Selbstzeugnisse der Neuzeit

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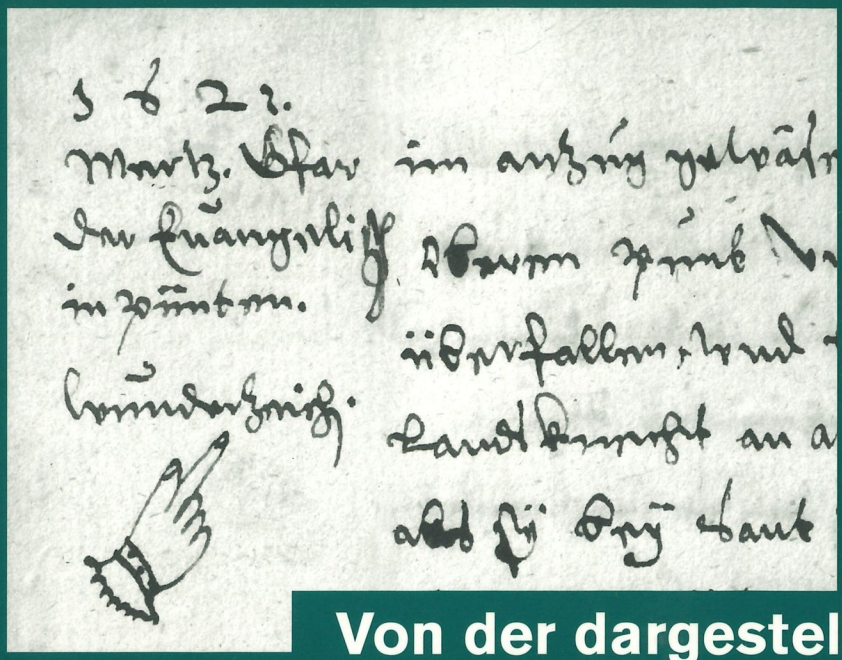

Von der dargestellten Person zum erinnerten Ich

Europäische Selbstzeugnisse als historische Quellen (1500–1850)

Böhlau

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Herausgegeben von

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Philip Benedict

Some Uses of Autobiographical Documents in the Reformed Tradition

Historical studies of early modern autobiographical documents fall into three broad categories. The first, epitomized by the writings of such scholars as Georg Misch and Karl Weintraub, attempts a literary history of autobiography that is essentially the story of the emergence of one distinctive genre of personal memoir, the kind most characteristic of the form today, in which a self-reflective individual attempts to answer the questions "who am I?" and "how did I become what I am?". Works in this tradition often set their story within a larger metanarrative entitled something like "the emergence of modern individualism" or "the rise of the self".[1] The second approach uses individual personal documents or a corpus of such documents to explore aspects of the history of this period that other sources do not allow us to reconstruct with as much vividness and immediacy. Here the focus is less upon the documents themselves than upon what they reveal about their authors and their times.[2] The third, a less teleological and selective variant of the first, attempts to reconstruct the full range of personal documents from the past and the reasons for which they were established.[3]

Each approach has its strengths. The first offers stimulating macro-level generalizations with which it is profitable to engage critically. The second (to use Marc Bloch's famous metaphor) satisfies the appetite of all good historian/vampires for human flesh. But this essay follows the third approach, which seems a particularly fruitful way of proceeding at the present moment. Not only is an adequate understanding of the reasons why different kinds of autobiographical documents were kept an essential critical preliminary to the use of these documents as historical evidence; such an approach speaks directly to questions of the uses of literacy and of the relations between writing and personal experience that

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1 Misch, Georg. Geschichte der Autobiographie, Frankfurt a/M 1949–19693. Weintraub, Karl. The Value of the Individual: Self and Circumstance in Autobiography, Chicago, 1978. For a more historically complex retelling of the early modern English aspect of this tale, see now Mascuch, Michael. Origins of the Individualist Self: Autobiography and Self-Identity in England, 1591–1791, Stanford 1996.

2 Classics of this approach include Lottin, Alain. Chavatte, ouvrier lillois. Un contemporain de Louis XIV, Paris 19792. Macfarlane, Alan. The Family Life of Ralph Josselin: A Seventeenth-Century Clergyman, Cambridge 1970. Seaver, Paul. Wallington's World: A Puritan Artisan in Seventeenth-Century London, Stanford 1985.

