *Accomplissement* nearly two years before Vincent's inspiration.⁵⁹ In the preface to the first volume, Jurieu drew attention to several prophecies of an "uncertain and dubious" origin "without adding a lot of faith." Credulity, he affirmed, was "a great source of illusion."⁶⁰ Nevertheless, he found some of these to have been genuinely inspired by the Holy Spirit after a mystical meditation on their origins:

I could not prevent myself from being touched by an inward feeling, that in all this there could indeed be something divine and dispensed by providence. Like the holy Virgin, I put these words in my heart, [and] without carrying any judgment I awaited [the passing of] time, alone the true touchstone for distinguishing true prophecies from mad visions.⁶¹

Jurieu's method for distinguishing between true and false prophets, like his "examination of diligence," was entirely intrapersonal. If he did not explicitly state that it hinged on divine illumination, than he strongly implied it. After all, he claimed not to have carried any judgement, and spoke passively of his own involvement in determining the truth of the prophecies in question. His mention of an "inward feeling" (*secret sentiment*), invokes Calvin's notion of the inward testimony of the Spirit, even if his meditation was not grounded in Scripture. Though he would later deny trying to play the role of prophet, he seemed to welcome associations with

⁵⁸ The youth, ignorance, and passivity of the child prophets were taken among supporters as proof that God's Word had reached the ears of the faithful completely unmediated by human meddling. Schwartz, *The French Prophets*, 31.

⁵⁹ The *Accomplissement* was published in March 1686. Vincent began to prophecy in February 1688. Howells, "The World Upside-Down," 494.

⁶⁰ The prophecies in question were those of Christopher Kotterus, Nicolas Dracibius and Christina Poniatovia, collected and published by Jan Amos Comenius as *Lux in tenebris* (Amsterdam: [s.n.], 1657); Jurieu, *Accomplissement*, 1: *4r- 4v.

⁶¹ Jurieu, *Accomplissement*, 1: *4v. "Je ne pouvois m'empêcher d'être touché d'un secret sentiment, qu'en tout cela il pouvoit bien y avoir quelque chose de divin & dispensé par la providence. Comme la sainte Vierge, je mettois ces paroles là dans mon cœur, sans porter de jugement j'attendais le temps, seul véritable pierre de touche, pour distinguer les véritables Prophéties, des folles visions." The mention of the Holy Virgin is a reference to Luke 2:19, though the context of this verse is not related to prophecy.

diviners of the past. Though he claimed to have arrived at more precise conclusions, he insisted that his vision of the future was in accord with those of medieval and early modern prophets.⁶²

Despite his belief in the efficacy of divination, Jurieu's defence of the child prophets was not as assertive as is often presumed. He only made mention of the first and most famous practitioner, Isabeau Vincent, before prophetism in the Midi became a large-scale phenomenon. Jurieu made much of her astonishing skill for preaching and her miraculous mastery of the French language (her village spoke a Languedoc dialect). These skills were only available to her in her dormant state. When she awoke, she retained no memory of what had transpired, and, as Jurieu claimed, "sank back into her natural simplicity, and the ignorance of a shepherd, and a peasant without education...."⁶³ In Dauphiné and the neighbouring regions, this was widely recognized as an instance of divine inspiration.⁶⁴

Long after it had become a sensation in the rural areas surrounding the Dauphiné, Jurieu exposed Vincent's story in the first *Lettre pastorale* from the month of October, 1688, and elaborated on it in the following letter, dated October 15. Finding Vincent's inspiration worthy of credence after nearly 9 months of deliberation, Jurieu must have subjected her words to a prolonged meditation. The sheer number of reliable eye-witness testimonies assured Jurieu that the events in question had actually transpired, but their extraordinary nature he seems simply to have taken for granted. The only question remaining for debate, according to Jurieu, was whether it was the "Holy Spirit or the evil spirit that entered there inside [her]...."⁶⁵ This, of course, was

⁶²Brueys pointed out the fact that Jurieu associated himself with other prophets in the *Histoire du fanatisme*, 38-41.

⁶³Jurieu, "III. Lettre Pastorale (October 1, 1688)," in *Lettres Pastorales*, 3: 21. "...retomber dans sa simplicité naturelle, & dans l'ignorance où est une bergère, & une paysanne sans éducation..."

⁶⁴Cosmos, *Huguenot Prophecy*, 58-9; see also the abbreviated story, and the same quotation, in Garrett, *Spirit Possession*, 19, and a reprint of the *Abrégé de l'histoire* in Philippe Joutard and Henri Manen, *La Pervenche: Un foi enraciné* ([Valence]: [Imprimeries réunies], 1976), 69-70.

⁶⁵Jurieu, "III. Lettre Pastorale (October 1, 1688)," in *Lettres Pastorales*, 3: 24. "...Sçavoir si c'est le Saint Esprit ou le mauvais esprit qui est entré là dedans..."

nothing more than a rhetorical conceit from the man who had introduced the story as the work of God.

Consistent in his assertion that the hand of God was at work in the French countryside, Jurieu claimed that God had "made use of the ministry of a simple shepherdess who knows neither how to write nor read... to declare his wonders and to proclaim his truth."⁶⁶ God had wrought this miracle primarily as a sign of his favour of the Huguenot community, but he also hoped to sustain the preaching of his Word.⁶⁷ Like he had done with the lay preachers Vidal and Rey, God made up for Vincent's natural deficiencies to prepare her for ministry. Education was again the primary shortcoming. When she was arrested by local authorities and interrogated at the regional capital of Grenoble, she demonstrated just how strongly God had fortified her learning: "she responded to all these interrogations with such accuracy [*justesse*], prudence and [so many] signs of sincerity, that the most capable lawyer of the kingdom would not have been able to respond better if he had studied the interrogations for 15 days... she gives reason for her faith and easily confuses those who come to harass her."⁶⁸ Once again, God chose the weak things of the world to confuse the strong.

Unfortunately for Jurieu, few of his coreligionists outside of the French countryside shared his belief that God had inspired the peasants of the Midi to preach his Word. Much like

⁶⁶ Jurieu, "III. Lettre Pastorale (October 1, 1688)," in *Lettres Pastorales*, 3: 20. "...Dieu depuis tant de mois se sert du ministère d'une simple Bergère qui ne sait ni lire ni écrire, d'un enfant de quinze ou seize ans, pour déclarer ses merveilles & pour publier sa vérité."

⁶⁷ Jurieu claimed that miracles in themselves "ne sont pas destinés à prouver la vérité, mais simplement à réveiller les esprits & les rendre attentifs à la vérité." Elsewhere he claimed that these miracles were God's way of saying that "il ne laissera pas périr l'ouvrage de la réformation que nos Pères ont commencée: mais qu'il la portera à sa dernière perfection." Jurieu, "III. Lettre Pastorale (October 1, 1688)," in *Lettres Pastorales*, 3: 23; IV. Lettre Pastorale (October 15, 1688), in *Lettres Pastorales*, 3: 32.

⁶⁸ Though she had indeed undergone interrogation in Grenoble, others claimed that she had eventually confessed to fraud and joined a Catholic convent. Brueys, *Histoire du fanatisme*, 118; Jurieu, "III. Lettre Pastorale (October 1, 1688)," in *Lettres Pastorales*, 3: 21. "Mais elle a répondu à toutes ces interrogatoires avec tant de justesse, de prudence & de caractères de sincérité, que le plus habile Avocat du Royaume n'auroit pu y mieux répondre quand il auroit étudié quinze jours les interrogatoires... elle rend raison de sa foi & confond facilement tous ceux qui la viennent harceler."

the assemblies, the *petits prophètes* were a delicate topic for those who were wary of worsening the Calvinist reputation, especially with the escalation of violence between clandestine assemblies and royal troops.⁶⁹ The fact that most of the child prophets and preachers were female was particularly troubling as it contravened the biblical ban on woman preachers strongly emphasized in most Calvinist literature.⁷⁰ Only Brousson, whose fame and notoriety soon came to rival Jurieu's, and the obscure figure of Jacques Massard shared the burden of publicizing the prophets' "miraculous" inspirations.⁷¹ Thus, if this debate was cleanly divided along confessional lines, it was only because those Protestants critical of the child prophets chose not to say anything at all, rather than draw more attention to the embarrassing phenomenon.

The faculty of the University of Geneva were among the first to dismiss the *inspirés* as fraudulent imposters. In the winter of 1689, a young prophet inspired by Vincent's example fled to the University of Geneva where he was asked to demonstrate his miraculous abilities in front of a hall full of spectators. Unconvinced by the performance, the sceptical onlookers pricked the sleeping prophet with a pin to gauge his reaction. Insulted by the experiment, he awoke to denounce their incredulity, shouting, "Scribes, Pharisees, hypocrites!"⁷² Eventually the prophet, and two more that came to the university in his wake, confessed that they had faked their inspiration in order to turn their wavering coreligionists back to the faith.⁷³

Catholic commentators were equally as sceptical, and much more vocal. As Philippe Joutard pointed out in his seminal historiographical study, those who denounced the French *inspirés* in the public forum rarely resorted to supernatural explanations for their irregular

⁶⁹ Garrett, *Spirit Possession*, 29ff.

⁷⁰ Schwartz, *The French Prophets*, 32-4; John Calvin, "Sermons sur les deux Epistres à Timothée et sur l'Epistre à Tite," (Geneva: C. Badius, 1561) in *Opera quae supersunt omnia*, ed. G. Baum, E. Cunitz and E. Reuss (Berlin: C.A. Schwetschke, 1895) 81: col. 197-8, 205-9, 222-6.

⁷¹ Utt and Strayer, *The Bellicose Dove*, 132-3, 152; Garrett, *Spirit Possession*, 28.

⁷² Fléchier, *Fanatiques et insurgés*, 99-100.

⁷³ Pitassi, *Orthodoxie aux lumières*, 70; Samuel Turretini, *Preservatif contre le fanatisme, ou Refutation des pretendus inspirez des derniers siècles*, trans. Jacques Théodore Le Clerc (Geneva: Du Villard & Jaquier, 1723), 52.

behaviour. Where previous generations would surely have introduced notions of demonic seduction, Jurieu's critics invoked medical theories, political conspiracies, and seditious plots; they relied almost exclusively on natural explanations.⁷⁴ Jurieu lamented the fact that Vincent's supposedly awe-inspiring sermons, for example, were widely dismissed as a subconscious recall of sermons she had heard elsewhere.⁷⁵ Her use of French (which was far from perfect, as her supporters claimed) could similarly be explained by her town's proximity to French-speaking regions.⁷⁶

The commentaries of the theologian and dramatist, David de Brueys, and that of Esprit Fléchier, the bishop of Nîmes, made it clear that the problem of prophecy was not one directly linked to Protestantism. It was not a natural effect of false belief, but of ignorance: a social ill that concerned both confessions. Though he stopped well short of condoning the Protestant heresy, Fléchier showed a great deal of respect for the "enlightened" Protestants who dismissed the prophetic impostors. As he explained, those men "of a spirit of quality" were the first to recognize signs of fraud at the University of Geneva. That the faculty was so easily able to discover the impostors was no surprise to Fléchier: "there were found among [those at Geneva] people too enlightened to be left beguiled by these ridiculous ecstasies, and too faithful to thus tolerate making light of the faith and religion of the people that had already been too much abused."⁷⁷ Brueys also showed a remarkable degree of tolerance towards Calvinist heretics in the introduction to his well-received account of the child prophets, the *Histoire du fanatisme de nostre temps* (1692):

⁷⁴ Joutard, *La légende des Camisards*, 72-5; Bernard Dompnier, *Le venin de l'hérésie: Image du protestantisme et combat catholique au XVIIe siècle* (Paris: Centurion, 1985), 65ff.

⁷⁵ Jurieu, "III. Lettre Pastorale (October 1, 1688)," in *Lettres Pastorales*, 3: 23

⁷⁶ Fléchier, *Fanatiques et insurgés*, 83.

⁷⁷ Fléchier, *Fanatiques et insurgés*, 100-1. "Il se trouva parmi eux des gens trop éclairés pour se laisser surprendre par ces ridicules extases, et trop fidèles pour souffrir qu'on se jouât ainsi de la foi et de la religion des peuples dont on n'avait déjà que trop abusé."

It is not that there are several among [the Huguenots]... who, in rendering to God in their manner, what they believe they must render to him, render also to Caesar what belongs to him. But... there are some whose blind and unknowledgeable zeal does not sufficiently distinguish what concerns the duties of a faithful Christian from what concerns the duties of a faithful subject.⁷⁸

To distinguish them from more respectable Calvinist heretics, Brueys referred to the *inspirés* of the Midi as "fanatics" (*des fanatiques*). The term had long been used specifically to designate adherents to Protestant sects with apocalyptic overtones, or those that believed in the immediate inspiration of the Holy Spirit, but it became irrevocably associated with the French *inspirés* and the Camisard rebels.⁷⁹

Fléchier was the first among many to suggest that Vincent and the *petits prophètes* learned their craft from students of the mythical "prophet school" as part of a plan "inspired and concerted in Geneva" to re-establish the Calvinist heresy in the Midi.⁸⁰ The theory was devoid of any empirical basis, but it stuck. Brueys expanded on the idea in his *Histoire*, and went so far as to suggest that the whole effort was just one small piece of a plot cooked up by a "league" of Protestant refugees to undermine the King's control over the Huguenot population and incite foreign intervention from Protestant allies.⁸¹ Convinced that "the most honest people and the most enlightened Calvinists" would be able to agree on Jurieu's folly in supporting a divine explanation for the *inspirés*, Brueys traced a long history of fanaticism that betrayed an enduring political agenda. Pointing to such historical examples as Thomas Müntzer, Jan Matthys and Jan

⁷⁸ Brueys, *Histoire du fanatisme*, a3v-4r. "Ce n'est pas qu'il n'y en ait plusieurs parmi eux, qui... en rendant à Dieu en leur manière, ce qu'ils croient luy devoir rendre, rendre aussi à Cesar ce qui appartient à César. Mais,... Il y en a quelques uns, dont le zèle aveugle, et sans connaissance, ne distingue pas assez ce qui regarde le devoir d'un fidèle Chrétien d'avec ce qui regarde celui d'un fidelle sujet."

⁷⁹ Joutard, *La légende des Camisards*, 71.

⁸⁰ Fléchier, *Fanatiques et insurgés*, 37ff, 75ff ; Joutard, *La légende des Camisards*, 72.

⁸¹ It should be noted that Brueys did not believe that the Republic of Geneva had anything to do with the plot. The prophet school was "only composed of fugitive ministers." Fléchier, by contrast, claimed it was entirely the product of Genevan authorities. He was at pains to explain how the same authorities that trained the *petits prophètes* could have entertained a demonstration of their inspiration only to chase them out of the city upon discovering their fraud. Brueys, *Histoire de fanatisme*, 6-16, 66ff; Fléchier, *Fanatiques et insurgés*, 75.

van Leiden, he demonstrated the curious frequency with which inspirations of the Holy Spirit tended to incite political rebellion.⁸² There was no doubt in his mind that the masterminds behind the current prophetic movement had modelled their plans on these historical precedents in order to achieve political ends: “under special pretext of re-establishing their religion, a clever trap was set to solicit them to revolt against the powers that God established over them....”⁸³

But if the plan originated in the council chambers of the learned and powerful, its success depended on the cooperation of a mass of uneducated and unruly peasants. Brueys spoke dismissively of the “vulgar spirit” of the Huguenot peasants, describing them as naturally “susceptible to the most crazy visions, and naturally carried to revolt... blinded by the desire to aggrandize themselves....”⁸⁴ The great minds of the Protestant league exploited these natural shortcomings to advance their interests. Fléchier suggested that starving initiates to the point of mental delusion facilitated their instruction by rendering them “more susceptible to empty visions and vain beliefs.”⁸⁵ In the second edition of his *Histoire du fanatisme* (1709), Brueys borrowed from a host of contemporary medical theoreticians to explain how the prophetic frauds communicated their “gift” by exploiting the melancholy, mania, old age, and youth of their victims. Jurieu had claimed that the most profound Christian truths were those that “agree with the sentiments of the heart, and with the *lumières naturelles*.⁸⁶ Brueys, however, warned against

⁸² Brueys, *Histoire de fanatisme*, 195-201. Brueys' great historical awareness is owed largely to Florimond de Raemond's authoritative *Histoire de la naissance, progrez, et décadence de l'hérésie de ce siècle*, 8 vols. (Paris: G. de la Noue, 1610).

⁸³ Brueys, *Histoire de fanatisme*, 210. "... sous le prétexte spécieux du rétablissement de leur Religion, on leur tend un piège à droit pour les solliciter à la révolte contre les Puissances que Dieu a établies sur eux..."

⁸⁴ Brueys, *Histoire de fanatisme*, 77. "...l'esprit grossier de ces peuple [sic], susceptible des plus folles visions, & naturellement portez à la révolte... aveuglé par le désir de s'agrandir..."

⁸⁵ Fléchier, *Fanatiques et insurgés*, 52. "On leur ordonnait de jeûner plusieurs jours, ce qui leur affaiblissait le cerveau et les rendait plus susceptibles de ces visions creuses et de ces vaines créances."

⁸⁶ Jurieu, "II. Lettre Pastorale (September 15, 1687)," in *Lettres Pastorales*, 2: 12. "Faites-vous un système de la doctrine Chrétienne, nous verrez qu'il s'accorde avec les sentimens du cœur, & avec les lumières naturelles."

trusting human feelings. He described those things that “strike the spirit” as the source of all prophetic illusions:

Melancholic and black bilious people can easily fall into this malady; if, in the time that their temperament is disturbed, by the young, the old, or the exhausted, they apply themselves to dream strongly of miracles, and of prophecies, which are objects that vividly strike the spirit... love of oneself, and pride, which turn from their side all the disorders of the human spirit, carry them at last, to be persuaded, that they have themselves the power to work miracles, and to prophecy... this malady can easily be communicated, and become contagious....⁸⁷

Even if his medical theory was eclectic and largely speculative in nature, it nonetheless demonstrates Brueys’ desire to locate the origin of all fanaticism in the human passions. Even the bizarre contortions and agitations of the *inspirés*, while hardly explicable in medical terms, required no recourse to otherworldly forces. Like nature itself, the human body was nothing more than a “machine” that occasionally produced strange effects:

These different symptoms, which surprise and frighten those who do not know the machine of the human body, were often taken, as much by the ancients as by the moderns, for supernatural things... but it is certain... that they are ordinarily nothing but a genuine malady, which one cures like the others... the symptoms, as surprising as they appear, [are] nothing but natural, and of which the cause is perfectly known.⁸⁸

Brueys' augmented medical discussion built upon the metaphor employed in his original 1692 edition likening fanaticism to a volatile contagion, and elsewhere to a hydra that re-grew twenty

⁸⁷ Brueys' invocation of Descartes notion of "animal spirits" in the second edition of the *Histoire du fanatisme* is particularly telling with regards to his intellectual milieu. Brueys, *Histoire du fanatisme de nostre temps*, 2nd ed. (Montpellier: chez Jean Martel, 1709), a6r-6v; Joutard, *La légende des Camisards*, 74-5. "Les gens mélancoliques & atrabilaires peuvent aisément tomber dans cette maladie; si, dans le tems que leur tempérament est dérangé, par des jeûnes, des veilles, ou des fatigues, ils s'appliquent à rêver fortement sur les miracles, & sur les prophéties, qui sont des objets qui frapent vivement l'esprit... l'amour propre, & l'orgueil, qui tournet de leur côté tous les dérèglements de l'esprit humain, les portent enfin, à se persuader, qu'ils ont eux-mêmes le pouvoir de faire des miracles, & de prophétiser.... cette maladie peut aisément se communiquer, & devenir contagieuse..."

