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The Dilemma of Obedience: Persecution, Dissimulation, and Memory in Early Modern England, 1553-1603

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The Dilemma of Obedience: Persecution, Dissimulation, and Memory  
in Early Modern England, 1553-1603

By

Robert Lee Harkins

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the  
requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in

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in the

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of the

University of California, Berkeley

Committee in charge:

Professor Ethan Shagan, Chair

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## Abstract

The Dilemma of Obedience: Persecution, Dissimulation, and Memory  
in Early Modern England, 1553-1603

by

Robert Lee Harkins

Doctor of Philosophy in History

University of California, Berkeley

Professor Ethan Shagan, Chair

This study examines the problem of religious and political obedience in early modern England. Drawing upon extensive manuscript research, it focuses on the reign of Mary I (1553-1558), when the official return to Roman Catholicism was accompanied by the prosecution of Protestants for heresy, and the reign of Elizabeth I (1558-1603), when the state religion again shifted to Protestantism. I argue that the cognitive dissonance created by these seesaw changes of official doctrine necessitated a society in which religious mutability became standard operating procedure. For most early modern men and women it was impossible to navigate between the competing and contradictory dictates of Tudor religion and politics without conforming, dissimulating, or changing important points of conscience and belief. Although early modern theologians and polemicists widely declared religious conformists to be shameless apostates, when we examine specific cases in context it becomes apparent that most individuals found ways to positively rationalize and justify their respective actions.

This fraught history continued to have long-term effects on England's religious, political, and intellectual culture. Therefore, this study also traces the ways in which the official commemoration of religious conflict, with its emphasis on a romanticized past of martyrdom and resistance, often contrasted sharply with the remembered history of capitulation and conformity. The decisions and rationalizations made during the Marian persecution did not simply disappear after Elizabeth's accession, but continued to fundamentally shape the collective memory of early modern English society.

For Rachel

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## ABBREVIATIONS

BL	British Library
Bodl.	Bodleian Library, Oxford
CCCC	Corpus Christ College, Cambridge
CCEd	<i>The Clergy of the Church of England Database, 1540–1835</i>
CP	The Cecil Papers, Hatfield House
CUL	Cambridge University Library
Foxe	<i>The Unabridged Acts and Monuments Online</i>
LPL	Lambeth Palace Library
ODNB	<i>Oxford Dictionary of National Biography</i>
SP	State Papers
STC	<i>Short Title Catalogue</i> , 2nd ed.
TNA	The National Archives



## Introduction

An authority on metaphorical monsters, Homeric and otherwise, Thomas Hobbes understood well that, contrary to the common use of the proverb by his contemporaries, there was no sailing *between* Scylla and Charybdis.<sup>1</sup> As the goddess Circe explained in Book XII of the *Odyssey*, one could not safely circumvent both dangers: the only way Odysseus could avoid the loss of his entire crew in the monster Charybdis' whirlpool was to intentionally steer his ship towards the ferocious Scylla, thereby sacrificing six of his men to her monstrous maw. Faced with this grim reality, Odysseus was forced to make the painful choice. The consequences of his decision were devastating: like watching a fisherman who spears fish, and then throws them, still gasping and flopping, onto land, so did Odysseus witness Scylla snatch up his men, sending "their sprawling arms and legs i' th' air, and heard them lamentably to me cry, and name me in their uttermost despair."<sup>2</sup> Odysseus' memory of his companions "roaring and holding out their hands to me" while Scylla ate them alive, would be the most painful of his entire journey. "Of my mishaps," Odysseus pitifully recalls, "this was the saddest I did ever see."<sup>3</sup>

As a foremost translator of the *Odyssey*, Hobbes recognized that Scylla and Charybdis symbolized not a safe and sensible *via media* between two dangers, but rather a dire quandary that required an individual to make a painful choice. In his treatise on moral conflict, *De Cive*, Hobbes employed this powerful image when describing one of the central dilemmas of his own age: an individual's crisis of obedience when caught between competing religious and political duties. This was a problem, Hobbes believed, that was particularly severe in Christian commonwealths, because the sovereign power held both temporal and spiritual authority. Since it was true that one must always "*obey God rather than man*," crises of conscience were inevitable, because "a difficulty has arisen as to how obedience can be safely offered if an order is given to do something which CHRIST forbids."<sup>4</sup> Torn between these two competing obligations, citizens found

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<sup>1</sup> By contrast, most early modern authors used this proverb to signify the virtues of moderation. See, for example: Francis Bacon, "The Flight of Icarus; also Scylla and Charybdis; Or the Middle Way," in *The Philosophical Works of Francis Bacon*, ed. John M. Robertson (London: George Routledge and Sons, 1905), 853; On the language of moderation more generally, see: Ethan Shagan, *The Rule of Moderation: Violence, Religion and the Politics of Restraint in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011); The availability of these two distinct and competing interpretations of the Scylla and Charybdis proverb was described by Erasmus: *The Adages of Erasmus*, ed. William Barker (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001), 83-6.

<sup>2</sup> Homer, *The travels of Ulysses as they were related by himself in Homer's ninth, tenth, eleventh, & twelfth books of his Odysseys, to Alcinous, King of Phaeacia*, trans. Thomas Hobbes (London, 1673), 92.

<sup>3</sup> Homer, *The travels of Ulysses*, 92.

<sup>4</sup> Thomas Hobbes, *On the Citizen*, ed. and trans. Richard Tuck and Michael Silverthorne (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 234; While Hobbes recognized this dilemma, he also thought it was, in actuality, only "an alleged difficulty" that could be

themselves trapped in an inescapable moral conundrum, and would often become ruined by indecision. “Men know very well what kings and the congregated *Church* command,” Hobbes explained, “but they do not know whether *what* they command is against God’s orders or not. Their obedience wavers between the penalties of *temporal* and *spiritual* death; they attempt to sail between *Scylla and Charybdis*; and often fall foul of both.”<sup>5</sup>

While John Locke, of course, proposed different answers than Hobbes, he also recognized the pervasiveness of this dilemma. Caught between competing dictates of religion and politics, the early modern citizen was in a constant state of moral crisis. This problem of obedience, Locke believed, had been particularly acute in the previous century, when each change of Tudor monarch had been accompanied by a drastic shift in official religious policy. “Our modern *English* history,” Locke observed, “affords us fresh examples, in the reigns of *Henry the 8th*, *Edward the 6th*, *Mary*, and *Elizabeth*, how easily and smoothly the clergy changed their decrees, their articles of faith, their forms of worship, everything, according to the inclination of those kings and queens. Yet were those kings and queens of such different minds, in point of religion, and enjoined thereupon such different things, that no man in his wits (I had almost said none but an atheist) will presume to say that any sincere and upright worshipper of God could, with a safe conscience, obey their several decrees.”<sup>6</sup>

