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John Knox and the Formation of Diaspora Worship in Geneva: A Case Study of the English-Speaking Exile Community in the 16th Century

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Abstract

This study explores the formation of diaspora worship among the English-speaking exile community in Geneva during the mid-sixteenth century and its decisive role in shaping the theological and political identity of the Second Reformation. By examining the leadership of John Knox and the compilation of *The Forme of Prayers* (1556), the research investigates how the experience of displacement facilitated a radical departure from the liturgical compromises of the Church of England. The study begins by analyzing the "troubles" at Frankfurt (1554–1555), where the conflict between the "Prayer Book party" and the "Geneva faction" catalyzed the adoption of the Regulative Principle of Worship as a defensive mechanism for faith. It then evaluates the socio-ecclesiastical institutionalization of the community in Geneva, as evidenced by the Livre des Anglois, and the theological framework of their resulting liturgy. Key elements (including covenantal confession based on the "remnant" identity, the sacraments as "visible Word," and the pedagogical function of metrical psalmody) are analyzed as paradigms for religious identity construction within a refugee context. Furthermore, the paper traces the intellectual output of this diaspora, such as the Geneva Bible and radical resistance theory, which provided the theological blueprint for the "Genevanization" of Scotland and the emergence of Elizabethan Puritanism. Ultimately, this research presents the Genevan exile experience as a sophisticated model of "diaspora faith," demonstrating how marginalized religious communities utilize theological innovation, institutional autonomy, and media technology to transform from the periphery into a central force of historical and political change.

Keywords: John Knox; Geneva exiles; diaspora worship; *The Forme of Prayers*; Regulative Principle of Worship; covenant theology; Livre des Anglois; resistance theory

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1. Introduction

In the mid-sixteenth century, the European continent became both a theater of confessional conflict ignited by the Reformation and a space in which new theological identities were actively contested. As various European monarchs and territorial rulers sought to enforce confessional uniformity within their realms, religious displacement followed. Believers (particularly from territories undergoing volatile confessional shifts, such as France, The Netherlands, and England) left their homelands in search of freedom of conscience, forming a scattered diaspora across the continent (Grell 1996, p. 164).

For the Reformed exiles of this period, diaspora was more than a mere physical displacement; it functioned as a formative experience that led them to theologically interpret

their flight as a modern continuation of the Old Testament exodus (Grell 1996, pp. 164–66). This theological self-identity did not remain merely conceptual; rather, it found a powerful medium of expression when coupled with the unique urban and industrial infrastructure of Geneva. The influx of skilled refugees significantly boosted the local economy, particularly by introducing a highly developed printing trade that became the material foundation for the city's transformation. This infrastructure enabled Geneva to emerge as the preeminent international hub of the Reformed movement during the mid-to-late sixteenth century. While this prominence was largely concentrated in the decades before 1600—after which centers such as Heidelberg, Leiden, and Saumur assumed increasing significance—Geneva during this crucial period served as the primary locus where Reformed theology was systematized, ministers were trained, and Reformed ideas were disseminated across Europe (Naphy 1994, pp. 125–26; Grell 1996, p. 164; Kingdon 2007, pp. 14, 31; Pettegree 1986, pp. 83–84).

The city of Geneva integrated refugees into its social and political structure by permitting affluent exiles to acquire bourgeois status (Naphy 1994, p. 124). This policy transcended mere religious hospitality and served as a lucrative financial strategy for the city. The income generated from these civic fees was substantial, accounting for a fifth of Geneva's total revenue in 1555 alone (Naphy 1994, pp. 124, 128). Consequently, the Genevan Council directed these funds toward alleviating the city's heavy financial burdens, effectively turning refugee resettlement into a strategic opportunity for urban economic recovery (Naphy 1994, p. 138). Many of these exiles had previously enjoyed significant religious autonomy, having been permitted to form their own independent congregations under the 1550 Charter in London (Grell 1996, p. 166). This precedent of doctrinal and ecclesiastical freedom instilled a strong sense of assurance among the refugees, leading them to expect similar privileges and autonomous church structures wherever they settled (Grell 1996, pp. 166, 169). Furthermore, as diverse refugee communities from France, Italy, and the Netherlands settled in Geneva, the influx of the educated elite after 1549 transformed the city from a mere sanctuary into a vibrant intellectual and economic center (Naphy 1994, pp. 126–27).

Within this international context, the ascension of Mary Tudor to the English throne in 1553, marked by policies of Catholic restoration and the severe persecution of Protestants, prompted significant displacement. Although John Foxe estimated that nearly a thousand individuals fled abroad, recent scholarship underscores the plight of internal refugees who sought safety elsewhere within the realm, likely constituting the largest demographic of those persecuted (Cavill 2013, pp. 885–86). Early systematic research by Christina Hallowell Garrett framed these Marian exiles as the organizational foundation of Elizabethan Puritanism (Garrett 1938, pp. 1–17).

Subsequent historiography has moved beyond Garrett's depiction of the exiles as a unified Puritan network or an orchestrated conspiracy. Scholars such as P. R. Cavill have demonstrated that Marian Protestantism encompassed a broad and complex theological spectrum that resists simple categorization (Cavill 2013, p. 883). Within this varied landscape, Geneva emerged as the final destination for the most theologically radical and uncompromising faction.

Drawing on the experience of pastors expelled from Lausanne, Robert Kingdon observes that these exiles demonstrated strict adherence to Reformed theology by fiercely defending fundamental doctrines such as predestination against the Bernese authorities. Their collective resilience was further evidenced by their mass migration to Geneva, a difficult journey marked by significant material losses and personal hardships (Kingdon 2007, p. 22).

This specialized identity was institutionalized through what Naïma Ghermani defines as the "economy of asylum" (*L'économie de l'asile*) (Ghermani 2020, pp. 607–9). Within this

framework, the exiles' willingness to abandon their assets and social standing for their faith was understood as a profound sacrifice, which in turn generated a moral debt (*dette morale*) toward their host society (Ghermani 2020, p. 619). To manage this influx, Genevan authorities employed registration and accounting systems as an administrative apparatus (*dispositif*) to evaluate and integrate refugees based on their economic utility and moral standing (Ghermani 2020, pp. 623–24). Through these mechanisms, the uncompromising diaspora was forged into an elite religious community, fully prepared to export radical Reformed ideals back to their native lands.

