Early Polemic by Andrew Melville: The *Carmen Mosis* (1574) and the St Bartholomew's Day Massacres¹

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Le réformateur religieux et de l'éducation Andrew Melville (1545–1622) n'a pas écrit de traités politiques d'ampleur, et sa position intellectuelle est un des aspects les moins étudiés de son personnage. Toutefois, Melville est l'auteur d'un corpus important de poésie néo-latine. Cet article examine donc sa première publication connue, intitulée Carmen Mosis. Écrite en 1573/74, cette petite collection d'épigrammes témoigne de sa réaction au massacre de la Saint-Barthélémy—réaction qui ne serait pas connue autrement. Cette collection attaque aussi la dynastie française des Valois en tant que la cause principale du massacre. De plus, le Carmen Mosis trahit l'influence de George Buchanan et la propagande huguenote en France et à Genève sur l'esprit du jeune Melville.

Introduction

Andrew Melville (1545–1622) was a lightning rod for religious dissent in early modern Scotland. Despite recent advances in “Melvillian” studies, perhaps the most under-researched aspect of Melville is his intellectual outlook. Unlike his counterparts John Knox and George Buchanan,² Melville has left us no political or polemical treatises outlining his views on resistance, church government, or church-state relations. But this does not mean that Melville left nothing, in literary terms at least, that can elucidate his mindset for us. For example, a small number of theological pamphlets and lecture notes by his students at St Mary's survives from the 1590s and early 1600s, shedding light on the theology he was teaching, as does a book of his correspondence from his period in the Tower of London (1607–1611), collated by his nephew James Melville.³ His most significant literary output, however, was a substantial body of neo-Latin poetry, comprising over 160 pieces, which now survives in a handful of printed works and in manuscripts scattered across various institutions and archives.⁴ Melville was diverse in his choice of subject matter, turning his hand with equal ease to encomiastic and elegiac verses for friends, satires on

bishops and the state of the Kirk, and poetic commentaries on excerpts from the *Book of Daniel* and John of Patmos's *Revelation*. Taken together, his poems provide a greater insight into his personality and politics than has hitherto been recognized. As an example, this paper will focus on Melville's earliest known polemical works, a series of poems and epigrams condemning the French St Bartholomew's day massacres of August 1572. These were written between his final years in Geneva in 1573 and his return to Scotland in 1574, and published under the title *Carmen Mosis* ("The Song of Moses"). These poems, lamenting the death of so many Huguenots and attacking the French king Charles IX and his mother Catherine de Medici as the central agents behind the massacres, are fresh, full of energy and often devastatingly sharp in their criticism. Collectively, the texts let us see his otherwise unrecorded personal reaction to one of the key events in contemporary European politics, while an analysis of them shows how familiar he was with Calvinist resistance theory and propaganda, as typified both in the works of his friend George Buchanan, and in the wider range of French and Genevan tracts on the massacres.

Melville: Background and Historiography

Following his return to Scotland from Geneva in 1574, Melville quickly emerged as the *primus inter pares* of the Presbyterian faction that controlled the church in lowland Scotland. A radical proponent of the "two kingdoms" theory and an outspoken opponent of Episcopal forms of church government, Melville was exiled or warded by James VI on a number of occasions in the 1580s and 1590s, culminating in 1606 in his removal from St Andrews and imprisonment in the Tower of London.⁵ Melville was equally a force for change in his other role as an educational reformer and as a "Doctor" of the Kirk. His first job on his return to Scotland was to assume the principalship of Glasgow University, where he introduced the teaching of Hebrew, Syriac, and Chaldaic to Scotland, and added a range of humanist subjects to Glasgow's outdated medieval curriculum. He also rejected parts of the traditional corpus of Aristotle then taught at Scottish universities in favour of the simplified "method" of teaching logic, rhetoric, and other liberal arts pioneered by the French scholar Pierre de la Ramée, or Petrus Ramus, whom Melville heard lecturing at Paris, Geneva, and Lausanne between 1564 and 1571.⁶ Melville's innovations were made official in the *Nova Fundatio* of Glasgow in July 1577, and influenced the re-foundations of St Andrews in November 1579 and King's College, Aberdeen in 1582–83,⁷ as well as the new foundations of Edinburgh University in 1582 and Marischal College, Aberdeen in 1593.⁸ In 1580 Melville assumed the principalship

of Scotland's only school of divinity, St Mary's College, St Andrews, and spent the next 26 years there. In addition to his work in the Kirk, he attempted to defend the independence of the University of St Andrews from governmental control and held the post of rector there between 1590 and 1597.⁹

Recent research on Melville has deconstructed his role as the leader of a "Melvillian" party in the Kirk during the reign of James VI, and has confirmed that this image of Melville is largely a product of seventeenth-century Presbyterian historiography that was enshrined in the detailed biography of Melville, completed in the early nineteenth century, by Thomas M'Crie.¹⁰ The work of James Kirk has attempted to understand Melville's work within the Scottish universities, although with a central focus on his achievements at Glasgow.¹¹ However, commentators on Melville's poetry have, until recently, been few, and have been uniformly unenthused by his work. Thomas M'Crie said relatively little on this aspect of Melville's life, confining comments to short excerpts from poems that he found of interest.¹² Whether this was because M'Crie, a dour minister of the Original Secession Church, found the concept of poetry too frivolous or because he thought Melville's oeuvre was on the whole unworthy of attention, is unclear. D. F. S. Thomson, surveying the development of the Scottish neo-Latin epigram during the Renaissance, was mixed in his comments:

Melville combined in himself the high purpose of the older Humanists and the verbal virtuosity of the expanding Renaissance [...] Vigorous as they are, [his verses] are full of faults: uneven, often devoid of literary taste, and much interlarded, in the fashion of the time, with Greek.¹³

Leicester Bradner, whose *Musae Anglicanae* is the only attempt to write a history of British neo-Latin poetry, is as disparaging as Thomson, pointing out that while Melville was best known in English poetic circles after 1603 for his epigrams attacking the English Episcopal polity and what he saw as the "pseudo-Catholic" trappings of the English liturgy, he concluded that "it cannot be said that they add to his stature as a poet."¹⁴ Although he had some interest in Melville's earlier works, he would, in all likelihood, not have been as generous as James Macqueen in his assessment of Melville's work as "competent but uninspired."¹⁵