This study is an examination of the problem of religious and political dilemma in early modern England. Focusing on the period when Locke believed this crisis had been at its most severe, the sixteenth century, it analyzes the various decisions and justifications made by individuals caught in this crisis of obedience, and it traces the immediate and long-term effects these decisions had on the political, religious, and social landscape. In particular, its central subjects are the reign of Mary (1553-1558), when the official return to Roman Catholicism was accompanied by the systematic prosecution of Protestants for heresy, and the reign of Elizabeth (1558-1603), when the state religion again shifted to Protestantism. The cognitive dissonance created by these seesaw changes of official doctrine necessitated a society in which religious dissimulation and mutability became standard operating procedure: nearly everyone became, at one time or another, and in one sense or another, a conformist. An understanding of the causes and effects of conformity, therefore, is not only crucial to understanding the crisis of obedience facing individuals during moments of state persecution, but it also allows us to trace the long-term consequences of these experiences on early modern English culture.

As a sustained period of religiously motivated state violence, the Marian persecution intensified the dilemma of obedience. In a five-year span, 284 Protestants were burned alive at the stake, while scores more were imprisoned or driven into exile.<sup>7</sup>

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readily solved if the citizen recognized that obedience to the sovereign was enough to satisfy those things that were necessary for salvation.

<sup>5</sup> Thomas Hobbes, *On the Citizen*, 235.

<sup>6</sup> John Locke, *A Letter Concerning Toleration*, ed. James H. Tully (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 1983), 37-8.

<sup>7</sup> *Mary Tudor: Old and New Perspectives*, eds. Susan Doran and Thomas S. Freeman, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 229-271; Christina Garrett, *The Marian Exiles: A Study in the Origins of Elizabethan Puritanism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1938).

Further complicating the matter, Protestants also faced reproach and ostracization from co-religionists who explicitly condemned all acts of capitulation to the Roman Catholic Church as anti-Christian. Just as it was impossible for Odysseus to sail his ship between Scylla and Charybdis and remain unscathed, so, too, was it impossible for most early modern men and women to navigate between the competing and contradictory dictates of Tudor religion and politics without conforming, dissimulating, or changing important points of conscience and belief. And yet, when we examine individual acts of conformity in context, it becomes apparent that most people found ways of rationalizing and justifying their respective actions. We also find that these difficult decisions continued to have long-term political, religious, and intellectual effects, even after the immediate dilemma had passed: just as Odysseus' choice to sacrifice some of his men to Scylla would continue to haunt his memory, so too did the fraught decisions made by individuals during the Marian persecution continue to have a lasting impact on themselves and the collective political memory of early modern English society. The foundations of Elizabethan culture were built on several Marian legacies, which included not only a nascent martyrological tradition, but also an official (yet precarious) narrative of providential Protestant triumphalism, a nuanced conformist conceptualization of the polity along mixed-constitutionalist and republican lines, an enduring association of puritanism with subversive religious and political action, and a distinct form of anti-Catholic resentment that rived the official English church while fueling fears of religious persecution. And so while the Marian crisis of obedience produced competing modes of political and religious behavior, it was during Elizabeth's reign that the memories of these disparate decisions came into conflict.

\* \* \*

“Religious conformity has,” the late historian Patrick Collinson once mused, “if not no history, a most elusive history.”<sup>8</sup> In the decades since these words were written scholars of various stripes have admirably begun to fill this lacuna, but the very nature of conformity will always make it a particularly elusive subject.<sup>9</sup> When studying Protestants during the reign of Mary, for example, it remains true that we know far more about the deliberations of the martyrs than we do about the decision-making strategies of conformists. And yet, as Andrew Pettegree observed in his groundbreaking study of Marian Protestants, the fact of sheer numbers attests that conformity was the most

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<sup>8</sup> Patrick Collinson, “Windows in a Woman’s Soul: Questions about the Religion of Queen Elizabeth I,” in *Elizabethan Essays*, 90.

<sup>9</sup> See, for example: *Conformity and Orthodoxy in the English Church, c.1560-1660*, eds. Peter Lake and Michael Questier (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2000); Michael Questier, *Conversion, Politics, and Religion in England, 1580-1625* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996); Alec Ryrie, *The Gospel and Henry VIII: Evangelicals in the Early English Reformation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003); Ethan Shagan, *Popular Politics and the English Reformation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003); Susan Wabuda, “Equivocation and Recantation during the English reformation: The ‘Subtle Shadows’ of Dr Edward Crome,” *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 44 (1993): 224-42; Alexandra Walsham, *Church Papists: Catholicism, Conformity and Confessional Polemic in Early Modern England* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 1993).

common response to the problem of religious and political dilemma.<sup>10</sup> Not surprisingly, the anguished conversations and decisions of people caught between competing obligations rarely made it into the public record. There are, however, telling exceptions.

In John Ponet's 1556 work, *A Short Treatise of Politic Power*, he recollects a curious encounter that took place soon "after the beginning of the Queen's reign [Mary's], and the sudden alteration of all things (contrary to oath and promise)." As he walked in a garden, he was approached by an old acquaintance, who attempted "to persuade me to incline to the Queen's proceedings," and conform to the Marian church. Ponet provides a supposedly verbatim account of their conversation: "'Play the wise man,' sayeth he, 'and do as I and other men do. I have known thee of a long time, to be a good fellow. I warrant thee, thou shalt recover thy loss and live in honour, if thou wilt be ruled by reason.'"<sup>11</sup> Congenially reassuring Ponet that capitulation was the only sensible option, the man (who was apparently of very short stature), then "lept up to clap me on the shoulder, for unless he stood on tiptoe, he could not reach it." When Ponet still seemed resistant, the man chided him further: "'Tush,' said he, 'thou art a fool. If the Turk ruled in England, I would frame myself to live according.'"<sup>12</sup>

For Ponet and other anti-conformist authors, such arguments were evidence of the false faith and opportunistic hypocrisy that had come to dominate Marian England. Reformed theologians, in particular, were especially strict on the subject, regularly conflating attendance at the Roman Catholic mass with blatant idolatry and willing service of the Antichrist; John Calvin, for example, relentlessly condemned Protestants that outwardly conformed to Catholicism, sarcastically dubbing them "Nicodemites," after the scriptural Pharisee Nicodemus, who would only visit Christ in secret.<sup>13</sup> Catholic authors also criticized religious dissimulation, arguing that true Christians could not simply "frame" their beliefs to suit the demands of the temporal sovereign, but should profess their faith honestly and with clear conscience.<sup>14</sup> What, then, do we make of Ponet's garden conversation, and his acquaintance's unabashed embrace of conformity? Should we simply understand this mystery conformist- as Calvin likely would have- by dismissing his arguments for religious duplicity as the shameless opportunism of a false believer?