The experience of exile fundamentally reconstructed their religious identity. For these reformers, displacement was not merely a political tragedy but a providential calling to establish a pure church. The exiles themselves articulated this self-understanding in their own writings. When the English refugees first gathered on the continent, they urged their scattered brethren to recognize God's mercy in providing "a churche in a strange lande wherein they might heare gods worde truly preached, the Sacraments rightly ministred, and Discipline vsed, which in their owne countrie coulde neuer be obtained" (Whittingham 1575, p. VII). Similarly, Christopher Goodman articulated the theological purpose of their flight, arguing that God had granted them liberty to flee so that they might worship "with great freedome of cõscience… without all dregges of poperie, or supersticion of mans inuencion" (Goodman 1558, p. 234). Their diaspora, in other words, was not a condition to be endured but a mandate to be fulfilled: the construction of a perfectly reformed church that could one day be transplanted back to their homeland.

This paper contends that the English-speaking exile community in Geneva, under the pivotal leadership of John Knox, intentionally broke from the liturgy of the Church of England (most notably through the definitive conflict known as the "Troubles at Frankfurt") to forge an independent diaspora worship. Their compilation, *The Forme of Prayers* (1556), while deeply anchored in Calvin's theology, was an original creation that interpreted the community's singular experiences of persecution and displacement from the perspective of covenant theology, reflecting their profound yearning for the reformation of their homeland. It represented a theological and liturgical manifesto that transcended simple imitation, ultimately serving as the official liturgy for the Church of Scotland and establishing a crucial historical precedent as an ideal model for English Puritanism. However, the sophisticated Genevan model was not an immediate achievement; it was forged through the crucible of the Frankfurt 'troubles.' To understand its genesis, the following section investigates the adiaphora controversy in Frankfurt as the critical starting point of this liturgical evolution.

2. The Conflict in Frankfurt: Adiaphora and the Regulative Principle of Worship (1554–1555)

To trace the genesis of Geneva diaspora worship, one must first examine closely its prehistory—the fierce and fundamental theological struggle in Frankfurt. The English-speaking exile community that settled in Frankfurt in 1554 became embroiled in irreconcilable internal strife over the issue of worship forms. This episode was meticulously documented in *A Brieff Discours off the Troubles Begonne at Franckford* (1575), traditionally attributed to William Whittingham, which represents the perspective of the defeated Geneva faction and Knox supporters from the Frankfurt controversy (Whittingham 1575, pp. 20–35). However, as modern historian Karl Gunther critically observes, this record should be interpreted as a highly sophisticated apology and a piece of propaganda rather than a mere objective narrative. Gunther contends that *A Brieff Discours* was published in 1574 with the explicit goal of creating a "respectable pedigree for Puritanism," serving as a key instrument in the "presbyterian propaganda campaign" of the 1570s (Gunther 2014, pp. 186–87). He further emphasizes the necessity of distinguishing the original documents

within the text from the overarching narrative, which was reconstructed by later Presbyterians to justify their theological stance and discredit their opponents (Gunther 2014, pp. 159–60). Consequently, the work functions less as an impartial historical account and more as a theological manifesto designed to legitimize the exclusionary actions of Knox and his colleagues. While *the Brieff Discours* must be read through this critical lens of later Presbyterian apology, the theological substance of the conflict it records remains undeniably foundational: the dispute over the 1552 edition of the *Book of Common Prayer*. Nevertheless, this document records the first official division within English Protestantism over worship forms, serving as a prelude that foreshadowed the conflicts of the later English Puritan movement (Collinson 1967, pp. 32–38). The core of the conflict centered on the use of the 1552 edition of the *Book of Common Prayer*, regarded as the pinnacle of reform under Edward VI. The "Prayer Book party," led by Richard Cox, insisted on maintaining "the face of an English Church" even in exile (Whittingham 1575, p. 38). They argued that drastically altering the liturgy would be tantamount to condemning its chief authors, such as Thomas Cranmer, who were then suffering persecution and "moste redie to confirme that facte with the price off their bloude" (Gunther 2014, p. 173). In practice, however, their liturgical demands were more flexible than Cox's initial rhetoric suggested. To preserve the unity of the Anglophone exiles, the Coxian faction was prepared to modify the 1552 *Book of Common Prayer*, discarding ceremonies such as private baptism, kneeling at communion, and the use of the surplice (Collinson 1967, p. 33; Gunther 2014, pp. 176–77). When these concessions failed to bridge the divide with Knox's supporters, the Coxians defended their liturgical omissions based on the concept of adiaphora, or "things indifferent"—matters neither explicitly commanded nor forbidden by Scripture, such as the use of surplices and specific liturgical forms. Drawing on the arguments employed by Bishops Cranmer and Ridley during the Edwardian vestments controversy, they maintained that such practices could be lawfully enjoined by magisterial authority for the sake of "good order" in the church (Gunther 2014, p. 171). This position stood in sharp contrast to the radical demand for strict biblical warrant; as Patrick Collinson observes, this conflict anticipated the later alignment of the Elizabethan Church, pitting those who demanded absolute scriptural authority against those who permitted the use of "things indifferent" under the direction of the state (Collinson 1967, p. 33). Furthermore, this faction held that in matters of indifference, where "the customs of divers countries be diverse," one should submit to the magistrate's authority to determine which ceremonies were appropriate for the avoidance of offense (Gunther 2014, p. 180).