In some senses, however, the roughness of Melville's work is precisely why it is valuable for gaining insight into his character. His poems give the impression, on the whole, of being rushed and rarely edited afterwards, fired off as the thought took him. Melville, it appears, wrote in violent emotional reaction to the tumultuous events unfolding around him. As his nephew pointed out, he wrote nothing of great substance "partlie [by] his grait occupationes and distractiones, partlie, as he

wes wount to say, *scribillantium et scripturientium turba*.”¹⁶ One of his most famous works, the 315-line *Stephaniskion* (“The Small Garland”), recited before Queen Anne at her coronation in 1590, was apparently written in “a night or twa” before the event, showing the speed of composition that Melville was capable of.¹⁷ Even during his captivity in the Tower, when he had considerably more time on his hands to exercise his craft, he still had not fallen out of this habit. In 1609 he sent word to his former student James Sempill that he would like the return of a set of epigrams he had sent him to preface Sempill’s work condemning the Catholic apologist Robert Bellarmine’s interpretation of the Mass, so that he might now “after the warmth of composition has ceased to rage [...] recall [the verses] once again to the anvil, according to the precept [of Horace].”¹⁸

The value of these rushed and fevered outpourings has been noted in some recent work on the context and impact of Melville’s poetry. Arthur Williamson and Paul McGinnis have done considerable work in tracing and contextualizing the apocalyptic imagery in Melville’s poetry, and have shown that he clearly had his own unique interpretation of the narrative of sacred history and the role of a “British” empire in fulfilling it. In their collection of Buchanan’s political poetry they published translations of two of Melville’s most stridently apocalyptic works, the *Principis Scoti-Britannorum Natalia* and *Gathelus*.¹⁹ The *Principis*, a work published in 1594 celebrating the birth of James VI’s son Henry, outlines Melville’s expectation that the young prince would succeed to a throne uniting the kingdoms of Scotland and England (a belief shared by many as the realization grew that James VI would inherit the English throne) and in turn form an empire that would rise up and destroy the Pope and his European allies in a cataclysmic battle. By 1594, the long established Protestant image of the Pope as Antichrist was a fixture in Melville’s mind, described as the “Roman Cerberus [...] possessed of the seven sceptres/ and the throne of the twin-born dragon.” Henry is identified as a vessel for the divine justice that will be meted out to Britain’s Catholic enemies:

When Yahweh’s living power arms his [Henry’s] right hand,
And his thunderbolts drive down to the ghastly depths of Orcus
The thrice cursed Pope, and the Italian and the Iberian as well.²⁰

The *Gathelus*, first published as a prefatory piece to John Johnston’s *Inscriptiones Historicae Regnum Scotorum* (1601), was the first part of a poetic meditation on the origins of Scotland that Melville had clearly planned but never finished. The work takes as its subject the origin myth, largely discarded by the end of the sixteenth century, that Scotland was founded by the Athenian Gathelus and his Egyptian wife Scota. Hemecus and Hiber, Gathelus’s sons who settled Spain and Ireland

respectively, are symbolic of the cosmic clash between Britain and Spain that Melville believed would usher in the end times.²¹

Another aspect of the significance of Melville's poetic work in the religious controversies of the Jacobean era has been highlighted by James Doelman.²² Focussing primarily on Melville's poetic career following the removal of James VI and I to England in 1603, Doelman has shown that Melville continued to believe that the King had a divine role as leader of a united Protestant realm that would rise against the continental Catholic powers—for example, his three poems celebrating the King's accession to the throne in 1603 constantly refer to the unification of a great "British" empire under a "Scotanglus Princeps." He was also supportive enough of the King to write an impassioned poem as part of the collective outpouring of relief at the foiling of the Gunpowder Plot, where he described what he perceived as the Jesuit forces behind the attack in some of the most condemnatory language in any of his poems.²³ However, at the same time Melville increasingly vented his frustration through poetry at the growing supremacy of Episcopacy in Scotland and England. Melville retaliated against the hostile response towards the Millenary Petition printed by the leading supporters of Episcopacy at Oxford and Cambridge in his 1603 *Anti-Tami-Cami-Categoria*, or *Assertions against the Men of the Thames and Cam*, which provoked considerable response when it was finally published in 1620 as part of Calderwood's account of the Perth Assembly, the *Parasynagma Perthense*.²⁴ However, it was an epigram of six lines, written after Melville witnessed the celebration of the Feast of St Michael in the English Chapel Royal at Hampton Court in 1606, which caused the greatest consternation to the King.²⁵ Condemning the "Papal" decoration of the English altar as a travesty, Melville's defence of the work before the Privy Council was the final straw that led to his imprisonment.²⁶ The controversy generated by the epigram led to its widespread dissemination in manuscript form, and it was still provoking printed responses from English churchmen and academics over a decade after Melville's imprisonment.²⁷

The *Carmen Mosis*

Melville's poetic career began over 30 years before his final confrontation with James VI and I, and it was while a teacher of the second class of the lower school at the Genevan Academy, when the wave of printed responses to the massacres issued by the leading intellectuals of the city was at its height, that Melville published his first collection of poems. The volume, entitled *Carmen Mosis* and dedicated to the young King James VI, was published in Basle at some point in 1574.²⁸ It consisted

of a highly ornate and very free poetic paraphrase of the “Song of Moses” found in *Deuteronomy* 32, and a paraphrase of *Job* 3. These two works, though among the better examples of Melville’s poetic output, give us little insight into his intellectual outlook. They are, as Melville states in the dedication to James VI, the “sacred beginnings of my muse” (*sacra meae primordia musae*) and “the first elements of a grateful mind” (*grati prima elementa animi*), where he was attempting to show off his skills within the rigidly confined parameters of verse form.²⁹ Nor does there seem to be any theological impetus for the choice of these two passages, save that they would be well known and provide suitably dramatic material for conversion to poetic usage. The collection does, however, provide some insight into Melville’s reaction to the events of St Bartholomew’s day, which is discussed in a series of eight epigrams and short poems. These show the horror and revulsion that Melville felt towards the actions of the Catholic mob in France, and capture graphically the sense of outrage that he felt at such atrocities and at the Valois dynasty that allowed them to take place.