⁸⁸ Brueys, *Histoire du fanatisme*, 2nd ed., a9r-10r. "Ces symptomes differens, qui surprennent & effrayent ceux qui ne connoissent pas la machine du corps humain, ont été souvent pris, tant par les Anciens, que par les Modernes, pour des choses surnaturelles... Mais il est certain... que ce n'est ordinairement, qu'une véritable maladie, que l'on guérit comme les autres ... les symptomes, quelque suprénans qu'ils paroissent, n'ont pourtant rien que de naturel, & dont la cause ne soit parfaitement connue."

heads for every one cut off.⁸⁹ To this self-replicating virus, Brueys prescribed the prophylactic of administrative discipline:

...as the *malady* of fanaticism had passed from Dauphiné to the Vivarais, the remedy that we gave to it to prevent the progress, had also passed there; and the judges of the places had no sooner been warned that the village of Bressac was *infected*, than they had arrested those of these fanatics, who were crazy enough to let themselves be taken: some were led to the castle of the Voute of Vantadour, and others to the prisons of Privas.⁹⁰

As sources of civil unrest, the fanatics were to be treated as common criminals, and punished by secular authorities. This speaks to Brueys' general reluctance to receive the French prophets as a respectable, if heretical, religious movement: "this project came from men, and it had been formed to relieve the discontented of the Calvinists; and only the *simples*, or people blinded by passion, will still humour themselves to support [the notion] that there was something divine in this...."⁹¹ Dissociating it from the more respectable, if erroneous, belief in reformed doctrine, Brueys treated all forms of prophetism as social ills prodded along by conniving plotters.

Fléchier dismissed the commotion stirred up by the *petits prophètes* in a similar manner: "thus are the communications of the spirit of God, and this prodigy for which we wanted to stir up so much commotion; there is nothing so *natural* than ignorance and vanity, and following bad examples...."⁹²

⁸⁹ Brueys, *Histoire de fanatisme*, 151.

⁹⁰ Brueys, *Histoire de fanatisme*, 77. "...comme la maladie du Fanatisme avoit passé du Dauphiné dans le Vivarez, le remède qu'on y apportoit pour en empêcher les progrès, y avoit aussi passé; & les Juges des lieux, n'eûrent pas plutôt été avertis que le village de Bressac en étoit infecté, qu'ils firent arrêter ceux de ses Fanatiques, qui furent assez fous pour se laisser prendre: les uns furent conduits au Château de la Voute de Vantadour, & les autres aux prisons de Privas."

⁹¹ Brueys, *Histoire de fanatisme*, 208. "...ce projet venoit des hommes, & qu'il avoit esté formé pour soulever les mécontents des Calvinistes; & il n'y aura que les simples, ou les gens aveuglez par la passion, qui s'amuseront encore à soutenir qu'il y avoit en cela quelque chose de divin."

⁹² Fléchier, *Fanatiques et insurgés*, 52. "Voilà ces communications de l'esprit de Dieu, et ce prodige dont on a voulu faire tant de bruit; il n'y a rien de si naturel que l'ignorance et la vanité, et la suite du mauvais exemple...." Emphasis added.

But Jurieu simply could not accept a natural explanation for what was certainly a divine occurrence.⁹³ To reduce God's providence to an effect of the "machine" of nature deeply offended his providential sensibilities. Having had plenty of time to discuss the alleged miracles with undisclosed interlocutors and to take in the "diverse judgements of men," his initial discussion of the miracle at Dauphiné quickly turned to an attack on the scepticism of the population at large. In the same letter in which he brought the story to light, he berated the "incredulity" of its commentators. He might have expected scepticism from across the confessional divide, but Jurieu was most concerned with that of his coreligionists: "certainly the Papists have nothing to fear on our part and should not be afraid that our reformed make use of this [miracle] against them; since they do all that is in their power to ruin it. This is an ingratitude against the providence and against the benefaction of God that cannot be tolerated for much longer."⁹⁴

If it was an ingratitude to the creator, then it was not necessarily an effect of "atheism" or "irreligion." As he made clear, this waning devotion was rooted in the increasing dominance of a strain of thought that held the natural realm to operate independently of God's direct intervention. Those who held such views were drawn both from the "vulgar" and learned classes. Jurieu identified them with the common derogatory appellation of "*forts esprits*," typically reserved for those who, as the *abbé* Charles Cotin claimed, "believe only what they can see and

⁹³ If such views can accurately be described as "rational," then there is a certain danger in seeing them as any more "modern" or "scientific" than Jurieu's. Certainly they were no more empirical. Fléchier and Brueys did not understand the prophetic phenomenon any better than Jurieu, had no data to support their assertions, and relied on medical theories that were still largely speculative in nature. It should also be noted that these same "sceptical" critics would be the first to defend a host of miraculous phenomena purported to have occurred within the flock of the Catholic Church (so long as it was confirmed according to the proper procedures). Still, it is significant that they proposed natural explanations when supernatural ones (demonic seduction) would seemingly have had greater polemical effect. Where their sixteenth-century predecessors would have literally demonized their confessional enemy, Fléchier and Brueys saw only human folly.

⁹⁴ Jurieu, "III. Lettre Pastorale (October 1, 1688)," in *Lettres Pastorales*, 3: 22. "...certainement les Papistes n'ont rien à craindre de notre part & ne doivent pas avoir peur que nos réformés se prévalent de ceci contre eux; car ils font tout ce qui leur est possible pour l'anéantir. C'est une ingratitude contre la providence & contre la bonté de Dieu qui ne s'ouvrirait plus longtemps être soufferte."

touch.”⁹⁵ The “wisest” amongst such thinkers, for whom Jurieu held some respect, believed that God had once worked miracles, but that he had ceased to do so long ago. “That is to say that we no longer have men to whom God had given the gift of tongues or the gift of healings, who can ordinarily and as it pleases them put the highest power of God at work.”⁹⁶ These people saw predictable and unbreakable “laws” in the natural world, and denied that God would ever work against the machine that he created. “Can God make this miracle [at Dauphiné]?” asked Jurieu. “Maybe they believe not, and that from now on God is too old to do great and extraordinary things. They would like even better to say that God can do them: but that he does not want to....”⁹⁷

Averting his attention from the Catholic adversary, Jurieu turned to the enemies in his own midst. The cessationists, or those that believed the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit had long since been denied to mankind, were the prime offenders. “Where,” asked Jurieu, “had God declared that he would no longer do anything extraordinary”?⁹⁸ A number of thinkers would endeavour to answer this question in the coming years, especially during the so-called “affair of the prophets” in London, as we shall see in Chapter Three. But Jurieu was right to point out that Scripture offered no readily-evident basis for this idea. With no clear doctrine one way or the other, Jurieu proposed his own theory on the relationship between the natural and supernatural realms. He confirmed his was not the “age of miracles,” if only to cast in doubt the divinity of

⁹⁵ Charles Cotin, quoted in H. Busson, “Les noms des incrédules au XVIe siècle,” in *Bibliothèque d’humanisme et renaissance* 16 (1954): 282; Jean de la Bruyère, *Les Caractères*, ed. Louis van Delft (Paris: Imprimerie nationale, 1998), 472-500; Jurieu, “III. Lettre Pastorale (October 1, 1688),” in *Lettres Pastorales*, 3: 23. Jurieu was aware of the term ‘deisme,’ but held it to be almost indistinguishable from atheism (see below).

⁹⁶ Jurieu, “IV. Lettre Pastorale (October 15, 1688),” in *Lettres Pastorales*, 3: 27. “C'est à-dire nous n'avons plus d'hommes à qui Dieu ait donné le don des langues ou le don des guérisons, qui puissent ordinairement & quand il leur plaît mettre la toute puissance de Dieu en oeuvre.”

⁹⁷ Jurieu, “III. Lettre Pastorale (October 1, 1688),” in *Lettres Pastorales*, 3: 24. "...Dieu peut-il faire ce miracle? Peut-être croient-ils que non, et que désormais il est trop vieil pour faire des choses grandes & extraordinaires. Ils aimeront pourtant mieux dire que Dieu les peut faire: mais qu'il ne le veut pas..."

⁹⁸ Jurieu, “III. Lettre Pastorale (October 1, 1688),” in *Lettres Pastorales*, 3: 24. "...Et alors je les prieray de me dire où Dieu a déclaré qu'il ne vouloit plus rien faire d'extraordinaire."

monastic faith healers,⁹⁹ but to deny the very possibility of miracles would be to reject the absolute sovereignty of God. “God is always attached to the machine,” he asserted. “He makes the laws of nature, but he often abandons them as he sees fit.”¹⁰⁰ And he had every reason to abandon them in the present circumstances. In signalling the deliverance of the true church from the grip of the Antichristian Empire, God’s power would soon be put to test. “Maybe miracles are also necessary to conclude the establishment of the reign of Jesus Christ, as they were to begin it. What has come is nothing in comparison to what is to come....”¹⁰¹

But sceptics saw no reason why God would send such a flurry of “inspired” messengers to further fracture European Christendom. Inciting resistance to the Edict of Fontainebleau would be to subvert the social order that God had erected in the first place. Human institutions, whether religious or secular, had been established by God to protect the peace. It was the duty of all good Christians to “render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s,” regardless of their confessional adherence.¹⁰² To Brueys, this meant “obedience and submission to the powers, and to the kings that God established on us, whether they are infidels or heretics, and even when they are harsh and unpleasant.”¹⁰³ Putting aside confessional quarrels to remind his Protestant readers of their own allegiances, Brueys drew attention to Melanchthon’s suggestion that “it is better to endure all sorts of extremes than to take arms for the labours of the Evangel, and to excite civil wars...”¹⁰⁴ In this regard, Brueys echoed the opinion of so many refugee ministers, who

⁹⁹ Jurieu, “IV. Lettre Pastorale (October 15, 1688),” in *Lettres Pastorales*, 3: 27.

¹⁰⁰ Jurieu, “III. Lettre Pastorale (October 1, 1688),” in *Lettres Pastorales*, 3: 23. “...Dieu est toujours attaché à la machine.”

¹⁰¹ Jurieu, “IV. Lettre Pastorale (October 15, 1688),” in *Lettres Pastorales*, 3: 29. “...les miracles sont peut-être aussi nécessaires pour achever l’établissement du règne de Jesus-Christ, comme ils l’ont été pour le commencer. Ce qui en est venu n’est rien en comparaison de ce qui est à venir...”

¹⁰² Mark 12:17 (KJV).

¹⁰³ Brueys, *Histoire du fanatisme*, 239. “...obéissance & soumission aux puissances, aux Rois que Dieu a établis sur nous, quoy qu’infidèles ou hérétiques, & lors mesme qu’ils sont rudes & facheux...”

¹⁰⁴ Melanchthon, quoted in Brueys, *Histoire du fanatisme*, 240. “Il vaut mieux souffrir toutes sortes d’extremitez, que de prendre les armes pour les affaires de l’Évangile & d’exciter des guerres civiles...”

preferred their flock to fall victim to the wolves of the confessional enemy, than to take any action that had the slightest air of sedition.

Even submission to their own ecclesiastical powers was preferable to the lawlessness incited by the child prophets and their assemblies. Fléchier expressed frustration over the fact that the *inspirés* rejected all established authorities that conflicted with their own interests: “They make of their belief what pleases them... they reject judges, [and] clergymen are suspect to them; they do not even listen to the public voice. A woman or an artisan seems apt to discern prophecies, and they judge without appeal a matter of religion on the attestation of a physician...”¹⁰⁵ Pellisson, who had previously engaged in debate with Jurieu over the necessity of an *examen*, was the most forceful in linking the disorder described by Fléchier to the renegade minister’s backwards theology. In an augmented edition of his *Reflexions*, he assessed Jurieu’s notion of grace and exposed its social consequences. Much like Brueys, he feared that one’s “human passions” might easily be mistaken for the sensation of the Holy Spirit. Encouraging the *menu peuple* to follow such sentiments would only lead them to pursue their own carnal desires.¹⁰⁶

More significant, however, was the way in which a theology of divine illumination, because it excluded examination, fundamentally undermined the authority of learned theologians. Discussing the implications of such a theological system, Pellisson asked:

...what then will become of all the great advantages that [Jurieu] supposes to have over us and over all the rest of men? Goodbye to his doctorate. Goodbye to his authority and to his theological empire. Goodbye to all his great *lumières* on the Apocalypse[:] useless furniture for which no one any longer has any need... there is, he says, a great clarity in

¹⁰⁵ Fléchier, *Fanatiques et insurgés*, 36. "Ils font de leur créance ce qu'il leur plaît... Ils récusent les juges, les ecclésiastiques leur sont suspects; ils n'écoutent pas même la voix publique. Une femme ou un artisan leur semblent propres à discerner les prophéties, et ils jugent souverainement une affaire de religion sur l'attestation d'un médecin..."

¹⁰⁶ Paul Pellisson, *Reflexions sur les différents de la Religion. Troisième Volume. Ou les Chimères de M. Jurieu: Réponse Générale à ses lettres Pastorales de la seconde année contre le Livre des Reflexions, et Examen Abrégé de ses Prophéties* (Paris: Gabriel Martin, 1690), 25, 44.

[religious] controversies, where the most simple have no need of a great examination. Nevertheless one must have a great capacity such as he gives to himself, to make them see this great clarity. If one is true, the other can not be.¹⁰⁷

Perhaps Jurieu was prepared to surrender the value of his own title on the grounds that his faith would continue to lead him to truth, but no Church could continue to function without some system of education and rational debate, claimed Pellisson. Certainty in religion depended on “the *lumières* of sense and reason,” and the common accord of Christians. This was the very basis of social and ecclesiastical order, and Jurieu’s notion of grace was its antithesis:

...this particular feeling of grace[,] taken for rule and for law, as [Jurieu] wants it, turns both religion and reason upside down at the same time: because the one does not go without the other. What have we to make of order, of society, of pastors, of church, if this particular feeling of grace leads us? Who will reconcile these particular feelings of grace[,] true or false, when they are found opposed and contrary to one another? What can we heed against this particular feeling, which is for each nothing other than the infallible spirit of God himself that he believes to have?¹⁰⁸

This passage succinctly illustrates the imagined opposition between individual inspiration and established religion. God did not make Christians by illuminating their minds – the Church made them, by instructing those who submitted to its discipline and authority. Salvation never depended on “feeling” or “inspiration,” Pellisson asserted, but on, “certain and convincing proofs by the *lumières* of sense and reason,” which outlived the momentary spark of inspiration and lasted for generations. “These proofs were passed to us, and will pass after us to the last Christians,” claimed Pellisson. The idea that God would not let the entire Catholic body

¹⁰⁷ Pellisson, *les Chimères de M. Jurieu*, 11. "Et que deviendront alors tous les grands avantages qu'il prétend avoir sur nous & sur tout le reste des hommes? Adieu son Doctorat. Adieu son Ressort & son Empire Théologique. Adieu sur tout ses grandes lumières sur l'Apocalypse, meubles inutiles & dont personne n'a plus besoin... Il y a, dit-il, une grande clarté dans les Controverses, où les plus simples n'ont pas besoin d'un grand examen. Il faut néanmoins une grande capacité telle qu'il se la donne à lui-mesme, pour leur faire voir cette grande clarté. Si l'un est vrai, l'autre ne le peut estre."

¹⁰⁸ Pellisson, *les Chimères de M. Jurieu*, 45, 48-49. "... ce sentiment particulier de la grâce pris pour règle & pour loy, comme il le veut, renverse en mesme temps & Religion & raison: car l'un ne va point sans l'autre. Qu'avons-nous à faire d'ordre, de société, de Pasteurs, d'Église, si ce sentiment particulier de la grâce nous conduit? Qui accordera ces sentimens particuliers de la grâces vrais ou faux, quand ils se trouveront opposez & contraires les uns aux autres? Que pourrons-nous écouter contre ce sentiment particulier, qui n'est autre chose pour chacun que l'esprit infaillible de Dieu mesme qu'il croit avoir?"

collectively fall into error assured Pellisson that the Church had support from God. It also justified suppressing small pockets of dissent, even in cases where the dissenters claimed divine inspiration. God watched over his human ministers, but he delegated the task of determining correct doctrine entirely to human minds: “it does not turn religion upside down to speak thus, as Mr. Jurieu would like to persuade us[:] it is to establish it and to found it.”¹⁰⁹

Conclusion: Jurieu and the Age of Reason

Not long after his brief flirtation with the subject of prophecy, Jurieu withdrew from public attention. For undisclosed reasons, he terminated his previously unbroken sequence of bi-monthly *Lettres pastorales* in July 1689 without any further mention of the *petits prophètes*. Soon after, the phenomenon moved underground, and the Huguenots of the Midi lost their most vocal proponents. Massard, faithful to the end, disappeared sometime after 1693. Brousson continued to support the *Désert* assemblies and the prophets that attended them until his death in 1698, but did not prioritize publicizing their case to the same extent as Jurieu.¹¹⁰ By the time Brueys published his *Histoire du fanatisme* in 1692, the episode of the *petits prophètes* was squarely in the past.

The stress that Jurieu incurred from an extended reprimand at the hands of his colleagues in Rotterdam and his adversaries in France¹¹¹, together with his unrelenting efforts to draw popular attention to divine phenomena in the Midi, took a serious toll on his health. Soon after terminating his *Lettres* in 1689, he began to experience nervous collapses on a regular basis.

¹⁰⁹ Pellisson, *les Chimères de M. Jurieu*, 44-5. “Grace & élection... n’ont jamais consisté en sentiment & en inspiration seulement, mais en preuves certaines & convaincantes par les lumières des sens & de la raison... ces preuves... ont passé jusques à nous, & passeront après nous jusques aux derniers des Chrétiens... Ce n’est point renverser la Religion que de parler ainsi, comme M. Jurieu nous le voudroit persuader, c’est l’établir & la fonder.”

¹¹⁰ Utt and Strayer, *The Bellicose Dove*, 132-3, 147.

¹¹¹ Howells counts at least six separate “counter-campaigns” to Jurieu’s *Lettres* from such high profile Catholic figures as Richard Simon and Bossuet. Howells, *Antinomian Radical*, 62-3; Howells, “Introduction,” in *Lettres Pastorales*, xvii-xviii.

When he applied himself once more to the project at the end of 1694, he made no mention of the *petits prophètes*. Maintaining faith in providence, Jurieu assured his Huguenot readers that the fall of Babylon was still to be expected.¹¹²

When the prophetic phenomenon re-emerged in the context of the Camisard rebellion at the beginning of the eighteenth century, Jurieu lent his support in much more subtle ways. He and his wife assisted agents of allied Protestant nations in the effort to secure a relief force to the Cévennes, and supported the prophetic movement when it reached England. Jurieu continued to watch for signs of God's providence in European politics, and never lost hope in the miraculous conversion of the king.¹¹³ In 1705 he published a treaty advocating allied military intervention on behalf of the Camisards, though he did not exploit the phenomenon of spirit possession in advancing his argument.¹¹⁴ He died in January 1713, having lived long enough to see the Camisards surrender in their fight against the Antichristian Empire.