Ironically, however, their appeal to magisterial authority belied the precarious reality of their situation. The establishment of the English church in Frankfurt was not an exercise of unhindered religious freedom. Operating within an increasingly orthodox Lutheran city, the English exiles secured their place only on sufferance. Their presence depended on the patronage of a sympathetic local magistrate, Johann von Glauburg, who protected them and their French counterparts against the hostility of orthodox Lutheran ministers such as Hartmann Beyer (Pettegree 1986, p. 70; Whittingham 1575, p. XXXVIII). Furthermore, the Frankfurt Senate granted the English shared use of the Weissfrauenkirche with Valérand Poullain's French congregation under a strict condition: they were ordered not to "discent from the frenchmen in doctrine, or ceremonyes" (Whittingham 1575, p. VI; Gunther 2014, p. 160). Consequently, the exiles' initial liturgical framework was not an autonomous choice, but a requirement dictated by local political constraints and the mandate to align with an existing Reformed order. This magisterial and pragmatic approach to liturgical order, however, collided directly with a radically different ecclesiological paradigm—one that rejected human discretion in favor of the absolute sufficiency of Scripture.

Conversely, the group led by John Knox, who had been invited from Geneva, and his core associate William Whittingham, fiercely criticized the *Book of Common Prayer* for still containing the "dregs of popery" that lacked any scriptural basis (Dawson 2015, pp. 102–5). They later declared in the preface to their own *Forme of Prayers* that "we have admitted no human inventions whatsoever", championing the Regulative Principle of Worship insisting that only what is expressly commanded or exemplified in Scripture should be permitted in public worship. According to this principle, practices such as wearing the surplice, litany responsive singing, private baptism, confirmation, and especially kneeling at communion were regarded as human inventions superstitious elements potentially leading to idolatry that had to be eliminated (Dawson 2015, pp. 108–10). This controversy went beyond mere differences in ritual, posing a fundamental theological conflict over whether church authority resides in state legal order or in Scripture's absolute and explicit prescriptions. Initially, the Knox faction had been using a temporary compromise liturgy(adapted from the local French church's order of service) that omitted responsive prayers and the litany. However, upon the arrival of the Cox party, this compromise was rejected, and the dispute intensified. Knox sought Calvin's opinion on the matter, and in his reply, Calvin acknowledged that the *Book of Common Prayer* contained "tolerable follies (tolerabiles ineptiae)" while nonetheless advising concession for the sake of peace and unity, thereby subtly supporting Knox's position (Calvin 1863–1900, vol. 15, col. 552).

Ultimately, in March 1555, Knox was expelled by the Frankfurt city council, which was concerned for the city's political stability. Nevertheless, when the conflict could not be reconciled, the Coxian faction gained numerical superiority and resorted to political maneuvers by denouncing Knox to the Frankfurt city authorities. They used as a pretext the fierce criticisms directed at Holy Roman Emperor Charles V and Queen Mary in his previously published work, A Faithful Admonition, scaring the magistrates into dismissing him from the city in March 1555 (Mackie 1951, p. 8). Paradoxically, the defeat and expulsion from Frankfurt served as a direct catalyst and a moment of theological liberation, allowing Knox and his community to establish a new church in Geneva where they could fully realize their theological ideals without any pressure of compromise. In this new environment of Geneva, they were able to embark on a "new experiment in the restoration of apostolic Christian polity, discipline and doctrine" (Danner 1999, p. 44). This experience became a core element that defined their identity even after they eventually returned to their homeland. This is assessed as a reflection of the "primitive, apostolic Christianity which they recollected to have been so bountiful in Geneva," a state far removed from the ecclesiastical reality of the Church of England at that time (Danner 1999, p. 46). The political expulsion of Knox, triggered by the Coxian faction's tactical denunciation, paradoxically served as a moment of theological liberation. By shifting the locus of their experiment from the contested ground of Frankfurt to the receptive environment of Geneva, the Knoxian community was finally positioned to realize a 'new experiment' in apostolic Christian polity without the necessity of compromise.

3. The Genevan Community: Institutionalizing the Ideal Church and the Origin of *The Forme of Prayers*

3.1. Social History of the Exile Community and the Livre des Anglois

Following their expulsion from Frankfurt, Knox and his supporters, accompanied by numerous fellow exiles, relocated to Geneva, where they were formally welcomed by John Calvin. According to the official register of the English congregation in Geneva, the Livre des Anglois, and related scholarly investigations, this community was far from a disorganized group of refugees; rather, it constituted a substantial congregation reaching a peak of approximately 200 members. The community's demographic makeup was notably

diverse, encompassing humanists such as William Whittingham, theologians like Anthony Gilby, and members of the gentry, as well as skilled artisans, weavers, and professional printers most notably Rowland Hall, who would later spearhead the printing of the Geneva Bible (Danner 1999, pp. 30–35). This convergence of intellectual leadership and technical expertise ensured that the community was not merely a passive group of exiles, but a highly functional 'academy' capable of producing sophisticated theological and literary works. Such social diversity and intellectual caliber served as the driving force that enabled the community to move beyond mere theological discourse in Geneva and undertake a monumental cultural and political project the translation and publication of the Bible.

A particularly noteworthy aspect is that the Livre des Anglois served as much more than a mere directory. As Jackson observes, it "is much more than a list of names"; it functions as a comprehensive ecclesiastical record, documenting dates of arrival, baptisms, marriages, and burials, as well as the "results of the annual elections of the two ministers and several elders and deacons" (Jackson 2015, p. 176). This institutional precision provides decisive evidence that the exiles were consciously constructing a self-governing "True Church." Their explicit goal was to establish a community where they might "heare gods worde truly preached, the Sacraments rightly ministred, and Discipline vsed" (Whittingham 1575, p. 5). Indeed, these records demonstrate the "wide participation of the congregation" in establishing a "peaceable, non-contentious community," standing in marked contrast to their previous conflicts (Jackson 2015, p. 179).

Beyond mere record-keeping, Danner notes that the register was bound in parchment with numerous "blank pages left after the entries," which suggests that the exiles did not view their stay as a fleeting refuge but "thought their stay might be elongated" while they built a lasting ecclesiastical structure (Danner 1999, p. 29). This meticulousness was central to what Danner calls a "new experiment in the restoration of apostolic Christian polity, discipline and doctrine" (Danner 1999, p. 44). Furthermore, Gunther emphasizes that the community was not simply reconstituting the Church of England abroad but was intentionally "establishing a more perfectly reformed English Church than had ever before been possible" in their homeland (Gunther 2014, p. 162). By recording their annual activities and adhering to a Reformed pattern of church government, they sought to inhabit a church that was "subject to no blemish" and functioned as a "homing beacon" for the wider English Protestant diaspora (Jackson 2015, pp. 173–76; Gunther 2014, pp. 161, 170). Yet, this ambitious vision of an 'unblemished' church required more than internal discipline; it necessitated a supportive physical and intellectual ecosystem where such ideals could be systematically nurtured and tested.