This cycle of poems begins with an elegy lamenting the massacre of the French Protestants, entitled *Ad Novissimos Galliae Martyres* (“To the Very Recent French Martyrs”). The first six lines evoke images of extreme violence and rivers of blood, juxtaposed against the calm certainty in the four closing lines that these “martyrs” are now assured of their place in heaven:

Where the Rhône, and the Saône, with calm, flowing waves, where the Loire, and the Seine plough a twisted route: And where with a bloody flood the Garonne leaves the Pyrenees, and stains the sea with infamous water: Souls were driven out with great violence: both trunks and limbs destroyed, and corpses mangled, with the sword. Are you simply destroyed? Have [your] names been deemed perpetually worthy of heaven? Are you to suffer the whipping blows, are you to suffer the cross? [No,] illustrious spirits: heavenly symbols, nowhere does the gate of heaven stand open in a more noble way.³⁰

Another short poem, *Pax Gallica* (“The French Peace”),³¹ sees Melville draw on the common belief found in Protestant propaganda that the fragile peace of Saint-Germain, agreed at the end of the third war in 1570, allowed the Catholic regime latitude to plan and execute the massacres.³² In this poem, the Valois family are “impiety” personified, who wove a deceitful peace that the “senseless nobility” accepted and thus allowed the Protestant innocents to “perish.” It celebrates the fact that this “poorly woven” peace is now unravelled, as now presumably true “nobility may succeed to the ancestral hearths,” and innocence reign.

Elegiac verses comprise another three poems in the cycle, discussing the assassination of the Huguenot leader Gaspar Coligny (whose death triggered the massacres), his captain Francois Briquemaut de Beauvais (who was executed on 27 October 1572 before Charles IX at the Place de Greves), and Briquemaut's kinsmen who were slaughtered in the massacres.³³ Coligny is elevated to heroic status within the three-verse poem dedicated to him, as the man whom "Mars, god of lightning, does not have power over," and as the victor in the "wars thrice stirred by royal fraud." Only the "seductive peace" of St Germain, "produced in the night by Erebus," afforded assassins the chance to kill Coligny, something which Mars himself had been unable to do throughout the wars. The second and third verses employ the standard tool in elegiac poetry of using Coligny himself as the narrator. While the second verse is merely competent, showing Coligny reconciling himself to death, the third presents him condemning Catholic France in uncompromising terms for the destruction it has wrought upon itself:

In life I was your life, France; Dead, ah! I am your death, though I wanted you to live by my death. You savagely sought your salvation in my murder while I stood: with my falling you fall. You killed me, France, and yourself at the same time. But you lie thrown down by your own devices: I stand restored to life again. Learn and understand by your lesson. You owe to me the happiness that you enjoyed: you owe it to yourself that you are wretched.³⁴

The blame for the massacres is laid squarely by Melville at the feet of the French king, Charles IX, and his mother, Catherine de Medici. Charles is portrayed, first in a passage in the poem to Coligny and then in the final three epigrams of the collection, as an arrogant agent of the satanic and Catholic power, a power which allows Charles to wantonly flout his royal duties and turn France into the embodiment of Tartarus on Earth:

How were you able, O King, to break your sworn oaths in such a way? Behold! [is this] Virtue, to lift up men with fraud? Or [is this] Piety, to mangle the pious? Or Religion, to butcher the faithful? Or Faith, to destroy the limbs of Christ? Because despite this age being torn apart, the [French] kingdom persists, and the "majestic" head raises itself up to the stars: [and] because under an uneven weight of wickedness, this earth, unshaken, supports these threats to heaven. (1.9–16)³⁵

In a particularly gruesome epigram to Charles IX, *Ad Carolum, Tyrannum Galliarum* ("To Charles, Tyrant of the French People"),³⁶ Melville suggests that the haemorrhaging that killed the King after a prolonged bout of tuberculosis is a sign from God that he is too weak to stomach the slaughter that he had sanctioned:

The Blood, Charles, which practically bursts on all sides from your nostrils, mouth, eyes and ears, and anus; This is not your own blood: but the blood from the massacre of saints which you shed, like a wild beast: [blood] that you could not digest.³⁷

Charles's mother Catherine de Medici is given the harshest treatment in the short collection. She is the eponymous subject of the sixth poem, *Vipera Thusca, cum Catulis* ("The Tuscan Viper, with her Whelps"). Catherine is portrayed as the ultimate source behind all the deception and evils that enabled the massacres to take place. Melville echoes common accusations in propaganda about her infertility, remedied by the use of sinister poisons and witchcraft that in turn created children who were complete abominations:

The diseased cornfield of the Medici, having been fertilised with savage poison (for previously this field was lying, mouldering and unused), brought forth these unhappy fruits under an unfavourable star, more by medicinal unguent than by native seed (1.1–4).³⁸

It is Catherine whose "offspring, fed and grown on poison," brought forth the wars, and unnaturally mingled the "right hand and good faith with perjury, fraud with compacts, battles with a peace treaty, weapons with the toga." She is an unholy viper, and despite her children being old enough to take control of the kingdom, against the natural cycle of life she refuses to relinquish control or even die, and instead "spreads her venom" along with them.³⁹

The final two short epigrams attached to the work suggest, albeit only slightly, that Melville supports the idea that the people of France should actively resist the tyranny of the Valois family. The epigram *Classicum* ("The Trumpet-Call") suggests that all that France lacks is the *animus*—the courage and spirit, perhaps—to seize its freedom:

What, when it comes to liberty, is against you France? Violence, fraud, and the wolf, and a she-wolf with bloody whelps. What, when it comes to liberty, is available to you, France? Right, divine law, and the mind, and hands with strength—now what is absent? The *animus*.⁴⁰

The final epigram in the collection, *Tyrannus* ("The Tyrant") is subtler in its suggestion, alluding to the figure of the assassin Brutus in antiquity:

Since the land bears so many savage tyrants from the race of Tarquin,
Where is there a single Brutus with a stern heart?⁴¹

The use of the word *acer* to describe the "heart" or emotional and inner power of Brutus is ambiguous, meaning both "stern" in quality but also "sharp," referring perhaps to the weapons of both Lucius Brutus, who reputedly overthrew Tarquinius

Superbus to found the Roman Republic in 509 BC, and Iunius Brutus, the assassin of Julius Caesar and last defender of the dying Republic.⁴²