If Jurieu's ideas on the operation of the Holy Spirit were becoming rapidly outmoded within his lifetime, then they were nearly abandoned after his death. When the *nouveaux convertis* began to resurrect the disciplinary institutions of the pre-revocation Huguenot Church after 1715, they did so under the guidance of a new generation of Calvinist thinkers who privileged the use of reason in matters of faith, and freed religious devotion from its reliance on supernatural forces.¹¹⁵ The previously controversial work of John Cameron, Moses Amyraut, and Claude Pajon at last came to occupy a place of centrality in Calvinist intellectual life.¹¹⁶ Only

¹¹² Jurieu, "XXII. Lettre pastorale (November 1, 1694)," in *Lettres Pastorales*, 4: 179-80; Howells, "The World Upside-Down," 505.

¹¹³ Schwartz, *The French Prophets*, 170-1; Labrousse, *Pierre Bayle*, 1:143, 206-7, 231n.

¹¹⁴ Howells, *Antinomian Radical*, 64; Labrousse, *Pierre Bayle*, 1: 207.

¹¹⁵ Heyd, *Orthodoxy and Enlightenment*, 236-44, esp. 240.

¹¹⁶ Rex argues that Calvinist rationalism originated in the thought of John Cameron at the beginning of the seventeenth century, and survived through his disciples, the most notable being Moses Amyraut, who did much to encourage rationalism at the academy of Saumur. This "veritable explosion" of rationalism, he argues, culminated in the thought of Pierre Bayle, who is himself often credited with ushering in the enlightenment. "...these disciples of

after the crisis had subsided and prophetism lost momentum in the Midi did these liberal Calvinist thinkers invoke the disgraceful memory of the Huguenot prophets.

The Genevan theologian Samuel Turrettini's *Préservatif contre le fanatisme* (1723) is a clear indication of the extent to which eighteenth-century Huguenots embraced rational thought.¹¹⁷ With specific reference to the *petits prophètes* and the Camisard *inspirés*,¹¹⁸ Turrettini brought the full force of rational philosophy to bear on all forms of "fanatical" thinking and inspired prophecy: "reason is the eye of the soul," he suggested. "It is the faculty that God gave to man to judge the manner in which he must lead himself. One cannot dismiss it, or fail to make use of it, without doing infinite harm to oneself, and without insulting he who is the author."¹¹⁹

As if to address the confusion introduced by Jurieu's radical theology, Turrettini clarified Calvin's notion of inward testimony. Far from an alternative to rational argumentation, the testimony of the Holy Spirit acted only to confirm one's knowledge of Scripture already established by other, namely rational, means: "Calvin thus explains what he says of the testimony of the Holy Spirit, by sealing in the heart the truth of Scripture, for which one already has good proofs, that is to say, to make sure that one surrenders to these proofs."¹²⁰ Turrettini maintained that the Holy Spirit did not interfere with the rational mind, the sole arbitrator of religious questions:

of Cameron set up the Scripture as the final authority and the absolute judge of all arguments, and yet made the Scripture actually subject to the absolute negative authority of reason. Their rationale for doing so was that there could be no disagreement between reason and Scripture, since God is the source of both." Rex, *Religious Controversy*, "Introduction," 97, 99-101, 108-111, 120.

¹¹⁷ The French translation was based on several of Turrettini's theological theses, originally presented in Latin in 1722. See "Preface du Traducteur." As Christina Pitassi has remarked, Turrettini's line of reasoning was not entirely original, but he was the first to pit rationalism and "fanaticism" against each other in a work of theology. Turrettini, *Préservatif contre le fanatisme*, op. cit.; Pitassi, *De l'orthodoxie aux lumières*, 74-6.

¹¹⁸ Turrettini, *Préservatif contre le fanatisme*, 5.

¹¹⁹ Turrettini, *Préservatif contre le fanatisme*, 158-9, 420. "Raison est l'œil de l'âme; c'est la faculté que Dieu a donnée à l'homme, pour juger de la manière dont il doit se conduire. On ne peut la mépriser, & négliger de s'en servir, sans se faire à soi-même un tort infini, & sans faire injure à celui qui en est l'Auteur."

¹²⁰ Turrettini, *Préservatif contre le fanatisme*, 312-8. "Calvin explique ainsi ce qu'il dit du témoignage du S. Esprit, par sceller dans le cœur la vérité de l'Écriture, dont on a déjà de bonnes preuves, c'est-à-dire, faire en sorte qu'on se rende à ces preuves."

One can say in general that [the inward testimony] consists of putting us in the state where we must be, so that [God's] Word acts on us, and to make sure that it unfurls its efficacy on our hearts, but... As Scripture does not enter into any detail on this subject, one could say nothing precise on this matter. One could conceive however, that it acts immediately on us, without supposing that it acts as the fanatics claim it does.¹²¹

Turretini's notion of grace established a greater gulf between God and his creation, forcing believers to rely more heavily on their own rational faculties than on any God-given illumination. This was, of course, a retreat from the tenacious stance that seventeenth-century Calvinists had taken against the rationalist theology of thinkers like Pajon.¹²²

The rise of liberal Calvinism in the new Huguenot establishment coincided with a wider rationalization of religious doctrine in the eighteenth century.¹²³ But it was preceded by a very concrete demonstration of the dangers posed by religious practices predicated on sustained contact with the supernatural. The empowering notion that God had illuminated the minds of uneducated peasants and sanctioned their ministry was inherently destabilizing. The critical reaction to this popular threat exposed clerical concerns that established ecclesiastical institutions might lose their authority to disordered mobs of *menu peuple*. As God's representatives on earth, they had every incentive to push the supernatural into the background of human affairs, and to safeguard his written word as the sole source of revelation. If this contributed to the rise of deism, or even atheism, than it was an unintended consequence. If it made the interpretation of God's will unavailable to the illiterate peasants of the Midi, then it was not a coincidence.

¹²¹ Turretini, *Préservatif contre le fanatisme*, 392-3. "L'on peut dire en général qu'elle consiste à nous mettre dans l'état où il faut que nous soyons, afin que cette Parole agissent sur nous, & à faire ensorte qu'elle déploye son efficace sur notre cœur... Comme l'Écriture n'entre dans rien aucun détail sur ce sujet, on ne sauroit rien dire de précis sur cette matière. On peut pourtant concevoir, qu'il agit immédiatement sur nous, sans supposer qu'il y agisse comme le prétendent les fanatiques."

¹²² Such a process of reinterpretation was, according to Rex, an integral component of French Calvinism: "...despite their efforts to remain detached from fallible human contingencies these Calvinists were constantly drawing on the arguments and traditions established by their predecessors... it occasionally appears that they were less concerned with abstracting themselves from custom and tradition than with demonstrating in fresh and contemporary terms the continuing vitality of the truths which had been handed down from the past." *Religious Controversy*, 97.

¹²³ Heyd, *Be Sober and Reasonable*, 277; Margaret C. Jacob, "Christianity and the Newtonian Worldview," in *God and Nature*, 238-9; Pitassi, *Orthodoxie aux lumières*, 62-4.

Chapter Three, “The Way of Trying Prophets”: Prophecy and Cessationism in Eighteenth-Century London

By October 1704, the Camisard rebellion had nearly come to a close. The greater part of the rebel forces surrendered according to a treaty of capitulation drawn up by the *maréchal de Villars*, which entitled every soldier to a small sum of money and a passport to Geneva.¹ Some remained in Switzerland, while others continued on to the Netherlands, England, or Germany, where communities of sympathetic French-speaking Protestants had existed since well before the revocation.² The deportation sent hundreds of Camisards into exile, but it also transplanted the prophetic phenomenon into England. Three deported *inspirés* – Elie Marion, Durand Fage, and Jean Cavalier – found a welcome reception amongst the community of Huguenot *émigrés* in the district of Soho in London's west end. The men continued to prophesize in this foreign setting, and for a time, at least, maintained the same apocalyptic ethos that they had helped develop in the *Désert*.³ But they also spoke more lucidly of a radical restructuring of the social order, and heralded the demise of the existing institutions of Church and state. This made ecclesiastical authorities uneasy. The prophetic “gifts” of the *inspirés* had rallied the Huguenot peasantry to turn the Cévennes into a zone of conflict, and English clerics feared they might do the same in London.

By the Bishop of London's request, the consistory of Savoy, a tributary of the Church of England, launched an investigation into the prophets' alleged inspiration. By January of the next year, they declared the conduct of the three French Prophets to be “intirely [sic] unworthy [of]

¹ For more on the circumstances of the Camisards' surrender, see Ducasse, *La Guerre des Camisards*, 153–82, esp. 175–9; Joutard, *La Légende des Camisards*, 25–33; Crété, *Les Camisards*, 244–9.

² Joutard, “End or Renewal?,” 351–8; Cosmos, *Huguenot Prophecy*, 29–31; Charles Bost, “Les Routes de l'exil,” in *BSPHPF* 47 (1898): 561–593, 634–651.

³ Schwartz, *The French Prophets*, 75–9.

the Wisdom of the Holy Spirit.”⁴ Though they had hoped to quell a nascent heresy, the prophets’ followers only increased in number and their ties to the English clergy disintegrated. The ensuing influx of English adherents to the prophetic sect, as well as the increasingly insolent tone of the prophets’ inspired declarations, heightened clerical anxieties over the spread of “fanaticism,” or “enthusiasm,” and the Church’s ultimate inability to manage it.⁵ Faced with the threat of schism, the clergy scrambled to exert their authority in the public eye. Over the next four years, clerics of all denominations produced an extensive body of printed polemic that targeted the French prophets and reaffirmed the legitimacy of existing ecclesiastical structures.⁶

This chapter explores this polemical literature with a focus on the strategies employed to discredit the phenomenon of inspired prophecy while preserving the authenticity of canonical prophets.⁷ It is argued that in the course of rebuking the French prophets, Church writers placed a new emphasis on cessationist doctrine. Furthermore, they aided in its popularization by diffusing their arguments to a broad public with cheap and accessible print. Without denying God’s ability to inspire prophets in the modern age, clerics argued simply that he had rarely, if ever, done so since the time of the early church. In tandem with the assertion that Scripture already contained everything necessary for salvation, clerics used this as a basis on which to encourage incredulity, and even hostility, towards modern prophets.

Printing these arguments and preparing them for popular consumption allowed the Church of England and its French Reformed tributaries to propagate correct doctrine at a point in

⁴ N.N., *An Account of the Lives and Behaviour of the Three French Prophets, Lately come out of the Cevennes and Languedoc* (London: Printed for J. Morphew near Stationers-Hall, 1708), 9-10.

⁵ The group reached some 400 members by the end of 1708. Of these 400 members, about 37 of them were active *inspirés*. Schwartz, *Knaves, Fools, Madmen*, 24.

⁶ Schwartz has counted a total of 90 printed publications leveled against the French prophets in London between the years of 1707 and 1710. Hillel Schwartz, *Knaves, Fools, Madmen*, 40.

⁷ My conception of clerical opposition to prophecy in the English setting is very much informed by Michael Heyd's statement that the established churches confronted “not so much a heretical challenge, but one of enthusiasts who threatened to circumvent the clerical channels for transmitting the Christian message by arrogating to themselves direct divine inspiration.” Heyd, *“Be Sober and Reasonable*, 166, 172.

history when their power over public opinion was rapidly waning. The public's acclimatisation to cessationist doctrine brought Protestant theologians one step closer to insisting more decisively on cessationism as a point of dogma later in the eighteenth century.⁸ It was a crucial victory in the effort to safeguard Scripture as the sole source of revelation, and to preserve the existing church structures that oversaw its interpretation.

Camisards and Refugees

Though largely overlooked by modern historical scholarship, the Camisard rebellion was sensational news to European contemporaries.⁹ England in particular had substantial exposure to the events unfolding across the channel. Acutely aware of their role in advancing Protestant interests on the world stage, English readers would have taken keen interest in the slew of reports of the persecution of the Huguenots published in the last decade of the seventeenth century.¹⁰ A collection of detailed reports on the *petits prophètes* circulated in English translation after their publication in 1689.¹¹ Excerpts from Jurieu's famous *Lettres pastorales* relating to the miraculous events in the Midi were published the same year, and his entire corpus of letters appeared in English translation a decade later.¹² An almost certainly fabricated *Manifesto of the*

⁸ See below for a discussion of the largely neglected history of cessationism and its crystallization in the eighteenth century.

⁹ Joutard's seminal study remains the best starting point for anyone interested in the historiography of the Camisard rebellion. See "L'événement au présent," in *La légende des Camisards*, 49-66; Garret, *Spirit Possession*, 11.

¹⁰ Schwartz, *The French Prophets*, 42-3.

¹¹ *A Relation of Several Hundreds of Children*, op. cit.

¹² Pierre Jurieu, *The reflections of the reverend and learned Monsieur Jurieu, upon the strange and miraculous extasies of Isabel Vincent, the shepherdess of Saov in Dauphiné: who ever since February last hath sung psalms, prayed, preached, and prophesied about the present times in her trances : as also upon the wonderful and portentous trumpetings and singing of psalms that were heard by thousands in the air, in many parts of France, in the year 1686 : taken out of the pastoral letters of the 1st and 15th day of October last : to which is added, A letter of a gentleman in Dauphiné, to a friend of His in Geneva, containing the discourses and prophesies of the shepherdess / all faithfully translated out of the French copies* (London: Printed for Richard Baldwin in the Old-Baily, 1689); Pierre Jurieu, *The pastoral letters of the incomparable Jurieu: directed to the Protestants in France groaning under the Babylonish tyranny, translated: wherein the sophistical arguments and unexpressible cruelties made use of by the papists for the making converts, are laid open and expos'd to just*

Cevennois, and a *Compleat History of the Cevennees* appeared from a London printer in 1703, as did a pamphlet imploring the Queen to intervene on the rebels' behalf.¹³ The anonymous author of the *History of the Cevennees* claimed that at the time of his writing, "the discourse of every Coffee-house [was] about the affairs of the *Camisards* or the *Cevennois*...."¹⁴ There can be little doubt that the foreboding developments in France would have had particular resonance with the English in light of the recent triumph of radical Protestantism in the Glorious Revolution.¹⁵

Documents like these prompted many English Protestants to welcome Huguenot refugees as victims in a struggle against Catholic tyranny, if not the heroes of an apocalyptic battle against the "Antichristian Empire." The Bishop of London, Henry Compton, had a particular affinity for Huguenot refugees.¹⁶ Assured of a sympathetic reception, the *émigrés* came in large numbers, particularly after the dragonnades of 1681. By 1700, Huguenot refugees made up an estimated 5% of the population of London, concentrated mostly in the districts of Soho and Spitalfields.¹⁷ Their numbers warranted the existence of a semi-autonomous Huguenot Church in the capital city, but one that was ultimately subject to the authority of the Church of England according to

abhorrence. : Unto which is added, a brief account of the Hungarian persecution (London: Printed for T. Fabian... and J. Hindmarsh, 1699).

¹³ An English fleet of only two ships, loaded with arms and money, was sent to the coast of Languedoc, but failed to make contact with the Camisards due to communication issues. The Estates General of Holland also showed some interest in lending aid to the Camisards, but never acted on it. Schwartz, *The French Prophets*, 24-6; Joutard, *La Légende des Camisards*, 31-2; *Manifesto of the Cevennois shewing the true Reasons which have contrained the Inhabitants of the Cevennes to take up Arms* (London: Printed and Sold by Joseph Downing in Bartholomew-Close near West-Smithfield, 1703); A *Compleat History of the Cevennees* (London: Printed for Nich. Cox, at the Golden Bible the Corner of Pals-Grave-Court without Temple Bar, 1703); Abel Boyer, *The Lawfulness, Glory and Advantage, Of Giving Immediate and Effectual Relief to the Protestants in the Cevennes Together With the Ways and Means to succeed in such an Enterprize* (London: Printed, and sold by J. Nutt, near Stationers Hall, 1703).

¹⁴ *History of the Cevennees*, br.

¹⁵ Matthew Glozier, *The Huguenot Soldiers of William of Orange and the "Glorious Revolution" of 1688: The Lions of Judah* (Brighton: Sussex Academic Press, 2002), 139-141; Cosmos, *Huguenot Prophecy*, 28.

¹⁶ As noted in previous chapters, referring to the Catholic Church and all its constituent kingdoms as the "Antichristian Empire" was a staple of Huguenot polemic. Jurieu was particularly fond of this term. Robin Gwynn has argued that the English believed that providing shelter for religious refugees would invite providential blessings on the entire nation. Of course, the English government was naturally more motivated to accept Huguenot refugees – many of whom were highly skilled manufacturers – for economic reasons. Robin D. Gwynn, *Huguenot Heritage: the history and contribution of the Huguenots in Britain* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1985), 38, 57-9, 129-143; Cosmos, *Huguenot Prophecy*, 13-4; Schwartz, *The French Prophets*, 68-70.

¹⁷ Gwynn, *Huguenot Heritage*, 35-8; Cosmos, *Huguenot Prophecy*, 13-4.

the terms of the Act of Conformity (1662).¹⁸ The dual powers of the secular and ecclesiastical establishments of England – closely intertwined at all levels of administration and symbolically united in the figure of Queen Anne – allowed for an unprecedented degree of freedom of religion, but kept a close eye on the activities of Huguenot churches, whether they conformed to the guidelines of the English liturgy or not.

Despite its allure, the three Huguenot *inspirés* did not come immediately to England. Elie Marion and Durand Fage were both escorted to Geneva under the terms of the treaty of capitulation in 1705. After failing to find employment in Switzerland, Fage caught word of the preparation of a French regiment in England intended to relieve the rebels still holding out in the Cévennes. He arrived in London in June of 1706. Jean Cavalier of Sauve – not to be confused with the more famous “colonel” Jean Cavalier, leader of the largest band of Camisard troops – managed to secure himself a place in the army of the Marquis de Broglie, and wound up in Italy. Widespread accusations of having betrayed his fellow Huguenots in the Cévennes led him to obtain a discharge and travel to Geneva, where he too was informed of the English relief effort.¹⁹ He arrived in London two months after Fage. Marion spent a year living with his father in Lausanne before repeated inspirations compelled him to continue on to England. He caught up with his compatriots in September 1706.²⁰

There is no evidence to suggest that the prophets arrived in England with any intention of sharing their spiritual gifts with their English hosts, but within weeks of discovering that they

¹⁸ After the Act of Conformity, Huguenot churches were deemed either "conformist" or "non-conformist" according to whether or not they adopted the French translation of the English Book of Common Prayer. Conformist churches more closely reflected Anglican liturgy and were subject to more strict supervision by the Bishop of London, but both branches of the Huguenot Church had a vested interest in respecting the dictates of their host in the national Church of England, especially in the lack of any centralized authority amongst themselves. George Beeman, "Notes on the Sites and History of the French Churches in London," *Proceedings of the Huguenot Society of London* 8 (1905-8): 14-20; Cosmos, *Huguenot Prophecy*, 14-5; Gwynn, *Huguenot Heritage*, 94ff, 100; Schwartz, *The French Prophets*, 39, 54-6.

¹⁹ Cosmos, *Huguenot Prophecy*, 30-1.