The identity of this man has long been unknown, since Ponet refused to name him in print. "I may not, nor will tell you his name," Ponet explained, "because I hope he will

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<sup>10</sup> Andrew Pettegree, *Marian Protestantism: Six Studies*, (Aldershot: Scolar Press, 1996), 86-9.

<sup>11</sup> John Ponet, *A shorte treatise of politike pouuer and of the true obedience which subiectes owe to kynges and other ciuile gouernours, with an exhortacion to all true naturall Englishe men* (1556, STC 20178), sig. L6v.

<sup>12</sup> John Ponet, *A Short treatise of politike power*, sig. L6v-L7r.

<sup>13</sup> Jean Calvin, "Excuse à messieurs les Nicodemites," in *Three French Treatises*, ed. Francis Higman (London: Athlone Press, 1970), 131-53; Carlos Eire, "Calvin and Nicodemism: A Reappraisal," *Sixteenth Century Journal* 10, no. 1 (Spring 1979), 44-69; Perez Zagorin, *Ways of Lying: Dissimulation, Persecution, and Conformity in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1990), 70-75.

<sup>14</sup> Brad Gregory, "Martyrs and Saints," in *A Companion to the Reformation World*, ed. R. Po-chia Hsia (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2004), 461-2.

once remember himself, and call to God for grace.” Ponet did, however, leave a tantalizing clue for the curious reader: “But to put you somewhat from musing, I will tell you somewhat: In King Henry’s time, when Gardiner was called the bear, he was called the ape.” Ever since, scholars have found this single hint to be insufficient, suspecting that the identity of “the ape” has been forever lost to posterity.<sup>15</sup> If we follow this breadcrumb, however, it not only leads us to the answer to the riddle, but it also shows why any understanding of religious conformity must go beyond the categories used by early modern polemicists and theologians.

The answer lies in the tumultuous final year of Henry VIII’s reign, when the controversy surrounding the examination and execution of the Protestant gentlewoman Anne Askew had exacerbated the religious divisions at court. John Bale’s 1546 account of the affair, *The First Examinacyon of Anne Askewe*, was drawn largely from Askew’s own notes, and lays considerable blame for her heresy prosecution on the conservative faction led by Stephen Gardiner, Bishop of Winchester.<sup>16</sup> It is in this book’s index that we find the answer to Ponet’s riddle. For while Gardiner is listed as “Winchester, the pope’s bear,” we also find a listing for “Peryn, the pope’s ape.”<sup>17</sup> It is clear, therefore, that the mystery conformist described by Ponet was none other than the Roman Catholic theologian William Peryn.

At first appearance, this identification is shocking.<sup>18</sup> Not only was Peryn the Prior of the Dominican house of St. Bartholomew in Smithfield, but he was also one of the “star preachers” of the Marian church, publicly extolling and defending Roman Catholic doctrine from the nation’s most important pulpits.<sup>19</sup> More surprising still, Peryn was arguably the leading theologian of the Counter-Reformation in England. Eamon Duffy, for instance, has designated Peryn “the first English writer to absorb and adapt the

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<sup>15</sup> Winthrop Hudson, *John Ponet: Advocate of Limited Monarchy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1942), 60-1; Barrett L. Beer, “John Ponet’s *Shorte Treatise of Politike Power* Reassessed,” *Sixteenth Century Journal* 21, no. 3 (1990), 378.

<sup>16</sup> On Anne Askew and her trial, see: Alec Ryrie, *The Gospel and Henry VIII*, 54-5; Megan Hickerson, “Negotiating Heresy in Tudor England: Anne Askew and the Bishop of London,” *Journal of British Studies* 46, no. 4 (2007): 774–795; Thomas Freeman and Sarah Wall, “Racking the Body, Shaping the Text: The Account of Anne Askew in Foxe’s ‘Book of Martyrs’,” *Renaissance Quarterly*, Vol. 54, No. 4, Part 1 (Winter, 2001), 1165-1196.

<sup>17</sup> Anne Askew and John Bale, *The first examinacyon of Anne Askewe lately martyred in Smythfelde, by the Romysh popes vpholders, with the elucydacyon of Iohan Bale* (1546, STC 848), sigs. \*4r-v.

<sup>18</sup> This identification also opens up the intriguing possibility that this portion of the *Short Treatise* was not, in fact, written by John Ponet, but by a secondary contributor.

<sup>19</sup> Eamon Duffy, *Fires of Faith: Catholic England under Mary Tudor* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009); Miller MacLure, *Register of Sermons Preached at Paul’s Cross, 1534-1642*, Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies, Occasional Publications, Vol. 6 (Ottawa: Dovehouse Editions, 1989), 38; L. E. C. Wooding, “Peryn, William (*d.* 1558),” *ODNB*.

techniques of Loyola's *Spiritual Exercises*.<sup>20</sup> His works were at the center of Marian Catholic theology, and would have an enduring influence on recusant devotional culture.<sup>21</sup> This identification, then, poses an interpretive problem: assuming that Ponet's report of his conversation with Peryn was (at least to some degree) true, then how do we reconcile this profound disconnect between this private Peryn, a man who could secretly brag that he would conform to even a non-Christian ruler, and the public Peryn, proud flag bearer of Ignatius Loyola and the Counter-Reformation?