How, then, does this short collection of poems fit within the wider range of written responses to the massacre? The events of 1572 spawned a massive range of pamphlets and propaganda by outraged Calvinists across Europe, but particularly within France itself and Geneva. The resulting development of early resistance theory and popular sovereignty in these works has been well documented,⁴³ and the *Carmen Mosis* seems to echo, to a small extent, some of their ideas. There are many examples of Continental tracts that Melville likely drew on as models for his work, but a central influence was probably a scholar from much closer to home, namely George Buchanan. Although Thomas M'Crie argued that Melville and Buchanan met while the former was taking his MA at St Andrews between 1560 and 1564, it is actually far more likely that the two met for the first time during Buchanan's visit to Paris in the winter of 1565–66, when Melville was attending the lectures of Adrien Turnèbe, Ramus, and others at the Collège de France. Melville departed for Poitiers in 1566, but in the intervening period Buchanan took Melville under his wing and gave him an intense education in the technical construction and exegesis of Latin poetry using his own psalm paraphrases as a basis, as a letter from Melville to Peter Young in 1572 clearly shows:

For when he [Buchanan] was in Paris, he courteously explained to me the more difficult passages in his Psalm [paraphrases] and epigrams: and having lovingly embraced me, as if I were his son, he willingly admitted me to his rich companionship and to his learned talk. I have never once forgotten so much kindness: reading privately and commenting publicly in the schools his splendid, almost divine work.⁴⁴

It would be the beginning of a friendship that would last until Buchanan's death in 1582, and Melville is due the credit in part for seeing Buchanan's *Rerum Scoticarum Historia* through the press.⁴⁵ Melville wrote several epigrams praising Buchanan as a historian and poet,⁴⁶ and the epigrams *Classicum* and *Tyrannus* certainly seem to bear his influence, both in style and in intellectual content. This should perhaps come as no surprise, as Melville may well have been schooled by Buchanan in more than Latin poetry during their time together in Paris. Roger Mason has persuasively argued that Buchanan's most controversial tract on the right to resist, the *De Iure Regni Apud Scotos Dialogus*, was begun shortly after Buchanan's visit to Paris and almost entirely completed before the end of 1569.⁴⁷ If the ideas forming *De Iure* were not already in gestation during Buchanan's time in Paris, when he and Melville could have discussed them, at the very least he may have sent Melville a manuscript copy of the work, or word of it may have passed to Melville via shared

friends such as Peter Young. Either way, the tone of *Classicum* certainly reflects the general idea of popular resistance, while the specific reference to Brutus in *Tyrannus* links the epigram with the cult of Brutus and the republican tradition, mirrored by Buchanan's reference to Brutus in another of his works, the 1552/3 poetic preface to Marc-Antoine de Muret's tragedy, *Julius Caesar*:

Such great virtue as there was deep-seated in the heroic soul of Brutus,
When the pious daggers were given him on behalf of his country.
A virtue, equalling his, inspired your lofty voice, Muret,
When you sang his pious deeds.⁴⁸

Moreover, Melville's epigram on Charles IX's death by haemorrhaging may owe something to Buchanan's satire against Charles de Guise, Cardinal of Lorraine. Written at some point before 1572, but perhaps triggered by Buchanan's horror at the state of Paris following the first civil war on his arrival in late 1565, it condemns the house of Guise for its policy of severe religious repression and support of the Habsburgs. A section in it condemning Guise to the same treatment as that of the Protestant martyrs he executed seems to echo the bloody fate of the French king envisioned by Melville:

Nemesis reserves for you the derision and amusement of the world,
And she keeps for you heavier chastisement
Than you might imagine—as if, instructed by your example,
She might pour on you, when you are dragged forth
From the dark stench of the dungeon, your own hated blood,
With all the people looking on and applauding,
Or torture your body in the heat of the slow burning embers.⁴⁹

However, despite the fact that Buchanan may have had some influence on the stylistic content of these poems, Melville seems to have taken a very lukewarm attitude overall to the case made by his mentor for the secular right to resist. The poems, after all, give only the merest suggestion that Melville would endorse such action, and his only other writing dealing with the subject, a commentary on *Romans* 13: 1–8 given as part of a series of divinity lectures in 1601, is far more concerned with drawing a range of arguments from the text that show why the civil magistrate *must* be obeyed rather than making any sustained case for popular resistance.⁵⁰ This cautious, scripturally-based attitude is unsurprising when placed in the context of the tracts being issued by Melville's Calvinist counterparts in France and Geneva in the same period, which are far more in touch with the *Carmen Mosis* in their themes and content.

Indeed, there is a definite link between the *Carmen Mosis* and one of these works. A central theme of the earliest tracts following the massacres was the portrayal of Coligny as the pious martyr, first seen in a portrait of his life in François Hotman's *De Furoribus Gallicis* (1573), which was then expanded and reissued by Hotman as the *Gasparis Colinii Castellonii Magni Quondam Franciae Amiralii Vita* in 1575.⁵¹ However, in the same year as *De Furoribus Gallicis* was published, a small twelve-page pamphlet of elegiac poetry for Coligny was anonymously printed at Geneva. This pamphlet—entitled *Epicedia Illustri Heroi Caspari Colinio [...] Poetis Decantata*—was widely believed to have been compiled by Melville's friend and fellow Academy professor, François Portus.⁵² The names of the authors of the fourteen poems, except for Theodore Beza, were given only by their initials. However, one of the poems, under the initials "A.M.S" (for *Andreas Melvinus Scotus*, presumably), is Melville's third elegiac verse on Coligny from the *Carmen Mosis*.⁵³ In addition to showing his direct involvement in the Huguenot propaganda movement, it also suggests that Melville shared his work with his Genevan colleagues prior to its publication, perhaps for their approval.