²⁰ Schwartz, *The French Prophets*, 72; Cosmos, *Huguenot Prophecy*, 31

had arrived too late to meet with Cavalier's forces, they began making public inspirations in a refugee-friendly neighbourhood near a Huguenot Church known as "The Greeks" (an annex of the Savoy Church of London).²¹ Their earliest utterances were very much like those offered by the *petits prophètes* 20 years prior. Drawing on cryptic, biblical imagery, Marion – who soon came to be regarded as the foremost among the prophets, owing to his advanced learning and more serious demeanour – spoke disparagingly of the spiritual decline of the present age.²² "The Devil rejoyceth, believing that he hath destroyed my People...." Yet Marion assured them, in vaguely apocalyptic terms, that God would confound the efforts of the Devil in little time: "the Heavens shall guide my people; The World and the Devil shall be affrighted at their coming... I come to dispatch the Darkness of my Children... I will destroy the Beast and his Empire."²³

The prophets' pronouncements attracted curious spectators and several devoted followers. This following's growth gained momentum with the aid of local supporters. The Marquis de Miremont, a prominent Huguenot refugee largely responsible for organizing the English effort to relieve the Camisards²⁴, offered his house as a meeting place. The efforts of Jean Daudé and Charles Portales, both of whom served as the prophets' secretaries, were fundamental in disseminating the inspired declarations beyond the immediate circle of spectators. A third secretary, the internationally renowned mathematician Nicolas Fatio, joined the team even before Marion's arrival in September 1706. His meticulous efforts at documenting (and perhaps editing) the inspirations of the prophets, as well as his lofty reputation, did a great

²¹ Schwartz, *The French Prophets*, 72-3.

²² *Clavis Prophetica; or, a Key to the Prophecies of mons. Marion, and the other Camisars* (London: Printed, and Sold by J. Morphew near Stationers-Hall, 1707), 9; Schwartz, *The French Prophets*, 17-22; Garrett, *Spirit Possession*, 19-27.

²³ *The French Prophet's Declaration*, 4-5.

²⁴ See note above.

deal to raise the profile of the swelling prophetic sect.²⁵ Within a month, it had caught the attention of local church authorities.

The Ministry Mobilized

The Prophets' unbridled displays of inspiration immediately triggered clerical fears over the vulnerability of the English public to religious enthusiasts and charismatic sectarians. The London clergy could not help but suspect that the prophets maintained some undisclosed agenda. Most other Protestant nations had already rejected the belligerent prophets, but England, with its international reputation for religious liberty, still offered the possibility of a welcome reception.²⁶ Contemporaries were well aware of their nation's vulnerability to imposture. The anonymous author of a work entitled *Clavis Prophetica* suggested that the foreign imposters had come to London acutely aware that the English people would be a receptive audience to their prophecies:

Must we not think it much for the Honour of England to be thus pitch'd upon, and preferr'd to all other Protestant Countries, as the most proper scene for such an Imposture? It shews, what Encouragers we are of Liberty, in point of Religion; and what Opinion Foreigners have of our Good Nation at least, if not of our Penetration.²⁷

²⁵ The prophets themselves were illiterate and claimed not to remember what they had spoken while in a state of ecstasy, and thus depended on their secretaries to record all their pronouncements. Many critics believed that Fatio, as the most educated of the secretaries, corrected for falsities and contradictions before committing their words to paper. *Clavis Prophetica: Or, a Key to the Prophecies of Mons. Marion, And the other Camisars. Part II* (London: Printed and Sold by J. Morphew, near Stationers-Hall, 1707), 7-8, 23-4, 35-6; Schwartz, *The French Prophets*, 72-4.

²⁶ Ethan H. Shagan has recently remarked that there was considerably more coercion and governance in the maintenance of public liberty than has often been presumed. Nevertheless, European contemporaries saw England as a nation with limited government intrusion in matters of religion and ideological expression. Recent developments, such as the so-called 'Toleration Act' of 1689 that exempted dissenting from certain censorship laws, created a freer 'public sphere' than existed anywhere else in Europe. Ethan H. Shagan, *The Rule of Moderation: Violence, Religion and the Politics of Restraint in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 9-10, 288ff; Peter Lake and Steven Pincus, "Rethinking the Public Sphere in Early Modern England," 13, and Steven Pincus, "The State and Civil Society in Early Modern England: Capitalism, Causation, and Habermas's bourgeois Public Sphere," esp. 262, in *The Politics of the Public Sphere in Early Modern England*, eds Peter Lake and Steven Pincus (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007); Helen Berry, *Gender, Society and Print Culture in Late-Stuart England: The Cultural World of the Athenian Mercury* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003), 16-18.

²⁷ *Clavis Prophetica*, A2r-v.

The source of the vulnerability was England's weak censorial oversight: "we live in a Country where Men have liberty to say what they please."²⁸ The Huguenot refugee minister Jean Blanc, who suffered the same religious suppression as his prophetic compatriots, also feared that the "imposters" had come to England to exploit the laxity of disciplinary institutions:²⁹

Geneva, Switzerland, Germany and Holland, have extinguish'd these pretended Spirits, and laid their Oracles silent, and shut up the Mouths of these New Prophets. But why so? Because these Imposters were threaten'd with Prison and Corporal Punishments, therefore they must seek for a Place of Liberty and Mild Government, wherein they may hope to go unpunish'd.³⁰

Blanc predicted that the English people, not "blinded" by the same zeal as the miserable Huguenot peasantry, would not lend any credence to the foreign imposters, but their inspirations continued to draw crowds.³¹

Clerical fears were validated by the belligerent content of the prophets' declarations. Marion's words, presented as those of God himself, made unequivocal predictions of the toppling of all world powers:

Weep! you Great Ones of the Earth! Your Powers are fallen...The Councils of the many Kingdoms shall be overturn'd, many Crowns shall be cast down, and none shall raise them up[.] In a few Days I will spill much Blood, I tell thee, and in so great abundance, that the Earth shall not be dried of it along time; I must destroy, I must Exterminate wholly that I may make up my People anew.³²

More significantly, Marion seemed to suggest that his followers would have some active role to play in this bloodshed: "I will make known to them the Way they must take to arrive at my Heavenly Kingdom... I will, that thou... appear as a Captain of [my Son's] Army. Thou shalt

²⁸ *Clavis Prophetica...Part II*, 13.

²⁹ Blanc's Huguenot heritage is significant. Schwartz has demonstrated that *émigré* Huguenot ministers were the leading advocates of the "deception hypothesis." He argues that they were the most directly menaced by the prophets' imposture, and having emigrated before 1685, were unable to empathize with the younger prophets who had spent nearly their entire lives in the state of desperation ushered in by the revocation of the Edict of Nantes. Schwartz, *Knaves, Fools, Madmen*, 58-9; *The French Prophets*, 61-2.

³⁰ John Blanc, *The Anathema of the false Prophets, in a Sermon Preach'd in several French Churches in and about London*, (London: Printed, and sold by S. Bunchley, at the Publishing-Office in Bearbinder-Lane, 1708), 9-10.

³¹ Blanc, *Anathema*, 9.

³² *The French Prophet's Declaration*, 6-7.

bear his Arms and Banner... I make use of you to execute my Will."³³ Such language was eerily reminiscent of the bellicose tone of the Camisard prophets, and threatened to incite disorder. As the prophets continued to draw more English adherents, the Bishop of London requested that the French Churches of London investigate the nature of their inspiration. The Church on Threadneedle Street, fearful of tarnishing its reputation with charges of harbouring religious enthusiasts, readily complied.³⁴

In late September, 1706, a minister from the Threadneedle Street Church was able to meet with Cavalier and the prophets' foremost secretary, Fatio.³⁵ When he announced his disapproval of Cavalier's conduct, the meeting immediately turned hostile, and Cavalier chastised the minister – a Huguenot *émigré* by the name of Pierre Testas – and his ordained colleagues for having “abandon'd their flocks” at the first sign of persecution.³⁶ An offended Testas returned to warn his superiors of the need for a full investigation into the prophets' alleged inspiration, and within days the Church of Savoy called the prophets before the consistory.³⁷ All three of the prophets complied, but when they began to realize that the directors were leaning towards an unfavourable ruling, they declined to undergo another series of interviews. Nevertheless, the consistory had seen enough. Deciding that the prophets had displayed no convincing marks of divinity, the directors of Savoy declared their inspirations to be "the Effect

³³ *The French Prophet's Declaration*, 5, 7.

³⁴ Cosmos, *Huguenot Prophecy*, 19.

³⁵ Schwartz, *The French Prophets*, 76.

³⁶ Insulted, Testas responded with an assertion of the providential nature of the ministers' actions: “all the World knows, that the French Ministers did not forsake their Flocks, but that God himself had separated them by a superior Force...and... had had the Goodness to favour them in this Separation by a singular Protection.” The encounter was simply one instance of a growing rift between Huguenot peasants and their former ministers, who were some of the first to flee the country after the intensification of religious persecution in France. “A Letter written by the Order, and in the Name of the French-Church in Threadneedle-street, to the Lord Bishop of London,” quoted in Richard Kingston, *Enthusiastick Imposters, No Divinely Inspired Prophets. The Second Part* (London: Printed for the Author and Sold by B. Bragge, at the Raven in Pater-Noster-Row, 1709), 197-200; Cosmos, *Huguenot Prophecy*, 19-20; Joutard, “End or Renewal?,” 343-4; Schwartz, *The French Prophets*, 61; Crété, *Les Camisards*, 41.

³⁷ Schwartz, *The French Prophets*, 76-7.

of a voluntary Habit, of which they are entirely Masters." Their judgment was published on January 5, 1707, and pronounced from the pulpits of London several days later.³⁸

The pronouncement, known to the followers of the French Prophets as the "Acte Noir," or in English as the "act of defamation," prompted the prophets' followers to rush to the defense of their inspired leaders.³⁹ Foremost among them was François-Maximilien Misson, the son of a Huguenot refugee minister and well-established writer in the genre of travel literature. After several months of observation, he began an ambitious campaign to collect statements from the local Huguenot population attesting to the veracity of the prophets' inspiration and to the miracles purported to have occurred in the Midi.⁴⁰ These testimonies were published as *Le théâtre sacré des Cévennes* in April of 1707, sparking a literary war over the question of the prophets' legitimacy, and the Church's authority to decide on it.

A Cry from the *Désert*

By his own account, Misson's work was nothing more than a reaction to the public defamation incited by the notorious "Acte Noir."⁴¹ He did not believe himself, or any of the French Prophets, to be undermining the authority of the established ministry: "the enemies of these innocents... accuse them of not being Christian, and of hating Christian Ministers:

³⁸ Schwartz, *The French Prophets*, 77-80; The act appears in English translation in N. N., *the Three French Prophets*, 9-10.

³⁹ Schwartz, *The French Prophets*, 82.

⁴⁰ Cosmos, *Huguenot Prophecy*, 23-7.

⁴¹ In the preface, Misson stated that, "Le Dessein général est de faire voir, contre les Murmures, et contre les fausses idées de la Bruyante Multitude folle & aveugle, qu'il est réellement vrai, que depuis environ six Ans, il y a eu, dans les Cévennes, un fort grand nombre de Personnes... qui ont été, et qui sont présentement, encore dans un état tout semblable, à celui d'Elie Marion, de Jean Cavalier, & de Durand Fage, qui font tant de bruit parmi nous, à Londres, depuis sept ou huit Mois." François-Maximilien Misson, *Le théâtre sacré des Cévennes ou récit de diverses merveilles partie nouvellement opérées dans cette partie de la province de Languedoc* (London: chez Robert Roger, dans les Black Fryars, près de Holland-Street, 1707), a2r.

something notoriously false and truly detestable."⁴² The prophets had no intention of creating schism, or of disrupting the ecclesiastical hierarchy. Yet Misson maintained a hostile tone towards those ecclesiastical sceptics, directly implicating them in a plot to conceal the word of God. He expressed concern that the search for Truth amongst the *simple* people had been hindered by the unbefitting conduct of judicial authorities: "to pull the wool over the eyes of *les simples*, in giving them false and scandalous things to read; to take advantage of their feebleness in perplexing their minds... this is not what one expects from the courts of justice..."⁴³ With the *Théâtre sacré* he hoped to reverse the decision of the authors of the act of defamation and restore the prophets' reputation amongst good Christians: "the only option... worthy of Christian ministers, would be to ingenuously confess their fault, and to make public reparations generously."⁴⁴

The prophets themselves were even more emboldened by public denunciation. Even by the time of the *Théâtre sacré*'s publication they had given up on trying to convince the London clergy of the genuine character of their inspiration. At the end of the work was a signed disposition in which the three *inspirés* renounced their allegiance to the Church of Savoy, excoriating it as "an assembly that treated us so shamefully, and that has no kind of authority over us...."⁴⁵ The judgments of the prophets, grounded in immediate inspiration, were absolute, and thus could not be reconciled with the arbitrary will of the ministry: "the eternal is our retreat,

⁴² François-Maximilien Misson, *Les prophètes protestants: réimpression de l'ouvrage intitulé le théâtre sacré des Cévennes*, ed. Ami Bost (Paris: Delaix, 1847), 27. "Les ennemis de ces innocents... les accusent de n'être pas chrétiens, et de haïr les Ministres de l'Évangile: chose notoirement fausse véritablement détestable."

⁴³ Misson, *Les prophètes protestants*, 27. "Jeter de la poussière aux yeux, en leur donnant à lire des rapports de choses fausses et scandaleuses; profiter de leur imbécillité en embarrassant leur esprit... ce n'est pas ce qu'on demande dans les tribunaux de justice...."

⁴⁴ Misson, *Théâtre sacré*, a3r. "Le seul Parti qu'ils auroient à prendre, s'ils faisoient sagement, & ce qui seroit très édifiant, & très digne de Ministres Chrétiens, ce seroit de confesser ingénûment leur faute, & d'en faire généreusement Réparation publique."

⁴⁵ Misson, *Théâtre sacré*, 146. "...une Compagnie qui nous avoit si indignement traitez, & qui n'a aucune sorte d'Autorité sur nous...."

and the rock of our refuge."⁴⁶ There was no chance of compromise. Within a year of the *Théâtre sacré*'s publication, Misson came to indict the clergy with as much fervour as the *inspirés*: "by motives of greed, pride, and envy, [they] have infected and corrupted a great number of *simples*."⁴⁷ He drew particular attention to the illegitimacy of the consistory of Savoy, whose "arbitrary power" and conduct was directly opposed to the operation of the Reformed Churches of France.⁴⁸

Having alienated the ministry, Misson and the French prophets turned their attention to the public. As Marion and his compatriots declared at the end of the *Théâtre sacré*, "we believe that it is our duty towards God, for his glory; towards our neighbours, for their edification; and towards ourselves, for our rightful justification... to protest... this detestable act...."⁴⁹ The act of defamation may have had a strong impact on public perception, as Misson claimed, but opinion was still divided when he published the *Théâtre sacré*. A brief article from the Amsterdam journal *Nouvelles de la république des lettres* in June 1707 – some six months after the first declaration from the ministry of Savoy – discussed Misson's "meticulous" efforts in a positive light, and though it pointed to the existence of a growing number of sceptics, maintained a neutral tone.⁵⁰

In order to reach out to the people, Misson had his work translated into English by an early adherent of the French Prophets' sect, John Lacy. Lacy finished the translation within days of its original French publication, and called it *A Cry from the Desart*. The title was a symbolic

⁴⁶ Misson, *Théâtre sacré*, 146. "L'eternel est notre Retraite, et le Rocher de notre Refuge."

⁴⁷ Misson, *Plainte, & censure des calomnieuses accusations* (London: chez Robert Roger, dans les Black-Fryars, près de Holland-Street, 1708), 41. "Par des motifs d'Avarice, d'Orgueil, & d'Envie, ont infecté & corrompu un grand nombre de pauvres Simples."

⁴⁸ Misson, *Plainte & censure*, 75-6.

⁴⁹ Misson, *Le théâtre sacré*, 146. "Nous croyons qu'il est de notre devoir envers Dieu, pour sa Gloire; envers nos Prochains, pour leur Edification; et envers nous-mêmes, pour notre raisonnable justification... de protester... cet Acte détestable...."

⁵⁰ "Extraits de diverses Lettres," in *Nouvelles de la république des lettres* 8 (June 1707): 688-90.

reminder of the physical and spiritual gulf between the rustic French prophets and the curious English urbanites, but it allowed Misson's work to reach beyond the linguistic confines of the refugee community and attract a new demographic.

The *Théâtre sacré* must have fallen on receptive ears, at least in English translation, as its publication corresponded with a large influx of English adherents to the prophetic sect. Schwartz's study has revealed that as early as September 1707 there were more English than French members in the group.⁵¹ By February of the next year, English members outnumbered the French two to one.⁵² This influx was troublesome to those who supported the ministry of Savoy's declaration against the French Prophets. Not only did it swell the ranks of the sect at a time when many considered their arguments in favour of inspiration to have been thoroughly refuted, but it showed that it was gaining its own momentum amongst the English population.

It was not just the quantity of English followers that was so troubling, but the quality, or the more radical elements that they introduced to the prophetic ethos. First was the sudden influx of female *inspirés* in April 1707, a radical innovation by the standards of any established church.⁵³ Second was the social stature of the new English members. Even before Misson published the *théâtre sacré*, the French Prophets had attracted several wealthy, educated, and socially prominent residents of London. Chief among them were John Lacy, who would soon become the foremost English prophet, and Sir Richard Bulkeley, a wealthy landowner and member of the Royal Society in Ireland who would also receive the gift of prophecy. Both of these men were involved in the prestigious Society for the Reformation of Manners, and their

⁵¹ Schwartz, *The French Prophets*, 102.

⁵² "Relation historique de ce qui s'est passé à Londres au sujet des prophètes Camisards, envoyé de Londres à l'auteur de ces Nouvelles," *Nouvelles de la république des Lettres* 8 (February, 1708): 396.

⁵³ Schwartz, *The French Prophets*, 83.

reputations lent a great deal of credibility to the prophetic movement.⁵⁴ Indeed, many clerics expressed feared that the high stature of people like Fatio and Lacy might lead the "Ignorant and Unthinking" to "swallow down whole" the inspirations they endorsed, without engaging in critical investigation.⁵⁵

The English prophets also introduced a radical element to the prophetic ethos by encouraging their followers to actively participate in inciting the apocalypse: not by force of arms, but simply in spreading the inspired word of God. In the preface to the second edition of his *Cry from the Desart*, Lacy claimed that,

the Accomplishment of those numerous Scriptures, touching the New Heavens and New Earth, The Kingdom of the Messiah... is to be wrought, on the part of Man by Spiritual Arms only, proceeding from the Mouths of those, who shall by Inspiration... be sent in great Numbers to labour in God's Vineyard.⁵⁶

The process of proselytization was already underway; even before the first edition of *A Cry from the Desart*, Lacy had published Marion's *Avertissements, or Prophetical Warnings*, a printed collection of the prophet's inspired utterances.⁵⁷ Just as Marion had promised, Lacy assured his readers that the accomplishment of scriptural prophecies regarding the apocalypse would be accompanied by all manner of calamities. More pointedly, however, he claimed that it would level the ecclesiastical hierarchies that currently prevailed in the Christian world: "whenever the time comes that God shall pour out his Spirit upon all Flesh, and that Infants, Women, young Men and old, do prophesie, there will manifestly be little need of [the clergy:] they will stand

⁵⁴ Schwartz, *The French Prophets*, 79-80.

⁵⁵ The words quoted above are those of Kingston. Kingston, *Enthusiastick Imposters*, A3v-A4r, B4v; *Clavis Prophetica*, 6.

⁵⁶ John Lacy, *A Cry from the Desart: Or, Testamontials of the Miraculous Things lately come to pass in the Cevennes, verified upon Oath, and by other Proofs. Second Edition* (London: Printed for B. Bragg at the Black-Raven in Pater-Noster Row, 1707), xxi.