3 Newer and less fully developed than the other two traditions, this approach is perhaps best illustrated by Amelang, James. The Flight of Icarus: Artisan Autobiography in Early Modern Europe, Stanford 1998.

are at the heart of current historical concerns. It also promises to suggest a more complex and less teleological history of personal record keeping practices in which the emergence of that dissolving will-o'-the-wisp, "the modern self", may not be the only or the most important story.

The foundation for this essay is relatively unsystematic, at least when compared with the vast efforts to seek out and inventory all surviving diaries, journals, and other egodocuments that have been recently undertaken in a number of countries. Over the past fifteen years, while working on both archivally based studies of the French Huguenots and on a more synthetic study of the Reformed tradition throughout Europe, I have been keeping an eye out for autobiographical documents written by members of the Reformed churches in the various parts of Europe where such churches became established. Often I have followed in the tracks of those who have made more systematic searches for such works. All told, I have read perhaps fifty such documents, and have gained from bibliographies and secondary works what I believe to be a fairly accurate picture of the larger corpus of such documents for many but not all parts of Europe where Reformed churches came to be established. What follows explores the practices that gave rise to the creation of such documents and the uses to which they were put within one of the major confessional families of early modern Europe.

Puritan spiritual diaries and autobiographies of 17th century England and America occupy a position of great prominence in all three of the chief approaches to early modern personal documents that have just been outlined. No literary history of autobiography is complete without some discussion of such classics of the genre as Bunyan's *Grace Abounding to the chief of Sinners*. Puritan diaries and journals have inspired such gems of modern social history as Alan Macfarlane's *The Family Life of Ralph Josselin* and Paul Seaver's *Wallington's World*. And literary scholars and historians of Puritanism have explored the history and development of the particular genres of personal writings cultivated by the English and American Puritans with perhaps greater thoroughness than is the case for any other genre or corpus of early modern autobiographical documents.[4] So well known are these documents, in fact, that they are often presumed to be typical or emblematic of Calvinist religiosity more generally in the early modern period.

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4 Particularly important studies include Watkins, Owen. The Puritan Experience: Studies in Spiritual Experience, New York 1972. Boursier, Elisabeth. Les journaux privés en Angleterre de 1600 à 1660, Paris 1976. Hall, David. The Mental World of Samuel Sewell. In: Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society 92 (1980), p. 21–44. Caldwell, Patricia. The Puritan Conversion Narrative: The Beginnings of an American Expression, Cambridge, 1983. von Greyerz, Kaspar. Vorsehungsglaube und Kosmologie: Studien zu englischen Selbstzeugnissen des 17. Jahrhunderts, Göttingen, 1990. Webster, Tom. Writing to Redundancy: Approaches to Spiritual Journals and Early Modern Spirituality. In: The Historical Journal 39 (1996), p. 33–56. Mascuch, Origins of the Individualist Self, chs. 4–5.

In fact, these documents are far from typical of Reformed pious praxis in 16th and 17th century Europe. They actually happen to constitute a specific contellation of genres that emerged out of the distinctive concerns and preoccupations of late sixteenth century England. From there they spread to other – but not all – parts of the Reformed world. This essay will have two parts. The first will attempt to sketch the geographic and chronological diffusion of the sorts of personal documents whose maintenance was first encouraged by the English practical divines of the late 16th and 17th century. This part will be the history of one constellation of genres of personal documents across all those regions of Europe where Reformed churches were established. The second part will attempt to survey all of the different kinds of private journals and autobiographical writings produced by the members of the French Reformed churches, Calvinists who did not keep spiritual diaries of the sorts made familiar to us by the English and American Puritans. This will be a survey of all forms of personal or autobiographical writing among the members of a single Reformed community. Through these two complementary approaches, I hope to illuminate the particular features of the English religious landscape that encouraged the development of the Puritan spiritual diary and its related genres, to suggest how the mapping of autobiographical documents and their diffusion can contribute to understanding broader themes of one confession's history and experience in this period, and to offer my small contribution to the larger history of autobiographical practices in early modern Europe now under construction.