Apart from this direct link with the Huguenot tracts, other general themes of the *Carmen Mosis* reflect their contents. For example, the eulogizing of the Protestant dead, the demonization of the Valois family, and the wholesale smearing of the reputation of Catherine de Medici were also common themes, perhaps most notably brought together in the work of Simon Goulart. This Genevan pastor was the compiler of the three volume collection of pamphlets and accounts of the massacres, *Memoires de l'Estat de France sous Charles IX*. First published in 1576, reprinted twice in 1577, and issued again in a revised and expanded edition in 1578,⁵⁴ Goulart's collection contained a range of pamphlets designed to evoke sympathy for the Protestant cause, including the *Reveille-matin des François et de leurs Voisins*, or "Alarm-call to the French and their Neighbours." First published in Basle in 1573 and then in expanded new editions in German, Latin, and French in 1574 and 1575, the *Reveille-matin* in its final form consisted of two dialogues, mixing historical accounts of the massacres, anecdotes of the cruelty and stupidity of the Cardinal of Lorraine and Catherine de Medici, and prayers and poems, with appeals to the English, German, and Polish people highlighting the cruelty of the Valois family. It also contained a proposal made by the persona of the prophet Daniel urging a "general league" of all Protestant countries to mutual military assistance, and urging every French community controlled by Protestants to set up its own independent government.⁵⁵ A poem appended to the *Reveille-matin* which attacks Catherine de Medici, entitled *Sympathie de la Vie de Catherine & de Iezabel, avec L'antipathie de leur Mort*, exemplifies the widespread

revulsion for Catherine displayed in the post-1572 Protestant pamphlets and shows the tone that Melville is imitating in his *Vipera Tusca*:

S'on demande la convenance
De Catherine & Iezabel,
L'une ruine d'Israel,
L'autre ruine de la France:
Iezable maintenoit l'Idole
Contraire a la sainte parole
L' autre maintient la Papauté
Par trahison & cruauté.⁵⁶

The invective levelled at the Queen crystallized in the *Discours Merveilleux de la Vie, Actions et Deportemens de Catherine de Medicis*, or the “Marvellous Discourse on the Life, Actions and Misconducts of Catherine de Medicis.” This work, attributed to the Genevan classical scholar Henri Estienne, was written in mid-1574, when the Queen assumed the regency of the country following the death of her son Charles IX. The work was published in at least ten editions in 1575 and 1576 across Europe in Latin and vernacular editions, and formed the final extended pamphlet in the third volume of every edition of Goulart’s *Memoires*.⁵⁷ While Melville completed his collection before the publication of the *Discours*, the ideas within it would have been common coin among the Genevan intelligentsia. Catherine is presented as a scheming villain who relentlessly pursued power and desired the wholesale execution of the French nobility to further her control of the realm. Prior to his departure from Geneva, Melville would also have been aware of the early views of Hotman and Beza as regards secular resistance theory, circulating in the *Franco-Gallia* published in July 1573 and in the early French edition of the *Droit du Magistrates* in 1574. Hotman’s work utilized an historical analysis of the ancient French constitution to justify a theory of popular sovereignty where royal authority was elective and subject at all times to an assembly of the Three Estates, ideas which Beza also utilized to produce his own form of resistance theory.⁵⁸ While Melville’s failure to endorse or outline such ideas in the *Carmen Mosis* may simply show that they were not in full circulation by the time he published his collection, it is perhaps more likely that a full-blooded statement of resistance theory was not something that he was comfortable with and thus shied away from discussing in his first published work.

One curious omission from the material composed by Melville is the lack of an elegiac verse to Ramus. Ramus suffered a particularly gruesome death at the hands of the Catholic mob during the massacres, being shot and stabbed, thrown from a first-floor window, and decapitated, before his body was thrown into the

Seine. The murder of such a high-profile Protestant convert, particularly one who was supposed to have been under the protection of royal orders, should have been highly valuable to the propagandists in Geneva. However, Ramus had proven to be a considerable thorn in the side of the Genevan church in the two years prior to his death. Ramus had sided with Jean de Morély, sire de Villiers against the Genevan church on issues of church organization. Morély's *Traicté de la Discipline et Police Chrestienne*, printed at Lyon in 1562, advocated greater lay participation and a more democratic, decentralized organization of the reformed church than Geneva would allow. At the provincial synod of the Ile-de-France in March 1572 and the national synod at Nîmes in 1572, the Morély-Ramus faction came close to winning considerable concessions to their reform programme, but Beza and his supporters threatened them with expulsion from the church if they continued to refuse to comply with the Genevan stance on polity.⁵⁹ The massacres killed Ramus before such extreme action was taken, but as a result Ramus's death posed a problem in terms of treatment for the polemic writers. It was enough grudgingly to accept Ramus as a martyr and portray him, as Francois Portus did in his polemical exchange with Charpentier, as being led astray by the double apostate Hughes Sereau and others in their "misguided" attempt to change the church polity.⁶⁰ Melville's silence on the death of the man he had followed around Europe, and whose ideas contributed substantially to his educational reform plans, can thus perhaps be understood as Melville dutifully following the party line of the Genevan movement that he had come to embrace so wholeheartedly during his time at the Academy, to the exclusion of other intellectual loyalties.

In writing these poems, and addressing them to the young James VI, it may be that Melville was attempting to do his part to advance the Genevan propaganda machine on the international scene, while also making a name for himself at the Scottish court. English translations of the *Discours*, the *De Furoribus Gallicis*, and the *Gasparis Colinii Castellonii* were published in London during the 1570s, and copies would have found their way to Scotland.⁶¹ The *Reveille-matin* was but one of a number of works that made an appeal to the international community, and as the *Memorials* of Richard Bannatyne record, pamphlets and news regarding the massacres did make their way to Scotland and were translated for the local audience.⁶² The printer Thomas Bassandyne imported several dozen copies of Melville's book to Edinburgh,⁶³ which suggests that it would have been available to the Scottish intelligentsia, and that in a small way Melville would have been helping to communicate the plight of the French Calvinist movement to a sympathetic audience in Scotland.

DESPITE LACKING THE FINESSE and sheer raw talent of his role model Buchanan, it is clear that Andrew Melville took the writing of Latin poetry seriously, both as a pastime and as a way of commenting on the world he saw around him. He continued to write throughout his lifetime, even in his last years at Sedan,⁶⁴ and as a record of the development of his personal and intellectual outlook his poems deserve more recognition than they are generally given. His *Carmen Mosis* is a good case in point, for it provides us with a rare glimpse into the early intellectual development of the man who would become the leading influence in the Jacobean Kirk at a time in his life when sources are difficult to come by. What they reveal is perhaps unsurprising in many respects: after a decade on the Continent sampling many different teachers and educational approaches, the content and form of the first work published by Melville owes its greatest debt partly to his friend and mentor Buchanan, but primarily to his Calvinist brothers-in-arms in Geneva and France. The adherence to the Genevan “party line” seen in the *Carmen Mosis* is reflected in both the themes Melville adopts for the poems and in those whom he fails to mention in them, for surely the lack of a verse to another of his favourite teachers, Petrus Ramus, should be seen as significant. The intellectual loyalties in the work also perhaps presage the uncompromising devotion to the Presbyterian cause that Melville brought home with him, and underscore just how great an influence his five years in Geneva exerted upon him.

