

THE ATTEMPTS TO TRANSFER THE GENEVAN ACADEMY TO IRELAND AND TO AMERICA, 1782–1795

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ABSTRACT. *Early in 1782, republican rebels in Geneva removed the city's magistrates and instituted a popular government, portraying themselves as defenders of liberty and Calvinism against the French threats of Catholicism and luxury. But on 1 July 1782, the republicans fled because of the arrival at the city gates of invading troops led by France. The failure of the Genevan revolution indicated that while new republics could be established beyond Europe, republics within Europe, and more especially Protestant republics in proximity to larger Catholic monarchies, were no longer independent states. Many Genevans sought asylum across Europe and in North America in consequence. Some of them looked to Britain and Ireland, attempting to move the industrious part of Geneva to Waterford. During the French Revolution, they sought to establish a republican community in the United States. In each case, a major goal was to transfer the Genevan Academy established in the aftermath of Calvin's Reformation. The anti-religious nature of the French Revolution made the attempt to move the Academy to North America distinctive. By contrast with the Irish case, where religious elements were played down, moving the Academy to North America was supported by religious rhetoric coupled with justifications of republican liberty.*

I

The 1st of July 1782 might have become a memorable date for republicans. On that day, the population of the small city republic of Geneva was reportedly willing to fight to the death for liberty. One inhabitant wrote that 'the true

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patriots among the men, women and children are resolved to defend their liberty to the last drop of their blood'.¹ Gunpowder had been amassed in the cathedral of Saint-Pierre and placed in the houses of the chief magistrates recently removed from their offices.² Beyond the city walls, 9,000 troops from France, Berne, and Savoy were ready to attack in order to crush the recent rebellion in the city. Yet the rebels saw themselves as the true citizens of the republic, with a government elected by the people in the aftermath of a revolution against the unpopular ruling magistrates on 4–5 April 1782. Calling themselves democrats, the rebels united in their opposition to the invasion. They planned for almost three months to defend the city, repaired the walls, and prepared for a siege.

The people of Geneva foresaw a mass sacrifice of republicans at the hands of the invading enemies of popular liberty. Yet despite the support for self-defence, the leaders of the revolution decided, during the night of 30 June and in the early hours of 1 July, to abandon their resistance. Many of their supporters were said to have gone to sleep in the anticipation of an honourable death the following day, only to rise to find the city gates open and the enemy troops in their midst. Most of the leaders of the rebellion fled.³ Instead of becoming republican heroes, they became notorious for their cowardice.⁴ When the city was pacified, the marquis de Jaucourt, leader of the invading forces, pronounced a general amnesty. Certain citizens and bourgeois could not, however, be forgiven. The twenty-one persons exiled included the pastors Jacob Vernes, Isaac-Solomon Anspach, and Ésaïe Gasc, the merchant Etienne Clavière, and the lawyers Jacques-Antoine Du Roveray and François d'Ivernois.

The significance of the Genevan revolution was that republics, and more especially Protestant powers close to stronger Catholic states, could no longer defend themselves. As a result, they could not maintain themselves as independent states, sovereign and capable of self-defence. Accepting this, some of the leaders of the exiled Genevan rebels sought asylum across Europe and in North America. Many of them initially looked to Britain and Ireland and attempted to move the industrious part of Geneva to Waterford, taking advantage of the protection Britain offered to their liberty. During the French Revolution, when French arms once more threatened Geneva, they sought to establish a republican community in North America. In both cases, one of the major concerns of the rebels was to transfer into free soil what they saw as the most important institution of old Geneva, the Academy established in

¹ Henri-Albert Gosse to Roland de la Platière, 16 Mar. 1782, in Danielle Plan, *Un Genevois d'autrefois: Henri-Albert Gosse (1753–1816) d'après des lettres et des documents inédits* (Paris and Geneva, 1909), p. 123.

² François d'Ivernois to John Stuart (Mountstuart, 4th earl of Bute from 1794), 26 June 1782, Bibliothèque de Genève (BGE), MS Suppl. 32, fo. 368.

³ Édouard Chapuisat, *La prise d'armes de 1782 à Genève* (Geneva, 1932).

⁴ Henri-Albert Gosse to his father, 5 July 1782, in Plan, *Un Genevois d'autrefois: Henri-Albert Gosse*, p. 131.

the aftermath of Calvin's Reformation. As the anti-religious nature of the French Revolution became highlighted across Europe, however, the attempt to transfer the Academy to the United States began to be shaped by explicitly religious rhetoric inextricably coupled with ongoing political aspirations for republican liberty. Thomas Jefferson, who was closely involved in the proposed transfer to the United States, provided his support and identified the Genevan Academy as one of the eyes of Europe, the other being the University of Edinburgh.⁵ This article explains why the attempts were initiated, how they differed, and considers the reasons for the failure of the project in each case. The article is not a study in migration history but is rather concerned with justifications of the project, which drew upon ideas about politics, political economy, religion, and international relations. The little-known story of the two attempts to move the Genevan Academy underscores the precarious position of Europe's republics at the end of the eighteenth century, illuminates relations between Protestant communities and the perceived threats to them, and recovers central elements of the debate about the meaning of republicanism and enlightenment and their relationship to religion in the very different contexts of Europe and the United States in a time of crisis.

II

The French author Guillaume-Alexandre de Méhégan, in his *Tableau de l'histoire moderne* (1766), noted that it was only when Calvin arrived at Geneva in 1536 that the city became a republic.⁶ Calvin inspired the people to throw off the yoke of the Catholic bishop of Geneva and of the duke of Savoy, 'established the new form of worship and introduced the sweets of democracy among [Geneva's] inhabitants'. In consequence, Geneva had 'ever since preserved the precious privilege of freedom', with a populace 'subject only to the laws, happy in their independence, rich by their industry, and revered for their knowledge'. Méhégan's view was commonplace in early modern times, that Calvin was as much a republican legislator as a theocratic leader. The two roles were interconnected because the Calvinist forms of worship ended the perceived religious tyranny of pope, bishop, and priest, just as the foundation of a republic with a popular government ended presumed oppression by a secular bishop and an ambitious ducal family. Calvin's success in winning disciples across Europe made the Genevan experiment an international affair, a Rome for Protestants.

⁵ Jefferson to Wilson Cary Nicholas (one of Albemarle County's two representatives in the Virginia House of Delegates), 23 Nov. 1794: B. Oberg and J. Jefferson Looney, eds., *The papers of Thomas Jefferson digital edition* (Charlottesville, VA, 2008).

⁶ Quotations are from the contemporary English translation: Guillaume-Alexandre de Méhégan, *A view of universal modern history, from the fall of the Roman empire* (3 vols., London, 1778), II, p. 166.

The first Calvinist missionaries left Geneva to establish congregations abroad in the 1550s, and were particularly successful in the German states, England, Poland, Hungary, and Transylvania.⁷ Calvin's model of church government, sometimes called 'the Geneva forms', became especially popular in France and Scotland, in the latter case through time spent in the city by the admiring John Knox.⁸ In 1555, Anglicans who had fled the persecution of Queen Mary founded a church in the city, as congregations of Italian and Spanish Protestants had done before them. On the return of the Protestants to England with the coronation of Elizabeth I, the queen was said to have 'thanked the city for their protection'. In the 1580s, Geneva was seen to be such a safe haven for religious refugees that Jews emigrating from the German empire sought to establish a colony in the city, although permission was not granted. Oliver Cromwell sent funds to Geneva in 1655 to combat dearth for 'the common cause of the Orthodox Religion', and in 1658 the states of Holland partly funded the further fortification of the city. The sense of Geneva as the capital of Protestantism, and as providentially protected, was therefore commonplace by the end of the seventeenth century. It was illustrated by the culminating paragraph of Isaac Spon's well-known history, first published in 1680:

And thus hath Geneva, subsisted to our times, whilst several flourishing cities have perished, and divers mighty states have been overturned, which God often permits by his admirable providence, to let both great and small states know, that their subsistence or ruin depend not on their own strength or weakness, but that they are all in his hand, and their happiness or misery come only from him.⁹

Genevans were proud of the fact that their city aided Protestants across Europe. Genevan subsidies helped to build churches and support émigré congregations in south Germany, Russia, and Turkey.¹⁰ The continental success of this theological epicentre was recognized to depend upon the continued independence of the city-state.

⁷ Graham Murdock, *Beyond Calvin: the intellectual, political and cultural world of Europe's reformed churches, c. 1540–1620* (Basingstoke, 2004), pp. 31–53, and idem, *Calvinism on the frontier, 1600–1660: international Calvinism and the reformed church in Hungary and Transylvania* (Oxford, 2000), pp. 46–76, 270–90.