3.2. Institutional Establishment and Theological Incubation in Geneva

Geneva served as the optimal incubator for their theological experiments (Danner 1999, p. 44). The community was granted use of the *Notre-Dame-la-Neuve* chapel (also known as the *Auditoire de Calvin*), located adjacent to St. Pierre Cathedral, which they shared with the Italian exile congregation (Jackson 2015, p. 173). Through Calvin's extensive lectures on biblical interpretation—which served as the primary theological training ground before the formal establishment of the Academy—the exiles, including John Knox, were able to profoundly deepen their Reformed theology (Kingdon 2007, pp. 14, 16). In particular, the Genevan Consistory, a powerful mechanism for moral regulation that had successfully asserted its authority over the civil magistrates by 1555, was etched into Knox's mind as an ideal model for maintaining the church's holiness without state interference (Naphy 1994, pp. 138–39; Kingdon 2007, p. 22). Knox famously lauded the city's discipline, stating that while Christ was truly preached in other places, "manners and religion so sincerely reformed, I have not yet seen in any other place" (Kingdon 2007, p. 22). The profound

impression made by Geneva's 'sincere reformation' of manners and religion provided the immediate impetus for the community to codify these observed ideals into a comprehensive liturgical manual.

The primary and most urgent task of this community was to compile a new service book that would encapsulate their theological identity: *The Forme of Prayers* (hereafter FOP), published in 1556 (Jackson 2015, p. 173). The FOP was an evolution of the draft that had been rejected during the Frankfurt disputes; as Jackson notes, its Sunday Morning Service structure remained "identical to the first order of morning service used by the English exiles when they arrived at Frankfurt in 1554" (Jackson 2015, p. 179). Structurally, the FOP was deeply rooted in the Reformed tradition of the Continent. As Maxwell demonstrates through a comparative analysis, it was heavily influenced by Martin Bucer's Strasbourg liturgy (1539) and Calvin's Genevan French service book (*La Forme des Prières*, 1542) (Maxwell 1936, pp. 17–18, 23). While Calvin had simplified Bucer's model after returning to Geneva, the English exiles followed this "sober, severe Genevan model" to ensure their worship was, as Knox argued, essentially biblical and free from human inventions, which served as a vital means of establishing community cohesion (Maxwell 1936, pp. 19, 162). This compilation was not a mere imitation but a theological declaration, marking their formal break with the liturgical compromises of the Church of England (Gunther 2014, p. 162). The FOP was far from a mere copy of continental models; it was an original liturgy, reimagined to reflect the exiles' diaspora consciousness and to systematically apply the "Regulative Principle of Worship" forged through the bitter liturgical disputes in Frankfurt (Gunther 2014, pp. 158–59, 170, 176). Knox's colleague Christopher Goodman later recalled this period as one of "happy agreement and solid peace," primarily because they were finally able to conduct worship in which their theological ideals were fully realized, free from the pressures of political compromise (Gunther 2014, p. 187). This spiritual harmony was possible because the Genevan congregation functioned as a "peaceable, non-contentious community" in their shared pursuit of a more perfectly reformed church (Jackson 2015, p. 179; Gunther 2014, pp. 162, 187).

4. Theological Framework of *The Forme of Prayers*: Diaspora, Covenant, and Ecclesiology

4.1. Liturgical Antecedents and Comparisons: The 1550 Translation and the 1555 Frankfurt Liturgy

The distinctiveness of the 1556 *Forme of Prayers* becomes clearer when situated against two earlier liturgical texts available to the English exiles: W. Huycke's 1550 translation of Calvin's liturgy (Calvin 1550) and the 1555 Frankfurt liturgy. Published in London prior to the Marian exile, Huycke's *The forme of common praiers used in the churches of Geneva* was a direct English translation of Calvin's 1542 French liturgy (Calvin 1542; Maxwell 1936, pp. 17–18). This text had already introduced English readers to the continental Reformed structure, providing translated prayers, catechisms, and sacramental rites. In its baptismal service, for instance, it emphasized that believers are "incorporated and admytted into the feloweshypp of Goddes people" and made members of Christ's church (Calvin 1550, fol. xcv). When the exiles initially gathered in Frankfurt, the committee tasked with compiling a new order of worship "had before them, and had even proposed using, Huycke's English translation" (Maxwell 1936, p. 17).

However, the Genevan congregation eventually took a different approach. While they retained the "sober, severe Genevan model" characteristic of Calvin's liturgy (Maxwell 1936, pp. 18–19), they exercised a "large measure of independence" in their compilation (Maxwell 1936, p. 17). They did not simply reproduce Huycke's text as a matter of convenience. Instead, they adapted the continental Reformed structure to articulate their specific

covenantal and diaspora identity. The most notable example was the incorporation of exilic additions—such as the 'Daniel 9 Prayer' to corporately confess the apostasy of their homeland. These additions were completely absent in the 1550 translation. By injecting their present crisis into the liturgy, the Genevan exiles marked a definitive shift from a generic translated continental rite to a living document that reflected their specific diaspora experience and penitential theology.

The Frankfurt Liturgy of 1555 further complicates the narrative of exilic liturgical development. The dispute at Frankfurt has often been portrayed as a rigid, unyielding division between Knoxians demanding radical reform and Coxians strictly enforcing the 1552 *Book of Common Prayer*. Yet, Robin A. Leaver's reconstruction of the 1555 manuscript shows that after Knox's expulsion, the victorious Coxian faction adopted a "liturgy of compromise" that blended the 1552 Prayer Book with the practices of the local French congregation whose church they shared (Leaver 1984, p. 8). Their revisions were, in fact, quite extensive. In the communion service, they omitted the epistles and gospels, the Sursum corda, the Preface, and the Sanctus (Leaver 1984, p. 8). In other rites, they removed the sign of the cross at baptism and the giving of the ring at marriage (Leaver 1984, p. 8). Karl Gunther similarly observes that the Coxians "adopted many of the same changes made by the Knoxians" and willingly relinquished certain ceremonies that were traditional to the English church (Gunther 2014, pp. 176–77).