⁵⁷ Schwartz, *The French Prophets*, 81-2.

upon a Level with the rest."⁵⁸ Lacy's Millennium was not some otherworldly paradise; it was earthly, it was imminent, and it promised to turn the world upside down.

With the future of their authority called into question, the London clergy were on the defensive. Lacy's vision of the apocalypse hinged on the number of people that received the gift of prophecy. If the cult of the French Prophets continued to swell, the people of London might come to believe that the Millennium had begun. As Lacy stated, "if the Voice be from God, no fighting against it can defeat the same; if from Men only, it will soon come to nought..."⁵⁹ The London clergy, regardless of denominational adherence, thus applied themselves to halting the effusion of the Holy Spirit on the English people with an aggressive print campaign.

Prophecy and Cessationism

Though the French prophets ultimately grounded their authenticity in historically documented miracles, their very claim to inspiration raised significant theological questions over the extent of God's involvement in the natural world. The first question to which clerics applied themselves was thus whether or not the prophetic gifts described in Scripture were still available to humanity. The Protestant world had long been split on the question of whether or not God continued to work as he had in biblical times, but many in England argued that God no longer needed to work miracles after having perfected revelation with the visions of Saint John, and thus had rarely, if ever, done so since the time of the early church. The former Bishop of Gloucester, John Hooper (~1500-1555), explained that, "there is now no more need of new miracles; but rather we must content ourselves with that is done, and simply and plainly believe

⁵⁸ Lacy, *A Cry from the Desart... Second Edition*, xxii.

⁵⁹ Lacy, *A Cry from the Desart... Second Edition*, xxiv.

only the holy scriptures, without seeking any further to be taught."⁶⁰ Scripture contained all necessary revelation, and was to remain the sole basis of Protestant theology. Indeed, the Westminster Confession of Faith (1646), which many of the nonconformist churches adopted in the second half of the seventeenth century, suggested that God had ceased to inspire prophets precisely because he wanted to preserve what he had already revealed to humanity.⁶¹

Such innovative arguments in Anglican theology have led D. P. Walker to suggest that cessationism was in fact an English invention.⁶² Walker, and more recently, Jane Shaw, have argued that Protestants of all denominations embraced the doctrine not on a point of principle, but in the desire to negate the rhetorical punch of miracle stories in Catholic polemic.⁶³ Negating the miracle claims of the French prophets was, in large part, simply a matter of translating the same argument to another polemical context.

But cessationism remained a contentious issue in theological circles. If it achieved normative, doctrinal status in the later eighteenth century, cessationism in this period was still very much an argument open to debate.⁶⁴ Many were reluctant to take a firm stance on the issue

⁶⁰ John Hooper, "A Brief and Clear Confession of the Christian Faith" in *Later Writings of Bishop Hooper*, ed. Charles Nevinson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1852), 44-5; Shaw, *Miracles in Enlightenment England*, 25-6n.

⁶¹ The *Westminster Confession of Faith* not only made a cessationist claim at the outset of the first chapter, but articulated the theological assumptions underpinning the unofficial doctrine: "it pleased the Lord... to reveal himself, and to declare that his Will unto His Church; and afterwards for the better preserving and propagating of the Truth, and for the more sure establishment and comfort of the Church against the corruption of the flesh, and of the malice of Satan and of the world; to commit the same wholly unto writing: which maketh the Holy Scripture to be most necessary; those former ways of God's revealing his Will unto His people, being now ceased." *The confession of faith and the larger and shorter catechisme first agreed upon by the Assembly of Divines at Westminster, and now appointed by the Generall Assembly of the Kirk of Scotland to be a part of uniformity in religion, between the Kirks of Christ in the three kingdome*s. ([Edinburgh]: Amsterdam, printed by Luice Elsever [i.e. Gideon Lithgow], for Andrew Wilson, and are to be sold at his shop in Edinburgh. 1649), 1-2.

⁶² Walker, *Unclean Spirits*, 72-3; Quantin, *The Church of England*, 130-9.

⁶³ Shaw, *Miracles*, 23; Walker, "The Cessation of Miracles," 111-3.

⁶⁴ Even the mild cessationistic claim in the confession was not unanimously supported. Immediately after the Westminster Confession was made public, William Parker, a cleric from the town of Wrotham, Kent, published a formal rebuke that attacked, among other things, the claim that God would no longer reveal himself to humanity: "the Lord will have prophets in all ages," he claimed, "and the last times shall abound most of all with the prophetical Spirit." Shaw argues that the doctrine of cessationism only became fixed in the eighteenth-century

in light of the relative silence of Scripture. Misson insisted that there was no biblical support for the doctrine.⁶⁵ Lacy even pointed to divinely inspired biblical prophecies presaging the return of prophetic gifts: "we are assured that all Scripture was given by Inspiration, and was written for our Instruction, yet there are many now, who deny that Privilege to the yet unfulfilled Prophecies of it, tho' even against the obvious tendency of the Words themselves...."⁶⁶

Even the most uncompromising opponents of the French prophets agreed that there was no direct biblical support for the notion that God no longer intervened in human affairs. The Huguenot writer Jean Graverol⁶⁷ admitted that although God never expressly promised that he would once again deliver the gift of prophecy, "there is no place in the holy books, where one can infer that he does not want to...." Maintaining reverence for the absolute sovereignty of God, he insisted that "the power of God is neither bound, nor attached to any time, nor any country... everywhere and in all times he can, when it pleases him, raise up those who seem good to him to the prophetic lights [*lumières*]."⁶⁸ Richard Kingston, who devoted himself to exposing the artifice of the *Enthusiastick Imposters* in his two-volume treatise, could not bring himself to deny all allegations of miracles, and kept a careful eye out for acts of God.⁶⁹ The low churchman

philosophical debates. William Parker, *Late Assembly of Divines Confession of Faith Examined* (London, [s.n.], 1651), 6-8; Shaw, *Miracles*, 31-3, 50.

⁶⁵ Misson, *Meslange de Lite'rature historique et critique sur tout ce qui regarde l'Etat extraordinaire des Cevennois, appellez Camisards* (London: chez Candide Alffthir, 1707), 23.

⁶⁶ Lacy, *A Cry from the Desart... Second Edition*, iii, v.

⁶⁷ Jean Graverol was a refugee pastor from Nîmes, and became a prolific writer upon his emigration to England. David C. A. Agnew, *Protestant exiles from France in the reign of Louis XIV: or, The Huguenot refugees and their descendants in Great Britain and Ireland* ([s.l.]: Printed for private circulation, 1866), 246-7.

⁶⁸ Jean Graverol, *Reflexions Desinteressées sur certains Pretendus Inspirez, Qui, depuis quelque temps, se mêlent de Prophetiser dans Londres* (London: [s.l.], 1707), 7. "...il n'y a aucun endroit dans les saints livres, d'où l'on puisse inférer qu'il ne le veut point faire... la puissance de Dieu n'est, ni bornée, ni attachée à aucun temps, ni à aucun pays... par tout et en tout temps il peut, quand il lui plait, élire qui bon lui semble aux lumières prophétiques."

⁶⁹ Thought he pointed to biblical passages that hinted at the termination of miraculous gifts, Kingston admitted that he was "not apt to... think that an Omnipotent Being, cannot inspire Men in these Days as well as in the former..." Richard Kingston, *Enthusiastick Imposters, No Divinely Inspir'd Prophets* (London: Sold by J. Morphew near Stationers-Hall, 1707), 1: 15; *Enthusiastick Imposters...The Second Part*, 174-5.

Josiah Woodward, despite denying the divinity of all prophets in London, was even willing to concede that God may have inspired other Huguenots in the Midi.⁷⁰

Cessationism was not a foregone conclusion. The case for the cessation of revelation and its corollary in the closure of the Christian canon had to be actively asserted, and the threat of the French prophets made this an urgent necessity. But although both sides occasionally debated the issue of prophecy at a theological level, the general consensus was that recognizing God's work could not be done on the basis of any *a priori* assumptions about the limits of divine intervention in the natural world.⁷¹ As Kingston stated, God's ability to inspire men to take up the office of prophet was not open to debate: "the Question is not, Whether God can [inspire prophets]; but whether God has..."⁷² This question required a rigorous methodology, not a rigid theory.

Ye Shall Know them by their Fruits

How was one to verify an alleged prophet? This question was not taken lightly. English clerics were gripped by a fear of accepting false prophets as messengers of God. All were aware that Scripture was quite explicit in the need to protect the Christian community from the threat of "wolves in sheep's clothing."⁷³ Many clergymen pointed to passages such as Matthew 24: 11, where Jesus promised that "many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many" (KJV). Offspring Blackall, the prominent Bishop of Exeter who had made a name for himself defending revealed religion from the threat of deism⁷⁴, opened a timely sermon on *The Way of Trying*

⁷⁰ Josiah Woodward, *Remarks on the Modern Prophets, and on Some Arguments Lately published in their Defence* (London: Printed and Sold by J. Downing in Bartholomew-Close near West Smithfield, 1708), 23.

⁷¹ Shaw has similarly found that cessationism was more often argued with reference to specific instances of alleged miracles, rather than on an abstract, strictly theological level. Shaw, *Miracles*, 24-5, 49-50, 153.

⁷² Kingston, *Enthusiastick Imposters... The Second Part*, 174.

⁷³ Writers often alluded to this analogy as found in Matthew 7:15: "beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves" (KJV).

⁷⁴ John Redwood, *Reason, Ridicule and Religion: The Age of Enlightenment in England* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1976), 136-8.

Prophets with a quote from 1 John 4:1: "beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world."⁷⁵ This biblical mandate resurfaced in the works of countless authors on both sides of the debate.

It was an increasingly unpopular belief, but some clerics in this period insisted that Satan could grant false prophets the power to work miracles even in a time when God did not. Even the cessationist Bishop Hooper warned of "the false miracles of Antichrist, wherewith the world at this day is stuffed; which miracles are wrought by the working of Satan, to confirm all kind of idolatry, errors, abuses, and iniquities, and thereby to blind the poor and ignorant...."⁷⁶ The notion that God was not the necessary origin of all modern-day miracles meant that even those capable of working feats contrary to the laws of nature could not be welcomed as prophets without some further indication of their divinity. The stakes were high; failure to apply scepticism not only threatened to make fools out of sober and reasonable churchmen, but it threatened to taint the purity of God's Word. Blackall's scepticism was such that he even suggested that it was better to deny a true prophet than to accept a false one.⁷⁷

How was one to be assured of a prophet's divinity in the midst of so many delusions? The affair of the French prophets demonstrated that the people of eighteenth-century London expected some objective and public display of inspiration.⁷⁸ The clergy acknowledged the biblical precedent of proving one's divinity through miraculous works, and thus found this

⁷⁵ Ofspring Blackall, *The Way of Trying Prophets. A Sermon Preach'd before the Queen at St. James's, November 7, 1707* (London: Printed by J. Bradford, at the Bible in Fetter-Lane, 1707), 1-2.

⁷⁶ It is likely that Hooper drew inspiration from Calvin, who claimed in his *Institutes of the Christian Religion* that "Satan has his miracles, which, though they are deceitful tricks rather than true powers, are of such sort as to mislead the simple-minded and untutored... Idolatry has been nourished by wonderful miracles, yet these are not sufficient to sanction for us the superstition either of magicians or idolaters." Hooper, "Confession" in *Later Writings*, 45; Calvin, *Institutes*, 1:17; Shaw, *Miracles*, 24, 29.

⁷⁷ Blackall, *Way of Trying Prophets*, 6.

⁷⁸ Heyd argues that this expectation reflected a shift in popular thought following the development of experimental philosophy and new scientific conceptions of evidence. See "The New Experimental Philosophy: A Manifestation of "Enthusiasm" or an Antidote to it?" in Heyd, *Be Sober and Reasonable*, 144-64, 173.

expectation to be warranted.⁷⁹ Blackall pointed to John 5:31 and John 15:24 to suggest that even Jesus did not expect his followers to take his divinity on his word alone. "For it can never be a Fault, not to believe without Reason," he claimed.⁸⁰

Though the excessive application of reason was typically stigmatized in religious debate, the utility of rational analysis in "trying the spirits" of alleged *inspirés* was rarely called into question in the context of the French prophets.⁸¹ At least in the early years of the prophetic sect in London, there was a consensus on both sides of the debate that the prophets' claim to divine inspiration could only be determined by the type of rational *examen* that Jurieu had previously rejected.⁸² Misson, for one, assured his audience that establishing the truth of the prophets' claims did not necessitate a rejection of human learning and rational scepticism; on the contrary, the very reason that so few lent credence to the prophetical warnings was that they neglected to pursue a sustained, critical examination. In a follow-up publication to the *Théâtre sacré*, he bemoaned the fact that his critics did not "embrace the philosophy of Descartes," or the dictates of "common sense." Rather, they jumped straight to conclusions: "they all begin by judging. They have no need for an examination, since clear ideas are useless to them." By contrast, Misson advocated a rigorous, empirical methodology based on a disinterested, historically-

⁷⁹ It should be noted that clerics accepted miracles as proof of prophetic inspiration, but drawing from early Reformation rhetoric, rejected the notion that they could be used to establish the correctness of any given doctrine. Shaw, *Miracles*, 26.

⁸⁰ Blackall, *Way of Trying Prophets*, 6-8.

⁸¹ Reedy, "Spinoza, Stillingfleet, Prophecy," 57; Redwood, *Reason, Ridicule and Religion*, 16, 140; Schwartz, *The French Prophets*, 62ff, 92.

⁸² As demonstrated in chapter two, Jurieu had insisted on the superiority of an interior sense of truth, and denied the necessity of objective proofs of inspiration even while embracing the miraculous claims of the Huguenot peasants. As he claimed in his *Lettres pastorales*, "les miracles ne sont pas destinés à prouver la vérité, mais simplement à réveiller les esprits & les rendre attentifs à la vérité..." Pierre Jurieu, "III. Lettre Pastorale (October 1, 1688)," in *Lettres pastorales*, 3: 23.

orientated pursuit of "the facts."⁸³ The *Théâtre sacré* was structured accordingly, taking the form of a compilation of eye-witness testimonies to miraculous occurrences.⁸⁴

Of course, the clergy denied these charges of negligence. Indeed, many of the pamphlets published in response to Misson's claims consisted in large part of detailed refutations of the alleged miracles together with suggestions on how they could easily have been faked by cunning imitators. At the same time, however, clerics tended to advocate a slightly different methodology than did Misson. First, the criteria that most clerics established for miraculous works made them impossible to fake by human means. Blackall, for one, found it reasonable to investigate only those works that "could not be done but by the Power of God."⁸⁵ His widely distributed sermon on *the Way of Trying Prophets* consisted largely of a break down of exactly what this entailed. Claude de la Mothe, who had devoted himself to a critical examination of the *théâtre sacré*, was similarly critical of Misson's standards. He lambasted the cabal of prophetic supporters for establishing such a low standard of evidence as to allow poorly faked acts of human ingenuity to pass as genuine acts of God. A true miracle, according to la Mothe, could not possibly be mistaken for a false one: "it seems to me that what man can counterfeit, could not be fit for the wisdom of the Holy Spirit."⁸⁶ Most clergymen agreed that if proof of inspiration was not forthcoming and self-evident, the alleged *inspiré* could rightfully be dismissed as an imposter. A true miracle could not possibly incite scepticism, and thus would never require the kind of sustained critical examination that Misson demanded. In this light, their willingness to

⁸³ Misson, *Meslange de Lite'rature*, A2v-A3r. "Comme ces gens-là n'embarrassent pas beaucoup de la Philosophie de Des-Cartes, c'est à dire, du Sens-commun, ils commencent tous par juger. Ils n'ont pas besoin d'examen, parce que des idées claires leur sont inutiles."

⁸⁴ Misson's methodology was not independent of biblical guidance. He argued that by Jesus' own standards, one only had to produce two or three credible witnesses in order to effectively prove a miracle claim. Misson, *Plainte, & censure*, 21.

⁸⁵ Blackall, *Way of Trying Prophets*, 8.

⁸⁶ [Claude de la Mothe], *Examen du Théâtre Sacré des Cévennes* (London: [s.l.], 1708), 10.

engage in detailed examinations of miracles was more likely motivated by an obligation to temper popular excitement than it was by any genuine desire to identify God's messengers.

More significantly, however, clergymen tended to rely more heavily on the touchstone of Scripture in distinguishing true and false prophets. Blackall suggested that "we may be most certain that [an alleged prophet] is not a Messenger from God, if the Matter of his Doctrine be contrary either to the Principles of Natural Religion, or to the Eternal Laws of Reason, or to the Truth of a former Divine Revelation...."⁸⁷ The emphasis on the touchstone of Scripture was not a rejection of rational debate. On the contrary: most saw the two to be complementary. Graverol, for example, insisted that he followed the dual guide of "the light of Holy Scripture and that of right reason" in subjecting the French Prophets to their due examination.⁸⁸ Rather, the central place of Scripture in examining alleged prophets was a check against the threat of accepting false miracles, or those worked by evil forces. "The Holy Scripture alone, we are well assur'd, is able to make us wise unto Salvation," claimed Blackall.⁸⁹ With this unquestionable Christian truth in mind, it could reasonably be assumed that a true prophet would never contradict the teachings of Scripture. True prophets could thus be measured according to their conformity to these teachings.⁹⁰ Blackall, and many others, quoted Jesus' famous phrase, "ye shall know them by their fruits."⁹¹ As Kingston suggested, "the End and Purposes for which Miracles are wrought, is the only Test to try 'em by, and to distinguish those which are done by the Power of God, from

⁸⁷ Blackall, *Way of Trying Prophets*, 9.

⁸⁸ Graverol, *Reflexions Desinteressées*, 7; Schwartz, *Knaves, Fools, Madmen*, 66. "La lumière de l'Ecriture sainte, & celle de la droite raison..."

⁸⁹ This argument rested heavily on passages from Galatians affirming that the Christian canon had been closed: "but tho' we or an Angel from Heaven preach any other Gospel unto you other than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed." Blackall, *Way of Trying Prophets*, 6; Blanc, *Anathema*, 2.

⁹⁰ For more historical perspective on this line of reasoning, see Heyd, *Be Sober and Reasonable*, 38-41, 175-6; Shaw, *Miracles*, 29.

⁹¹ Blackall, *Way of Trying Prophets*, 9.

those which are not so."⁹² By this method, Kingston concluded that the prophets were not truly divine, since their "new gospel" tended to turn people away from Scripture.⁹³

This line of reasoning did not preclude God from once again inspiring human subjects to contradict established truths in advancing his revelation, but it implied that whatever he might say could not be so important as to risk accepting a false prophet. As Blackall wrote, "if, for want of sufficient Evidence of Inspiration, we should not give Credit to a Man that is really inspir'd, the only Hazard we seem to run, is, of not knowing some Truths which might be upon some Accounts useful to be known, but without the Knowledge of which we might do very well...."⁹⁴ Exactly what the inspirations of the French prophets added to humanity's knowledge of God was unclear to Blackall:

In a Word therefore; The Doctrine... of these pretended Prophets, is either Old or New; it is either the Doctrine of the Gospel, or it is another Gospel... If they shall say the first... To what Purpose then, we may well ask, do you Pretend... that you are taught it now by immediate Divine Inspiration, when, by your own Acknowledgement, you were taught it before, and we may all of us learn the same, from the long ago Divinely inspir'd Scripture? But if they shall say the other... we may then (as we said before) very reasonably require of them to give such Proof of their Inspiration and Mission, by Signs and Wonders and mighty Works....⁹⁵

There was no room for new revelation in Blackall's theology, and only miraculous works of truly biblical proportions could open the closed canon.