Notes

1. I would like to thank Alan MacDonald, Jamie Reid-Baxter, and Roger Mason for reading successive drafts of this article, and the anonymous readers for some very helpful comments. I would also like especially to thank Peter Maxwell-Stuart for reading and extensively correcting early drafts of the translations used in this article; however, all final renderings into English, interpretation of the poems, and any mistakes or errors therein remain my own responsibility.
2. *The Works of John Knox*, ed. David Laing, 6 vols. (Edinburgh: Wodrow Society, 1846–64); George Buchanan, *History of Scotland*, ed. and trans. James Aikman, 4 vols. (Glasgow, 1827); *Georgi Buchanani [...] Opera Omnia*, ed. Thomas Ruddiman, 2 vols. (Edinburgh, 1714–15); *Vernacular Writings of George Buchanan*, ed. Peter Hume Brown (Scottish Text Society, 1892).
3. For a complete list of the seven “Theses Theologicae” published by divinity students at St Andrews between 1595 and 1602, see Ronald Gordon Cant, “The St Andrews University Theses, 1579–1747: a bibliographical introduction,” *Edinburgh Bibliographical Society Transactions* 2.2 (1941), pp. 105–150, at 143–147, and “Supplement,” *Ibid.* 2.4

- (1945), pp. 263–273; for Melville’s letters, see *D. Andreae Melvini Epistolae* (Edinburgh University Library DC6.45).
4. The bulk of Melville’s printed poetic works, though by no means all of them, can be found in Arthur Johnstone, ed., *Delitiae Poetarum Scotorum* (Amsterdam, 1637), vol. 2 [hereafter *DPS*], pp. 69–133, and *Viri clarissimi A. Melvini musae et P. Adamsoni Vita et Palinodia et Celsae Commissionis ceu Delegatae Potestatis Regiae in Causis Ecclesiasticis Brevis & Aperta Descriptio* (Netherlands?, 1620) [hereafter *Musae*], ed. Thomas Wilson, pp. 5–44. John Durkan also published Melville’s eulogy on Henry Scrimgeour, found in Bodleian MS Cherry 5, in “Henry Scrimgeour: Renaissance Bookman,” *Edinburgh Bibliographical Society Transactions* 5.1 (1978), pp. 1–31, at 28–31. A selection of his poems in manuscript can be found in Edinburgh University Library DC8.5; DC4.68; DE1.12 10–14, DF7.72; DC.5.50; Trinity College Library, Dublin, MS416 ff. 2–4; National Library of Scotland E.84.f.16.
 5. Thomas M’Crie, *Life of Andrew Melville*, one volume edition (Edinburgh: Blackwood, 1856), pp. 91–95, 130, 205, 263–272.
 6. John Durkan and James Kirk, *The University of Glasgow, 1451–1577* (Glasgow: University of Glasgow Press, 1977), pp. 262–346; James Kirk, “‘Melvillian’ reform in the Scottish universities,” in *The Renaissance in Scotland: Studies in Literature, Religion, History and Culture*, ed. Alasdair A. MacDonald, Michael Lynch, and Ian B. Cowan (Leiden: Brill, 1994), pp. 276–300.
 7. David Stevenson, *King’s College, Aberdeen, 1560–1641: From Protestant Reformation to Covenanting Revolution* (Aberdeen: Aberdeen University Press, 1990), chapters 2 and 3, pp. 20–60.
 8. Michael Lynch, “The origins of Edinburgh’s ‘Toun College’: a revision article,” *Innes Review* 33 (1982), 3–14; *Idem*, “The creation of a college,” in Robert D. Anderson, Michael Lynch, and Nicholas Phillipson, *The University of Edinburgh: an Illustrated History* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2003), pp. 1–49, at 9–18; Steven John Reid, “Aberdeen’s ‘Toun College’: Marischal College, 1593–1623,” *Innes Review* 58.2 (2007), pp. 173–195.
 9. M’Crie, 76, 153; Ronald Gordon Cant, “Melville,” in *Idem*, *The University of St Andrews: A Short History*, 4th edn (St Andrews: The Strathmartine Trust, 2002), pp. 60–67, and James K. Cameron, “Andrew Melville in St Andrews” in *In Divers Manners: A St Mary’s Miscellany*, ed. D.W.D. Shaw (St Andrews: St. Mary’s College, 1990), pp. 58–72.
 10. In addition to the 1856 edition of M’Crie’s *Life of Andrew Melville*, there are two earlier two-volume editions, published in 1819 and 1824. Alan R. MacDonald, “James VI and the General Assembly,” in *The Reign of James VI*, ed. Julian Goodare and Michael Lynch (East Linton: Tuckwell Press, 2000), pp. 170–185; *Idem*, *The Jacobean Kirk: Sovereignty, Polity and Liturgy, 1567–1625* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1995), pp. 31–34, 58–65, 171–80; David Mullan, *Episcopacy in Scotland: The History of an Idea, 1560–1638* (Edinburgh: John Donald, 1986), pp. 78–79.
 11. See note 6.