One seductive, yet ultimately problematic, approach would be to wonder which of these pictures represents the "real" Peryn and his "sincere" beliefs. Another option would be to try to understand Peryn through early modern categories: we could, for example, dismiss Peryn out-of-hand as an opportunistic dissembler and religious coward, just as Ponet did. This is a mode of interpretation commonly used by scholars of religious persecution: when describing the Protestant scholar Nicholas Grimald's infamous recantation and subsequent collaboration with the Marian authorities, for example, a recent study has argued that Grimald and those who committed similar "betrayals" must have "resided in the nether regions of decent social convention, propelled as they were by treachery and mercenary desires."<sup>22</sup> Such conclusions largely proceed from the assumption that individuals who dissimulated or capitulated their faith were, as evidenced by their behavior, less passionate and sincere in their beliefs than their steadfast co-religionists. In his landmark study of martyrdom, for instance, Brad Gregory has argued that what separated martyrs from conformists was a greater degree of certainty in their own faith: "The centrality of trust in God and his word in the martyrs' lives, their rigorous commitment to the ramifications of Christian belief, and the consequent power of faith to displace competing concerns and to relativize even horrific death distinguished the martyrs' faith from that of ordinary Christians. The *content* of their faith was shared with less devout fellow believers- but taking it with uncompromising seriousness greatly

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<sup>20</sup> Eamon Duffy, "A.G. Dickens and the late medieval Church," *Historical Research* Vol. 77, No. 195 (February 2004), 106. See, in particular: William Peryn, *Spirituell exercyses and goostly meditacions and a neare waye to come to perfection and lyfe contemplatyue, very profytable for religyous, and generally for al other that desyre to come to the perfecte loue of god, and to the contempte of the worlde* (1557, STC: 19784).

For an overview of Peryn's contributions to Marian religion, see: William Wizeman, SJ, *The Theology and Spirituality of Mary Tudor's Church* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2006); Mary Erler, "The Effects of Exile on English Monastic Spirituality: William Peryn's Spirituell Exercyses," *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 42, no. 3 (2012), 519–537.

<sup>21</sup> Peryn's *Spirituell Exercyses*, for example, was a favorite text of the Elizabethan martyr Margaret Clitherow: Peter Lake and Michael Questier, *The Trials of Margaret Clitherow: Persecution, Martyrdom, and the Politics of Sanctity in Elizabethan England* (London: Continuum, 2011), 37; For Peryn's influence on recusant devotion, see: Lisa McClain, *Lest We Be Damned: Practical Innovation and Lived Experience Among Catholics in Protestant England, 1559-1642* (New York: Routledge, 2004), 120-7.

<sup>22</sup> Sarah Covington, *The Trail of Martyrdom: Persecution and Resistance in Sixteenth-Century England* (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 2003), 41.

transformed its *character*.”<sup>23</sup> In stark contrast to the martyrs who proved their certainty of belief by their willingness to die, conformists showed that their faith was fickle and uncertain. “For *martyrs* to have been unwilling to die for their beliefs,” Gregory writes, “they would have had to consider ambiguous the many biblical passages that stipulated steadfastness in suffering. Or they would have had to believe that the Bible was not God’s word.”<sup>24</sup> By this reading, if conformists can be said to have held any modicum of true belief at all, then surely it must have been qualitatively inferior to the constant and unwavering faith of the martyrs.

While this approach is certainly helpful in recovering how the martyrs understood their own actions, it is less helpful in understanding the motivations and beliefs of those who chose not to be martyred. Furthermore, the logical implication of this approach is that those who were not willing to be martyred did not *really* believe in the Bible at all, and so when they were caught between “faith and fear- religious conviction and the natural aversion to painful suffering and death,” they simply chose to save their own skin.<sup>25</sup> Similarly, scholars have often transfused the language of Christianity into their own language of analysis: individual believers, for example, are often judged using scales of temperature, fervency, or strength.<sup>26</sup> Martyrs, outspoken polemicists, and (in the case of early modern England) puritans, are routinely described as being “hotter” and “stronger” in their beliefs than their “colder” and “weaker” co-religionists.<sup>27</sup> This approach directly appropriates scriptural categories, such as those found in the Book of Revelation’s condemnations of the Church of Laodicea: “I know your works; you are neither cold nor hot. I wish that you were either cold or hot. So, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I am about to spit you out of my mouth.”<sup>28</sup> Upon close inspection, however, these categories are problematic when used for historical analysis: very few conformists, for example, seem to have thought of themselves as being “lukewarm” towards true religion, or “weak” in their faith.

This study, therefore, pursues a different approach. Instead of asking whether an individual’s actions represented a fulfillment or a failure within a particular confessional framework, we should instead set ourselves to the task of understanding why people did what they did. This study also assumes that it is largely beyond the ability of historians to accurately distinguish the *character* of an individual’s faith. While we can, of course, differentiate between disparate patterns of behavior and professions of belief, it is ultimately impossible to make qualitative judgments about an individual’s faith without also tacitly adopting the rhetorical categories and religious frameworks of our early

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<sup>23</sup> Brad Gregory, *Salvation at Stake: Christian Martyrdom in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1999), 137.

<sup>24</sup> Gregory, *Salvation at Stake*, 346.

<sup>25</sup> Quotation in Gregory, *Salvation at Stake*, 110.

<sup>26</sup> Gregory, for instance, has argued that early modern Christianity existed as “a spectrum of religiosity, from ignorance or indifference to passionate commitment”: *Salvation at Stake*, 111.

<sup>27</sup> See, for example, Patrick Collinson’s influential definition of puritans as “the hotter sort of Protestants”: *The Elizabethan Puritan Movement* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967), 27.

<sup>28</sup> Revelation 3:15-6.

modern subjects.<sup>29</sup> Furthermore, we cannot draw a direct line of correlation between *habitus* and belief without also relying on the specious assumption that an individual's behavior is an accurate and cognizant manifestation of his or her faith: an individual's actions in any particular moment, and in any particular context, are not the sum of his or her beliefs.<sup>30</sup> As economists, cognitive scientists, and social psychologists have often observed, human motivations can be incredibly difficult to determine, in large part because individuals are rarely self-conscious of why they make the choices they make.<sup>31</sup> This poses a profound analytical difficulty for the historian, since the motivations and beliefs that people ascribe to themselves are often widely disconnected from the actual impulses and deeply-rooted conceptions that propel their actions. We can, however, recover the ways in which people rationalized and understood their own actions.

We also cannot, and should not, assume that mutability and sincerity are mutually exclusive, especially since the permutations of belief are highly dependent upon the situational context. In an assessment of the multivalent nature of religious toleration in early modern Germany, for example, Robert Scribner coined the term "tolerance of practical rationality," in reference to "the tolerance of ordinary people, a tolerance found frequently in daily life which made little fuss about difference of belief and accepted it as a normal state of affairs." This form of tolerance, Scribner suspected, was "probably the most important of all," and may have been pervasive in a culture in which the common people could be reluctant to make concrete truth claims in the wake of widespread theological disagreement.<sup>32</sup> Following Scribner's lead, early modern scholars have recently begun to find examples of quotidian ecumenicism in a wide range of regional

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<sup>29</sup> On post-confessional approaches to Reformation history, see: Ethan Shagan, "Can Historians End the Reformation?" in *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte* 97 (2006): 298-306.