⁸ John Knox, *The historie of the reformatioun of religioun within the realm of Scotland, ... together with the life of John Knox the author, and severall curious pieces wrote by him* (Edinburgh, 1732). See further Robert M. Kingdom, *Geneva and the consolidation of the French Protestant movement, 1564–1572* (Madison, WI, 1967); Scott M. Manetsch, *Theodore Beza and the quest for peace in France, 1572–1598* (Amsterdam, 2000).

⁹ Isaac Spon, *The history of the city and state of Geneva* (London, 1687), p. 120 (orig. *Histoire de la ville et de l'état de Genève* (Lyons, 1680)), *ibid.*, pp. 191, 125, 180–1.

¹⁰ Patrick F. O'Mara, 'Geneva in the eighteenth century: a socio-economic study of the bourgeois city-state during its golden age' (Ph.D. diss., Chicago, 1954), pp. 197–8; Otto H. Selles, 'A case of hidden identity: Antoine Court, Bénédict Pictet, and Geneva's aid to France's desert churches (1715–1724)', in John B. Roney and Martin I. Klauber, eds., *The identity of Geneva: the Christian Commonwealth, 1564–1864* (Westport, CT, 1998), pp. 93–110.

Geneva managed to maintain itself, according to many observers, because national independence and democratic government, when tied together by Protestantism, was deemed naturally suited to the growth of commerce. Wealth, brought from trade, funded enterprises, the best known of which was the Genevan Academy. The Academy was established in 1558, with Theodor Beza the first rector. The first chairs in Divinity, Greek, Hebrew, and Philosophy were followed by posts in Church History, Geography, Law, Eloquence, Civil History, and Oriental Languages, providing one of the most rigorous training regimes for Protestant ministry and civil education.¹¹ According to the historian Andrew Le Mercier, the Academy 'hath spread the name and fame of Geneva all over the world, whereas it was before that, hardly known beyond the limits of Switzerland and Savoy . . . and it has a very good influence over the citizens of the Republic'.¹² As William Coxe, another visitor to the city, noted, Calvin, being 'conscious that religion derives support from every branch of knowledge, liberally promoted the cultivation of science, and the study of elegant literature'.¹³

In the eighteenth century, the Academy continued to be a prominent place of learning. It was equally well known for innovation with regard to its teaching curriculum. In 1703, the professor of law Bénigne Mussard taught Hugo Grotius's *De jure belli ac pacis* for the first time at the Academy. In 1719, this was followed by the establishment of a chair of Natural Law, first held by Bénigne's son, Pierre Mussard. In 1722–3, two chairs of jurisprudence were established to teach natural and civil law and the law of nations, and they were held by Jean Cramer and Jean-Jacques Burlamaqui.¹⁴ By 1760, there were eleven professors, each elected by the Venerable Company of Pastors: three of Theology and Ecclesiastical history, one of Oriental Languages, two of Natural and Civil Law, one of German Law, two of Philosophy, one of Mathematics, and one of Belles Lettres.¹⁵ The culmination of the year was an oration by the rector each June, in which he emphasized the theocratic nature and godly mission of the city and described the independence of the state of Geneva as key to the future of European Protestantism.

Voltaire, in his *Essai sur l'histoire universel* (1754), enunciated a critical perspective on Geneva and its history, significantly drawing upon a much longer tradition of Catholic criticism of heretical movements. Voltaire held that in securing national independence from Savoy and the Roman church the

¹¹ Charles Borgeaud, *Histoire de l' Université de Genève, 1: L'Académie de Calvin, 1559–1798* (Geneva, 1900); Gillian Lewis, 'The Geneva Academy', Andrew Pettegree, Alastair Duke, Gillian Lewis ed., *Calvinism in Europe, 1540–1620* (Cambridge, 1994), pp. 35–63.

¹² Andrew Le Mercier, *The church history of Geneva, in five books* (Boston, BA, 1732), pp. 40–1.

¹³ William Coxe, *Travels in Switzerland* (2 vols., London, 1789), II, p. 91.

¹⁴ Michael Heyd, *Between Orthodoxy and the Enlightenment: Jean-Robert Chouet and the introduction of Cartesian science in the Academy of Geneva* (The Hague, 1982), p. 227.

¹⁵ George Keate, *A short account of the ancient history, present government, and laws of the republic of Geneva* (London, 1761), pp. 129–32.

Genevans swapped political tyranny for a far worse theological despotism.¹⁶ The ‘morose’ and ‘forbidding’ followers of Calvin sought ‘to change human society into monasteries’. In doing so, they abandoned the richness of life to be found in Catholic music, in theatre and in leisure, and lived instead under the watchful eyes of their pastors, becoming public censors and enjoying powers to expel Genevans from the church and to remove an inhabitant’s civic right to live within the walls of the city. Such an approach naturally questioned the link between Protestantism and political liberty, and equally any relationship between Protestantism, political liberty, and the growth of commerce. National independence might have been won but, as Voltaire wrote, the price was private life and domestic independence, as Calvin ‘deprived men of free will’. Above all, Voltaire questioned whether the city was in any sense special when viewed from the perspective of European or from sacred history. Indeed, he contended that it was following the trend of secular enlightenment and becoming francophone in many of its mores.

It was this claim that became infamous in the article ‘Genève’, composed by Voltaire’s disciple Jean d’Alembert, in volume VII of the *Encyclopédie* in 1757. D’Alembert stated that Geneva’s pastors and populace had renounced Calvinism for ‘the perfect Socinianism’, rejecting the divinity of Jesus Christ and the notion of hell.¹⁷ The populace of Geneva attended the theatre and had embraced the benefits of the pursuit of happiness and the enjoyment of luxury. D’Alembert’s claim was met with national outrage and a campaign of refutation.¹⁸ At the same time, D’Alembert voiced the questions that were obvious to external observers, who could see the rise of magistrates within the city increasingly involved with France and increasingly separated from the general populace who lived in the lower town. The problem was compounded, as Herbert Lüthy revealed in his magisterial *La banque protestante en France*, because large numbers of wealthy Genevans, many of whom served as magistrates, had begun to make fortunes from investment in the French national debt.¹⁹ Some lived partly in Geneva, had estates in the Pays de Vaud, and spent a great deal of time at Paris. Calvin had never envisaged an imperial theocracy aspiring to be the fulcrum of a Protestant empire. Nor had he envisaged a Geneva surviving by virtue of its being a French protectorate.

¹⁶ Quotations are from the contemporary English translation: Voltaire, *An essay on universal history, the manners, and spirit of nations, from the reign of Charlemaign to the age of Lewis XIV* (4 vols., Dublin, 1759), III, pp. 101–3.

¹⁷ D’Alembert, ‘Genève’, *Encyclopédie, ou Dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts et des métiers, par une société de gens de lettres* (28 vols., Geneva, 1772 (orig. Paris and Neuchâtel, 1757)), VII, pp. 574–8.

¹⁸ Graham Gargett, *Voltaire and Protestantism* (Oxford, 1980), pp. 135–55, and idem, *Jacob Vernet, Geneva and the philosophes* (Oxford, 1994), pp. 144–5; Jennifer Powell McNutt, ‘Church and society in eighteenth-century Geneva, 1700–1789’ (Ph.D. diss., St Andrews, 2008), pp. 200–6, 220–3.

¹⁹ Herbert Lüthy, *La banque protestante en France de la révocation de l’édit de Nantes à la Révolution* (2 vols., Paris, 1959–61), II, pp. 47–80.

Two parties emerged at Geneva. That of the magistrates justified its rule by its adherence to order within the city and by its closeness to France beyond. The party that began to call itself the 'représentants' in the 1760s, because its adherents brought representations of injustice to the general council (*Conseil générale*) of all citizens and bourgeois, was increasingly convinced that liberty was being lost just as manners were corrupted by luxury. Protestantism and national independence were under threat. The war between the magistrates and the *représentants* reached a peak in 1782 when the latter initiated the popular revolution.²⁰ The magistrates used their contacts at Versailles to ensure that the French foreign minister, Charles Gravier, comte de Vergennes, launched the invasion that put an end to the rebellion.

III

While they were preparing to defend themselves against the invaders, the *représentants* sent emissaries to the major powers of Europe in the hope of generating diplomatic opposition to a French invasion. One of the emissaries was François d'Ivernois, who established especially good relations with John Stuart (Mountstuart), the British ambassador at Turin. After he fled the city on 1 July 1782, d'Ivernois was working within days to establish a new Geneva. His preference was to bring as many exiles as he could to Britain with Mountstuart's help. D'Ivernois had been born in Geneva on 9 April 1757, was educated in law at the Collège de Genève, and became an advocate in 1781. His father, François-Henri d'Ivernois, was a merchant who became well known for his closeness to Rousseau after the latter's *Émile* and *Contrat social* were burned in the city in 1762. He was among the prominent *représentants* who persuaded Rousseau to defend their cause in the *Lettres écrites de la montagne* (1764). It was undoubtedly through the connections of his father that d'Ivernois created the 'Société typographique de Boin, D'Ivernois et Bassompierre', which published the 'Geneva' edition of Rousseau's writings between 1778 and 1784. At the same time, d'Ivernois became a major figure among the *représentants*, then being led by his friends the lawyer Jacques-Antoine Du Roveray and the merchant Etienne Clavière.