The Puritan Spiritual Diary and Autobiography: Origins, Development, and International Diffusion

Puritan spiritual diaries and autobiographies represent a very precise and well-inventoried constellation of genres whose keeping was explicitly recommended in a number of treatises of the time. The first evidence of spiritual diary keeping in England comes in a 1574 account of the life of the Edwardian preacher and Marian martyr John Bradford (d. 1555):

> "He used to make unto himself an ephemeris or a journal, in which he used to write all such notable things as either he did see or hear each day that passed. But whatsoever he did see, he did so pen it that a man might see in that book the signs of his smitten heart. For if he did see or hear any good in any man, by that sight he found and noted the want thereof in himself, and added a short prayer, craving mercy and grace to amend. If he did hear or see any plague or misery, he noted it as a thing procured by his own sins, and still added *Domine miserere me*, 'Lord have mercy upon me.' He used in the same book to note

> such evil thoughts as did rise in him. ... And thus he made to himself and of himself a book of daily practices of repentance."[5]

The first surviving diary of this sort is that of Richard Rogers, that important figure of the Cambridge group around Richard Greenham and William Perkins that was the fountainhead of the English tradition of practical divinity and experimental predestinarianism.[6] (Rogers' diary begins in 1586.) Perkins urged the making of "catalogues and bills of thine own sins" in his 1597 treatise entitled *A Graine of Musterd-Seede*.[7] In a country in which diary-keeping or memoir-writing was previously quite rare, diaries and personal records kept for such purposes subsequently began to multiply, becoming far more common in England than in the Germanic speaking lands in the same period.[8] The volume of such records picked up particularly after 1640. Extended spiritual autobiographies written at a single moment in which the author traces his or her spiritual experiences and growth in grace also made their appearance around midcentury. From the 1640s onwards, too, manuals of spiritual advice recommended the maintenance of diaries or other personal records with increasing frequency. The most extended such recommendations were found in a work devoted entirely to the value of diary-keeping, John Beadle's 1656 *A Journal or Diary of a Thankfull Christian*.[9]

The range of purposes that Beadle suggested that a diary or journal might serve was extensive. Diaries, he said, should be books of three leaves: the black leaf of the diary keeper's sins and sorrows; the white leaf of God's goodness and mercies; and the red leaf of God's judgements felt. They should record both national and personal affairs. The records of national affairs should serve to note the kinds of princes who ruled; their piety or lack thereof; the country's prosperity or lack thereof; God's remarkable judgements on notorious offenders; and the nature of the "national epidemicall sin" of the moment. Such a record could serve to demonstrate the links that Beadle was certain existed between the character of the ruler's faith and the situation of the country as a whole. It could also suggest possible remedies for the most prevalent sins. The personal entries should include a careful account of the diary keeper's effectual calling; records of all instances of divine providential care; the identity of personal benefactors; one's calling, offices and the sort of minister one lived under; and the diary keeper's "returns on prayers." In rereading the journal, the diary keeper would be reminded of God's abundant mercies and kindnesses

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5 Bradford, John. The Writings, Cambridge 1848–1853, v. 1, p. 35. This passage does not appear to have been previously noticed by students of English spiritual diary-keeping.

6 Knappen, M. M. Two Elizabethan Puritan Diaries by Richard Rogers and Samuel Ward, Chicago 1933.

7 Perkins, William. The Work, ed. Ian Breward, Appleford 1970, p. 406, 408.

8 von Greyerz, Vorsehungsglaube und Kosmologie, p. 47.

9 Now edited by Murray, Germaine Fry. A Critical Edition of John Beadle's *A Journall or Diary of a Thankfull Christian*, New York 1996.

to him or her. The diary would thus serve as an incitement to praise God and reinforce faith. The diary keeper would be able to tally his or her personal shortcomings and be inspired to attempt to overcome them. Finally, the document would serve as a useful memorial for future generations.[10] The potential purposes and uses of spiritual diaries had thus come by this period to exceed the simple tool of self-improvement that Bradford's diary was reported to have been for him. In fact, more than one genre of Puritan personal document was discernable by this period: the spiritual autobiography; the record of God's particular providences and mercies to an individual; the memorial of personal experiences of prayer and communion; the registers of sins and shortcomings, often linked to the notation of personal vows or covenants taken to avoid one or several kinds of sins; and the recording of personal, familial, and national events. Some diary-keepers, such as Nehemiah Wallington, kept each one of these separately. Many others mixed several together in the same cocktail.