12. James Kirk, "McCrie, Thomas (1772–1835)," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford University Press, 2004) [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/17406>, accessed 7 Feb 2008]; see comments by M'Crie in M'Crie, 40–42, 140, 343–345, 396–399, 411, 430–432, 447–450, 495–497.
13. D. F. S. Thomson, "The Latin epigram in Scotland: The sixteenth century," *Phoenix* 11.2 (1957), p. 70.
14. Leicester Bradner, *Musae Anglicanae: A History of Anglo-Latin Poetry, 1500–1925* (London: Oxford University Press, 1940), pp. 151–155. However, for English developments in the period see J. W. Binns, *Intellectual Culture in Elizabethan and Jacobean England: The Latin Writings of the Age* (Leeds: Francis Cairns, 1990).
15. James Macqueen, "Scottish Latin Poetry," in *The History of Scottish Literature*, vol. 1: *Medieval and Renaissance*, ed. R. D. S. Jack (Aberdeen: Aberdeen University Press, 1988), p. 220.
16. James Melville, *Autobiography and Diary*, ed. Robert Pitcairn (Edinburgh: Wodrow Society, 1842) [Hereafter JMAD], p. 63.
17. JMAD, p. 279; DPS, pp. 71–76.
18. James Sempill, *De Sacrificio Missae* (Edinburgh University Library, EUL DC8.5), 7. Horace, *Ars Poetica*, 1.441: "et male tornatos incudi reddere versus."
19. Arthur Williamson and Paul McGinnis, eds., *George Buchanan: The Political Poetry* (Scottish History Society, 1995), pp. 31–36, 276–297. See also their *The British Union: a Critical Edition of David Hume of Godscroft's De Unione Insulae Britannicae* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002), pp. 9–19.
20. Williamson and McGinnis, pp. 31–32, 276–287.
21. Williamson and McGinnis, pp. 32–36, 288–297.
22. James Doelman, *King James I and the Religious Culture of England* (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2000), chapter 4: "King James, Andrew Melville and the neo-Latin religious epigram," pp. 57–72.
23. "Conjuratio Pulverea, Anno 1605 Novemb. 5," *Musae*, 15–18. At lines 25–28 the Jesuits are described as having "breasts dedicated to savage slaughter" and "marching columns prepared with war-like tricks" and being "birds of ill omen, male whores, both flame-spewing and hungry for sex" (*Devota sacris pectora caedibus/Instructa technis agmina bellicis, Spinturnices inauspicatae/Spintriae, et ignivomi et salaces*).
24. A poem, entitled "Melvinus Delirans" was composed in response to Melville's epigram by Thomas Atkinson, a student at St John's College, sometime between December 1616 and June 1621, and George Herbert also wrote epigrams against Melville's epigram and the *Anti-Tami-Cami-Categoria*. See Doelman, pp. 63, 71.
25. Doelman, pp. 64–67. The epigram, beginning "Cur stant clausi," is given in *Musae*, 24, and in English translation in JMAD, 682–683 and John Row, *The History of the Kirk of Scotland* (Edinburgh: Wodrow Society, 1842), pp. 234–35.
26. The speech Melville gave to the King is supposedly recorded in a Latin poem written by Melville, entitled "The Melvillian Trumpet" (*Melviniana Tuba*), in David

- Calderwood, *The History of the Kirk of Scotland*, vol 6 (1600–1608), ed. Thomas Thomson (Edinburgh: Wodrow Society, 1845), pp. 656–57.
27. George Eglisheim, physician to the King, wrote a series of epigrams against Melville in his *Duellum Poeticum* (1618); see Doelman, pp. 69–70. The poems can also be found in manuscript form in the collection of Drummond MSS at Edinburgh University Library (EUL DE1.12, 10–14).
 28. *Carmen Mosis, Ex Deuteron. Cap. xxxii, Quod Ipse Moriens Israeli Tradidit Ediscendum et Cantandum Perpetuo, Latina Paraphrasi Illustratum. Cui Addita Sunt Nonnulla Epigrammata, et Iobi Cap. iii. Latino Carmine Redditum. Andrea Melvino Scoto Auctore* (Basle, 1574). The exact dating and the securing of an original copy of this text have as yet proved impossible. M'Crie had a copy, and believed that the poem "Ad Carolum, Tyrannum Galliarum," with references to Charles IX's death on 30 May 1574 from tuberculosis, must have been written and sent back to Basle after Melville left Geneva, but given the speed at which we know Melville could work, there may have just been time to complete the text; see M'Crie, pp. 26, 40–42, 447–8. M'Crie and P. Mellon both give a comprehensive account of its contents and the editions of the texts referred to here are contained in DPS 108–112, and P. Mellon, *L'Academie de Sedan* (Paris: Fischbacher, 1913), pp. 156–68.
 29. M'Crie, p. 42.
 30. Qua Rhodanus rapidis, et Arar clementibus undis,/ Qua Liger, et tortum Sequana sulcat iter:/ Et qua sanguineo fluctu Garumna Pyrenen/ Linqvit, et infami Nerea tangit aqua:/ Excussae vi multa animae: mactataque ferro,/ Truncaque raptatis membra cadaveribus./ Vosne solo deleta? Polo dignata perenne/ Nomina? Vosne pati verbera, vosne crucem?/ Illustres animae: coelestia pignora, nusquam/ Coeli porta patet nobiliore via.
 31. Texuit hanc technam impietas: ansam dedit excors/ Nobilitas: passa est credula simplicitas,/ Qua regnat late impietas: longe exulat exspes/ Nobilitas: perit, heu, prodita simplicitas./ Foelix, cui tantum favet indulgentia coeli,/ Ut male contextum rite retextat opus./ Ut pulsa impietate, focus succedat avitis/ Nobilitas: regnet libera simplicitas.
 32. Quentin Skinner, *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought*, vol 2 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), pp. 302–48, at 307. This idea appears in the pamphlet in Simon Goulart's *Memoirs* (see further, below) entitled *Preparations for the Massacres*, which suggests the plots for the massacres were approved at three separate council meetings held by Charles IX and Catherine de Medici in the early months of 1572.
 33. Henri Noguères, *The Massacre of Saint Bartholomew*, trans. C. E. Engel (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1962), pp. 156–57; Nicola Sutherland, *The Massacre of Saint Bartholomew and the European Conflict, 1559–1572* (London: Macmillan, 1973), p. 340.
 34. Vita ego vivus eram tibi Gallia; mortuus, ah Mors/ Sum tibi, quam volui vivere morte mea./ Dum tu in caede mea quaeris tibi saeva salutem,/ Tu me quo stabas stante, cadente cadis./ Extincti me, teque simul tua Gallia. Sed tu/ Per te versa jaces: sto