A week after his flight from Geneva, on 7 July 1782, d'Ivernois wrote to Mountstuart stating his desire 'to transplant into England the Republic [of Geneva], or at least the most advantageous part of the Republic'. By this, he meant the watchmaking part of Geneva, which he estimated at 'half of the city'.²¹ The failure of the revolution at Geneva had created 'fugitives in the mountains'. The *représentants* had become 'victims of the most profound

²⁰ On the *représentants*, see Richard Whatmore, *Against war and empire: Geneva, Britain and France in the eighteenth century* (New Haven, CT, and London, 2012).

²¹ D'Ivernois to Mountstuart, 7 July 1782, BGE, MS Suppl. 32, fos. 370-1, cited in Otto Karmin, *Sir Francis d'Ivernois* (Geneva, 1920), pp. 115-17.

and odious machinations that a people has ever been subjected to'. Their desire was to establish 'a new country' that would 'save old Geneva'. They were interested in finding asylum 'in a great monarchy, in an empire where the rights of man are respected'.²² Mountstuart must have acted quickly because d'Ivernois was soon travelling to London, where he stayed with his other English patron Charles Stanhope, then Lord Mahon. Stanhope and Mountstuart pleaded the Genevan cause before the new ministry of Lord Shelburne, serving as first lord of the treasury from July 1782 to April 1783 after the death of Rockingham. D'Ivernois submitted a memorandum to the British government on 27 September 1782. British support was then made public via a report in the *Morning Herald and Daily Advertiser* on Tuesday 8 October 1782. This announced that the Genevan *représentants* were being encouraged by the British government to settle in Ireland. They were to establish a colony and bring with them the skills that had made Genevan manufactures renowned:

We are happy to inform the public that an order yesterday was made by the Privy-Council, to encourage a colony from Geneva to settle in this country. Some most respectable citizens of that oppressed republic have been soliciting an asylum in this rising land of liberty, for a number of their inhabitants give the preference to Ireland, and propose to bring with them the arts and manufactures that have long rendered that city the envy of Europe and the continued object of the jealousy of France.²³

A large sum of money was reported to have been offered 'to a number of unfortunate but virtuous citizens of Geneva' as an inducement.

D'Ivernois negotiated the nature of the settlement with Shelburne and George Nugent-Temple-Grenville, Earl Temple (made first marquess of Buckingham in 1784), who had become lord lieutenant of Ireland in July 1782. D'Ivernois then returned to Neuchâtel to promote the emigration with eight commissioners representing the Genevans. Each commissioner was one of the individuals banished from Geneva by the French: d'Ivernois himself, Clavière, Du Roveray, Gasc, Melly, Grenus, Ringler, and Baumier. D'Ivernois then returned to London with Du Roveray, and joined Clavière, Gasc, Grenus, Melly and Ringler at Dublin. Earl Temple received them at Dublin Castle on 14 February 1783.²⁴ They were naturalized as Irishmen. The arrangement between the British and the Genevans was announced on 4 April 1783. Earl Temple issued a warrant for the settlement of the Genevans in accordance with 'principles truly interesting to justice and humanity'. The will of George III had been confirmed to be 'to induce the said merchants, artists, and

²² D'Ivernois to Mountstuart, 11 June 1782, 6 July 1782, and 30 Sept. 1782, BGE, 'Intelligence from Geneva 1779–1783', MS Suppl. 32, fos. 303, 372, 374.

²³ *Morning Herald and Daily Advertiser* (London), Tuesday, 8 Oct. 1782, issue 606; *Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser* (London), Wednesday, 16 Oct. 1782, issue 4185.

²⁴ Karmin, *Sir Francis d'Ivernois*, pp. 130–3.

manufacturers, citizens, or inhabitants of Geneva, to settle in Ireland, under the conviction, that by their civil and religious principles, their industry, and their loyalty, they would materially contribute to the advantage of this kingdom'. The warrant confirmed the issue of £50,000, 'to enable the first thousand emigrants to effect their purpose, of which a sum, not exceeding one half, to be applied to defray the expense of their journey, and the carriage of their effects; and the remainder to be applied in the building or providing houses for their reception.' A charter was to be drawn up specifying the laws of the colony with regard to politics and commercial life, but the warrant stated that the Genevans would be able to regulate their internal concerns. All emigrants were to be naturalized, given land, and supported in establishing manufactures.

IV

An exchange of letters between the London-based lawyer Samuel Romilly, himself the son of a watchmaker, and his brother-in-law Jean Roget, a *représentant* living at Lausanne, provides the first evidence that New Geneva was intended to incorporate the Genevan Academy. Romilly, who was close to Shelburne and had clearly spoken to d'Ivernois, revealed at the end of October 1782 that everyone at New Geneva was expected to live together as equals, in the hope of preventing the emergence of a cast of magistrates that might turn themselves into an aristocracy. The Academy was integral to this plan because of the positive role it might play in maintaining civic intelligence and good morals. Jean Roget replied that moving the Academy would be a positive act, because the Academy at Geneva had become lax and no longer distinguished. Like the city, it had been corrupted by luxury.²⁵ This aspect of the plan was made public in the spring of 1783. The immigrants were encouraged to follow the model of the Genevan Academy in establishing 'a school or academy'. The academy was planned for the encouragement of religion, virtue, and science, by improving the education and early habits of youth. Such an establishment was intended to 'remove the inducements to a foreign education; and being conducted with that attention to morality and virtue which hath distinguished the establishments in that city, may attract foreigners to reside in this kingdom for the like purpose'.²⁶ Shelburne, always a friend to dissenting Protestants, was keen on the new educational establishment. Earl Temple, an advocate of

²⁵ Samuel Romilly to Jean Roget, 25 Oct. 1782, in Samuel Romilly, *Memoirs of the life of Sir Samuel Romilly written by himself* (3 vols., London, 1840), 1, pp. 243–5; Jean Roget to Samuel Romilly, 18 Dec. 1782, in F. F. Roget, *Lettres de Jean Roget, 1780–1783* (London, 1911), pp. 292–4.

²⁶ 'Warrant by the lord lieutenant general and general governor of Ireland, for the settlement of the Genevese in that kingdom', *Annual register, or a view of the history, politics and literature for the year 1783* (London, 1785), pp. 350–4.

a 'Presbyterian mode of education', reported that he was 'full of the idea . . . of a Genevois College for education'.²⁷

As the New Geneva project developed, the plan for the creation of the Academy became ever more central. One reason may have been that it offered employment to some of the leading exiles, including Du Roveray and perhaps also d'Ivernois himself. The most significant reason was that the Academy was expected to be a powerful inducement to Genevans considering resettlement. Having an educational establishment was recognized to be one of the key reasons why New Geneva would be taken seriously. As time passed, and difficulties arose concerning the movement of watchmakers to New Geneva, the Academy became still more important. The idea of a colony of watchmakers was hindered by problems with the supply of gold and more still by the lack of fully qualified labour for each stage of the watchmaking process among the emigrants. In such circumstances, d'Ivernois and Du Roveray asked Earl Temple to make the Academy the centrepiece of New Geneva, and to establish it even if the watchmaking industry remained in abeyance. The point was the Academy would attract 'persons respected for their knowledge, their talents and their wealth'. Once established, such people 'would inevitably be followed by artisans and manufacturers'.²⁸ Accordingly, they requested commitment to an annual expenditure of £4,244 13 s 8d to cover the costs of the establishment.