The chronology of the development of this constellation of genres, and the purposes for which they were recommended, enable us to situate them with considerable precision within the theological landscape of the day. The mention of Bradford's diary is particularly intriguing, since it suggests the possibility of a pre-existing practice of using personal notebooks as tools of personal asceticism and self-fashioning – technologies of the self in Foucault's terminology – that may already have been part of the panoply of techniques suggested by spiritual writers and advisers, although I have yet to discover any references to such recommendations in the corpus of late medieval or early Reformation devotional manuals. The fact that the first surviving journals can be traced back to the Cambridge circle of the 1580s and 1590s is anything but coincidental. It was just this circle that first began to popularize within the Reformed world detailed suggestions on how Chrstians could best shape their daily conduct and to disseminate other practical techniques of self-monitoring and self-improvement that were a standard part of late medieval devotional practice, such as the recommendation that one review one's daily behavior every evening before retiring to bed. This same circle nurtured the tradition of "experimental predestinarianism," a pastoral strategy that emphasized the need for all good Christians to make their election sure by searching within themselves for the marks of effectual calling that could offer them confidence that they were among the elect. This particular emphasis not only encouraged individuals to look inward for the marks of grace in their heart and the evidence of effectual calling in their daily moral behavior, motives that encouraged the recording of both spiritual experience and the day's sins and inattentions. It also stood behind the practice that developed in the Congregationalist and Particular Baptists churches in the 1630s and 1640s of requiring that individuals testify convincingly to the workings of

10 Ibid., passim, esp. p. 16, 33.

grace in their soul before they be admitted to the Lord's Supper. These testimonies of personal conversion in turn helped to inspire the genre of the spiritual autobiography.

The abundant literature on the Puritan spiritual diaries makes it unnecessary to review the insights these offer into the mental world and devotional experience of those who maintained them. The point to be stressed here is simply that these documents must be linked to the specific English currents of practical divinity and experimental predestinarianism, rather than with the broader traditions of Reformed theology or its high predestinarian variants. If these documents were an offshoot or expression of these broader traditions, then we would expect to find them maintained by members of the Reformed churches everywhere in Europe, or at least in those many times and places where a strict predestinarianism dominated Calvinist theology. But we do not. I have found no such records among the French Huguenots despite searching intensively for them. Specialists in the history of Reformed Switzerland and Hungary likewise indicate their absence there throughout the seventeenth century.[11] That is not to say, however, that the habit of spiritual diary-keeping always remained a peculiarity of the English. On the contrary, it spread to at least two other regions of Europe where Reformed churches were strong by the beginning of the eighteenth century, albeit with a long and quite telling time lag between the two cases.

The first region outside England where Reformed Protestants began to keep spiritual journals was Scotland. This is perhaps not terribly surprising, since Scotland shared the same island and, after 1603, the same monarch with England. It is nonetheless a point worth stressing, since the formal structure of worship and church government remained very different in Scotland from in England for most of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and the region's properly religious history has been seriously neglected by a historiography that concentrates instead on Scotland's ferocious ecclesiological battles. Insofar as it may be reconstructed, the religious life of the Scottish godly was nonetheless similar in many ways to that of their English counterparts, a fact that must be related at least in part to the longstanding weakness of the native printing industry and the consequent reliance of Scottish booksellers on devotional works imported from London.[12] One of the ways in which the similarity between Scottish and English devotional practices may be discerned lies precisely in the developing habit of Scottish men and women of keeping memorials or diaries of their lives and spiritual experiences from the early seventeenth century onward. The first such spiritual diary to come to my attention is that of Robert

11 Vuilleumier, Henri. Histoire de l'Eglise réformée du pays de Vaud sous le régime bernois, Lausanne 1927–1933, v. 2, p. 610. Personal communications from E. William Monter and Graeme Murdock.