⁹² Kingston, *Enthusiastick Imposters... The Second Part*, 189.

⁹³ Kingston, *Enthusiastick Imposters... The Second Part*, 176-7. The French Prophets denied advocating a turning away from Scripture. Like his critics, Lacy expressed strong conviction that "the Holy Scripture is undoubtedly the Touchstone by which to try everything else," and denied the accusation that the prophets had done anything contrary to it. Lacy, *A Cry from the Desart... The Second Edition*, xiii.

⁹⁴ Blackall, *Way of Trying Prophets*, 6.

⁹⁵ In an effort to cover any remaining loopholes, Blackall even admitted the possibility that the doctrine of the French prophets might be both old and new; that is, a new, clearer interpretation of a previously misunderstood section of Scripture. In this case, he required that the prophets demonstrate, "by Reason," the logic of their interpretation in such a way as to make it plainly understood by all, since even inspired interpretations eventually had to be communicated to the common person. Blackall, *Way of Trying Prophets*, 10; Schwartz, *Knaves, Fools, Madmen*, 65.

As the English clergy clearly articulated, resolving the controversy over the French Prophets was a matter of dire consequence. Whether they acted on the Devil's behalf, or simply out of their own selfish interests, false prophets were ever ready to exploit the credulity of the masses in order to taint the purity of God's revealed Word. This put humanity's salvation in jeopardy. With such high stakes, the trying of prophets could not simply be left to the flawed conscience of lay individuals. Clerics claimed exclusive rights to this critical task and used their monopoly to preserve the perfection of revelation. The closed canon, however tentative, made Scripture all the more precious, and elevated the role of the cleric – theologically trained and well-versed in exegetical procedure – to a level of supreme importance.

Authority and Imposture

The critical weak point of the clergy's claim to authority was the ongoing possibility that God could renew the effusion of his miraculous gifts and replace the ordained preacher with an inspired prophet. Lacy had, of course, notoriously announced that the reign of the clergy would be broken in inauguration of the end times.⁹⁶ Many lay people took advantage of this atmosphere of apocalyptic anticipation. Self-declared prophets had an instant claim to fame, and it was left to the clergy to rebuke their arguments and reaffirm the authority of the established Church. As the English public had not yet come to a definitive verdict on the divinity of the French prophets, it was imperative that they be exposed for their imposture.

A great portion of the critical polemic was thus concerned with defaming the character of the French prophets. As Hillel Schwartz has shown, many writers did so by employing newly

⁹⁶ Later, however, he claimed that his inspirations did not command anyone to "quit the sacred Ordinances and regular Ministry," implying that God had not yet 'poured out his Spirit on all flesh.' John Lacy, *A Relation of the Dealings of God to his Unworthy Servant John Lacy, since the Time of his Believing and Professing himself Inspir'd* (London: Printed for Ben. Bragg at the Black-Raven in Pater-noster-Row, 1708), 17.

developed medical theories in the service of branding the French prophets as mentally ill.⁹⁷

Those clerical writers who did not rely exclusively on medical explanations, however, cast the entire prophetic movement as a political ploy. They presented a narrative wherein the French Prophets – disorderly, vain, and ungodly – had come to England with the selfish desire to do away with the traditional ecclesiastical order and establish a new Christian Church. It was a libellous campaign, but one that explicated the political dimensions of the controversy. Both supporters and detractors were thus explicit in defining the controversy as a bid for the authority to interpret divine will.⁹⁸

The English people were not oblivious to the political implications of popular prophecy. Officials of both Church and State had long fought to bridle the zeal of radical millenarians out of fear that they might sap the foundation of the established Church structures.⁹⁹ The Interregnum period saw the proliferation of radical millenarian sects whose rhetoric was distinctly anti-clerical, and often times revolutionary.¹⁰⁰ Officials of the restored Church of England had learned to associate prophecy with social radicalism, and actively sought to contain it after the Restoration.¹⁰¹ The struggle continued throughout the seventeenth century.¹⁰² As recently as 1697, the then well-established Philadelphian Society sent missionaries throughout the city of London to give testimony to their personal relationship with God, and to inaugurate the coming of a new wave of prophetic inspiration that would precede the Millennium. This

⁹⁷ Schwartz identified two common streams of thought amongst clerical detractors: the first, which constitutes the focus of Schwartz's study, relied on Newtonian mechanics and new medical vocabulary to dismiss the prophets as "knaves, fools, and madmen" without recourse to supernatural forces. The remainder of this chapter focuses its analysis on the other stream of thought, or those clergymen who preferred to think of prophetism as a deliberate act of deceit with political motives. Hillel Schwartz, *Knaves, Fools, Madmen*, 1, 3, 56-9.

⁹⁸ Heyd, *Be Sober and Reasonable*, 166.

⁹⁹ Heyd, *Be Sober and Reasonable*, 165-6, 169-70.

¹⁰⁰ Christopher Hill, *The World Turned Upside Down: Radical Ideas During the English Revolution* (London: Penguin Books, 1991); Schwartz, *The French Prophets*, 39-40.

¹⁰¹ Thomas, *Decline of Popular Magic*, 139-40, 149; Hill, *World Turned Upside Down*, 348-60; Schwartz, *The French Prophets*, 38ff.

¹⁰² For a discussion of the survival of radical ideas produced in the Interregnum, see Hill, *World Turned Upside Down*, 378-84.

incited a swift response from ecclesiastical authorities fearful of the social repercussions.¹⁰³ And authorities were not powerless to prosecute those unorthodox voices invoking freedom of expression; a statute of Elizabeth I gave legal grounds to censure those "Phantastical or false" inspirations "with an intent to raise Sedition." This statute, along with the legacy of previous false prophets, were often invoked in subjecting the French prophets to consistorial investigations.¹⁰⁴

Whether he had the advantage of this historical perspective is unclear, but Kingston was one of the first voices to warn of the political agenda of the French prophets. With reference to Acts 17:6, he declared that, "the Men that turn the World upside down (in a literal Sense) are come hither also."¹⁰⁵ In the second part of his *Enthusiastick Imposters*, Kingston's tone grew more hostile: "all their Pretences to Prophecy, are Visionary, and chimerical Conceits, caus'd by an affected Ignorance or else a deep Design to ruin Religion, in which they are Instruments in the Hands of the common Enemies the Papists...."¹⁰⁶ La Mothe claimed from the outset of his *Examen* that Misson desired to "animate the people against the ministry." The insurrection in the Cévennes only proved the success with which claims to inspiration galvanized the zeal of otherwise docile Christian people, and la Mothe could not but suspect that the *inspirés* had modeled their strategy on the precedent of the Camisards.¹⁰⁷ Even foreign commentators from

¹⁰³ Schwartz notes that former Philadelphians represented the largest group of the French prophets' earliest followers. Schwartz, *The French Prophets*, 47-50, 53; Thomas, *Decline of Popular Magic*, 144-5.

¹⁰⁴ Shagan, *Moderation*, 9-10. Cosmos, *Huguenot Prophecy*, 131; Lacy, *A Cry from the Desart... Second Edition*, xxiii; *Clavis Prophetica*, 45-7.

¹⁰⁵ Kingston, *Enthusiastick Imposters*, 15. "These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also" (KJV).

¹⁰⁶ Kingston, *Enthusiastick Imposters... The Second Part*, 112.

¹⁰⁷ [de la Mothe] *Examen du Théâtre Sacré*, 4, 6. "...animer le peuple contre le Ministere."

the *république des Lettres* remarked on how the "cabal" of prophetic supporters "tended all equally to destroy the Evangelical ministry and to turn religion upside down."¹⁰⁸

In a testament to the mutually constitutive relationship between Church and state, many commentators held both powers to be the victims of the prophets' imposture. Blanc likened the prophetic utterances to the "Roaring of an Infernal Monster" that threatened "the State and Religion with total Ruine" by introducing "Sects of Perdition."¹⁰⁹ The French prophets' alleged miracles were counterfeited with the sole intention of building a base of trust on which to erect a new political system. As the anonymous author of *Clavis Prophetica* claimed, "there is not a better State-Engine in the World, than Prophecy, when it is in the hands that know how to play it skilfully."¹¹⁰

In the absence of any evidence, speculations on exactly which power the French prophets represented varied tremendously. Such speculations were not born of idle curiosity, but a deliberate attempt to associate the prophetic impostaers with the most pertinent threats of the day. An anecdote regarding an English Catholic with training in France voicing support of the *inspirés* was enough to convince Kingston that the prophets were agents of the Pope: "our most mortal Enemies, the Papists, have [the French prophets] already in their Eye, and employ them as their Agents, under the Mask of Prophets, to hurl us into Confusion, that they may thereby more easily gain an Advantage to destroy us."¹¹¹ Without going into as much detail, Blanc insisted that the prophets were "Emissaries of a Foreign Power, Enemys to the State and Church...."¹¹² The author of the *Clavis Prophetica* assigned to them the more benign motive of rallying support for

¹⁰⁸ "Relation historique," 395. "sans nuls égards pour les Compagnies Ecclésiastiques, ni pour aucun Ordre de gens." "tendoient toutes également à détruire le Ministère Evangelique & à renverser la Religion."

¹⁰⁹ Blanc, *Anathema*, 1.

¹¹⁰ *Clavis Prophetica*, A3v.

¹¹¹ Kingston, *Enthusiastick Impostors... The Second Part*, 187.

¹¹² Blanc, *Anathema*, 8.

the war against Catholic France. This was, as he explained, a common sentiment: "some have thought, that these were Men, who were sent to sound a Trumpet, in order to raise Recruits for their Countrymen. There is no removing this Thought out of the Minds of a great number of People."¹¹³

The clergy identified the prophets' political agenda easily enough, but they expressed great concern for the common folk who might not recognize the fraud. Just as Misson fought for the attention of the common people, the clergy attempted to secure their obedience. It was incorrectly assumed that the lower social classes were the most credulous with regards to prophetic claims¹¹⁴, and clerics actively set out to protect them from imposture. The reverend Blackall's sermon on the *Way of Trying Prophets* was published, so he claimed, "for the Good and Benefit of the Poor People." It was sold for the modest price of one penny.¹¹⁵ Kingston expressed great concern for the "Weak, and well meaning men" that fell into the prophets' delusions.¹¹⁶ Such critics feared that the dramatic displays of inspiration offered by Marion and his compatriots would resonate with the common people, whose taste for theatricality might lure them into delusion. In one of the more hostile indictments of the French Prophets, Blanc likened Marion to a stage actor who "deceives the Spectators, and who plays upon the Credulity of the Vulgar."¹¹⁷ The author of the *Clavis Prophetica* employed the same metaphor, describing the French prophets as "acting as publickly, and almost as constantly as their Brethren of Drury-lane or the Hay-market."¹¹⁸

¹¹³ *Clavis Prophetica*, Av, 2.

¹¹⁴ Schwartz has argued that clerics, who were heavily influenced by earlier histories of Levellers, Ranters, and Fifth Monarchists, were simply drawing on tradition in making the connection between prophetism and the lower social classes. Schwartz, *Knaves, Fools, Madmen*, 61.

¹¹⁵ See the title page of Blackall, *Way of Trying Prophets*.

¹¹⁶ Kingston, *Enthusiastick Imposters*, A3v-A4r, B4v.

¹¹⁷ Blanc, *Anathema*, 9; Samuel Smiles, *The Huguenots: Their Settlements, Churches, and Industries in England and Ireland* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1868), 400.

¹¹⁸ *Clavis Prophetica*, A2v.

The language employed by clerical writers to describe the popular reception of fanaticism underscored the severity of the threat it posed to the body social and the urgency required in attempting to contain it. Many likened its spread to that of a contagion, one that moved between weak minds, rather than weak bodies.¹¹⁹ Graverol spoke of the great "fecundity of fanaticism," or the "facility with which it spreads amongst the [common] people." At other points, he referred to it directly as an "illness" [*un mal*].¹²⁰ Kingston was the most direct in pushing the metaphor of the infection, suggesting a strong influence from David de Brueys's *Histoire du fanatisme* (1692). As a remedy, he proposed that "those that continue obstinate in their Errors, and can neither speak reason nor submit to Truth... ought to be reprimanded and detected, to prevent an Epidemical Infection."¹²¹ In terms of membership, the sect of the French Prophets was still relatively insignificant, but as Graverol suggested, the example of Isabeau Vincent demonstrated the fact that "it only takes one imposter to give birth to others."¹²² Kingston considered himself to be working towards a cure; in the second part of the *Enthusiastick Imposters*, he referred to his work as the "antidote" to the "poisonous principles and abominable practices" of the fanatics.¹²³ To stop their spread, he advised that false prophets be "cut off from among the People" in the same way that one would quarantine a plague victim.¹²⁴

In an effort to temper the contamination of the common people, clerical writers defamed those that might be called the heresiarchs of fanatical heresies: the artful imposters that deliberately deluded the people, rather than those that naively fell into their delusions. Their rhetoric drew heavily from seventeenth-century discourse on the origin and reproduction of

¹¹⁹ Schwartz' study offers an in-depth exploration of the medical explanations offered for the spread of enthusiasm. Schwartz, *Knaves, Fools, Madmen*, esp. 47-57.

¹²⁰ Graverol, *Reflexions Desinteressées... Seconde partie*, 3, 5.

¹²¹ Kingston, *Enthusiastick Imposters*, 15.

¹²² Graverol, *Reflexions Desinteressées... Seconde partie*, 4. "il ne faut qu'un Imposteur, pour en faire naître d'autres."

¹²³ Kingston, *Enthusiastick Imposters... The Second Part*, preface.

¹²⁴ Kingston, *Enthusiastick Imposters*, A4r.

Christian heresies.¹²⁵ Kingston presented the French Prophets as artful cheats who, like the heresiarchs of sixteenth century polemic, seduced the common people into fracturing God's Church and carrying out the devil's work. In concluding the first volume of his *Enthusiastick Imposters*, he described them as "Opiniatres," or "persons that have a Pharisaical Conceit of themselves... as expert in the Art of Shifting, Doubling and Equivocating as any Society of Jesuits in Christendom."¹²⁶ He warned of the "noxious Ingredients" of wit and learning that, when combined with ambition and vanity, only helped enthusiasts to start their own self-serving factions.¹²⁷ Exhibiting his familiarity with early modern heresiology, he claimed that these were the "constant Pretences of all Deceivers, in almost every Age of Christianity."¹²⁸

Their conceited nature, as well as their shared political agenda, led clerics to believe that the French prophets, like all enthusiasts, were working in conjunction with free-thinking heretics such as the increasingly influential English deists.¹²⁹ It was a paradoxical assertion to hold the proponents of the continuation of revelation to be the allies of those that denied that God had ever revealed himself to humanity at all, but clerics saw a connection in their common desire to subvert organized religion.¹³⁰ The author of *Clavis Prophetica* remarked that the prophets denounced the "Tyranny of the Priesthood" with such zeal, "that one would have thought, that the Author of the *Rights of the Christian Church* [the English Deist Matthew Tindal] had been

¹²⁵ Bernard Dompnier, *Le venin de l'heresie: Image du protestantisme et combat catholique au XVIIe siècle* (Paris: Centurion, 1985): esp. 65-109; Malcolm R. Greenshields, "Sweet Reason in 1699: Some French Catholic Suggestions on How to Convert Protestants," in *Orthodoxy and Heresy in Religious Movements: Discipline and Dissent*, ed. Malcom R. Greenshields and Thomas A. Robinson (Lewiston; Queenston; Lampeter: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1992), 85-92.

¹²⁶ Kingston, *Enthusiastick Imposters*, 114-5.

¹²⁷ Kingston, *Enthusiastick Imposters*, 37.

¹²⁸ Kingston, *Enthusiastick Imposters... The Second Part*, 59.

¹²⁹ Redwood, *Reason, Ridicule and Religion*, 30, 37.

¹³⁰ Of course, no such alliance existed. Deists took advantage of the controversy over the French Prophets to renew their attack on revealed religion. Heyd, *Be Sober and Reasonable*, 166-9; Shaw, *Miracles*, 158-163.

speaking through these Puppits....”¹³¹ This influential writer was also the most insistent on the theory that Fatio, whom he believed to be a “disciple of Spinoza,” played the Huguenot *inspirés* like puppets to advance his own agenda. Even without being able to identify a motive, the author was certain that Fatio was a devoted enemy of the Church: “whatever [his motive] be... he is become the Enemy of that Divinity he has quitted... [and] he has declared War against it, and, I am afraid, will die with his Arms in his Hand.”¹³²

Others believed the prophets had a more direct connection with “libertine” heresies. Throughout the second part of his *Enthusiastick Imposters*, Kingston exposed the various unorthodox leanings of the French prophets’ cabal; Misson rejected the Trinity, Bulkeley was an atheist, and other members denied the divinity of Jesus and the inspired nature of Scripture.¹³³ Bulkeley even betrayed the influence of the “impious Wretch,” Spinoza, whom Kingston claimed to be “abhorr’d by all good Christians,” at various points in his writing.¹³⁴ The connection was weakly illustrated, but ardently asserted.

The link between atheism or deism, on one hand, and enthusiasm on the other, was a recent construction, but not entirely new.¹³⁵ Michael Heyd has shown that the English philosopher Henry More had first proposed the association as early as 1656.¹³⁶ The French prophets, however, prompted clerics to elaborate on More’s ideas. Woodward explained that such crude attempts at faking inspiration as displayed by the three Camisards made the public grow more suspicious of all religion:

¹³¹ *Clavis Prophetica*, A2v, A3r.

¹³² For more on Spinoza’s anti-clerical reputation in England and its connection with atheism, see Rosalie Colie, “Spinoza in England, 1665-1730” in *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 107, no. 3 (June 19, 1963): 183-219; Reedy, “Spinoza, Stillingfleet, Prophecy,” 50-60; *Clavis Prophetica*, 4-6, 11-12; *Clavis Prophetica...Part II*, 7-8, 14, 17.

¹³³ Kingston, *Enthusiastick Imposters... The Second Part*, 71-2, 86, 132.

¹³⁴ Kingston, *Enthusiastick Imposters... The Second Part*, 165.

¹³⁵ Redwood, *Reason, Ridicule and Religion*, 29-30.

¹³⁶ Michael Heyd, *Be Sober and Reasonable*, 166-7.

Among the many causes of [the languishing State of true Religion], the groundless Pretences of enthusiasts to extraordinary Manifestations from God, are none of the least. For when People have founded these Pretensions, and found them nothing more than the Fancies of Men's distempered Brains, or the suggestions of evil Spirits; they are apt to think so, even of Things truly Sacred and Divine, without taking a just care to discern the vast difference betwixt the one and the other.¹³⁷

The prophets' disorderly conduct and senseless ramblings reflected poorly on all Christian leaders. The result was, of course, a general lack of respect for Christian dogma, and a more critical population. The author of the *Clavis Prophetica* made a similar point in discussing Marion's despicable conduct: "under the Umbrage of a Counterfeit Enthusiasm, he overturns everything that's most sacred, and by pretending to make God speak, takes the ready way to extinguish all Faith."¹³⁸ For this reason, the prophets could not simply be left to embarrass themselves. They needed to be silenced to protect the integrity of the one True Church.