D'Ivernois's and Du Roveray's plans were ambitious. They proposed a 'lower school' with nineteen tutors. The tutors were to teach reading, writing, arithmetic, English, French, Latin, German, Italian, Spanish, and Greek, design, geography, history, dancing, the exercise of arms and fencing. Higher students were to be taught by eighteen professors. Chairs were to be held in Ancient History and Belles Lettres, Modern History and Belles Lettres, Mathematics, Engineering, Rational Philosophy, Natural Philosophy, Astronomy, Chemistry, Mechanics, Civil Law, Common Law, Public and Political Law, Commerce, Agriculture, Architecture, Oriental Languages, and Horsemanship. It is noticeable that there were no chairs in theology, and that the Calvinist identity of the Academy was limited to having two pastors and a suffragan. This was undoubtedly explained by the need to fit with the predominantly Catholic Waterford. The Genevans intended to involve the local population, and planned to reduce fees for the poor. Although Earl Temple refused to grant all of the resources, cutting the budget by £500, he nevertheless sanctioned the scheme, as did George III, Lord Sydney, and the duke of Rutland, in February 1784. By this time, between 100 and 200) exiles

²⁷ Earl Temple to William Wyndham Grenville, 8 Feb. 1783, in *Report on the manuscripts of J. B. Fortescue Esq., preserved at Droghmore* (10 vols., London, 1892–1927), 1, p. 191; Karmin, *Sir Francis d'Ivernois*, p. 135.

²⁸ D'Ivernois and Du Roveray, 'Mémoire sur l'établissement des Genevois en Irlande', Bolton papers (Thomas Orde-Powlett, 1st Baron Bolton), National Library of Ireland, MS 15914 (3).

had arrived at Waterford from Geneva. Buildings were carefully planned and erected, including houses for a professoriat that included rooms for boarders.²⁹ The foundation stone of New Geneva was officially laid on 12 July 1784.³⁰ By this time, problems had developed. With some of the Genevans leaving Waterford for other exile communities, d'Ivernois and Du Roveray pressed Earl Temple to expedite the opening of the academy, in the hope of persuading people to remain. Earl Temple replied that he could not 'think this a fit time for the actual establishment of an Academy' because 'a sufficient number of inhabitants with their manufactures' remained the 'principal object' of New Geneva.³¹

New Geneva failed for a variety of reasons. The main reason was the fall of both Shelburne and Earl Temple from power. Another was the pressure to establish a viable commercial enterprise in a short period of time. It is significant that the Calvinist ministers selected for New Geneva, Etienne Dumont and Ésaïe Gasc, both turned the invitations down. Perhaps they felt that it was altogether an insufficiently Protestant establishment. All of the British and Irish ministers recognized the labours of d'Ivernois and Du Roveray. Both were ultimately rewarded with a pension.³² In the aftermath of the failure of New Geneva, d'Ivernois moved to London and became tutor to the children of the banker Samson Gideon. Du Roveray remained in Ireland.³³ Yet, as revolution loomed large across the English Channel, new prospects for the future of the project across the Atlantic began to take shape.

V

After the failed attempt to establish the Genevan Academy in Ireland, the European context shifted dramatically with the eruption of the French Revolution in 1789. As French revolutionary armies proceeded to conquer and annex a growing number of territories, the political and religious implications of such actions became increasingly apparent to European onlookers. With the onset of revolutionary terror, the Jacobin insistence that a 'good Christian' could *not* be a 'good republican' sought to overthrow a culture still reliant upon religion to ensure social and moral stability as well as the political status quo of European power dynamics. State and historic faith were no longer mutually supportive and rather became antagonistic. Even with the institutional

²⁹ 'Estimate of the houses for the Genevese, 20 May 1783', Bolton papers, National Library of Ireland, MS 15910 (1–2).

³⁰ Karmin, *Sir Francis d'Ivernois*, p. 155.

³¹ Earl Temple to d'Ivernois and Du Roveray, 28 May 1784, Bolton papers, National Library of Ireland, MS 15914 (1).

³² D'Ivernois to Stanhope, 9 Nov. 1785, Charles Stanhope, 3rd earl, miscellaneous political papers, Kent County Record Office, U1590 C65.3 Document E, fos. 1–4.

³³ Du Roveray to Stanhope, 24 Nov. 1785, *ibid.*, Document F, fos. 1–3.

re-establishment of Christianity under Napoleon, religion in France would not regain its *ancien* prestige.³⁴

European governments could not stand immune to the events set in motion by 1789; Geneva was no exception. Up until 1789, France had been one of the main powers that mediated Genevan political affairs, prevented the overturning of its existing hierarchical system, and claimed that it maintained the city's independence. Berne's, Savoy's, and France's desire to have influence over the city meant that each worked to preserve its independence from the other.³⁵ Now France was led by those seeking to overturn the political status quo, thereby fanning the revolutionary flame already ignited by the recent political unrest of 1782. Genevans increasingly embraced not only France's revolutionary sentiments but the symbols of the revolution as well, such as the 'bonnet rouge'.³⁶ International relations further shifted when Savoy was annexed to France in 1792 and the balance of power that had once secured Geneva's independence between Berne, Savoy, and France was altered. Geneva turned to the Bernese for support, but her Swiss allies retreated from protecting the city in order to avoid war with France.

In the midst of this external struggle, the Genevan government was caught between the necessity to appease vocal, radical groups within the city that could provoke French intervention and the desire to preserve political independence.³⁷ In the end, events in France ushered into Geneva the most aggressive political action of the century as revolutionaries in the city sought to introduce equality during a period of 'terror' from 1793 to 1794. As Etienne Dumont wrote, 'The Academy and the clergy are regarded as crushed since religion and the sciences are perceived as branches of aristocracy.'³⁸ Consequently, the 1780s marked a turning point in the affairs of the city that would eventually end with the French annexation in April 1798. Visitors to the city after the 1782 revolution recognized an altered culture. Madame Roland, writing in 1789, remarked, 'As for the city, of which Voltaire said formerly that the city [of] Calvin had become the city of Socrates and that its inhabitants were a people

³⁴ John McManners, *The French Revolution & the church* (New York, NY, 1969), pp. 10–11; Nigel Aston, *Christianity and revolutionary Europe c. 1750–1830* (Cambridge, 2002), p. 217; David Sorkin, *The religious Enlightenment* (Princeton, NJ, 2009), p. 311; Robert Darnton, 'What was revolutionary about the French Revolution?', for the eleventh Charles Edmondson Historical Lectures at Baylor University (28 Apr. 1989), p. 17.

³⁵ Lüthy, *La banque protestante en France*, II, pp. 749–89.

³⁶ Corinne Walker 'Le langage des apparences ou la loi des distinctions: Genève pendant la révolution', *Revue du vieux Genève*, 20 (1990), pp. 25–31, and idem, 'Langages et révolution: l'expression symbolique de la révolution Genevoise', *Regards sur la révolution genevoise, 1792–1798*, Société d'histoire et d'archéologie de Genève (SHAG), *MDG*, 55 (1992), pp. 170–90.

³⁷ Éric Golay, '1792–1798 révolution Genevoise et Révolution française: similitudes et contrastes', in *Regards sur la révolution genevoise, 1792–1798*, SHAG, *MDG*, 55 (1992), p. 30.

³⁸ Etienne Dumont to Albert Gallatin, 19 Aug. 1794, cited in Karmin, *Sir Francis d'Ivernois*, p. 177.

of wisdom, she is much changed ... Geneva is a French city: language and manners, all assimilated to our nation.'³⁹

During this volatile period, d'Ivernois became an indefatigable opponent of the French Revolution and an advocate of unrelenting war by Britain upon the First French Republic. Du Roveray became a spy for the British, working across Switzerland from 1792.⁴⁰ Arguing against both Shelburne and Stanhope, who remained cosmopolitan friends of peace and free trade, d'Ivernois and Du Roveray advocated a Britain with armies on mainland Europe, ready to defend Europe's small states against attempts by France or other states at universal monarchy.⁴¹ When they became uncertain as to whether Britain might be defeated by revolutionary France, and when Geneva was being threatened by egalitarian revolutionaries from both within and without, they set their sights on North America.

Geneva's political climate in 1794 along with the imminent threat of French revolutionary armies led d'Ivernois urgently to develop plans to establish a 'New Geneva' in the United States of America. In proposing his idea to America's Founding Fathers George Washington, John Adams, and Thomas Jefferson, a new rationale for the project based upon a concern for religious preservation emerged. The emphasis on religion, lacking in the Ireland project, became a central reason for seeking out the United States as an ideal safe haven. Through this correspondence, d'Ivernois's idea to bring Geneva to America through the transplantation of its educational institution emerges as an example of how religion persisted in holding a central role within Genevan identity post-1789 out of the hope that Genevan Protestantism and Republicanism would find a home together in the land of America.

VI

This was not the first time that Genevans sought to make their mark on North America.⁴² During the eighteenth century, the Company of Pastors was in frequent correspondence with New England's reformed church pulpits. Reports on the state of the reformed churches in New York, Philadelphia, and

³⁹ Jean-Daniel Candaux, *Voyageurs européens à la découverte de Genève* (Geneva, 1966), p. 155. See further J. Gaberel, *Histoire de l'église de Genève* (3 vols., Geneva, 1862), III, pp. 424–5; Edouard Dufour, *Jacob Vernes, 1728–1791: essai sur sa vie et sa controverse apologétique avec J.-J. Rousseau* (Geneva, 1898), p. 28; Sorkin, *The religious Enlightenment*, pp. 109–10.