<sup>30</sup> I want to stress that this does not mean that I am proposing anything approximating a reductionist approach to religion or religious belief, in which professions of belief are dismissed as manifestations or proxies of mental illness, economic motivations, or anything else. Rather, I am simply arguing that individuals hold a panoply of *beliefs*, and so to view any particular action as the failure or betrayal of any single religious belief is itself reductive.

<sup>31</sup> See, for example: Dora L. Costa and Matthew E. Kahn, *Heroes and Cowards: The Social Face of War* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008); Peter Carruthers, *The Architecture of the Mind: Massive Modularity and the Flexibility of Thought* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006); Robert Kurzban, *Why Everyone (Else) Is a Hypocrite: Evolution and the Modular Mind* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010); Daniel Dennett, *Consciousness Explained* (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1991); Robert Trivers, *The Folly of Fools: The Logic of Deceit and Self-deception in Human Life* (New York: Basic Books, 2011); On Amir, Dan Ariely, and Nina Mazar, "The Dishonesty of Honest People: A Theory of Self-Concept Maintenance," *Journal of Marketing Research* Vol. 45 (2008): 633-653.

<sup>32</sup> Bob Scribner, "Preconditions of Tolerance and Intolerance in sixteenth-century Germany," in *Tolerance and Intolerance in the European Reformation*, eds. Ole Peter Grell and Bob Scribner (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 38.



contexts.<sup>33</sup> While this study is not focused on the history of toleration, Scribner's emphasis on "practical rationality" still serves as an important reminder that there often was (and is) a divide between any individual's professed confessional faith and the beliefs that motivate his or her actions in everyday life. As Christopher Marsh has observed, early modern people "often seem to have been adept at living with contradictions."<sup>34</sup> We must recognize, therefore, that while William Peryn may indeed have been telling the truth when he privately boasted that he would, if the situation should arise, simply "frame" himself to live according to the rule of a Turk, this does not necessarily have any bearing on the sincerity of his public sermons and Counter-Reformation writings. What this does suggest, however, is that Peryn's beliefs, *in toto*, were complicated, internally inconsistent, and contextually malleable.

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As is suitable for a study of dilemma and duplicity, this project is divided into two sections. Part I, "Marian Conformity and the Rationalization of Obedience," analyzes the state persecution of Protestants during the reign of Mary I by focusing on conformist responses to this problem of obedience. While the specifics of each case were obviously different, we can see distinct patterns of rationalization, as men and women struggled to reconcile their dissonant beliefs with their respective actions. In particular, when examining Protestants who recanted their beliefs and conformed to the Marian church, we can see several clear rationalization techniques. Some simply changed their beliefs, becoming, by all appearances, sincere and committed Roman Catholics. Some emphasized their points of belief that were consistent with their actions; an individual could, for example, justify his recantation as an act of civil obedience, while also ignoring its religious significance. Some explained their behavior by downplaying the extent of their capitulation, while others went ever further, and refused to allow that their acts of conformity had really meant anything at all. Some retrospectively reduced their perceived options: they could, for instance, claim that they had no other choice but to conform, or dismiss their actions as insignificant because they were taken under duress. Most, however, simply ignored their conformity entirely, hoping that it would be forever forgotten.

Chapter 1 examines individuals who had been associated with Protestant reform during the reign of Edward VI, and yet, during Mary's reign, actively participated in the

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<sup>33</sup> See, for example: Benjamin Kaplan, *Divided by Faith: Religious Conflict and the Practice of Toleration in Early Modern Europe*; (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2007); Stuart Schwartz, *All Can Be Saved: Religious Tolerance and Salvation in the Iberian Atlantic World* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008); Keith Luria, *Sacred Boundaries: Religious Coexistence and Conflict in Early-Modern France* (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 2005); C. Scott Dixon, Dagmar Freist, and Mark Greengrass, eds., *Living with Religious Diversity in Early-Modern Europe* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2009); Nadine Lewycky and Adam Morton, eds., *Getting Along? Religious Identities and Confessional Relations in Early Modern England: Essays in Honour of Professor W.J. Sheils* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2012).

<sup>34</sup> Christopher Marsh, *Popular Religion in Sixteenth-century England* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1998), 11.

persecution of their former co-religionists. Chapter 2 shows how, despite the prevalence of harsh anti-conformist rhetoric within Marian Protestant culture, there was still a tacit acceptance of religious conformity, as even acts of outright recantation were not viewed solely as failures to attain martyrdom, but were often understood and justified through a myriad of valid claims and caveats, which included appeals to community, divine providence, human nature, English law, political obedience, and even Christian theology itself. Chapter 3 focuses on the connections between Renaissance political culture and the problem of Protestant obedience during the Marian persecution. In particular, it examines the case of the Protestant preacher and classical humanist Nicholas Grimald, a man long considered to be the “Judas of the Reformation” due to his supposed betrayal of the Oxford martyrs in 1555. I show how Grimald viewed his religious conformity through a classical lens, deftly rationalizing his actions through the framework of Ciceronian republicanism. Like Chapter 3, Chapter 4 also tracks the interplay between Renaissance political thought and religious obedience; specifically, it focuses on the political-theological views of certain Protestant leaders who, despite their exile, were desperate to maintain a modicum of obedience to a state that was persecuting them. The chapter highlights an alternative genealogy of English political thought— one that was forged in the experience of the Marian persecution and generative of new understandings of mixed constitutionalism and limited monarchy.

While the first half of this study focuses on the rationalizations of conformity during the Marian persecution, the second half examines the profound and lasting influence these experiences had on religious and political culture in Elizabethan England. The most well known Marian legacy, of course, was the vibrant martyrological tradition typified by John Foxe’s *Actes and Monuments* (“The Book of Martyrs”). As Thomas Freeman, Elizabeth Evenden, and other scholars have shown, Foxe’s martyrology became a pillar of English religious culture, and was a large reason why the trauma of the Marian persecution remained, for centuries, a common and central feature of Protestant discourse.<sup>35</sup> And yet, as the second half of this study shows, the collective memory of Post-Marian England was not limited to the history of the martyrs, but included the uncomfortable and controversial history of dissimulation and conformity that had characterized the Marian years. As scholars of mid-Tudor England have occasionally noted, the extremely delicate nature of this situation was complicated by the fact that the Elizabethan government and church was filled with former Marian conformists, including Privy Councilors such as William Cecil, Nicholas Bacon, and Thomas Smith, leading members of the episcopate, such as Matthew Parker and John Whitgift, and, most importantly, Queen Elizabeth herself.<sup>36</sup> As Andrew Pettegree has shrewdly observed, “To

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<sup>35</sup> Thomas Freeman and Elizabeth Evenden, *Religion and the Book in Early Modern England: The Making of John Foxe’s ‘Book of Martyrs’* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011); Adrian Chastain Weimer, *Martyr’s Mirror: Persecution and Holiness in Early New England* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011).