12 This is evident from The Wills of Thomas Bassandyne and Other Printers, etc. in Edinburgh, 1577–1687. In: The Bannatyne Miscellany, Edinburgh 1836, esp. p. 192–202, 242–243, 251. See also Coffey, John. Politics, Religion and the British Revolutions: The Mind of Samuel Rutherford, Cambridge 1997, p. 17–25, 82–113.

Blair, who began his journal in 1616 after "having heard of the practice of some diligent Christians, who daily took brief notes of the condition of their souls."[13] Such documents seem to become more numerous after 1660 or 1670. I have looked at a half dozen of these journals in manuscript. While they share many features with and reveal many of the same practices and preoccupations as their English counterparts, they also have a certain distinctive accent of their own. Perhaps most notable is the frequency with which they record the personal covenants of the diary keeper and his or her attempt to keep them. The diary of Sir James Nasmyth from the years 1688–1704 becomes for long stretches little more than notations that he has once again renewed his vow to mourn for his abominations and sins and entries, followed by entries recording his breaches of these vows, almost always through "untymely drinking" or "intemperance."[14]

Spiritual diaries and autobiographies of this ilk also came to be kept by members of the Reformed churches in the Netherlands, but here the practice began almost a century later. This detail of chronology is at once surprising and revealing. A movement for further reformation that owed a strong debt to the example and inspiration of English Puritanism took shape in the Netherlands from the 1610s onward. Although the active band of Dutch historians dedicated to studying this "Nadere Reformatie" has been far more concerned with establishing the honor roll of pious precisians than with clarifying the initiatives pursued by those whom they associate with the goal of further reformation, it appears that the first generations of Batavian Baxters and Bunyans concentrated their attention on enforcing stricter sabbath observance and effecting a broader reformation of manners through magisterial initiatives. Only when these failed to carry the day did they embrace the vigorous preaching to individual conversion and the many techniques of personal and small group amelioration characteristic of the English tradition of practical piety from its outset.[15] It is at this point that spiritual diaries or autobiographies began to appear in the Netherlands. Two printed examples provided models. In 1665 an Amsterdam printer brought forth a third-person account of *God's Wondrous Working for and in a Reborn Soul*

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13 Cited in Webster, Writing to Redundancy, p. 37.

14 Diary of the Experiences of James Nasmyth. Saint Andrews University Library, MS DA 804.IN2, continued at Edinburgh University Library, MS DC.7.81. Other Scottish diaries or autobiographies that I have examined include Memorial or Diary of Mr Francis Borland, minister of Glassford, 1661–1722, Edinburgh University Library. Part of the Diary of the Revd. Mr Thomas Hog, Edinburgh University Library. Diary of Mr James Murray, National Library of Scotland MS 3045. The Most Memorable Passages of the Life and Times of Mr J. B. Written by Himself, National Library of Scotland, Wodrow MS 4o 82. The Memoirs of Walter Pringle and The History of Mr John Welsh, Minister of the Gospel at Ayr. In: Select Biographies, ed. W. K. Tweedie, Edinburgh 1855. Diary of Sir Archibald Johnston of Wariston 1632–1639, ed. G. M. Paul, Edinburgh 1911.

15 The literature on the Dutch Nadere Reformatie is at once vast and rather superficial. The Documentatieblad Nadere Reformatie is a scholarly periodical devoted entirely to the subject. The fullest intro-

by "M.D.B." – probably the English immigrant to Haarlem, Matthias Du Bois – that related the protagonist's initial awakening to a life of external righteousness, his two-year period of fear and doubt during which he was convinced of his damnation despite his relatively upright life, and the arguments and sentiments that gradually brought him growing confidence that he possessed saving faith. In 1689 a Dutch translation of Bunyan's *Grace Abounding* appeared. Surviving manuscript spiritual autobiographies or diaries then begin to appear from the turn of the eighteenth century onward; some twenty are known. These have been well studied by Fred van Lieburg, who shows that they display many of the same spiritual preoccupations and psychological patterns as English Puritan autobiographies.[16]

Spiritual diary-keeping also developed in pietistic circles in Reformed Switzerland in the 18th century, just as it did in the pietistic Lutheran circles in Germany. How much the development of this practice drew upon and continued the English traditions, and in what ways it might have diverged, merits further investigation.