⁴⁰ Jean Desonnaz, *Histoire de la conjuration de Grenus, Soulavie, &c. contre la république de Genève faisant suite à la correspondance de Grenus et Desonnaz* (3 vols., Geneva, 1794), III, p. 52.

⁴¹ Du Roveray, *Declaration des citoyens de Genève anti-anarchistes: du 6 Janvier 1794* ([Geneva], 1794); d'Ivernois, *La Révolution française à Genève: tableau historique et politique de la France envers les Genevois, depuis le mois d'Octobre 1792 au mois de Juillet 1795* (London, 1795).

⁴² Records also indicate some resistance to Genevans emigrating to territories such as Carolina: Archives d'état de Genève (AEG), Registres de la Compagnie des Pasteurs (RCP) 24, 16 Apr. 1734, fo. 46.

'New Scotland' were sent to the Company,⁴³ and the Company helped in filling pulpits, including for the French church in New York.⁴⁴ Additionally, Genevan clergy participated in the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts (SPG), a society born chiefly out of the work of Englishman Thomas Bray in 1701. The society sought to enhance churches in the colonies through the Christian education of settlers as well as the evangelism of Native Americans and African slaves.⁴⁵ To that end, SPG supplied educated and upstanding Church of England priests as well as funds for clerical books, fare, and clothing.⁴⁶ In order to provide these services, SPG was dependent on financial contributions and members' subscriptions.⁴⁷ Geneva received notices seeking to appeal to their concern over 'the despicable plots of the Atheists, Deists, and of the Socinians' who were working to 'destroy in them, and in others, all the notions of divine things, and of the difference that exists between good and bad.'⁴⁸ The Genevan clergymen Jean-Alphonse Turretini and Louis Tronchin, who were already forging connections with England's Anglican Church over the revision of the liturgy through correspondence with the archbishop of Canterbury, became supporters of the cause and were elected to the society in 1704.⁴⁹ Significantly, Geneva would use SPG's model to establish the *Chambre des Prosélytes* in 1708 in order to aid the Genevan Consistory in the reception of Roman Catholics to the reformed faith.⁵⁰ Professor of Theology and Genevan pastor Bénédict Pictet

⁴³ AEG, RCP 31, 12 Oct. 1770, fos. 66–7; *ibid.*, 8 Mar. 1771, fo. 97. Difficulties with the Anglicans in the area are alluded to in the report to the Company.

⁴⁴ See AEG, RCP 29 and the correspondence found in BGE, MS Fr. 451. The key role of the church of Geneva is evident when the New York church refused the candidate recommended by the church at Amsterdam because he did not come from Geneva but from Zurich: AEG, RCP 29, 3 May 1765, fo. 398. Jean-Louis Duby is an example of a Genevan pastor filling the New York pulpit: AEG, RCP 35, 21 Oct. 1796, fo. 88.

⁴⁵ Parliament began supporting missionary activity to New England from 1649 with the creation of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in New England due to Edward Winslow's promotion of the cause in England and the success of John Eliot's work with the Algonquians in New England: Francis Bremer, *The puritan experiment: New England society from Bradford to Edwards* (rev. edn, Lebanon, NH, 1995), p. 203. Bray then launched the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge (SPCK) at the end of the seventeenth century, which became SPG in 1701. See Margaret Dewey, *The messengers: a concise history of the United Society for the Propagation of the Gospel* (London and Oxford, 1975); H. P. Thompson, *Into all lands: the history of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, 1701–1950* (London, 1951); C. F. Pascoe, *Two hundred years of the S.P.G.: an historical account of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, 1701–1900* (London, 1901).

⁴⁶ Records indicate that the Company of Pastors was already in charge of dispensing willed funds purposed for the evangelism of 'infidels': AEG, RCP 18 (1703), fo. 452.

⁴⁷ Dewey, *The messengers*, p. 14; Thompson, *Into all lands*, p. 102.

⁴⁸ BGE, Arch. Tronchin 55, 'Relation succincte des diverses societez etablies depuis peu d'Années en Angleterre pour la Reforme des mœurs, et pour la Propagation de la religion chretienne', fo. 3.

⁴⁹ BGE, Arch. Tronchin 55, fo. 52v; Thompson, *Into all lands*, pp. 39–40; Pascoe, *Two hundred years of the S.P.G.*, p. 734.

⁵⁰ AEG, RCP 19, 30 Dec. 1707, fo. 244; AEG, *Chambre des Prosélytes* 1, 16 Jan. 1708, fo. 3.

would serve as a member of both SPG as well as a founding member of the *Chambre*.⁵¹

While Genevan pastors forged religious links in these ways with American churches and clergy, others sought investment opportunities, such as Genevan financier Etienne Clavière, who sent J.-P. Brissot to America in the late 1780s in order to gather information regarding the purchasing of debt stock. Undoubtedly, the most famous Genevan to bring his financial ingenuity to the United States was Albert Gallatin (1761–1849). With few prospects for advancement in Geneva, Gallatin emigrated to America in 1780 at the age of nineteen, and he initially served in the revolutionary army and taught French at Harvard University in 1782.⁵² Over the course of his successful career, he was elected to the US Senate (1793) and US House of Representatives (1795–1801) before being appointed the secretary of the treasury in 1801. Gallatin served under Presidents Thomas Jefferson and James Madison until 1814, which is the longest term ever served as treasury secretary.⁵³ Gallatin additionally had a leading role in the founding and chartering of New York University in 1831 as well as serving as the president of the first council of the university.⁵⁴ He would prove to be a key proponent of Genevan immigration.

Genevans were not merely seeking the opportunities promised by America. It is well known that Geneva was a key destination for the Reformation educational tour in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.⁵⁵ Similarly, Geneva became a stop on the Grand Tour during the eighteenth century.⁵⁶ A graduate of Calvin's Academy, Albert Gallatin attested to the flow of Europeans and Americans to Geneva's Academy during his time from 1770 to 1780 saying 'a great many distinguished foreigners came to Geneva to finish their education', including Benjamin Franklin's grandson, Benjamin Franklin Bache.⁵⁷ Indeed,

⁵¹ Pictet wrote to SPG to inform them of the establishment of the committee: AEG, *Chambre des Prosélytes* 1, 6 Feb. 1708, fo. 18. See response: *ibid.*, 10 Sept. 1708, fos. 79–81. Records from 18 Feb. 1709 indicate that England planned to introduce a similar society to evangelize Roman Catholics: *ibid.*, fos. 119–20.

⁵² Gallatin made plans with fellow Genevan Academy schoolmates Henri Serre and Jean Badollet though only Serre was able to go with him at his departure on 1 Apr. 1780: Raymond Walters, Jr, *Albert Gallatin: Jeffersonian, financier and diplomat* (New York, NY, 1957), p. 9.

⁵³ See Nicholas Dungan, *Gallatin: America's Swiss founding father* (New York, NY, 2010). Gallatin was denied the office of the secretary of state due to his Genevan birth and the fact that Geneva came under Bonaparte's control: Walters, *Albert Gallatin*, p. 210.

⁵⁴ BGE, MS Fr. 1130. Dungan, *Gallatin*, p. 155; John Austin Stevens documents that Gallatin was seeking to establish a university education free to all and unhampered by confessional governance: *Albert Gallatin* (Boston, MA, and New York, NY, 1911), pp. 369–70.

⁵⁵ Karin Maag, *Seminary or university? The Genevan Academy and reformed higher education, 1560–1620* (Aldershot, 1995).

⁵⁶ Jeremy Black, *The British and the Grand Tour* (London, 1985), p. 196; Heyd, *Between Orthodoxy and the Enlightenment*, p. 247.