In hopes of turning the public against the notorious imposters, clergymen made liberal use of slanderous *ad hominem* attacks. For heightened polemical impact, some clerical writers associated the French prophets' imposture with the work of demonic forces. Blanc suspected a connection with evil forces on the basis of the prophets' disorderly conduct and muddled exhortations: "it is the property of the Devil to cause Disorder, to possess with Fury, and to utter things that are Dark and Obscure."¹³⁹ Kingston, however, was the most assertive of all English clerics to posit this connection: "there is no new thing under the Sun," he claimed. "Lucifer is again become a Lying Spirit in the Mouths of false Prophets."¹⁴⁰ These men were "seduc'd by lying Spirits," and they would "boggle at nothing that may promote the Interest of the Devil's

¹³⁷ Woodward, *Remarks*, 5-6.

¹³⁸ *Clavis Prophetica*, 23.

¹³⁹ Jean Blanc, *A Preservative Against the False Prophets of the Times: Or, a Treatise Concerning True and False Prophets, with their Characters* (London: Printed, and Sold by J. Morphew near Stationers-Hall, 1708), 16, 24.

¹⁴⁰ Kingston, *Enthusiastick Imposters*, A2v.

Kingdom."¹⁴¹ The Devil was also present in the meetings of the French prophets, working miracles to bolster their public image.¹⁴²

Even in the absence of a direct link with Satan, proof of the prophets' imposture could be found in their debauchery. Here again, clerical writers drew stock arguments from early modern heresiology in linking fanaticism and moral degeneracy. Kingston was again at the forefront of this endeavour. Jean Cavalier, the highly revered "colonel" of the Camisard forces and "Man of Honour and Piety," helped expose the debauchery of the *inspirés* after dissociating himself from all forms of prophetism. He attested to the fact that Marion was an "exploded Wretch," and Fage a "poor Devil." The latter, a "composition of Knave and Fool," was born of one of the "meanest" families in the Languedoc, and earned a reputation for his lewd activity with the local girls. The last of the three, the other Jean Cavalier (to whom the "colonel" claimed no relation), was also the worst. As well as being "infamous" for his lewd conduct with the "modest" women of his home province, having a history of involvement in the Catholic church, and having engaged in homosexual activity with young boys, he made a name for himself as an informant to the crown, betraying those Huguenots that met in *Désert* assemblies.¹⁴³

Whether or not they were marks of the Devil's influence, the indecent conduct of the French prophets and their supporters were signs of human failure. Acknowledging their pastoral duties, the clergy accepted ultimate responsibility for the Camisards' imposture, but claimed to lack the necessary power to have prevented it. Clerics explained that restrictions on Church discipline had allowed the prophetic cult to flourish in such a free intellectual climate as eighteenth-century London. Speaking of the plot of the French prophets, Kingston claimed that,

¹⁴¹ Kingston, *Enthusiastick Imposters... The Second Part*, 23-4.

¹⁴² Kingston, *Enthusiastick Imposter... The Second Part*, 92, 105, 109, 112.

¹⁴³ Kingston, *Enthusiastick Imposters... The Second Part*, 58-63; Though many of the English prophets would later advocate sexual freedom or 'free love,' none of the charges regarding the French prophets' sexual conduct had any evidential basis. Schwartz, *Knaves, Fools, Madmen*, 61-2.

an entire Independance of Discipline and Government, has been the Cause of this... and [it] will not... be prevented from spreading like a Gangrene, 'till the primitive Discipline, Orders, and Government of the Church is restor'd, as a Rule and Protection to those that do well, and the Chastisement of the Refractory.¹⁴⁴

Kingston's was a conservative argument, nostalgic of some bygone golden age before dissenting denominations were given free reign to espouse their doctrine without fear of censure from the Church of England. Others shared this sentiment. In nearly identical wording, Blanc too blamed the problem of prophetism on "an entire Independance of Discipline and Government."¹⁴⁵ Like-minded clergymen presented the history of the prophets as an illustration of the dangers of releasing oneself from the oversight of the one True Church, and the importance of maintaining it.

The problem of discipline was frequently compounded by the fact that false prophets tended to make use of their inspired status to subvert established authorities. Blanc warned of the chaotic consequences of fanatical teachings:

One of the most fatal Errors, one can fall into, is to Create Schism, and to bring under contempt the Established Order and Authority, to trample upon which is a most flagrant Crime; or to teach that there is no Church, no Sacraments, no Ministry, but such as they form among themselves, or which they arrogate to themselves; and lastly, no Discipline, which is to serve for a Rule to those that do well, and for a Curb and Chastisement for the Refractory.¹⁴⁶

Graverol expressed similar fears over the explicit challenge to Church authority on the basis of his own historical reflections. Drawing a parallel with the second century Montanist heresy, he quoted Tertullian's discussion of their assemblies: "[Montanists] believed that [their prophets] had more power and authority than priests and bishops[,] which resulted in there being very little order and regulation in their assemblies." From this he concluded that chaos was "the ordinary

¹⁴⁴ Kingston, *Enthusiastick Imposters... The Second Part*, 112.

¹⁴⁵ Churchmen had long complained of insufficient administrative power, and linked their own shortcomings to the decline of piety and respect for correct doctrine. Redwood, *Reason, Ridicule and Religion*, 39-40; Blanc, *A Preservative*, 51-2.

¹⁴⁶ Blanc, *Preservative*, 51-2.

effect, and the inevitable result of fanaticism[:] It is capable, if one does not stop it from spreading, of changing the best regulated churches into as many Babels."¹⁴⁷ The argument underlying all clerical opinion was clear: in the absence of the Church, there could only be chaos. Indeed, religion and the Church were entirely synonymous in the lexicon of the English clergy.

Clerics held that this tendency towards schism was a direct violation of the duties of the Christian prophet. God was a "God of order," and had established the office of prophecy in accordance his desire for discipline and regularity. Clergymen insisted that true prophets invariably preached a message of repentance and exhorted the people to resubmit themselves to God's law.¹⁴⁸ Blanc opened a treatise with a brief description of the disciplinary function of canonical prophets: "the Office of the [Old Testament] Prophets... was to support the Interest of the Law of God, against the Rebellious People and Disobedient Kings... to restrain Men without the Bounds of the Will of God...."¹⁴⁹ The French prophets, like all fanatics, produced only the opposite effect.

If God had promised a final effusion of his Holy Spirit, then the French prophets bore no sign of its accomplishment. Their ungodly conduct – the bawdy convulsions, the senseless ramblings, and the libertine lifestyle – all suggested that the end times were still to come. The ecclesiastical establishment was on solid footing. In a response to the inspired utterances of English prophet Richard Bulkeley, Woodward agreed that, in anticipation of the end times, God would fill the world with inspired messengers. He was even willing to concede that this day was not "very far off." It would not be accomplished, however, until Christ's return, or after the

¹⁴⁷ Graverol, *Reflexions*, 22. "ils croyoient qu'elles avoient plus de pouvoir & d'autorité que les Prêtres & les Evêques. Ce qui faisoit qu'il y avoit très peu d'ordre & de règle dans leur [sic] assemblées. C'est là l'effect ordinaire, & la suite infaillible du Phanatisme. Il est capable, si on n'en arête le progrés, de changer en autant de Babels les Eglises les mieux réglées."

¹⁴⁸ Kingston, *Enthusiastick Imposters... The Second Part*, 113, 122, 133.

¹⁴⁹ Blanc, *Preservative*, 1-2.

calamities of the apocalypse.¹⁵⁰ That is, the kingdom of Christ described in Revelation was one that would be erected in Heaven, and not on Earth. In the meantime, God established the regular Ministry to hold people to the unchanging Truths revealed in Scripture. "And by this instituted Ministry it hath, and doth please God to save them that believe: and he hath declared it to last to the End of the World." The "Ministry of Man," claimed Woodward, was "perpetual."¹⁵¹

Conclusions

By the end of 1707, after the barrage of critical publications had subsided, the public turned against the cabal of the French prophets. Even by the time Misson came before the jurors at a trial in Guildhall in July 1707 to protest the innocence of his defendants, the room erupted in laughter.¹⁵² When the prophets were once again summoned to appear before the Queen's Bench Bar at Guildhall in November of the same year, they were fined and sentenced to public humiliation on the scaffolds.¹⁵³ Writing on the subject in February 1708, the authors of the *république des Lettres* abandoned all pretences of neutrality. They specified that only a "small number" of people supported the divinity of the prophets, and sided with the majority who believed that "there was deception" in their allegedly inspired utterances.¹⁵⁴

As Schwartz has shown, after the tumultuous first year of their establishment, the cult of the French prophets rapidly lost its connection with the Huguenot population, and consequently, the *Désert* ethos. It became a distinctly English phenomenon, absorbing influences from local

¹⁵⁰ Woodward, *Remarks*, 27-8, 31, 34-5.

¹⁵¹ Woodward cited Matthew 28: 19-20 as justification for his defense of the regular Minsitry. Woodward, *Remarks*, 33-4, 37-8; Schwartz, *Knaves, Fools, Madmen*, 67-8.

¹⁵² "Relation historique," 396.

¹⁵³ Cosmos, *Huguenot Prophecy*, 133.

¹⁵⁴ The turning point, according to the article, was the publication of Marion's *avertissemens*, which clearly demonstrated a lack of coherency on the part of the young *inspiré*: " toutes les personnes de bon sens, qui en firent la lecture, reconnurent aussi-tôt la fourbe." This was a teleological account as a previous article published after the release of Marion's work did not take the same stance on the French prophets. "Relation historique," 394.

traditions and folklore.¹⁵⁵ With this transformation, the prophets in London largely abandoned their attempt to convince the world of their inspiration. Later miracles were seen as manna for the believers, rather than evidence for the sceptics.¹⁵⁶ The group boundaries, once fluid and permeable, became fixed. The disorderly mob became an organized Church, and a preoccupation with internal politics replaced the initial revolutionary zeal.¹⁵⁷ The sect that crystallized with the arrival of the three French prophets survived in some form for most of the eighteenth century, but the clergy took little notice.¹⁵⁸

The clergy's polemical campaign not only managed to quell the insolent zeal of the French Prophets' cabal, it permanently stigmatized the very notion of prophetism in the modern context. In 1747, the deist Peter Annet remarked that "since the French Prophets, there have been among us no Fools great enough to profess foretelling future Events."¹⁵⁹ This was, of course, not entirely true. Prophetism did not altogether cease in the eighteenth century; on the contrary, the Huguenot prophets represented only the vanguard of the early eighteenth-century prophetic awakening.¹⁶⁰ But the affair of the prophets marked a turning point in the clerical response to enthusiasm. As Jane Shaw has shown, after 1707 the English clergy felt increasingly comfortable in simply dismissing claims to divine inspiration on the basis of theological assumptions about the limited extent of God's involvement in the natural world. Evidently, the public was not concerned with the failure to "try the spirits" of alleged *inspirés*.¹⁶¹ After centuries of debate,

¹⁵⁵ Schwartz, *The French Prophets*, 53-4, 79-80, 86-7, 282-6.

¹⁵⁶ Shaw, *Miracles*, 50, 153; Schwartz, *The French Prophets*, 96, 99.

¹⁵⁷ Schwartz, *The French Prophets*, 86-7, 103-4, 107, 130, 143-9.

¹⁵⁸ Schwartz, *The French Prophets*, 8, 279.

¹⁵⁹ Peter Annet, quoted in Shaw, *Miracles*, 174.

¹⁶⁰ Scholars have shown that prophetism experienced a particular period of intensity in both England and France during the religious awakenings of the eighteenth century. Susan Juster, *Doomsayers: Anglo-American Prophecy in the Age of Revolution* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003); Shaw, *Miracles*, 1-2, 9-10, 17-20; Garrett, *Spirit Possession*, 7-12.

¹⁶¹ Shaw, *Miracles*, 50, 153, 174; Thomas, *Decline of Popular Magic*, 144-5.

cessationism came to enjoy normative status in both Church doctrine and public opinion, further solidifying the clergy's monopoly on the mediation of revelation.

Whatever the outcome, the barrage of critical literature levelled against the French prophets is a reminder that at the turn of the eighteenth century, the ecclesiastical establishment was not the only contender in the bid to interpret the will of God.

Conclusion

Any hope that the prophets of the Cévennes might have achieved their goals by means of arms died with the last Camisard rebel, Abraham Mazel, in 1710. Betrayed by a friend, Mazel walked into a trap at a farm house near Uzès and was killed on the spot.¹ His short-lived uprising was a diminished echo of the initial thrust of the Camisard rebellion that had ended almost exactly six years prior. Mazel was the last of the *inspirés* to attempt military insurrection. The great Camisard general, Pierre Laporte, or the "Chevalier Roland" as he was known to his troops, had been killed in an ambush in August 1704.² Elie Marion never returned to the Cévennes after his London sojourn, and spent the rest of his life prophesising to his English followers. He succumbed to a mortal fever while on a mission in Italy in 1713, the same year that Jurieu died.³ The most famous of the Camisards, the "colonel" Jean Cavalier, had helped orchestrate the first great capitulation in 1704. Abandoned by his men over his decision to surrender, he accepted a pension of 1500 livres offered him by the minister of war and fled to Switzerland.⁴ After leading an army into Spain for the Duke of Savoy, he married the daughter of French nobility and settled in Dublin. When he died in 1740 he was a major-general in the English army and the Lieutenant Governor of Jersey.⁵ Though his men despised him for it, his career was living proof that it was better to side with the magistrates than to fight them.

Hoping to secure themselves a place in the new Huguenot Church, many of the Camisard *inspirés* that survived the rebellion would later dissociate themselves from the phenomenon of prophetism. Even by the time that Misson published the *Théâtre sacré* in April 1707, Cavalier had denied ever having been possessed by the Holy Spirit, and dismissed his inspired

¹ Ducasse, *La Guerre des Camisards*, 215-21; Crété, *Les Camisards*, 268-73.

² Crété, *Les Camisards*, 13, 240-3; Joutard, *La légende des Camisards*, 31.

³ Schwartz, *The French Prophets*, 180.

⁴ Crété, *Les Camisards*, 222-5, 233.

⁵ Crété, *Les Camisards*, 275-6; Frank Puaux, *Vie de Jean Cavalier* (Laussane: Berger-Levrault, 1868), 171.

coreligionists in London as liars and madmen.⁶ When he wrote his account of the rebellion in 1704, he made no mention of prophetism, and recast the entire conflict in terms of a more noble struggle for "liberty of conscience" against the oppression of a tyrant.⁷ The Camisards Pierre Corteiz, and Jacques Bonbonnoux, each having received the gift of prophecy at some point in their lives, made the same about-face after the failure of the rebellion.⁸

Corteiz and his friend, the young Antoine Court, played critical roles in resurrecting the institutional structures of the Huguenot Church. Even before they were ordained in 1718, the men had applied themselves to preparing the *inspirés* of the Languedoc for submission to a system of church governance.⁹ The Cévennes, if Corteiz is believed, had become a zone of chaos. "The more people with whom I spoke, the more religions I found," wrote Corteiz in his memoirs.¹⁰ His correspondence provides vivid testimony to the enduring legacy of prophetism after the war. In the midst of a struggle with the dissenting "Multipliants"¹¹ of the region surrounding Montpellier, Corteiz reflected on the state of disorder:

They do not themselves know what they believe, being all completely ignorant. If one questions them, they produce a cacophony of words, so that one does not understand what they said, nor what they wish to say... they do not agree; each has his belief separately from others. And they vary from day to day... they mortally despise those who

⁶ Cosmos, *Huguenot Prophecy*, 119-21; Schwartz, *The French Prophets*, 125-6; [la Mothe], *Examen du Théâtre Sacré*, 6-8.

⁷ Joutard, *La légende*, 85; Jean Cavalier, *Mémoirs of the Wars of the Cévennes, Under Col. Cavalier, in Defense of the Protestants Persecuted in that Country. And of the Peace concluded between him and the Mareschal D. Of Villars: of his Conference with the king of France, after the Conclusion of the Peace* (Dublin: printed by J. Carson, for the author, and are to be sold by William Smith, 1726), vi, 50, 91, 115, 262.

⁸ Joutard, *La légende des Camisards*, 126; Joutard, "preface," in *Mémoirs sur la guerre*, 13-4.

⁹ Joutard, *La légende des Camisards*, 114-24; Edmond Hugues, *Antoine Court: histoire de la restauration du protestantisme en France au XVIIIe siècle* (Paris: Michel Lévy Frères, 1874).

¹⁰ Corteiz, *Mémoires*, 56.

¹¹ The Multipliants, who crystallized as a distinct sect sometime in 1719, are considered to be the last group of French *inspirés* to thrive before the reestablishment of ecclesiastical discipline. Spirit possession did not play a central role in the sect as it had in early manifestations of prophetism. Groups were typically composed of men and women of Protestant descent, but practitioners rejected denominational labels. Joutard, *La légende des Camisards*, 33-4; Vidal, "La secte contre le prophétisme," 801-25, esp 804, 820-1.

oppose them, not wishing to recognize ministers. They do not allow one to doubt their affirmations, inspired by the Holy Spirit...¹²

The *inspirés* introduced the kind of anarchy that Paul Pellisson had warned of during the first wave of child prophets. Just as the English clergy had done some 15 years earlier, Corteiz asserted that the fractured state of the Huguenot community was the natural result of insufficient church discipline: "as there is neither minister nor *proposant*, nor assembly, nor sacraments, nor discipline, the corruption is great, the prejudices lamentable."¹³ The people required direction that the Holy Spirit alone could not provide them. They needed the governance of the Church.

At the heart of the matter, claimed Corteiz, was a lack of proper Christian instruction: "There is complete ignorance. Some are of the religion only because their father or mother was. Elsewhere the youth brought up in the Roman Church do not have enough intelligence to distinguish true from false."¹⁴ The private convictions of the *inspirés* obscured the simple truths found in Scripture: "they make use of the scriptures, but they explain and apply them so badly, it is pitiful to see the audacity with which they profane the sacred mysteries."¹⁵ Much to Corteiz' dismay, the *inspirés* continued to justify their existence on the often-cited prophecy of Joel, and no application of reason or Scripture could sway their erroneous beliefs.¹⁶

¹² Pierre Corteiz, *Mémoires et Lettres inédites* (Mende: Société des Lettres et sciences et arts de la Cozère, 1983), 97-8; Hugues, *Antoine Court*, 1:103-4. "Ils ne savent pas eux-mêmes ce qu'ils croient, sont tous dans une crasse ignorance. Si on les questionne, ils font une bourboulaude de paroles, qu'on ne comprend pas ce qu'ils ont dit, ni ce qu'ils veulent dire... ils ne s'accordent pas; chacun a sa croyance à part des autres. Et elles varient selon les jours... Ils haissent mortellement ceux qui les combattent, ne veulent pas reconnaître les ministres. Ils n'admettent pas qu'on doute de leurs affirmations, inspirées par le Saint Esprit...."

¹³ Corteiz, *Mémoires*, 56. "Comme il n'y a ni ministre ni proposant, ni assemblées, ni sacrements, ni discipline, la corruption y est grande, les préjugés funestes..."

¹⁴ Corteiz, *Mémoires*, 56. "Il y a une crasse ignorance. Quelques uns sont de la religion seulement parce que leurs père et mère en étaient. D'ailleurs la jeunesse élevée dans l'Eglise romaine n'a pas de grandes lumières pour discerner le vrai d'avec le faux."