Huguenot Personal Documents

While the French Huguenots did not maintain the kinds of spiritual diaries and autobiographies first developed by the English Puritans, this does not mean that members of these churches kept no personal records or autobiographies of any sort. On the contrary, a substantial corpus of diaries, memoirs, or *livres de raison* kept by members of the French Reformed churches from the mid 16th to the early 18th century survives in repositories across Europe and America.[17] A rapid survey of these personal documents can shed light both on the range of motivations that inspired early modern Europeans of all religious in-

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ductions to the subject and its historiography are provided by the collective works De Nadere Reformatie. Beschrijving van haar voonaamste vertegenwoordigers, The Hague 1986; Figuren en thema's van de Nadere Reformatie, Kampen 1987, 1990, Rotterdam 1993; and De Nadere Reformatie en de Gereformeerd Piëtisme, The Hague 1989. A good brief overview in English may be found in Lieburg, Fred van. From Pure Church to Pious Culture: The Further Reformation in the Seventeenth-Century Dutch Republic. In: Graham, W. Fred (ed.). Later Calvinism: International Perspectives, Kirksville Mo. 1994, p. 409–430. To understand the various initiatives lumped under this umbrella, however, there is no dispensing with such key statements of the movement as Teellinck, Willem. Noodwendig vertoog, Middelburg 1627; Witsius, Herman. Twist des Heeren met sijn winjgaart, Leeuwarden 1669; Koelman, Jacobus. Pointen van nodige reformatie, Flushing 1678.

16 M. D. B. Godts wonder-werck, voor en in de Weder-gheboorte, Amsterdam, 1665. Lieburg, F. A. van. Piëtistiche Egodocumenten in 18de-Eeuws Nederland. In: Spiegel Historiael 25 (1990), p. 320–324. Idem, Levens van vromen. Gereformeerd piëtisme in de achttiende eeuw, Kampen 1991, esp. p. 15.

17 A full list of Huguenot personal records used for this essay may be found in the Appendix.

clinations to keep various forms of personal records and on the distinctive religious outlook and historical experience of this particular group.

Many of the Huguenot personal documents belong to those genres of personal writing that were cultivated by sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Frenchmen of all religious inclinations: the *livre de raison* (a running record of major family events and property transactions), the travel journal, and the memoir or chronicle. The concerns stimulating Huguenots to keep such documents differed little from those that moved their Catholic neighbors to do the same: the need to record major family events or property transactions for future reference and, if necessary, as legal evidence; the desire to preserve a memory of extraordinary events or adventures; the concern to instruct and edify future generations. If certain of these documents betray no hint of the author's religious affiliation, others do so through the partisan slant of their narration of public events or by their concentration on events concerning the fate of the Reformed church. Some include brief religious reflections. Again, this is hardly unique to the Huguenot personal documents; brief prayers or formulaic phrases of a religious nature can be found in many diaries and *livres de raison* of the era. Still, it is tempting to discern a distinctively Calvinist accent to certain of these passages. Can we do so, for instance, in the particular insistence on giving all glory to God in the prayer that opens the chronicle of Jean de Mory, a butcher of Metz who recorded the major events in the history of his city and his church in the 1550s and 1560s? "May I begin in God's name. All honor and glory to you my God. Accord me the blessing of always remembering your benefactions to me," he began his work.[18] The preface to Agrippa d'Aubigné's autobiography is particularly charming. He wrote his work for the benefit of his children, he explains, since, while many biographies of great men exist to offer instruction in rulership, few works offer instruction in the dexterity that the middling sort of noblemen need to get on in their world, which is one of constant struggle with their equals. He thus vows to recount his deeds and his mistakes for his children's benefit as straightforwardly as if they were sitting on his lap, so that they may learn from both his honorable actions and his errors. Then he suddenly interrupts this admonition to self-fashioning with a pious demurral: "but good fortune does not come from us, but from above."[19] Again, a distinctively Calvinist twist?