⁵⁷ Gallatin to Eben Dodge, New York, 21 Jan. 1847, Henry Adams, ed., *The writings of Albert Gallatin* (Philadelphia, PA, 1879), II, p. 578. Jefferson names Mr Kinloch and Mr Huger as former students from South Carolina: Thomas Jefferson, *The writings of Thomas Jefferson*,

the Academy's original founder was commended for the way in which he championed learning during the Reformation period:

Whatever may have been his defects and erroneous views, Calvin had at all events the learning of his age, and, however objectionable some of his religious doctrines, he was a sincere and zealous friend of knowledge and of its wide diffusion amongst the people. Of this he laid the foundation by making the whole education almost altogether gratuitous from the A B C to the time when the student had completed his theological or legal studies.⁵⁸

Gallatin would prove instrumental in assisting Thomas Jefferson's nephew, Richard Terrell, to study in Geneva in 1816.⁵⁹ Gallatin recommended Geneva's Academy to Jefferson saying that he 'found the institutions and professors as good at Geneva as when I had left it thirty-five years ago'.⁶⁰

Undoubtedly, this close friendship contributed to Jefferson holding Geneva's Academy in high esteem,⁶¹ and Jefferson was frequently complimentary. In a response to J. Bannister, Jr, on 15 October 1785, Jefferson wrote that the best opportunity for the education of youth in Europe was either Geneva or Rome. By 1791, Jefferson claimed that the best school in Europe was in Edinburgh, but that 'On the continent of Europe, no place is comparable to Geneva. The sciences are there more modernized than anywhere else. There, too, the spirit of republicanism is strong with the body of the inhabitants.'⁶² In the end, Jefferson's opinion would go a long way toward providing d'Ivernois with the champion he needed to pitch his project to the highest American political authority of the time, President George Washington.⁶³

ed. H. A. Washington (9 vols., Washington, DC, 1853–4), III, Jefferson to Alister, 22 Dec. 1791, p. 313. See other names listed by Karmin, *Sir Francis d'Ivernois*, p. 644.

⁵⁸ Gallatin to Eben Dodge, New York, 21 Jan. 1847: Adams, ed., *The writings of Albert Gallatin*, II, p. 572.

⁵⁹ Richard was married to Jefferson's niece, Lucy Carr, who was the daughter of Jefferson's sister, Martha Jefferson, who had married Mr Dabney Carr. Gallatin helped introduce him in France and Geneva with letters of reference: BGE, MS Fr. 322, 2 Aug. 1816, fo. 69r–v. Jefferson wrote, 'I thank you for your attention to my request as to Mr. Terrell. You judge rightly that I have no acquaintances left in France: some were guillotined, some fled, some died, some are exiled, and I know of nobody left but La Fayette': Jefferson to Gallatin, 11 Apr. 1816: Adams, ed., *The writings of Albert Gallatin*, I, p. 701.

⁶⁰ Gallatin to Jefferson, 1 Apr. 1816: Adams, ed., *The writings of Albert Gallatin*, I, p. 700.

⁶¹ In such correspondence, Gallatin described Jefferson as 'one of my truest and best friends, and I owe him obligations which I would feel gratified, in some degree, to return': BGE, MS Fr. 322, fo. 69r–v.

⁶² Jefferson, *The writings of Thomas Jefferson*, III, Jefferson to Alister, 22 Dec. 1791, p. 313.

⁶³ Letters between Jefferson and the Genevan Professor Marc-Auguste Pictet indicate that Jefferson was eager to support furthering knowledge of the region: 'Our country offers to the lovers of science a rich field of the works of nature, but little explored, except in the department of botany. One would imagine indeed from the European writings that our animal history was tolerably known but time will show in it the grossest errors, our geology is untouched, and would have been a precious mine for you, as your views of it would have been precious to us. I will not allow myself to conclude that the present state of things is final. Our

VII

In his first step toward securing assistance in moving the Genevan Academy to America, d'Ivernois sent a memoir of the project to Vice-President John Adams on 22 August 1794.⁶⁴ Therein, d'Ivernois offered a detailed proposal for transplanting the Academy in its totality. Speculating that \$300,000 of uncultivated land would be needed, he suggested that Genevan shareholders would advance the amount and serve as the proprietors of the land. Finances were to be arranged so that free public education would be offered following Genevan practice. This was only one of many indications that d'Ivernois did not intend to leave old Geneva behind but to provide a new location wherein ideal conditions would enable it to thrive. Consequently, he suggested that New Geneva reflect 'old' Genevan in its environs by residing adjacent to a river and within a similar climate. Moreover, the university would employ the current Genevan professors to take up their position at the new location if they were amenable to the opportunity; notably, this proposal now included three theologians that he commended to Adams for their merit.⁶⁵ Finally, teaching would be conducted in French or Latin, though he assured Adams that all of the professors could speak or at least read English.

Although d'Ivernois acknowledged that American hospitality towards émigrés did not typically entail seeking them out or providing financial support, he urged Adams to seek permission and assistance from Congress or a provincial legislature. D'Ivernois speculated that \$15,000 would be needed to support the salary of those running the university, and houses would need to be built for the first inhabitants. To make the idea more attractive, d'Ivernois highlighted the benefits of establishing this 'academic colony' in the United States. Genevans would not only cultivate the land, but they would provide a university and attract emigrants, which could bring prosperity to the region. With a combination of Genevan capitalists and farmers at work, d'Ivernois did not doubt that New Geneva would become 'one of the prosperous cities of America' in a matter of years.⁶⁶ Meanwhile, if approved, the legislature would be given the right to establish a sub-committee that would determine the location of the university, its regulations, the number of professors, their function, salary, election, and more as long as it was understood that the colony would be destined for Genevans exclusively at the start. With the prospect

country is but beginning to develop its resources': BGE, Archives Rilliet, Jefferson to Pictet, 14 Oct. 1795.

⁶⁴ Original French manuscript: BGE, MS Suppl. 976, d'Ivernois to Adams, 22 Aug. 1794, fos. 59–63v. See French transcription in Karmin, *Sir Francis d'Ivernois*, pp. 640–9. An English translation is found in BGE, MS Suppl. 976, fos. 65–68v.

⁶⁵ D'Ivernois expressed concern that the old age of the Theology professors might prevent them from relocation. ⁶⁶ BGE, MS Suppl. 976, 22 Aug. 1794, fo. 61.

of reciprocal benefits, 'one of the most interesting and ancient institutions' in Europe would start a new chapter in the new world.⁶⁷

While clearly similar to the Ireland project, d'Ivernois's proposal to the United States was distinctive in the emphasis placed upon the religious necessity of the move. The plan to establish a Genevan colony in Ireland in 1782 had not been dominated by religious motivations or discourse and nor did it make provisions for a Bible or theology professor.⁶⁸ By 1794, however, d'Ivernois was not only pushing the academy as the primary reason for the colony, he was communicating a more explicit motivation to preserve the traditional Genevan dynamic between religion and politics. This urgency is evident in his first correspondence to Secretary of State Thomas Jefferson on 5 September that year wherein he fretted that 'our country is lost without hope of reparation'.⁶⁹ In both letters, d'Ivernois identified the impetus for the project as 'the alarming crisis that menaces the social order and all of Christianity'.⁷⁰ Thus, he wrote, 'Our wise and tolerant religion as much as its respectable ministers' all face the prospect of 'degradation under a populace' influenced by the banner and excesses of the French Revolution to the detriment of the 'the old world!' For d'Ivernois, this was a crisis that menaced both Christianity and European education.⁷¹ Such comments indicate that the turn of events in 1794 due to the French Revolution convinced d'Ivernois of the importance of actively protecting the religious identity of a New Geneva in addition to defending free education.

Consequently, in his post-1789 plan, d'Ivernois included three positions for theology. Moreover, he expressly described America as an ideal place to transplant Geneva's Academy because of its religious and political identity. In his words, it would be 'a Protestant University in a Protestant country'.⁷² This was crucial to preserving the Genevan way of life by establishing what d'Ivernois described as 'a colony of European Protestants and Republicans' separated from the French revolutionary threat.⁷³ Without such freedom, d'Ivernois

⁶⁷ BGE, MS Suppl. 976, 22 Aug. 1794, fo. 61v.

⁶⁸ 'Additional memorial from Mons. d'Ivernois delivered to me (Thomas Orde-Powlett, 1st Baron Bolton) by Lord Mahon, 11 June 1784', Bolton papers, National Library of Ireland, MS 15914 (3). Only minor reference is made to acknowledge benefits that the school might bring to 'the encouragement of religion, virtue and science': P. Egan, 'The Genevese', *History, Guide & Directory of County and City of Waterford* (n.d.), p. 206. See also Peter Jupp's article: 'Genevese exiles in County Waterford', *Journal of the Cork Historical and Archaeological Society*, 75 (1970), pp. 29–35.

⁶⁹ BGE, MS Suppl. 976, 5 Sept. 1794, fo. 72v.

⁷⁰ BGE, MS Suppl. 976, 22 Aug. 1794, fo. 63. Similarly, d'Ivernois's correspondence with Jefferson speaks about the alarming crisis that menaced both knowledge and the social order: BGE, MS Suppl. 976, 5 Sept. 1794, fo. 72v.

⁷¹ BGE, MS Suppl. 976, 22 Aug. 1794, fo. 61v.

⁷² BGE, MS Suppl. 976, 22 Aug. 1794, fo. 59v: 'The entire transplantation of a Protestant University into a Protestant country could be, it seems to me, an event extraordinary enough to merit perhaps a favorable exception and even some great sacrifice.'