While both factions were constrained by the realities of worshipping as guests in a foreign land, the divergence between them lay not in their willingness to revise the 1552 Prayer Book but in the theological rationale they brought to those revisions. The Coxians defended their liturgical omissions to Calvin as matters of adiaphora; they abandoned certain ceremonies "not as being impure and papistical. . . but whereas they were in their own nature indifferent. . . [to] lay them aside than to offend the minds or alienate the affections of the brethren" (Gunther 2014, p. 177). To the Coxians, these were pragmatic and charitable adjustments designed to preserve unity. In contrast, the authors of the 1556 *Forme of Prayers* rejected this premise. Knox had already argued in Frankfurt against elements of the Prayer Book by claiming they were placed "onely by warrant of mans authoritie and no grownde in godds worde" (Gunther 2014, p. 175). For the Genevan exiles, the removal of traditional ceremonies was not a temporary charitable concession, but a permanent theological correction grounded in the Regulative Principle of Worship.

By comparing the 1556 liturgy with both Huycke's 1550 translation (Calvin 1550) and the 1555 Frankfurt compromise, the distinct historical position of the Genevan exiles emerges. Their liturgy moved beyond the simple adoption of a translated rite and rejected the practical, adiaphoric concessions of their Frankfurt brethren. Instead, theirs was a deliberate attempt to construct a scripturally warranted church order. This liturgical experiment in Geneva would subsequently inform the liturgical trajectory of the Scottish and English Reformations—but only because the exiles had first used the space of displacement to forge a distinctly covenantal and scripturally grounded ecclesial identity of their own.

4.2. Structural Analysis of Liturgy: The Visualization and Ordering of Diaspora Theology

However, the FOP was far from a mere imitation of continental models. It was an original liturgy, creatively reimagined to reflect the exiles' diaspora consciousness and to systematically apply the principle of "strict biblical warrant" forged through the bitter liturgical disputes in Frankfurt (Gunther 2014, pp. 159, 176). This period was later recalled as a time when they were finally able to conduct worship in which their theological ideals were fully realized, free from the pressures of political compromise. This spiritual harmony was possible because the Genevan congregation maintained a "peaceable nature" and

enjoyed what Christopher Goodman described as "happy agreement and solid peace" (Jackson 2015, pp. 167, 171; Gunther 2014, p. 187).

This prayer leads the exile community to corporately confess not only their own sins but also the transgressions of England as a whole, specifically its idolatry and disobedience (Danner 1999, pp. 36–37). By directly adopting the language of Daniel 9, "O Lord, righteousness belongeth unto thee, unto us pertaineth open shame. . .", the confession positions the exiles as a 'remnant' interceding on behalf of their fallen homeland (Knox 1855, vol. 4, p. 179; cf. Sprott and Leishman 1868, p. 243). This reflects the covenantal identity of the diaspora community, which accepted their hardships in exile as God's righteous judgment and sought the spiritual restoration of their nation through the very language of Scripture. This covenantal self-understanding, rooted in the scriptural 'remnant' identity, was not confined to static confession but was further animated through the dynamic interplay between fixed liturgical order and the spontaneous movement of the Holy Spirit.

It is noteworthy that while the *Book of Common Order* (FOP) provided set forms of prayer, it simultaneously granted the minister the explicit discretion to pray freely 'as the Spirit of God shall move his heart' (Sprott and Leishman 1868, p. 90). This reflects a deliberate pursuit of balance between liturgical order and the dynamism of the Holy Spirit. By allowing the minister to frame the prayer according to the 'time and matter' of the sermon, the liturgy intended for public worship to remain a living spiritual communion rather than becoming a fossilized form. While the liturgy provided the structural framework for this diaspora identity, it was through the administration of the sacraments and the rigorous application of discipline that the community's collective sanctity was institutionalized and visually manifested.

4.3. Sacraments and Discipline: The Visible Word and the Institutionalization of Sanctity

The Forme of Prayers (FOP) redefined the sacraments as "visible Word," that is, as a communal event and a believing response to the Word that has been preached (Spinks 2017, p. 45; Jackson 2015, p. 181). Consequently, baptism was required to be administered only publicly before the assembled congregation and only after preaching and prayer had been completed (Jackson 2015, pp. 180–81). As a result, the kind of "private baptism" permitted in the English *Book of Common Prayer* (BCP) was rigorously rejected, on the grounds that such rites risked turning the sacrament into "charms, or sorceries" performed in a hidden corner (Jackson 2015, p. 181; Spinks 2017, p. 45).

The liturgy of the Lord's Supper demonstrated the most radical change, both theologically and symbolically. In contrast to the Geneva City Council, which mandated quarterly communion for local churches, *The Forme of Prayers* (FOP) prescribed that it be administered "once a month" (Jackson 2015, p. 181; Maxwell 1936, p. 40). This emphasized that the sacrament was not a mere memorial service, but a means of grace through which believers achieve union with Christ and receive continuous "spiritual nourishment" (Jackson 2015, p. 182; Maxwell 1936, pp. 35, 213). At the heart of the Genevan English exile liturgy was the combination of "fencing the table" and discipline. *The Forme of Prayers* (FOP) institutionalized the duty of pastors and elders to maintain the holiness of the community by strictly prohibiting the participation of "all blasphemers, idolaters, and such as live a life directly fighting against the will of God" before the administration of the sacrament (Sprott and Leishman 1868, p. 123; Jackson 2015, pp. 177–78). Furthermore, instead of kneeling before the altar, the congregation adopted the practice of sitting at the table and passing the bread and cup directly to one another (Sprott and Leishman 1868, p. 127; cf. Maxwell 1936, p. 46). Liturgically, this practice was intended as a "non-sacerdotal" symbol that restored the most primitive form of the rite, dismantling the hierarchical distinction between clergy and laity and visually embodying equal brotherhood in Christ (Maxwell

1936, p. 46; Jackson 2015, pp. 175–76). The 'visible Word' manifested in the sacraments was effectively complemented by the 'sung Word' through the practice of metrical psalmody, which extended the process of theological formation from the sacramental table to the collective voice of the congregation.