<sup>36</sup> Pettegree, *Marian Protestantism*, 106-9; Thomas Freeman, “‘As True a Subiect being Prysoner’: John Foxe’s Notes on the Imprisonment of Princess Elizabeth, 1554–5,” *The English Historical Review* 117, no. 470 (February 2002): 104-116; Diarmaid MacCulloch, *Tudor Church Militant: Edward VI and the Protestant Reformation* (London: Penguin, 1999), 189; Diarmaid MacCulloch, “The Latitude of the Church of

a very large extent the Elizabethan settlement was a Nicodemite Reformation.”<sup>37</sup> Therefore in Part II, “Elizabethan Conformity and the Conflicts of Memory,” I examine the contentious aftermath of the Marian persecution in order to understand the religious and political ramifications of this Nicodemite Settlement. I argue that many of the disputes of Elizabeth's reign were, in effect, battles for control over the nation's political memory, as different groups sought to selectively remember or forget particular points of the Marian past. Official Elizabethan memory, with its emphasis on Protestant providentialism, reconciliation, and a shared history of resistance to Roman Catholicism, was also meant to selectively ignore or conceal discrepant memories of conformity, dissimulation, and unresolved conflict.

In Chapter 5, for example, I show how, from the moment of its first appearance, Elizabethan puritanism was fueled by the enduring and destabilizing memory of the Queen's unrepented history of Marian idolatry. This vestigial anti-Nicodemism, I argue, continued to serve as a central, yet often cryptic, component of puritan critique throughout Elizabeth's reign. Just as Chapter 5 tracks one of the unforeseen legacies of Marian conformity, so too does Chapter 6, as it examines questions of conflict resolution and retributive justice in the aftermath of the persecution. While some Protestants in post-Marian England expected and demanded vengeance against their former persecutors, complications naturally arose when those who now had the authority to settle these religious scores had themselves conformed to the Marian regime. The memory that the Marian clergy had gone unpunished, I argue, would become a lingering point of puritan resentment, especially as members of the godly community were themselves increasingly targeted for prosecution by the Elizabethan church and state.

Finally, in Chapter 7, I examine the ways in which the long history of Marian conformity influenced the staunch anti-puritan and conformist arguments that were central to late Elizabethan and Stuart religious orthodoxy. In contrast to the view that anti-puritanism was largely a conspiratorial and paranoid misinterpretation of puritan political objectives, I show how it was rooted in memories of the very real and very different approaches to the dilemma of political-theological obedience that had fractured the Protestant community during the Marian persecution. In this respect, it draws upon Carlos Eire's observation that the severe anti-Nicodemism of Reformed Protestant thought could be seen- often with good reason- as “prelude to sedition,” since its inherent logic justified arguments for political resistance.<sup>38</sup> When we recognize that many of the spiritual and organizational leaders of late Elizabethan puritanism were still associated with a history of strict anti-Nicodemism and resistance theory, while some had even invoked the memory of the Queen's Marian conformity, then it becomes clear how

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England,” in *Religious Politics in Post-Reformation England*, eds. Kenneth Fincham and Peter Lake (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2006), 49.

<sup>37</sup> Pettegree, *Marian Protestantism*, 106.

<sup>38</sup> Carlos Eire, “Prelude to sedition? Calvin's attack on Nicodemism and religious compromise,” *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte* 76 (1985), 120-45.

conformist authors such as Richard Bancroft could logically view puritanism as a serious political threat.<sup>39</sup>

This study argues that in order to understand the Marian crisis of obedience and its lasting influence on English culture, we must place religious and political conformity at the center of our analysis. Rather than endlessly recycle the rhetorical dichotomies of true and false belief that were so often employed by our early modern subjects, we must instead recognize that, in practice, individuals who were caught between competing religious, political, and social obligations invariably found ways to justify or rationalize their own acts of accommodation, dissimulation, and mutability. Moreover, this dilemma of obedience was culturally generative, as individuals were not only compelled to question their relationship with the civil and religious authorities, but also reconceptualize the very nature of the state and church to which they were conforming. We find, therefore, that conformity was an unexpected yet profound force of political and religious change.

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<sup>39</sup> I want to emphasize that I am not myself declaring puritanism to have been necessarily politically subversive; rather, I am showing how Bancroft and others came to this conclusion.

## Chapter 1

### Protestants Turned Persecutors: Religious Mutability and the Enforcement of the Marian Counter-Reformation

Shortly after the accession of Queen Mary in 1553, Bishop John Bird's life was in shambles- his ecclesiastical career, his reputation, his wife, and (to the vagaries of old age) even one of his eyes, had all been lost. This was also the first time in more than two decades that Bird had not enjoyed royal favor: as a client of Thomas Cromwell in the 1530's, Bird caught the attention of Henry VIII after writing a theological treatise in support of his right to divorce Catherine of Aragon.<sup>1</sup> After ten years of royal service, Bird's loyalty paid dividends, as he was appointed bishop of the newly formed diocese of Chester. During the reign of Edward VI, Bird was an active proponent of the young king's religious policies. Reporting directly to Lord Protector Somerset, Bird supervised the widespread sale and appropriation of church goods within his diocese: a surviving survey of items, signed by Bird, lists the amounts fetched for the chalices, crucifixes, and clerical vestments that were sold in each parish.<sup>2</sup> Bird also married during Edward's reign, and it was for this reason that he was deprived in March 1554.<sup>3</sup> For Bird the early years of Mary's reign must have been a troubling time. His political reputation- carefully cultivated for decades- was now in ruins, and the religious program he had helped carry out in the previous reign was being quickly rolled back. While some of his fellow Protestants were resisting the changes and, consequently, accepting the harsh realities of persecution or exile, most had publicly returned to the Roman Catholic faith. Bird clearly had a difficult choice to make.