⁷³ BGE, MS Suppl. 976, 5 Sept. 1794, fo. 71. In fact, he particularly appealed to the Democratic Republican party as coinciding with Geneva's opposition to monarchical

feared that 'not only political liberty, but the life, fortune and religion' of all honest Genevans would be at the mercy of their oppressors.⁷⁴ D'Ivernois awaited a response to his proposition to establish the university in the autumn of 1795 and begin teaching in spring 1796.⁷⁵

Due to Jefferson's strong support for the advancement of knowledge and his high opinion of Geneva, upon receiving the letter from d'Ivernois, he recommended the plan to Wilson Cary Nicholas on 22 November 1794.⁷⁶ Jefferson indicated there that he had met d'Ivernois while the latter was exiled in Paris for his democratic views. Once more, Jefferson was extremely complimentary about the reputation of Geneva's Academy saying, 'You know well that the colleges of Edinburgh and Geneva, as seminaries of science, are considered as the two eyes of Europe; while Great Britain and America give the preference to the former, and all other countries give it to the latter.'⁷⁷ At this stage in the process, Jefferson was mindful of the obstacles facing d'Ivernois's goal, namely expense and the problematic nature of teaching in a foreign language (whether French or Latin). Nevertheless, Jefferson requested that Nicholas consider the proposal and discuss the idea with members of the Virginia Assembly.

Meanwhile, Adams passed on the information to George Washington, who wrote to Adams on 15 November 1794 saying, 'That a National University in *this* country is a thing to be desired, has always been my decided opinion.'⁷⁸ However, the prospect of complex arrangements and expenses that would be required for transplanting an entire 'Seminary of *Foreigners*', who might not be competent in English, was daunting to him. Rather, Washington regarded the assimilation of emigrants into the custom and languages of America as preferable to seeking to transplant a body of people who would maintain their previous customs, ideology, and language. For Washington, this prevented the country from becoming 'one people'.

Similar resistance to the project was evident from other political corners. On 6 February 1795, Jefferson wrote to inform d'Ivernois that although leading members of the Virginia legislature were interested in supporting the endeavour, it had not been approved due to obstacles of language and

despotism on the one hand and popular licence on the other while still upholding the importance of liberty and peace.

⁷⁴ BGE, MS Suppl. 976, 22 Aug. 1794, fo. 63v.

⁷⁵ BGE, MS Suppl. 976, 22 Aug. 1794, fos. 61v–62v. D'Ivernois requested a response before sending a representative to America to negotiate the transplantation.

⁷⁶ Jefferson would later write that 'Your proposition, however, for transplanting the college of Geneva to my own county, was too analogous to all my attachments to science, and freedom, the first-born daughter of science, not to excite a lively interest in my mind, and the essays which were necessary to try its practicability': Jefferson, *The writings of Thomas Jefferson*, IV, Jefferson to d'Ivernois, 6 Feb. 1795, pp. 113–15.

⁷⁷ Jefferson, *The writings of Thomas Jefferson*, IV, Jefferson to Wilson Nicholas, 22 Nov. 1794, p. 109.

⁷⁸ George Washington, *Letters and addresses*, ed. Jonas Viles (New York, NY, 1909), pp. 367–8.

expense.⁷⁹ Jefferson expressed his disappointment and hope that Geneva's 'inhabitants must be too much enlightened, too well experienced in the blessings of freedom and undisturbed industry, to tolerate long a contrary state of things'. Nevertheless, this was not the final word. Behind the scenes, Jefferson continued to make efforts to see the project succeed by contacting George Washington on 23 February 1795.⁸⁰ Jefferson stressed the effects of revolution on the Academy: 'The revolution which has taken place at Geneva has demolished the college of that place, which was in a great measure supported by the former government.'⁸¹ Jefferson then suggested some modifications to d'Ivernois's plan. For example, he rejected the idea of a colony of Genevan farmers by claiming that they could not count upon the land to raise money for the project. Rather, negotiating business with 'monied' Genevans displaced by their new government seemed more promising to him. Additionally, Jefferson stressed that the school could be useful to the federal city if it were located nearby. Importantly, he was able to offer these suggestions because Washington had first solicited Jefferson's opinion on how to use land shares in the Potomac and James River Companies that had been granted to Washington by the Virginia legislature.⁸² It was thought that an academic institution would be the best use of the funds, and Jefferson proposed the Academy of Geneva as the benefactor of that sum.

Washington persisted in his reservations. On 15 March 1795, Washington responded from Philadelphia to Jefferson.⁸³ He confirmed that his objective in using the land was to endow a national university wherein men would complete their education while benefiting from proximity to the hub of US government. The donation, however, would only be enough to provide a portion of the cost needed to establish the college and could not support the migration of an entire academy. Yet, this was only one of many issues Washington raised with regard to d'Ivernois's plan. Washington expressed further concern over transplanting the professors as a group, an element of d'Ivernois's project that Jefferson also questioned. Washington wondered whether all were men of good character and could speak English adequately. Like Jefferson, he was also concerned that their presence would prevent the institution from hiring top professors from other places such as Scotland. Moreover, Washington was sensitive to the political implications of d'Ivernois's project. Since the professors

⁷⁹ Jefferson, *The writings of Thomas Jefferson*, IV, Jefferson to d'Ivernois, 6 Feb. 1795, pp. 113–15.

⁸⁰ Jefferson to Washington, 23 Feb. 1795, in John Catanzariti, ed., *The papers of Thomas Jefferson*, xxviii (Princeton, NJ, 2000), pp. 275–8.

⁸¹ Once again, Jefferson described Geneva as one of 'the two eyes of Europe in matters of science'.

⁸² Washington to Jefferson, 25 Feb. 1785; Julian Boyd, ed., *The papers of Thomas Jefferson*, viii (Princeton, NJ, 1953), pp. 3–6.

⁸³ Washington to Jefferson, 15 Mar. 1795; Catanzariti, ed., *The papers of Thomas Jefferson*, xxviii, pp. 306–8.

were at odds with the political group seeking equality within Geneva, Washington reasoned that it might appear that America was supporting the aristocratic party. Consequently, Washington relayed that Adams was empowered to relay to d'Ivernois his refusal of the project.⁸⁴ Instead, Washington intended to move forward with the Virginia legislature to establish an academic institution that would rival Europe's institutions and discourage Americans from completing their education in Europe, 'where too often principles and habits not friendly to a republican government are imbibed, which are not easily discarded'. Washington's decision ended the matter as far as the American government was concerned. Interestingly, it appears that Jefferson never told d'Ivernois that he had asked Washington and that his effort had failed. Posterity would not forget Jefferson's efforts to secure state assistance for higher education in Virginia, deeming him the 'Father of the University of Virginia'.⁸⁵ Few knew that under different circumstances he could have been the Father of the new University of Geneva instead.

VIII

In the wake of Washington's refusal, d'Ivernois would conclude that the project was compromised by the simultaneous promulgation of a rival plan by Genevans already living in America.⁸⁶ Indeed, while d'Ivernois was communicating his plan to America's political leaders, an alternate plan was in process. Alexandre Couronne, and the Genevan pastors Jean-Louis Duby and Pierre-Daniel Bourdillon led the rival group. Revolutionary authorities had reprimanded or punished each of them.⁸⁷ Upon landing in America, however, they faced new difficulties. Disillusionment characterizes their early correspondence despite the eagerness to settle among 'a people moral, hospitable, enlightened, in the breast of religious and political peace'.⁸⁸ Negative attitudes toward their foreign tongue and a limited concern for education within the country took them by surprise. Initially attracted by cheap land and economic opportunity, they were faced with the reality of rising costs and increasing competition. Price, proximity to settled areas, and the dangers of Native Americans, not to mention

⁸⁴ Adams wrote to d'Ivernois on 11 Dec. 1795 saying, 'I regret with you that America cannot avail herself of the Science and Literature of the Genevan University: but the compleat impossibility of it is absolutely certain': BGE, MS Suppl. 976, fo. 97.

⁸⁵ Herbert B. Adams, *Thomas Jefferson and the University of Virginia* (Washington, Gov. Printing Office, 1888). Adams regarded the Geneva project as the 'historical origin' of Jefferson's dream of a 'cosmopolitan university, to be equipped with the best scientific talent that Europe could afford' (p. 45). Jefferson never gave up seeking to bring European born or educated professors to enhance the education at the University of Virginia (p. 110). See also Nicholas Hans, 'The project of transferring the University of Geneva to America', *History of Education Quarterly*, 8 (1968), pp. 246–51.

⁸⁶ Karmin points to d'Ivernois's letter to Vaucher on 5 Mar. 1795: *Sir Francis d'Ivernois*, p. 286.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 282–3.