4.4. Congregational Participation and Psalmody: The Theological Function of the Anglo-Genevan Psalter

Significant innovations also occurred within the auditory landscape of the Reformation. The Anglo-Genevan Psalter, included as an appendix to the FOP, was more than a mere collection of metrical psalms; it was a pedagogical tool meticulously designed to help the congregation internalize core doctrines through song, featuring 51 psalms and the Ten Commandments (Jackson 2015, pp. 173–74; Maxwell 1936, pp. 17–18). This initiative saw a major expansion in Scotland. Following a mandate from the General Assembly in 1562, a complete psalter (containing all 150 psalms set to music) was printed and distributed in Edinburgh by 1564 (Sprott and Leishman 1868, p. xv; Maxwell 1936, p. 15).

From a musicological perspective, the records of the time aimed for the congregation to sing "altogether in a plain tune" (Jackson 2015, p. 179; Whittingham 1575, p. 7). This musical setting deliberately eschewed complex polyphony, adopting instead simple, single-line melodies that every member of the congregation could easily follow (Jackson 2015, p. 179; cf. Maxwell 1936, p. 18). This reflects the emphasis on "participation and community" found in the order and liturgy of the English Church in Geneva (Jackson 2015, p. 184).

Margo Todd emphasizes that these metrical psalms functioned as the most vital "preaching supplements," serving to reinforce and complement the proclaimed Word from the pulpit (Todd 2002, p. 26). According to her analysis, the practice of psalmody allowed congregants to internalize the core tenets of their faith and transform their self-perception, effectively enabling them to "shape their religious identity" (Todd 2002, p. 26).

Furthermore, this communal singing fostered a profound sense of "participation and community." By creating a shared auditory experience, it played a crucial social role in maintaining a peaceful and cohesive society (one remarkably free of major internal conflict) even within the high-pressure environment of exile (Jackson 2015, p. 184).

5. Intellectual Output of Geneva: Political Theology and the Right of Resistance

5.1. The Geneva Bible as a Catalyst for Religious and Political Transformation

The reform efforts of the English-speaking community in Geneva extended far beyond liturgy. The highly developed printing industry and scholarly atmosphere of Calvin's Geneva provided them with powerful intellectual tools (Naphy 1994, p. 125). The most significant achievement was undoubtedly the compilation of the 1560 Geneva Bible under William Whittingham's leadership, a work characterized by 'fuller annotations' and designed to apply Reformed covenant theology to the daily lives of the laity (Jackson 2015, p. 167; Danner 1999, p. 44). The theological innovations of the Geneva Bible, however, were most prominently expressed through its paratextual elements, which translated complex covenantal concepts into specific political instructions.

Dan Danner points out that this version, produced under the leadership of William Whittingham, was characterized by its "fuller annotations" and a wide array of literary aids (Danner 1999, p. 44). It is evaluated as a groundbreaking work designed not only for philological accuracy but also as a practical instrument for applying Reformed covenant theology to the daily lives of the laity.

The true impact of the Geneva Bible resided in the dense 'marginal notes' flanking the text. Throughout the Scriptures, these commentaries asserted the legitimacy of resisting

tyranny and idolatry. For instance, regarding the midwives who defied Pharaoh's decree in Exodus 1:19, the marginalia stated, "Their disobedience herein was lawful," thus providing a theological basis for civil disobedience against unjust authority (Whittingham et al. 1599, p. 60). Moreover, in the case of 2 Chronicles 15:16, where King Asa deposed the idolatrous Queen Mother Maakah, the commentator rebuked the king for not executing her, remarking that "and herein he showed that he lacked zeal, for she ought to have died" (Whittingham et al. 1599, p. 452). This constituted a radical argument that one must not compromise with idolatry, even when it involves a ruler who is a close kinsman. If the Geneva Bible provided the scriptural legitimacy for resistance through its marginalia, the political pamphlets produced by the exile community transformed these commentaries into a systematic and radical theology of revolution.

5.2. Radical Political Theology and Resistance Theory

The radical thought of Geneva reached its culmination in pamphlets on resistance theory. Robert Kingdon points out that the resistance theory of the Genevan exiles went beyond Calvin's cautious stance (which permitted resistance only by lower magistrates), characterizing it as the birth of revolutionary ideology (Kingdon 1995, pp. 194–99). Indeed, according to Dan Danner, Goodman and Knox went so far in their radicalism that Calvin considered their propositions "somewhat harsh," advocating not only popular resistance but even tyrannicide (Danner 1999, pp. 41–42).

John Knox, in his 1558 publication The First Blast of the Trumpet Against the Monstrous Regiment of Women, argued that female rule itself was "monstrous" (contrary to natural law and God's ordinance) and directly denied the legitimacy of the reigns of both Mary Tudor in England and Mary of Guise in Scotland (Knox 1558, pp. 11–12). While Knox focused primarily on the illegitimacy of a specific ruler based on natural law, the discourse of resistance found its most democratic and systematic articulation in the works of Christopher Goodman.

In the same year, Christopher Goodman went a step further in How Superior Powers Ought to be Obeyed. He argued that rulers who impose idolatry no longer possess legitimate authority, and that if lower magistrates fail to restrain such tyrants, the people themselves have the right and covenantal duty to punish and remove them (Goodman 1558, pp. 189–90). Goodman declared that "God's law is not given only to the Rulers. . . but also is common to all the people" (Goodman 1558, p. 184), demonstrating the embryonic form of radical democracy by extending the subject of resistance to ordinary citizens (Danner 1999, p. 42).

