into foreigners as targets for exclusionary impulses while religious solidarity trumped traditional xenophobia. It would have been interesting to see how this complex dialectic played out in a Provence that increasingly came to define its identity as Catholic.

Audisio explicitly states that he was moved to write this book by debates on national identity that raged in the France of the early 2000s. Whether it can serve as a tract for the times is debatable, though one detects a certain pessimism in his references to the long-term persistence of certain tropes from the sixteenth to the twenty-first centuries.


Reviewed by: Raymond A. Mentzer
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Over the course of the past several decades, Robert M. Kingdon led a team of scholars in the careful transcription, editing, annotation, and publication of the manuscript registers of the consistory of Geneva. Six volumes, including the present, have appeared thus far and the project will continue through the publication of another four, encompassing the years 1542 through 1555. Although the original goal was the publication of the entire set of registers for Calvin’s lifetime—taking the endeavor to the year of the reformer’s death in 1564—Kingdon’s own passing in December 2010 has forced the editors to adopt a more modest agenda. Still, their accomplishments have been extraordinary in making available a superb transcription framed within an invaluable critical apparatus. The manuscript proceedings of the Genevan consistory are notoriously difficult to read. Thus, we are grateful for the published transcription and for the precise notes on the persons, events, and a distant French vocabulary encountered throughout these pages.

The present volume covers approximately one year of Genevan consistorial activity, from mid-February 1551 to early February 1552. The time span is distinguished by a number of critical events, including an outbreak of the plague. Yet the singular episode was the eruption of the famous controversy between Calvin and Jérôme Bolsec, a physician and former Carmelite monk. Their disagreement focused on the question of predestination and the relationship between election and the divine gift of faith. The Geneva municipal magistrates, heavily influenced by Calvin, imprisoned Bolsec and found him guilty of doctrinal error in late December 1551. They banished him in perpetuity from the city. Still, he had sympathizers in Geneva and several among them ended up answering to the consistory. Their testimony suggests that a larger popular discourse about predestination and free will permeated the city’s public spaces. Or was it more a matter of dissatisfaction with Calvin and his approach to reform? In all of this, we ought not to forget that most of the individuals summoned by the consistory and whose narratives are contained in the present volume display a less sophisticated, more banal challenge to the Reformation project espoused by Calvin and his associates.

The reform of society and inculcation of proper Christian behavior was the consistory’s seemingly unending task. The sinners who pass before our eyes on the 247 published pages of consistory proceedings at hand are invariably entertaining, occasionally astonishing, and
more often than one might like appallingly tragic. Some lacked industry and purpose, lurking about the tavern, drinking, playing games, and singing indecent ditties. Others, after nearly a decade of scolding and chastisement by the consistory, continued to take great pleasure in dancing at weddings and other festivities. The frequency of what Calvin, the associate pastors, and the elders took to be more serious offenses, notably blasphemy and fornication, may not have diminished significantly either. These issues can, of course, be overemphasized and Kingdon himself was a strong advocate for viewing the consistory as much more than a morals tribunal. Beyond the obvious suppression of vice, it was a vehicle for the promotion of virtue. Thus, he stressed the consistory's pastoral role in the strengthening of marital bonds, the resolution of conflict within the family, and in general, the settlement of the innumerable quarrels and disputes, both verbal and physical that constantly threatened the social fabric. The list of persons whom the consistory "counseled" over the course of 1551 is, in this sense, representative of a larger landscape. People needed to settle their differences and live in Christian peace and harmony.

The other great concern evidenced in the 1551 proceedings is the first hint of discontent among some of Calvin's early supporters. Though the antagonism that gradually coalesced around Ami Perrin and his political allies would not erupt into full crisis for another four years, problems are detectable at this early stage. Unease over the influx of religious refugees, especially those from France, and unhappiness with the perceived rigidity of the French pastors, chief among them Calvin, are perceptible. Members of several prominent Genevan families defied the authority of the consistory and its principal architect, John Calvin. The ensuing tensions would not be soon resolved.

Finally, the voices that we hear on these pages—while undeniably filtered by learned pastors, politically influential elders, and trained scribes—provide insight into the lives and mental universe of otherwise silent, plain folk. What were the conditions of their daily existence? What mattered to them? What did not? Above all, how did they interpret the momentous religious changes swirling about their community? Scholars have at their disposal few sources in which the illiterate and unlearned express themselves in so direct a fashion. Accordingly, this and the other volumes in the series are an invaluable addition to the materials essential for our collective investigation of early modern society and its multiple expressions at once sacred and profane.

Poètes, Princes et Collectionneurs: Mélanges offerts à Jean Paul Barbier-Mueller.
Ed. Nicolas Ducimetière, Michel Jeanneret, and Jean Balsamo.

REVIEWED BY: Roy Rosenstein
The American University of Paris

This festschrift recognizing Jean Paul Barbier-Mueller is the work of many hands, appropriately enough for a collection of essays honoring an indefatigable collector of authors, artists, and admirers. Prepared in Barbier-Mueller's native Geneva, it includes contributions from the previous and current directors of its scholarly publisher. The recipient is recognized first in a photographic portrait and two testimonials, from academic (and academician) Marc Fumaroli and from fellow collector Jean Bonna (Institut de France). Unfortunately, the first tells us more about other collectors and the second most about his own collection. Frustratingly, there is no biography or bibliography of Barbier-Mueller, who