¹⁵ Corteiz, *Mémoires*, 60. "...on ne saurait trouver des personnes plus irrationnelles que ces prétendus inspirés. Ils se servent des écritures, mais ils les expliquent et appliquent si mal, que cela fait pitié de voir comme ils ont l'audace de profaner les mystères sacrés."

¹⁶ Corteiz, *Mémoires*, 98.

To address the disorders introduced by the *inspirés* and bring unity back to the Huguenot Church, Court and Corteiz resurrected the governing bodies of the pre-revocation Church. In 1715, Court organized the first provincial synod held since the mid-sixteenth century, followed in 1726 by the first national synod.¹⁷ The convening churches resolved to resurrect all former disciplinary institutions and bring themselves back in line with authorities in Geneva.¹⁸ The synod of the Vivarais in 1721 drew up a list of "regulations" to serve as a sort of confession of faith for the new Huguenot Church. Referring back to the Confession of La Rochelle, it confirmed that "the word of God, which is the Holy Scripture comprising the old and new Testament, will be held as the sole rule of our faith," but added that one should "refute all so-called revelations to which there is nothing worthy of adding faith; enjoining pastors and elders to monitor them with care."¹⁹ The pastors were themselves monitored with care for fear of allowing fanatics to the pulpit. Another regulation read that, "no one will be received to preach who is not examined in life, mores, and doctrine by the pastors and elders of the consistories already established."²⁰ There was no room for enthusiasm in the ministry of men.

¹⁷ Hugues, *Histoire de la restauration*, 1: 75, 297.

¹⁸ Hugues, *Histoire de la restauration*, 1: 78; Joutard, *Les Camisards* (Paris: Gallimard, 1976), 217-221.

¹⁹ Joutard, *Les Camisards*, 219-20. It should be noted that the Confession of La Rochelle contained references to "visions" and "visionaries" in articles 5 and 25. These articles, however, do not state that all new revelation is to be rejected, but seem only to preclude the legitimacy of establishing rules of faith or ministerial offices on the basis of direct inspiration. Article 5 reads, in part: "...no authority, whether of antiquity, or custom, or numbers, or human wisdom, or judgements, or proclamations, or edicts, or decrees, or councils, or *visions*, or *miracles*, should be opposed to these Holy Scriptures, but, on the contrary, all things should be examined, regulate, and reformed according to them..." (emphasis added). Article 25 reads, in part, "...we detest all visionaries who would like, so far as lies in their power, to destroy the ministry and preaching of the Word and sacraments." Neither article states *a priori* that "visions" are in themselves impossible, or otherwise cannot come from God."... la parole de Dieu, qui est l'Ecriture sainte comprise au vieux et nouveau Testament, sera tenue pour seule règle de notre foi, comme il est porté par les articles 3 et 5 de la Confession de foi...on réfutera toutes prétendues révélations aux-quelles il n'y a rien digne d'y ajouter foi; enjoignant aux pasteurs et anciens d'y surveiller avec soin."

²⁰ Joutard, *Les Camisards*, 221. "Qu'on ne recevra aucune personne pour prêcher qui ne soit examinée en vie et meurs et doctrine par les pasteurs et anciens et les consistoires déjà établies."

Even in the face of disapproval from authorities in Geneva²¹, Court and Corteiz embarked on several missions through the Midi where they organized clandestine assemblies in order to instruct their coreligionists. They were more prudent than the lay preachers of earlier generations, however, and kept their assemblies small and discrete. In 1719, Court wrote to an envoy of the Regent:

[I assure you] that [the Huguenots] form their assemblies without arms, without commotion, and solely for the purpose of glorifying God and working for the salvation of their neighbours; that they pray to God for the King and his Highness [the Dauphin]; that those who preside over these assemblies are all established figures; that they do not receive those who were not examined and approved by capable people; that these are no longer furious Rollands, or Cavaliers, who made use of the sword of iron to make war on their enemies; – that these are now soldiers who use only the sword of the spirit....²²

The personal whims of impetuous men were put in check by a regulatory church bureaucracy. The Church itself found a way to coexist with secular powers, even if it was unrecognized in law. All estates had resumed their place in the social order.

Corteiz's defence of the new *Désert* assemblies focused on the issue of religious instruction. Unlike those prior to the rebellion, the preachers at the assemblies under his guidance were tightly bound to the orthodox teachings of the French Reformed Church. Invoking the memory of the Camisards, Corteiz claimed that,

[self-]interest, love [of oneself], and ambition are motives capable of making [Christians] fall into error. But thanks to God, it is not the same in the places where the assemblies are attended, the catechisms used and discipline established; knowledge is much more considerable, conduct infinitely more circumspect and better regulated, and religion established.²³

²¹ Hints of conflict with Genevan authorities are perceptible in some of Corteiz's letters, published in Corteiz, *Mémoires*, 117-9, 137-8

²² Antoine Court, quoted in Joutard, *Les Camisards*, 221. "...qu'ils faisaient leurs assemblées sans armes, sans tumulte, et uniquement dans les vues de glorifier Dieu et de travailler au salut du prochain; qu'on y priait Dieu pour le Roi et son Altesse; que ceux qui présidaient à ces assemblées étaient tous gens connus; qu'on n'en recevait point qui n'eussent été examinés et approuvés par des gens capables; que ces n'était plus de ces Rolland furieux, ni de ces Cavalier qui se servaient du glaive de fer pour faire la guerre à leurs ennemis; – que c'étaient aujourd'hui des soldats qui n'employaient que l'épée de l'esprit..."

²³ Corteiz, *Mémoires*, 57. "l'intérêt, l'amour, l'ambition sont des motifs assez capables de les faire tomber dans l'erreur. Mais grâce à Dieu, il n'en est pas de même dans les lieux où les assemblées sont fréquentes, et les

Corteiz strove for an educated population, but he did not want the people to educate themselves. The human passions could lead one to error, so it was necessary that Christians receive proper instruction from the ministry. Hence, the regulations of the Synod of Vivarais put new emphasis on the importance of the catechism. "The pastors will read the catechism to the people, both in assemblies and in private houses, and explain the most obscure terms and, to avoid all confusion, they will all use the catechism of M. Drelincourt...."²⁴ If individual Scripture reading was not explicitly discouraged, then it was not desired. Revelation was to be mediated by those with the authority to do so.

As the new ministers of the Midi brought the Huguenot people back under the oversight of the Reformed Church, the wider Calvinist community was itself experiencing substantial change. Scholars such as Michael Heyd, Christina Pitassi, and Martin I. Klauber have shown how Reformed thinkers in Geneva, the traditional centre of Calvinist intellectual life, made the transition "from orthodoxy to Enlightenment" at the turn of the eighteenth century.²⁵ The intellectual reorientation was due largely to the reforms of rationalist Jean-Alphonse Turrettini (1671-1737), whose father François had been one of the most conservative voices at the

catéchismes en usage et la discipline établie, la connaissance est beaucoup plus considérable, et les mœurs infiniment plus sages et mieux réglées et la religion établie."

²⁴ Charles Drelincourt (1595-1669) was a minister at Paris who published several works intended to help people refute the arguments of Catholic missionaries. Joutard, *Les Camisards*, 219; Bost, *Les prédicants protestants*, 1:43. "Que les pasteurs feront répondre le catéchisme aux peuples, tant aux assemblées que dans les maisons particulières, et expliqueront les termes les plus obscurs, et, pour éviter toute confusion, ils se serviront tous du catéchisme de M. Drelincourt, fait en faveur de sa famille."

²⁵ The intellectual reorientation of the Reformed academies is a subject far too vast to cover in sufficient detail here. The following discussion merely synthesizes the crucial points made in the following works; Pitassi, *l'orthodoxie aux lumières*, esp. 7-8, 77-8; Heyd, *Between Orthodoxy and Enlightenment*, 236-44, esp. 240; Heyd, *Be Sober and Reasonable*, 180; Martin I. Klauber, "Reason, Revelation, and Cartesianism: Louis Tronchin and Enlightened Orthodoxy in Late Seventeenth-Century Geneva," in *Church History* 59, no. 3 (1990): 326-39; See also; Rex, *Essays*, esp. 98-9, 108, 111; François LaPlanche, "Tradition et modernité au XVIIe siècle: l'exégèse biblique des protestants français," *Annales* 40, no. 3 (1985): 463-8, and more recently, David Sorkin, "Geneva's 'Enlightened Orthodoxy': the Middle Way of Jacob Vernet (1698-1789)," *Church History* 74, no. 2 (2005): 286-305.

Academy.²⁶ With help from the Cartesian natural philosopher Jean-Robert Chouet, Turrettini subjected the Geneva curriculum to a series of reforms beginning in 1704. Convinced that the new philosophy would only serve to verify traditional Reformed teachings, he extended the study of the natural sciences and encouraged the application of philosophical rationalism in matters of theology.²⁷ In Heyd's words, the younger Turrettini's generation "reversed the traditional relationship between faith and reason, and turned the latter into a judge of the former."²⁸

When Turrettini's theology was applied directly to the problem of fanaticism by his cousin Samuel in the *Préservatif contre le fanatisme* (1723), it recalled the arguments of so many writers who had opposed the various manifestations of Huguenot prophetism over the previous 30 years. As mentioned in chapter two, Samuel Turrettini insisted on the primacy of reason in all points of belief. Not even the "inward testimony" of the Holy Spirit could serve as a substitute for rational analysis. Indeed, reason was the only faculty available to humanity in determining religious truths.²⁹ Turrettini's was not, however, the "natural religion" of the eighteenth century Philosophes. Human reason could only find God when applied to the revelations of Scripture. Indeed, underlying the entirety of Turrettini's approach to the issue of fanaticism was the premise that Scripture was the only point of contact between God and humanity.³⁰ Those who could not read or understand it were to depend on instruction from Christian teachers – all of whom were

²⁶ Heyd, *Between Orthodoxy and Enlightenment*, 38, 46-7, 152, 196-202, 23; Klauber, "Tonchin and Enlightened Orthodoxy," 327.

²⁷ Klauber, "Tonchin and Enlightened Orthodoxy," 328, 330; Martin Klauber, "The Drive toward Protestant Union in Early Eighteenth-Century Geneva: Jean-Alphonse Turrettini on the "Fundamental Articles" of the Faith," in *Church History* 61, no. 3 (1992): 342; Heyd, *Between Orthodoxy and Enlightenment*, 78-80, 138-9, 197, 220-4, 238, 240. Pitassi, *l'orthodoxie aux lumières*, 46-50.

²⁸ Heyd, *Be Sober and Reasonable*, 180

²⁹ Turrettini, *Préservatif contre le fanatisme*, 160.

³⁰ He and his cousin both insisted on this fundamental approach to revelation. Klauber, "Jean-Alphonse Turrettini," 342.

appointed according to their knowledge of Scripture – and not from God, his angels, or any of his prophets.³¹

The *Préservatif* also demonstrated the connection between rationalist theology and cessationist doctrine. The notion that God continued to illuminate human minds conflicted with Turrettini's belief that God had intended for humanity to approach his Word exclusively with the use of reason. Like the churchmen in London who applied themselves to the problem of the French prophets some 15 years earlier, Turrettini was reluctant to deny the possibility that God might once again dispense his miraculous gifts. He was, however, confident in asserting that there had been no convincing cases of inspiration since those who had been in immediate contact with the apostles.³² With particular reference to Kotterus, Drabicius, and Poniatovia, the Quakers, and to both the *petits prophètes* and the *inspirés* remaining in the Cévennes, he insisted that all claims to inspiration were either deliberate attempts at imposture or the effect of deluded minds.³³ Indeed, the manner in which he justified his incredulity towards modern prophetism recalled the work of Ofspring Blackall and Jean Blanc:³⁴ given the demonstrably superior means of resolving religious controversies based on Scripture and reason, there were simply no grounds for expecting new revelations.³⁵

³¹ Turrettini, *Préservatif contre le fanatisme*, 151-5. This thinking betrays the influence of Jean-Alphonse Turrettini. See Klauber, "Jean-Alphonse Turrettini," 344-5.

³² Turrettini, *Préservatif contre le fanatisme*, 51, 119, 254-6.

³³ Turrettini, *Préservatif contre le fanatisme*, 4-5, 52, 44, 228.

³⁴ See, for example, the discussion in his second chapter regarding how to distinguish true and false prophets, his conclusion, and his invocation of John 4: 1 and Matt 11: 15. Turrettini, *Préservatif contre le fanatisme*, 8-12, 33, 39, 116, 242.

³⁵ Turrettini, *Préservatif contre le fanatisme*, 116. "Nous avons l'Écriture Sainte que nous pouvons lire, et d'où nous pouvons tirer aisément tout ce qui nous est nécessaire pour le salut, et quand nous ne la pourrions pas lire, n'avons nous pas des Pasteurs qui nous l'expliquent avec netteté... Il n'est donc point nécessaire que Dieu nous révèle une seconde fois sa volonté... & l'on fait qu'un être sage ne fait rien sans nécessité, nous de devons donc point espérer de nouvelles Révélations."

Finally, Turrettini, like Pellisson, drew attention to the fundamental opposition of divine illumination and ecclesiastical order.³⁶ Fanaticism was a danger to the Church in every modern context; it was the "natural source" of disorder, violence, schism, and insubordination.³⁷ It even drew otherwise faithful Christians to develop a "contempt for the public worship of religion, for its sacraments, and for the ministers," and ultimately led them to reject Christianity.³⁸ Like many of the clerics in the English context, Turrettini reasoned that in light of all the risks involved in accepting new revelation, it was better to simply maintain a closed canon. Whatever any new prophet promised to add to revelation could not be so important as to risk disrupting the unity of the established Church. Turrettini thus assuaged his readers' anxiety over exercising incredulity towards claims of inspiration, even if it meant denying true prophets from time to time.³⁹ For all intents and purposes, he inaugurated the end to the "age of miracles."

Of course, the enlightened views of thinkers like Turrettini did not put an end to prophetism. As late as 1795 an anonymous collection of *Prophetic Extracts* appeared in London that contained excerpts from all of Massard's favourite prophets: John Engelbrecht, Christopher Kotterus, the dream of Louis XIV, and even Nostradamus.⁴⁰ Even in the nineteenth century the phenomenon had not disappeared, but it shed many of its supernatural elements. The ecstatic spirit possession of the Huguenot *inspirés* became something alien to the eighteenth-century cultural world.⁴¹ Susan Juster has shown that Anglophone millenarian prophets of the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries looked with disdain at the "enthusiasts" of earlier periods. Rejecting the notion of interior revelation, they claimed to derive their insights by the

³⁶ Turrettini, *Préservatif contre le fanatisme*, 45, 426. "les mouvements de leurs passions."

³⁷ Turrettini, *Préservatif contre le fanatisme*, 427-31.

³⁸ Turrettini, *Préservatif contre le fanatisme*, 430. "Il inspire à plusieurs de ceux qui restent dans l'Église une mépris pour le culte public de la Religion, pour ses Sacramens, & pour les ministres... il est pour diverses personnes une pierre de scandale, qui les porte à rejeter le Christianisme."

³⁹ Turrettini, *Préservatif contre le fanatisme*, 440-1.

⁴⁰ *Prophetic Extracts*, 1: 30-1, 46-64, 5: 1-37, 45-8.

⁴¹ Thomas, *Decline of Popular Magic*, 145-6; Juster, *Doomsayers*, esp. 266-7.

same rational means available to all Christian people.⁴² One such prophet by the name of Lewis Mayer described his art in a way that recalled the rhetoric of his predecessors' most critical opponents: "the author expects to be credited only in proportion as his calculations correspond to scripture, authentic history, and rational probability."⁴³ Mayer's divinatory methods were nothing like those of Massard's. If there was, as Schwartz has described, a narrowing of the legitimate avenues of religious expression in the eighteenth century, then spirit possession, along with inspired dreaming and astrology, had fallen out of its scope.⁴⁴

How does one account for this disenchantment of lived religious culture in eighteenth century Europe? Few historians today would accept an unqualified version of Weber's thesis on the "disenchantment of the world" and the zero-sum relationship that it posited between science and religion.⁴⁵ Weber held that secular science gradually replaced religion as the dominant explanatory framework in Western culture, eliminating any need for the type of "mystical" explanations offered by inspired prophets.⁴⁶ Since then, scholars such as Margaret C. Jacob have shown that far from there being a conflict between science and religion, there was in fact a symbiotic "interplay" between these two systems of ideas that was more often benign than antagonistic.⁴⁷ In the Calvinist tradition, at least, this interplay nevertheless served to "secularize" orthodox theology, or to diminish the importance of those elements not perfectly explicable in rational terms. Eighteenth-century theologians revisited traditional Calvinist doctrines in an attempt to integrate the principles of rationalist philosophy and Newtonian mechanics. Thus

⁴² Juster, *Doomsayers*, esp. 88-91.

⁴³ Lewis Mayer, quoted in Juster, *Doomsayers*, esp. 90

⁴⁴ Schwartz, *Knaves, Fools, Madmen*, 1.

⁴⁵ Max Weber, "Science as a Vocation," in *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, ed. H. Gerth and C. W. Mills (New York: Oxford University Press, 1958), 138-9, 155

⁴⁶ See the historiographical discussion in David Lindberg and Ronald Numbers, "Introduction," in *God and Nature*, 1-14. See also J. W. Draper, *The History of the Conflict between Religion and Science* (New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1874); A. D. White, *A History of the Warfare of Science with Theology in Christendom*, 2 vols. (New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1896).

⁴⁷ Jacob, "Christianity and the Newtonian Worldview," in *God and Nature*, 238.

rationalists such as Louis Tronchin (1629-1705) and Pierre Bayle downplayed the mystical components of Christ's "spiritual presence" in the bread and wine of communion⁴⁸, and Samuel Turrettini reduced the inward testimony of the Holy Spirit to a series of psychological processes, much as Pajon had done for the action of grace.⁴⁹

Without diminishing the importance of these enlightened theological debates, the circumstances in which they took place suggest that there were other forces involved in propelling the disenchantment of the Calvinist worldview. It is no coincidence that the most intense period of rationalization in French Reformed thought corresponded with an unprecedented level of prophetic activity in Huguenot culture. As this thesis has shown, the emergence of inspired prophets in both France and England at the turn of the eighteenth century prompted a series of heated polemical exchanges that raised – and helped to answer – the same basic questions that divided Calvinist theologians. How did God reveal himself to humanity? Who in this world could rightfully claim to speak for God? If the debates between inspired prophets and common churchmen were less nuanced than those between learned intellectuals and theologians, then they were no less consequential. Indeed, insofar as they were made accessible in print, they had a much more immediate impact on the public.

The idea that the clergy helped to bring Calvinist thought further in line with rationalist philosophy and Newtonian mechanics questions the appropriateness of the secularization thesis in explaining the progress of the Enlightenment. The disenchantment of the Huguenot world and the rise of enlightened thought did not proceed at the expense of the Reformed Church's influence on public opinion. On the contrary, church writers actively worked to dissociate the natural and the supernatural realms precisely because it helped to reinforce the authority of

⁴⁸ For a summary discussion of the such debates, see Rex, *Essays*, 92-120, 128-131; Heyd, *Between Orthodoxy and Enlightenment*, 72, 240; Fatio, "Claude Pajon," 213-4.

⁴⁹ Heyd, *Be Sober and Reasonable*, 180-1, 188-9.

traditional ecclesiastical institutions. If the Huguenot *inspirés* and their supporters helped drive this process along by provoking their ministers to address their claims to inspiration, then they could never have foreseen that it would eventually lead to the virtual extinction of inspired prophetism in the modern era.

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Abbreviations:

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