6. Legacy: The Prototype of Diaspora Faith and Its Historical Trajectory

With the death of Queen Mary and the accession of Elizabeth I in November 1558, the period of exile came to an end, and the majority of the Genevan community returned to their homeland. Christina Garrett characterized this exile not as a mere religious flight but as a "premeditated and 'directed'" organized migration in which every element was essentially linked (Garrett 1938, p. viii). She described her census of these exiles as effectively a directory of the "early Puritan party," asserting that they provided the foundation for the Puritanization of Elizabethan England upon their return (Garrett 1938, p. vii). Notably, Garrett emphasized that they came to constitute a "protestant 'opposition'" to Elizabeth's policies, arguing that the essence of this movement was fundamentally "revolutionary" (Garrett 1938, pp. vii–viii). Ultimately, she presented this experience of exile as the primary key to understanding the "Origins of Elizabethan Puritanism" (Garrett 1938, p. vii).

While Garrett's political interpretation remains a subject of debate, leaving aside the question of political organization, it is clear that the theological and liturgical legacy

they forged within the "crucible" of Geneva became the "principal planks in the puritan platform" upon their return, exerting a profound and lasting influence on the subsequent history of English Protestantism (Collinson 1967, p. 44; Danner 1999, p. 47). While Garrett focuses on the political and organizational origins of this movement, the most tangible evidence of the Genevan legacy lies in its systematic transplantation into the national church structure of Scotland and its role as a theological blueprint for the English Puritan 'opposition'. This influence was directly manifested in the concrete historical contexts of Scotland and England; furthermore, its significance is found in the fact that it presented an "archetype of diaspora faith," transcending time and space, through which persecuted faith communities establish their identity and survive.

6.1. The 'Genevanization' of Scotland and the Blueprint for English Puritanism

The most direct and successful influence appeared in Scotland. Upon his return, John Knox sought to transplant the Genevan model to Scotland, and as a result, the FOP of 1556 underwent revisions with expanded psalms and prayers, eventually being adopted as the official liturgy of the Church of Scotland under the title the *Book of Common Order* (1564) (Sprott and Leishman 1868, p. xv). Scholars evaluate this process by noting that the liturgy developed in Frankfurt and Geneva ultimately became known as "Knox's liturgy" and formed the foundation of the 1564 *Book of Common Order* (Maxwell 1936, p. 15; cf. Sprott and Leishman 1868, p. xv). Indeed, William Maxwell points out that this liturgy was rooted in the practices formed within the exile communities of Frankfurt and Geneva (Maxwell 1936, p. 17), and considers it justified to call it "Knox's liturgy" given the extent of his influence (Maxwell 1936, p. 15). This book served as the standard for Scottish Presbyterian worship and faith for nearly 80 years until the introduction of the Westminster Directory in 1645, deeply rooting the Genevan legacy in Scottish soil (Maxwell 1936, p. 16).

The Genevan church polity model was codified in the Second Book of Discipline, approved by the Scottish General Assembly in 1578. This document specifies in Chapter 2 the four ordinary offices required for the church: pastor, doctor, presbyter/elder, and deacon (Shaw 1976, pp. 94, 109; Henderson 1641, pp. 1–2). Furthermore, this document established the so-called "Two Kingdoms" theory, asserting that the church possesses its own spiritual jurisdiction distinct from state power. The Second Book of Discipline explicitly delineates the distinction between civil government (the power of the sword) and ecclesiastical government (the power of the keys) from its preface (Shaw 1976, p. 91); James Kirk analyzes this as forming the constitutional foundation of the Scottish Presbyterian Church (Kirk 1980).

Indeed, Chapter 1 declares, "Ecclesiastical power and policy is different and distinct in the own nature from that power and policy which is called civil power. . . This spiritual power is immediately from God," thereby guaranteeing the church's spiritual independence free from state interference (Church of Scotland 1578, chp. 1: cf. Shaw 1976, p. 91). Upon returning to England, the exiles formed the core of the Puritan movement. To them, the Elizabethan Settlement and its revised *Book of Common Prayer* represented only a "halfly reformed" church (Collinson 1967, p. 29).

The reality of this enduring influence is clearly manifested in the theological blueprint provided by the Church of Geneva and its liturgy, FOP. Dan G. Danner points out that upon their return to England, the Genevan exiles discovered that Elizabeth's via media was far removed from the Genevan model of "primitive apostolic Christianity," leading them to forge a "radical kind of puritan ethos" based on their experiences in Geneva (Danner 1999, p. 47). During the subsequent Vestiarian Controversy, Puritans took the "best reformed churches" (namely Geneva) as their model, demanding the reform of the Prayer Book and the removal of superstitious dregs such as vestments (Collinson 1967, p. 36). This trajectory

culminated in the Admonition to the Parliament submitted by John Field and Thomas Wilcox in 1572.

Danner confirms the link between the Genevan legacy and this Admonition, asserting that it could not have been written without the influence of the Genevan exile Anthony Gilby (Danner 1999, p. 38). Patrick Collinson notes that these Genevan experiences became the "principal planks in the puritan platform" during the Elizabethan era (Collinson 1967, p. 44). While their efforts did not yield immediate success in England at the time, they sowed the seeds of a long-term struggle. Christina Garrett observed that the division in Frankfurt was destined to "end in civil war," emphasizing its connection to the 17th-century revolution (Garrett 1938, p. 59). Indeed, as William Maxwell confirms, Geneva's *Book of Common Order* remained the standard in Scotland until the enactment of the Directory for Public Worship by the Westminster Assembly in 1645, proving its enduring historical continuity (Maxwell 1936, p. 16). These historical developments in Britain were not merely regional adaptations; they were the manifestations of a sophisticated 'diaspora model' a spiritual and structural framework that provided a robust blueprint for any faith community facing displacement and persecution.