And so in the fall of 1554, after more than six months without a living, Bird decided to reinvent himself, and perhaps even regain what he had lost. His eye was replaced easily enough (a large polished pearl proved a respectable substitute), but the resuscitation of his ecclesiastical career would be a much more difficult task. He first made recantation for his heretical past, and was officially reconciled with the Roman Catholic Church. He also repudiated his wife, thereby making himself again eligible for religious office. In November 1554, he was collated vicar of Great Dunmow, Essex, and he soon began to curry favor with Edmund Bonner, the Bishop of London.<sup>4</sup> By the next year Bird was appointed suffragan bishop to Bonner, and he began to assist Bonner in the examination of heretics. As an examiner he encouraged imprisoned Protestants to conform; at the questioning of the Essex gentleman Thomas Hawkes, for example, Bird implored him to accept church authority, telling him "Alas good young man, ye must be taught by the church, and by your ancients, & do as your fathers have done before you."<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> TNA SP MS 1/62, fols. 53r-58r.

<sup>2</sup> TNA SP 10/3, fol. 10r.

<sup>3</sup> *Calendar of the Patent Rolls Preserved in the Public Record Office, Philip and Mary, Vol. 1, 1553-1554* (London: HMSO, 1936), 175.

<sup>4</sup> "John Bird (CCEd Person ID: 31015)," *The Clergy of the Church of England Database 1540-1835* <<http://www.theclergydatabase.org.uk>>, accessed 23 June 2012; John Foxe portrays Bird and Bonner as having a client-patron relationship. On one occasion, for instance, Bird presented Bonner with a gift of wine and apples: Foxe, 1563 ed., 1221.

<sup>5</sup> Foxe, 1563 ed., 1221.

Publicly, therefore, Bird's transformation was total. As one unsympathetic observer remarked, Bird thus went from being "a young Protestant" to "an old Catholic."<sup>6</sup>

In June 1555, Bonner began a visitation of Essex, during which he planned to oversee the restoration of Roman Catholic services at the parish level, while also detecting and examining suspected heretics. Upon arriving in the town of Great Dunmow, Bonner again looked to Bird for assistance, choosing him to deliver a public sermon applauding England's reconciliation with Rome. Bird would have seemed the perfect choice for such an occasion; he was a seasoned preacher, with experience addressing royal audiences. The Protestant polemicist John Bale, an old friend of Bird's, had even described him as having "a honeyed tongue," and complimented his effectiveness as a preacher.<sup>7</sup> More importantly, Bird was now the model of a rehabilitated cleric, and as such could be an influential example to others. The sermon, however, would not go as planned.

With Bishop Bonner looking on, Bird began with a detailed exegesis of Matthew 16:18 ("Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church"), explaining how this was justification for the legitimacy of papal authority through the Petrine commission.<sup>8</sup> As Bird continued, however, he started to become lost in his own thoughts. "He waded so far," one observer mused, "as he himself knew not where he was, nor any man else understood whither he would." Bird tried regaining his train of thought, but as he continued to preach he only became more confused. Visibly panicked, he abruptly changed subjects: instead of Matthew 16:18, Bird now recited Matthew 26:75 ("And Peter remembered the word of Jesus, which said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice"), interpreting the passage to make an impromptu apologia for his personal religious history. As one in the audience described the scene, "So that where the drift of his sermon was, if he could have brought it out, to prove the stability of St. Peter, and so successively of the Pope's seat, suddenly he slipped into the weakness of St. Peter, and of all mankind... Meaning belike, by the fall of Peter, to excuse his own weakness, and of all Adam's children, if he could well have discharged the matter."<sup>9</sup>

And so what had started as a confident assertion of doctrinal certainties quickly deteriorated into an extemporaneous confession of his own doubts and failings. Horrified at what was unfolding, Bonner looked as though he "stood upon thorns, for he made faces, his elbow itched, and so hard was his cushion whereon he sat, that many times during the sermon he stood up, looking towards the Suffragan [Bird], giving signs (and such signs as almost had speaking) to proceed to the full event of his cause in hand." The parishioners in the pews were also shocked, as it was not apparent whether Bird's rambling sermon was the result of a crisis of conscience, or of Bird's genuine confusion as to how he was able to reconcile his arguments for papal authority with his reformist background. For the anonymous Protestant observer to whom we owe this account, Bird's sermon was proof of the "cloaked hypocrisy" that characterized the Marian

<sup>6</sup> BL Harleian MS 421, fol. 1r.

<sup>7</sup> Richard Copsey, "Bird, John (*d.* 1558)," *ODNB*.

<sup>8</sup> Although a Protestant observer's account of Bird's sermon survives in manuscript copy among John Foxe's papers, transcribed in Foxe's hand, it was never printed in the *Actes and Monuments*: BL Harleian MS 421, fol. 1r-v.

<sup>9</sup> BL Harleian MS 421, fol. 1v.

church: by encouraging conformity to Roman Catholic authority while also attempting to justify his own Protestant past, Bird's moment of nervous parapraxis revealed "two contraries standing so disjointly."

In this chapter, I argue it is this very paradox- these "two contraries standing so disjointly"- that should be central to our understanding of the Marian persecution and its enforcement. For while Bird's sermon was obviously unusual, it brings into focus an important yet often overlooked reality of the Marian religious program: while Cardinal Pole and a handful of other high-ranking clerics recently returned from abroad could claim to have never been separated from the Roman Catholic Church, most Marian churchmen and magistrates could not. In many cases, therefore, those tasked with the enforcement of anti-Protestant policy were themselves former evangelicals. Historians of Marian England, long focused on debating the relative successes and failures of English Catholicism and Protestantism, have usually seen this period as one of confessional dualism. For this reason, historical attention has usually been focused on either leading Catholic officials, such as Queen Mary and her privy councillors, or on the Protestant martyrs and exiles. As a result, conformists have either been ignored entirely, or else negatively presented within a confessional framework.