⁸⁸ BGE, MS Suppl. 976, letter to d'Ivernois, 9 Dec. 1794, fo. 74v.

the hardships of weather, proved to be substantial obstacles to their plan to purchase suitable land.

In the end, Gallatin proved to be their greatest asset. Initially, they had been discouraged from seeking his help before their departure due to claims that 'he had forgotten his country [and] that he had received with the greatest indifference the Genevans who were recommended to him'. He was described to them 'as an outraged revolutionary, [and an] enemy of Washington'.⁸⁹ Upon meeting Gallatin in New York, however, Bourdillon determined that the rumors were 'absolutely false'.⁹⁰ Gallatin quickly won their esteem, particularly when he offered to include them in his and Badollet's plan to settle a new Geneva either in Pennsylvania or New York. A new optimism was born on the basis of Gallatin's American connections.

Like d'Ivernois's plan, the hope was to give asylum-seeking Genevans 'a new country, where religion, morals, the sciences and arts' would again flourish as they once had.⁹¹ To that end, Gallatin travelled to Philadelphia to present the group with a 'Plan of Association' that offered 150 shares of land at \$800 per share among Genevans residing in America already, Americans, and Genevans or Swiss abroad.⁹² Unlike d'Ivernois and under Gallatin's leadership, the group was more hesitant to pursue the establishment of the Academy in the first instance; this was a goal for the future after the city found some success. Additionally, Gallatin's plan sought a way to establish a colony without reliance upon state funds at all.⁹³ It was hoped that through this alternate plan, Genevans would establish a place in America where they could dedicate themselves to commerce, manufactures, and agriculture in addition to education.

D'Ivernois was aware of their efforts as early as September 1794, if not before, when he wrote to the group.⁹⁴ He then informed Adams and Jefferson in February 1795 of other Genevans at work to see New Geneva realized,⁹⁵ and he speculated that they would gladly combine efforts.⁹⁶ By March, however, a sense of rivalry between the projects is evident. D'Ivernois went so far as

⁸⁹ BGE, MS Suppl. 976, fo. 75v.

⁹⁰ Dungan writes that 'Gallatin made an exploratory trip through New York State in Apr., purportedly to look for suitable land for the Academy' (Dungan, *Gallatin: America's Swiss founding father*, p. 60). This trip led him to conclude that Pennsylvania would be a more fitting setting.

⁹¹ BGE, MS Suppl. 976, fo. 78r-v.

⁹² The plan was signed by the following persons: Albert Gallatin, James Odier, Jean-Salomon Fazy, Jean-Antoine and Antoine-Charles Casenove, Henry Cheriote, Pierre-Daniel Bourdillon, Jean-Louis Duby, Alexandre Couronne, Jean Badollet: BGE, MS Fr. 3637, vol. iv, no. 4; copy found in BGE, MS Suppl. 976, fos. 82-3.

⁹³ Transcribed in Karmin, *Sir Francis d'Ivernois*, pp. 284-5.

⁹⁴ D'Ivernois's Sept. letter is mentioned as being received in Dec.: BGE, MS Suppl. 976, fo. 86.

⁹⁵ BGE, MS Suppl. 976, d'Ivernois to Adams, 24 Feb. 1795, fos. 88-89v; *ibid.*, d'Ivernois to Jefferson, 26 Feb. 1795, fos. 90r-v.

⁹⁶ BGE, MS Suppl. 976, d'Ivernois to Jefferson, 26 Feb. 1795, fo. 90.

to write to Gallatin to prevent Bourdillon from travelling to Europe to encourage Genevans to pursue the alternate project. His presumption was that his own plan had greater support.⁹⁷ Neither party expected circumstances to change as drastically as they did.

Geneva's political circles lost control of the city after the summer of 1794 due in part to resented taxes. A brief period of Jacobin-like terror followed and government was suspended as anti-revolutionary groups regained control of the city. The situation improved in 1795 due to the Reconciliation of 21 September, which sought to bring all of the inhabitants of the city together. Few were interested in immigrating to America at that point. Jefferson wrote to Marc-Auguste Pictet in October to confirm that the future of the Academy seemed bright.⁹⁸ He was still praising Geneva twenty-five years later:

Altho' your Geneva is but a point, as it were, on the globe, yet it has made itself the most interesting one perhaps on the globe – industry, honesty, simplicity of manners, hospitality, & Science seem to have marked it as their own, and interest all mankind in prayers for the continuance of its freedom and felicity, it has mine most sincerely.⁹⁹

The professors of Geneva remained in Geneva as fears for the future abated. D'Ivernois dedicated himself to the service of the British state and its involvement in mainland European politics.

This was not the end of New Geneva. Albert Gallatin's commitment to the United States did not waver with the change in Geneva's circumstances in 1795.¹⁰⁰ In fact, during that summer, Gallatin purchased land around Georges Creek and the eastern bank of the Monongahela River in Pennsylvania known as Wilson's Port. Gallatin's partners provided finances to stock a retail store that would initially serve as the hub of the enterprise.¹⁰¹ As houses were built and sold, the town was chartered as New Geneva.¹⁰² Soon after, however, Albert Gallatin & Co. faced the financial crisis of 1796 that led Gallatin to seek new avenues for recovering the finances lost to him.¹⁰³ The idea of establishing a glass making business in partnership with German immigrants was finally agreed upon and the New Geneva Glassworks was born in 1797.¹⁰⁴ The

⁹⁷ Quoted in Karmin, *Sir Francis d'Ivernois*, p. 287.

⁹⁸ BGE, Archives Rilliet, Jefferson to Pictet, 14 Oct. 1795, n.f.

⁹⁹ BGE, Archives Rilliet, 26 Dec. 1820, Jefferson to M. A. Pictet.

¹⁰⁰ Walters, *Albert Gallatin*, p. 138.

¹⁰¹ Namely Badollet, James Nicholson (Gallatin's brother-in-law), Louis Bourdillon, and Antoine-Charles Cazenove: Walters, *Albert Gallatin*, p. 134.

¹⁰² Dungan, *Gallatin: America's Swiss founding father*, p. 62. For a history of New Geneva, Pennsylvania, see Elizabeth Davenport's *History of New Geneva* (n.p., 1933).

¹⁰³ Gallatin 'confessed that his affairs at New Geneva troubled him more than the party battles in Congress. He was especially depressed by the debts incurred': Walters, *Albert Gallatin*, p. 138.

¹⁰⁴ Davenport indicates that this partnership began in 1794 with the building of the factory following soon after (*History of New Geneva*, p. 2).

business, however, would not know success until the ownership of the company fell completely into Gallatin's hands through the dissolution of his Genevan partnerships in 1799.¹⁰⁵ Success was then due in large part to the establishment not of a university, but rather of a gun factory in that year.

IX

New Geneva was, in the end, a far cry from the original hopes of d'Ivernois and Gallatin. Even though the establishment of the city was eventually realized, the striking feature of the project goes beyond its ultimate founding. Rather, what emerges from the story of the effort to transplant one of the educational 'eyes of Europe' to America is a vision of an era grappling to preserve religious identity in the aftermath of the French Revolution.

This is evident when looking at Geneva's recovery in 1795. Protestantism as the foundation of citizenship was reaffirmed. Numerous pastors, despite the events of the revolution, continued to be active in politics.¹⁰⁶ In April 1795, the Company of Pastors began to address the consequences of the thinning of its pastoral ranks due to depositions by the Revolutionary Tribunal of 1794.¹⁰⁷ Geneva was picking up the pieces, and despite these considerable setbacks, religion would continue to have a central place in Genevan identity. Although Genevan Protestantism and republicanism were not united in America in the way that d'Ivernois had imagined, his efforts underscore the connection between republican sentiment and religious identity at the end of the eighteenth century and the limits of the secularizing effects of the French Revolution. It would take the annexation of Geneva to France in 1798 to set in motion the eventual separation of Protestantism and politics in the city that was evident by the mid-nineteenth century.

¹⁰⁵ Walters, *Albert Gallatin*, p. 139.

¹⁰⁶ Golay, '1792–1798 révolution Genevoise et révolution française', p. 34.

¹⁰⁷ AEG, RCP 34, 3 Apr. 1795, fo. 581. A number of pastors and ministers lost their livelihood due to the two tribunals, including Pierre-Daniel Bourdillon, Jean-Henri-Adam Bouverot, Georges-Louis Choisy, Jean-Jacques Juventin, Marc-Samuel Mange, Jean-François Martin, Frédéric Mestrezat, Joseph Peschier, and Alexandre Sarasin. In Mar. 1795, it was overwhelmingly voted that the revolutionary judgments be overturned (1,952 to 250): *ibid.*, 27 Mar. 1795, fo. 579.