6.2. A Model for Diaspora Faith Formation: Paradigms of Identity Construction and Its Originality

The experience of the English-speaking community in Geneva extended beyond merely influencing the history of a specific nation; rather, it presented an archetype for how a community of faith survives amidst persecution and exile, and further solidifies its identity. The model of 'diaspora faith' constructed by them consists of the following key elements. First is the covenantal theological reinterpretation of suffering. They understood their life in exile not merely as the result of political persecution, but as God's providential discipline and a process of refinement for the sins of their homeland, England, and themselves (Goodman 1558, pp. 84, 160; Whittingham 1575, p. 16). In particular, the 'Daniel 9 Prayer' (A Confession of our Sins. . . out of the Ninth Chapter of Daniel), placed at the beginning of the FOP, was the pinnacle of this theological self-reflection; it served as a channel through which the scattered community corporately confessed the apostasy of their homeland as well as their own sins, and reaffirmed their covenantal relationship with God (Knox 1855, p. 179; Sprott and Leishman 1868, p. 244). The 'Deuteronomic view of history' held by these exiles, as pointed out by Danner, became a powerful internal driving force that prevented the community from falling into despair and converted the period of suffering into an opportunity for the maturation of faith and the reaffirmation of their mission (Danner 1999, pp. 36–37).

Second is the practical exercise of an autonomous church order (Ecclesiological Autonomy) distinct from state power. As a theological concept, this was not an invention of the exiles; rather, it was a fundamental Reformed principle articulated in Book IV of the Institutes and adumbrated in the 1541 Genevan Ordonnances (Shaw 1976 pp. 14, 18). However, while this ecclesiological ideal was rarely enacted in its pure form (even in Geneva or Scotland, where churches faced constant magisterial oversight) the unique condition of exile provided a rare practical laboratory. Operating entirely outside the jurisdiction of the English Crown, they gained the opportunity to organize the church according to biblical principles. Although they were under the administrative jurisdiction of the Geneva magistrates (Gunther 2014, p. 172), internally, as evidenced by the Livre des Anglois, they established ministers, elders, and deacons through the consent and election of the congregation, and independently exercised discipline through the Consistory (Jackson 2015, pp. 177–79). This experience instilled the conviction that the church is not a subordinate organ of the state but an independent and autonomous spiritual community belonging directly to Christ; furthermore, it provided the theological basis for resistance that one

"ought to obey God rather than man" whenever the state attempted to infringe upon the spiritual realm of the church in later years (Goodman 1558, pp. 43–44).

Third, the service book was established as the community's 'Comprehensive Ecclesiastical Constitution.' The FOP was not merely a simple order of worship; rather, as Jackson analyzed, it was a document that encompassed "a confession of faith, constitution and liturgy" (Jackson 2015, p. 174). Since the Confession of Faith as well as the Order of Election of ministers, elders, and deacons, and a strict Order of Discipline were bound together in this book, it served as the legal foundation defining the theological identity and polity of the church (Whittingham 1575, p. 8; Sprott and Leishman 1868, pp. 241–43). This 'Order of Geneva' enabled the community to maintain its unique doctrine and discipline, serving as a powerful focal point that bound the scattered exiles together into one confession of faith (Whittingham 1575, p. 27).

Fourth, it was an ideological and educational strategy utilizing print media. Their most crucial strategy was to use Geneva's developed printing technology to publish the FOP, the Geneva Bible, and various resistance theory pamphlets, and to distribute them secretly to their homeland. In particular, the Geneva Bible, equipped with extensive annotations, served as an effective educational tool that trained the laity to read Scripture through the community's theological perspective specifically the 'Deuteronomic motif' emphasizing covenantal faithfulness, iconoclasm, and resistance (Danner 1999, pp. 36–37, 41–44). Through this, although they were physically scattered, they were able to construct a single 'imagined community' that was powerfully bound together ideologically. The enduring significance of this sixteenth-century model extends beyond its immediate historical impact, offering a vital analytical framework for addressing the religious, social, and technological complexities of the contemporary world.

6.3. Contemporary Implications

The experience of the Geneva exiles in the sixteenth century continues to offer significant implications today, over 450 years later. Their struggles provide a historical precedent and an analytical framework for understanding various phenomena in modern society.

First, it provides insight into the issues of global migration and the identity of religious communities. Today, numerous migrants and refugee groups leaving their homes for new lands due to war, persecution, or economic reasons face challenges similar to those of the Geneva exiles of the past. The case of Geneva demonstrates how consciously immigrant religious communities must construct internal focal points—such as worship, education, and autonomous organizations—in order to maintain their unique faith and cultural identity within a new society.

Second, it acts as a historical case study illustrating the relationship between media technology and the formation of religious networks. The manner in which the Geneva community utilized print media, the cutting-edge technology of the time, to overcome geographical limitations and form and maintain an ideological community is directly comparable to the formation of transnational religious networks and "virtual communities" via the internet and social media today. This offers an important historical perspective for understanding the impact of media technology on the propagation, cohesion, and even radicalization of religious beliefs.

Third, it facilitates an understanding of the relationship between religion and politics, particularly the origins of political resistance based on religious belief. The resistance theory developed by John Knox and his colleagues is grounded in the conviction that religious conscience holds superiority over the unjust commands of the state. This forms one of the significant theological roots of the concept of "civil disobedience" in modern democratic society. At the same time, their case contains a double-sided lesson, warning of

how religious beliefs can lead to absolutist and uncompromising political action, as well as the dangers of social conflict that may arise in that process.

7. Conclusions

In conclusion, the English exile community in Geneva forged a unique and influential diaspora worship within the crucible of persecution and internal strife. This study has traced how the theological struggle at Frankfurt compelled them to break decisively with the liturgical compromise of the Church of England and opt for the radical alternative of the 'Regulative Principle of Worship.' The resulting *Forme of Prayers* was not merely a copy of Calvin's liturgy; rather, while rooted in his theology, it was an original theological manifesto that encapsulated their covenantal identity as persecuted exiles and their prophetic aspiration for the reformation of their homeland.

The brief exile in Geneva was far more than a temporary refuge. It served as a 'laboratory' wherein a comprehensive alternative model of Protestantism was constructed—encompassing worship and theology, Presbyterian polity and social ethics, and even political resistance theory. The fruits of this experiment became the *Book of Common Order*, defining the worship of the Church of Scotland, and, alongside the Geneva Bible, served as a powerful theological, liturgical, and political manifesto that presented the ideal for English Puritanism. The immense influence that this small service book and community—born out of a short exile—exerted on the subsequent flow of British Protestantism and Western political history remains a compelling testament to how a marginalized diaspora community, through theological innovation and organizational cohesion, can transform from the periphery into the very center of historical change.

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