Whatever the answer to this question, one sort of Huguenot autobiographical account undeniably was the product of the distinctive historical experience of this religious minority. This was the escape narrative written from exile after 1685, occasionally embedded within a longer autobiography or family history, recounting the author's sufferings in France at the moment of the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes and his or her subsequent

18 Mazauric, Roger (ed.). Journal d'un bourgeois de Metz. In: Bulletin de la Société de l'Histoire du Protestantisme Français 95 (1948), p. 187.

19 D'Aubigné, Agrippa. Sa vie à ses enfants. In: Oeuvres, ed. Henri Weber, Paris 1969, p. 383.

flight abroad. Surviving accounts of this sort are surprisingly numerous and make up a substantial proportion of all Huguenot personal documents of the early modern era to come down to us. Carolyn Lougee Chappell, who is currently inventorying and studying these escape memoirs, has to date located no less than 51.[20]

These works are characteristic products of this minority not simply because of their subject matter, but also because of the manner in which they tell their story. To a greater or lesser extent, virtually all are moral tales, variously emphasizing the pangs of conscience that tormented those authors who had been induced by fear for their safety to abjure their faith, the heroic examples of others who chose to suffer punishment rather than renounce the faith, and God's admirable providences in delivering his children from bondage. Many motives undoubtedly inspired their writing, but most were explicitly addressed to the author's family or children, and we can be confident that the single most important concern of their authors was to prompt subsequent generations to remain faithful to the religion that they had undergone such risks to be able to continue to practice freely. Thus, the merchant Pierre Vieusseux began his account by addressing his children directly and telling them, "God's graces to me have been so great that I thought I must leave them to you in writing, to engage you to express your gratitude to him and to inspire you to fear him, to love him, and not to do anything that would displease him; for the benefits and goods he has bestowed upon me have served as your sustenance."[21] The schoolteacher Jean Migault exhorted his children to read yearly their copies of the account that he sent to each of them – a fascinating illustration of how at least one author imagined that a personal autobiography might be used by subsequent generations.[22] The pastor Jacques Cabrit was convinced that writing the history of his life had personal as well as familial religious value. He wrote his 1734 account for three reasons, he declares: 1) because the provincial church inspector urged him to do so (a Protestant instance of the assertion common to so many Catholic spiritual autobiographies that the text was written at a superior's prodding); 2) because "it seems to me that every refugee should remember the risks he ran when he was forced to leave France for his holy Religion, and God's admirable manner in delivering him, so that he is moved to offer most humble thanks, … [for this] is a powerful motive for humility, detachment from the world, and the deepest gratitude to our divine liberator"; 3) so that his wife and children might likewise know

20 Lougee Chappell, Carolyn. "The Pains I Took to Save My/His Family": Escape Accounts by a Huguenot Mother and Daughter after the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes. In: French Historical Studies 22 (1999), p. 2. I would like to thank Prof. Lougee for kindly sharing with me her inventory of such memoirs, which brought to my attention many of which I had not previously been aware.

21 Un émigre de la Révocation. In: Bulletin de la Société de l'Histoire du Protestantisme Français 25 (1876), p. 275.

22 Migault, Jean. Journal, eds. N. Weiss and H. Clouzot, Paris 1910, p. 49.

how God's grace led us to this place.[23] Less conscious motives may also be discerned behind certain of the texts. The vivid accounts of the danger and adventure of crossing the border in many of these documents betray their authors' desire to share the stirring yarn of what must have been for many the greatest adventure of their lives. Exile often provokes people to genealogical and autobiographical reflection so that they may preserve for subsequent generations their memories of their ancestral homeland and of their family's place within it, and this clearly inspired the detailed family history that Daniel Collot d'Escury wrote "to serve as evidence for my children of where they have come", tracing the family's story back to a grandfather orphaned when his mother was killed in the Massacre of Vassy.[24] A confessional tone characterizes the extended passages of certain accounts in which the authors express their regret at the weakness they displayed when they signed abjurations, attended mass, or kneeled as the consecrated host was carried down the street. In varying measures adventure stories, family origin myths, expressions of contrition, and testimonials of indebtedness to God's admirable providences, these texts thus served a broad range of both personal and familial purposes. The preservation of so many of them, often in family hands into the twentieth century, suggests as well that they often achieved their intended purpose and became important instruments in the subsequent construction of the family's identity.