- redivivus ego./ Disce tuo sapere exemplo. Debes mihi foelix/ Quod fueras: Debes tu tibi quod misera es.
35. Siccine juratas potuisti fallere dextras/ O rex? En virtus, tollere fraude suos?/ An pietas, mactare pios? Laniare fideles/ Relligio? Christi perdere membra, fides?/ Scilicet hoc rerum avulso cardine, regnum/ Perstet: et augustum tollat in astra caput./ Scilicet hoc scelerum sub iniquo pondere, tellus/ Sustineat coeli non labefacta minas.
 36. This is the title given in *DPS*, though Mellon gives it the title “Ad Tyrannum, sanguinis inusitato fluxu pereuntem.” Mellon, pp. 166–67.
 37. Naribus, ore, oculis, atque auribus, undiq[ue] et ano,/ Et pene erumpit qui tibi, Carle, cruor;/ Non tuus iste cruor: sanctorum at caede cruorem/ Quem ferus hausisti, concoquere haud poteras.
 38. Aegra seges Medicaea truci medicata veneno,/ (Nam prius hoc arvum putre jacebat iners;)/ Extulit hos tristes sub iniquo sidere foetus/ Unguine plus medico, semine quam patrio.
 39. “[These offspring mingle] fraud with promises: battles with a peace treaty: weapons with the toga [...] The snake brought forth the vipers: does the mother viper live still, and did she grow to spread her poisons? She [does] live still: living, and having given birth, she spreads [her] venom along with her offspring: a viper with young hasn’t the power to die” (fraudes/ Foederibus: paci praelia: tela togae [...] Ergo tulit colubros serpens: et spargere virus/ Addidit et vivit vipera mater adhuc?/ Vivit adhuc: spargit viva cum prole venena/ Effeta; nec potis est vipera foeta mori).
 40. Ad libertatem quid obest tibi Gallia? Vis, fraus,/ Et lupus, & lupa cum sanguineis catulis./ Ad libertatem quid adest tibi Gallia? Jus, fas,/ Mensq[ue] manusq[ue] virum, nunc quid abest? Animus.
 41. Tarquinii de stirpe truces cum terra tyrannos/ Tot ferat, acri unus pectore Brutus ubi est?
 42. John Roberts, ed., *Oxford Dictionary of the Classical World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), pp. 384–385.
 43. In addition to Skinner, see also Robert Kingdon: *Myths about the St Bartholomew’s Day Massacres, 1572–1576* (Mass., 1988), and “Calvinism and resistance theory, 1550–1580,” in J. H. Burns, ed., *The Cambridge History of Political Thought, 1450–1700* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), pp. 193–218.
 44. Andrew Melville to Peter Young, April 1572, Bodleian, Smith MS 77, 27, cited and translated in I. D. MacFarlane, *Buchanan* (London: Duckworth, 1981), pp. 256–57.
 45. *JMAD*, pp. 120–121.
 46. See “Ad Regem de Buchanani Historia” and “Ad G. Buchananum,” *DPS*, p. 115; “Georgii Buchanani Epitaphium. Obiit 28 Septemb. 1582,” *Musae*, p. 6; and “Geo. Buchan. Scotus, Vir Excellentiss.,” *M’Crie*, p. 42.
 47. Roger Mason and Martin S. Smith, *A Dialogue on the Law of Kingship among the Scots: A Critical Edition and Translation of George Buchanan’s De Iure Regni apud Scotos Dialogus* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004), pp. xv–lxxi, at xxvii–xxxvii.

48. Williamson and McGinnis, pp. 86–87, 306.
49. Williamson and McGinnis, pp. 92–100, especially at 94, 308–309.
50. Though he distinguishes between obeying “kind and just princes” (*benefici et just principes*) who serve the public good and rule with the common consent of all, and obeying “impious and unjust tyranny” (*impiam et injustam tyrannidem*), he states that God in his wisdom may establish a tyrant over a sinful kingdom for their “fatherly correction” (*paternam ad castigationem*) and should be obeyed. Andrew Melville, “Commentarius in divinam Pauli epistolam ad Romanos,” in *A logical analysis of the Epistle of Paul to the Romans, by Charles Ferme, translated from the Latin by William Skae; and a commentary on the same epistle by Andrew Melville, in the original Latin*, ed. William L. Alexander (Edinburgh: Wodrow Society, 1850), pp. 385–515, at 496–500.
51. Kingdon, *Myths*, pp. 15–16, 28–50, 118–19, 200–201, 256–57.
52. *Epicedia Illustri Heroi Caspari Colignio, Colignii Comiti, Castilionis Domino, Magno Galliarum Thallasiarchae Variis Linguis A Doctis Pisisque Poetis Decantata* (Geneva : Jean Durant, 1573), GLN2464. Copy consulted held at BnF, Résac. Yc 1887. See also Paul Chaix et al., *Les Livres Imprimés à Geneve de 1550 à 1600* (Geneva : Droz, 1966), p. 78; Emile Legrand, *Bibliographie Hellénique des XVe et XVIe Siècles* (Paris, 1962), p. xvi. I am grateful to Malcolm Walsby for checking the copy held at the BnF for this poem for me.
53. *Epicedia*, f. A4v (p. [7]).
54. Kingdon, *Myths*, p. 254; Skinner, pp. 305, 307–9.
55. Kingdon, *Myths*, pp. 70–87; Skinner, pp. 304–307.
56. *Reveille-matin*, Edinburgh, 1574, STC1464, vol. I, p. 129.
57. Kingdon, *Myths*, pp. 200–213.
58. Skinner, pp. 310–38; Kingdon, “Calvinism and resistance theory,” pp. 206–14.
59. Robert Kingdon, *Geneva and the Consolidation of the French Protestant Movement* (Geneva, 1967), pp. 62–122.
60. Kingdon, *Geneva*, pp. 111–13.
61. Numerous English editions of the following works from the 1570s exist. See, among others: *Discours Marveilleux*, STC10550–551.5; *Furoribus Gallicis*, STC13847; *Gasparis Colinii Castelloni*, STC22248; *Reveille-matin*, STC1464–1464.5.
62. Richard Bannatyne, *Memorials 1569–1573*, ed. Robert Pitcairn (Bannantyne Club, 1829), pp. 268–280.
63. M’Crie, p. 40. Bassandyne stated in his *Testament Testamentar*: “Item xlvii Carmen Moyses, ye dosane xviii^d.” Bassandyne died 18 October 1577.
64. For a good selection of these later works, some of which date as late as 1617, see Mel- lon, pp. 182–209.