At the end of May 1665, the provincial synod of Anjou met in the city of Saumur. At its completion, Chouet, who had become professor of philosophy at the academy of Saumur the year before and reported regularly on the events there to his uncle Louis Tronchin in Geneva, wrote: “Never has there been a more famous synod than this one, either on account of the people who compose it or on account of the things that were done.”

The decisions to which Chouet alluded will no doubt have been those pertaining to the academy, specifically in regard to its professorial corps. For, one of the items on the synod’s agenda was the examination of two men for finalizing their appointments to the faculty of theology.

In following the polity of the Reformed churches, there were also deputies from the four adjacent provincial synods in attendance. The synod of Poitou was thus represented by Jean Chabrol and Abraham Gilbert, Normandy by Étienne le Moine and le Sauvage, Bretagne’s delegation included Gotron, and, most significantly, Claude Pajon was one of the delegates from the synod of Orléans and Berry. Also important to note is the presence of one of the regular delegates from within the synod of Anjou itself, namely, Jacques Guyraut, pastor to the church of Loudun.

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6 Little is known about Guyraut (Guiraud, Giraud), but he served at Loudun from at least 1660 until 1683; see BPF Ms. 545 (Louis Auzière), fol. 239r°.
Guyraut was a friend of Paul de la Fons, pastor of Blois, the very same person to whom Pajon had sent his “De natura.” Moreover, it is entirely possible that Guyraut as well had been a student at Saumur together with Pajon and de la Fons. Increasingly worried, it would seem, about Pajon’s views on grace, de la Fons wrote up a response to the “De natura” and sent it to Guyraut, who in turn showed it to his colleagues at Loudun. De la Fons’s act, which may well have followed the letter of Pajon’s request not to show the “De natura” to anyone but was certainly against its spirit, set in motion a chain of events that led to a vivid personal polemic between Pajon and especially the pastors of Loudun. A first step was taken by Guyraut when he confronted Pajon at the 1665 synod of Anjou.

A. The Provincial Synod of Anjou (1665)

1. The Question of Succession

Given the responsibility of the academy of Saumur to teach the future pastors of the French Reformed churches, the decisions concerning it taken by the 1665 provincial synod of Anjou will have been important in any circumstances. However, especially in light of the situation in which the academy found itself at the time, they took on an even greater significance than they would have under normal circumstances. The fact of the matter was that by the year 1665, the academy no longer enjoyed the splendor it had acquired through the renown of de la Place, Cappel, and Amyraut. Not only had these three theologians of renown all died between 1655 and

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7 Guyraut defended the theses *De inferioribus ministrorum ecclesiasticorum ordinibus* at Saumur under Cappel’s presidency. They are undated in the 1665 *Syntagma* (3:287–95), but were already found in the 1651 collected Saumur theses (so Desgraves, “Les thèses soutenues,” 88).

8 I have not been able to find a copy of de la Fons’s work.

9 Letter from J.-R. Chouet to L. Tronchin, Saumur, 25 October 1666, in Sina, ed., *Corrispondenza*, 50: “Il auroit assurément à souhaiter que cet Escrit ne fut jamais sorti de son cabinet: cependant il le communiqua à Mons. de la Fond Pasteur à Blois, qu’il croyoit son intime ami, pour en sçauoir sa pensée, mais avec la Promesse que personne ne le verroit que luy. Mons. de la Fond n’en usa pas tout à fait bien, car il ne se contenta pas de refuter cet Escrit par un autre Escrit, mais de plus il enouya son ouurage à Mons. Guiraud Pasteur à Loudun, qui en fit part à ses Collegues, lesquels furent extrêmement scandalisés des opinions de Mons. Paison, de la maniere que le raportoit M. la Fond.” These colleagues can be identified as Jacques de Brissac sieur des Loges, and Claude Fautrart, both of whom reappear in the narrative below.