One Huguenot diary meanwhile stands apart from all of the others in character and in the insights that it offers us into the lived religious experience of its author. This is the *Ephemerides* of the eminent classical scholar and minister's son Isaac Casaubon.[25] Although not precisely similar to any Puritan journal of which I am aware, this work contains numerous pious meditations and a record of its author's devotional activities that is very much akin to the Puritan diaires that were just beginning to emerge as a genre when Casaubon wrote. Casaubon began his diary in 1597 and spells out the purpose of the diary on the first page: "The expenditure of time being the most costly of all those we make, and considering the truth of what is said by the Latin stoic that 'there is one reputable kind of avarice, viz. to be avaricious of our time,' I have this day resolved to begin this record of my time, in order that I may have by me an accout of my spending of so precious a commodity. Thus, when I look back, if any of it hath been well laid out, I may rejoice and give almighty God thanks for his grace; if again any of it hath been idle or ill spent, I may be aware thereof and know my fault or misfortune therein." True to its stated purpose, the diary's entries note Casaubon's daily round of activities: his morning

23 Autobiographie d'une victime de la Révocation: Jacques Cabrit, pasteur du réfuge (1669–1751). In: Bulletin de la Société de l'Histoire du Protestantisme Français 39 (1890), p. 533.

24 Collot d'Escury, Daniel. Livre de ma genealogie et des evennemens les plus remarquables qui me sont arrivez. Algemeen Rijksarchief, the Hague, Eerste Afdeling, Familie-archief Collot d'Escury, 390.

25 Casaubon, Isaac. Ephemerides, Oxford 1851. I owe thanks to Silvia Panichi for help in translating this document.

prayers, the progress of his studies, and whether or not he was able to spend each morning and afternoon working. Too often, he ruefully records, he was interrupted by illness, family concerns, or, most exasperating of all, his friends, "or better yet enemies," who were constantly dropping by to talk with him. The diary betrays no preoccupation with taking the temperature of his prayers or discerning whether or not God's grace seems to be with him, in the manner of so many English, Scottish, or later Dutch diaries. Instead, Casaubon confidently states at one point that he is sure that he is among the predestined. Fortunate events or narrow escapes from misfortune are noted as particular providences. What shines through above all else in the diary are the same sentiments that are so powerful in Calvin's own writings, namely a sense of God's absolute sovereignty and of man's duty to serve and honor Him in all of his actions. The most insistent refrain in his prayers is the petition that God grant him the health and the power to be useful in his service – although whatever God wills for him he declares himself ready to accept. Whether Casaubon hit upon the idea of keeping this document himself or based it upon some prior model I do not know.

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The members of Europe's different Reformed churches thus kept a range of personal documents for an equally wide range of purposes. The practice of keeping spiritual diaries and journals that was so important in the culture of the English godly also spread quickly to the ranks of the Scottish godly and was taken up by certain Dutch precisians or "Puritans" at the turn of the eighteenth century. For these pious diary-keepers, maintaining such documents served at once as an instrument of self-monitoring and self-improvement, as a way of sharing with others one's personal experience of grace, and as a means of establishing a personal record of God's graces and mercies that could be reread in times of ebbing faith to revive one's assurance of one's own election and to prompt a more ardent service of God. This practice was not a necessary or inevitable corollary of the high Calvinist emphasis on predestination, however, nor can it be seen as a product of a tendency to rationalization innate in Reformed theology, for it did not develop among the members of all of Europe's Reformed churches. What is the case is that elsewhere in Europe Reformed Protestants also wrote memoirs and kept diaries and *livres de raison* for the same motives that their non-Reformed neighbors did. The French Huguenots' experience of flight and exile after the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes also prompted them to write accounts of their prior lives in France and their fortunate escape from that land of persecution that served to construct their family's identity as refugees. Certain of these were written with the express intention that they be distributed among all family members and subsequently re-read regularly, an indication of how early modern Europeans used the written word quite self-consciously to shape the behavior of subsequent generations. Finally, one per-

haps quite exceptional French Huguenot created a personal diary as a means of monitoring his use of his time and seeking to ensure that his life was as fully dedicated to the service of God within his calling as possible. Within a single confessional tradition, the uses of autobiography were many.