In what amounts to an attempt to discern true from false converts, some historians have fallen into a form of retrospective confirmation bias by conflating an individual's doctrinal consistency with religious sincerity: those who maintained a persistent confessional outlook are deemed to be true and steadfast adherents, while those with shifting religious affiliations are cast as turncoats, false brethren, or shameless timeservers. Eamon Duffy, for instance, has used this line of reasoning to argue that the Edwardian Protestant turned Marian controversialist Thomas Harding was a genuine Catholic convert- living evidence for the effectiveness of Cardinal Pole's counter-reformation program. Harding's later refusal to conform during Elizabeth's reign showed that he had been "no mere opportunist" during Mary's; by remaining "true to his catholic convictions," he passed the test for true faith.<sup>10</sup> Likewise, the Edwardian evangelical turned Marian polemicist John Standish must be dismissed as a mere "doctrinal chameleon," because under Elizabeth he would accept the Oath of Supremacy.<sup>11</sup> Perhaps the most striking illustration of this type of approach can be seen in historical assessments of Anthony Kitchin, the Bishop of Llandaff. Kitchin has long been infamous as the only bishop to successively serve Henry VIII, Edward VI, Mary I, and Elizabeth I, and has thus been cast as a "spineless" coward, whose willingness to comply betrayed the "feeble and unstable" nature of his religious and political convictions.<sup>12</sup> Duffy has condemned Kitchin as "an incorrigible timeserver," whose willingness to serve both Catholic and Protestant monarchs proved his fundamental irreligiosity; Kitchin, Duffy has quipped, "would doubtless have become a Hindu if required, provided he was allowed to hold on to the See of Llandaff."<sup>13</sup> Yet, as I will show in this chapter, conformists such as Kitchin should not be dismissed so easily. Furthermore, when we realize that the detection,

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<sup>10</sup> Duffy, *Fires of Faith*, 12.

<sup>11</sup> Duffy, *Fires of Faith*, 63-64.

<sup>12</sup> J. Gwynfor Jones, "The Reformation Bishops of Llandaff, 1558-1601," *Morgannwg transactions of the Glamorgan Local History Society*, Vol. 32 (1988), 38-43.

<sup>13</sup> Duffy, *Fires of Faith*, 23, 99, 195.

examination, and prosecution of Protestants was often carried out by those with reformist pasts, then it requires us to examine religious mutability without resorting to a simple oppositional model of orthodoxy versus unorthodoxy.

Although this observation is largely absent from modern historiography, a version of it has been made before: in the 1590s, the Jesuit polemicist Robert Parsons privately circulated a manuscript amongst his friends, in which he attempted to explain why Queen Mary had not been able to permanently restore Catholicism in England.<sup>14</sup> Historians have long looked to this source, focusing primarily on Parsons' contention that the Marian religious agenda failed because leading officials were more focused on obtaining token conformity than sincere religious conversion.<sup>15</sup> Duffy, for instance, has claimed Parsons' unflattering assessment was foundational to an erroneous and persistent assumption that "the Marian regime failed to discover the counter-reformation."<sup>16</sup> Yet while scholars have long concerned themselves with whether or not Parsons' subjective diagnosis of Mary's reign was correct, they have paid less attention to the underlying conditions that Parsons described. In particular, Parsons' account of the Marian prosecution effort is especially telling, as it suggests a religious landscape that is more nuanced and complicated than the simple Catholic versus Protestant binaries typically found in both early modern polemic and modern historiography. Parsons writes:

Many priests that had fallen and married in King Edward's days, were admitted presently to the altar, without other satisfaction than only to send their concubines out of men's sight, and of some it is thought they did not so much as confess themselves before they said mass again; Others that had preached against Catholics, were admitted presently to preach for them; and others that had been visitors and commissioners against us, were made commissioners against the Protestants, and in this Queen's time [Elizabeth's] were commissioners again of the other side against ours; so as the matter went as a Stage-Play, where Men do change their Persons and Parts, without changing their Minds or Affection.<sup>17</sup>

Borrowing the metaphor, the purpose of this chapter, then, is to reconstruct some of this "Stage-Play." Who were the actors and actresses? What were the parts they were

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<sup>14</sup> Robert Parsons, *The Jesuit's memorial for the intended reformation of England under their first popish prince published from the copy that was presented to the late King James II: with an introduction, and some animadversions by Edward Gee* (1690), 20-6.

<sup>15</sup> Eamon Duffy, *Fires of Faith*, 9-10; Michael Carrafiello, *Robert Parsons and English Catholicism, 1580-1610* (London: Associated University Press, 1998), 56-87; J.J. Scarisbrick, "Robert Parsons's Plans for the 'true' Reformation of England," in *Historical Perspectives: Studies in English Thought and Society in honour of J.H. Plumb*, ed. Neil McKendrick (London: Europa Publications, 1974), 19-42; T.H. Clancy, "Notes on Parsons's 'Memorial for the Reformation of England,'" *Recusant History* Vol. 5, No. 1 (1959), 17-34; Arnold Pritchard, *Catholic Loyalty in Elizabethan England* (London: Scholar Press, 1979), 27-36.

<sup>16</sup> Duffy, *Fires of Faith*, 9.

<sup>17</sup> Parsons, *The Jesuit's memorial*, 20-21.



playing? And, most importantly, how were these stage-players able to change their parts so effortlessly?

I.

By 1554 it had been almost two decades since Thomas Goldwell had set foot on English soil. His exile was not entirely voluntary: in 1539 Goldwell was among those listed in the bill of attainder directed against Cardinal Reginald Pole and the members of his inner circle who had refused to acknowledge the royal supremacy. In the final years of Henry VIII's reign, and then through Edward VI's, Goldwell lived in Rome, where he served as Pole's chaplain and chamberlain of the English Hospice.<sup>18</sup> When Pope Julius III named Pole papal legate shortly after the accession of Queen Mary in 1553, Goldwell was directed to accompany the Cardinal to England. But as Goldwell prepared for his return trip, he began to have some misgivings about the state of affairs in England. In particular, he was uncomfortable with the realization that many of the Marian clergy now tasked with the restoration of Roman Catholicism were the same men who, only months before, had been extolling a Protestant religious program under Edward VI. One such cleric was Richard Thornden, a former associate of Thomas Cromwell and Archbishop Cranmer, who had recently declared himself a reconciled Roman Catholic. Eager to prove his change of affiliation to the new monarch, Thornden had even ordered the restoration of the mass in Canterbury Cathedral before it was legally authorized.<sup>19</sup>

Yet some were still skeptical. Goldwell knew Thornden from their Oxford days, and so in June 1554 he wrote an admonitory letter to Thornden, in which he bluntly reminded him of his recent Protestant past: "...there hath been given very evil informations of you, and it hath been said that you have concurred with all manner of evil proceedings, the which have these years past been in England." Specifically, Thornden was accused of acting against "the holy Sacrament of the altar, & against the supreme authority of Christ's Vicar in Earth, as with the use of the abominable late Communion, and with the marriage of Priests, as well religious as secular." Furthermore, Goldwell charged Thornden with having "given orders to (I cannot tell how many) base, unlearned, and evil disposed people, by reason of the which they have taken upon them to preach, and to do much hurt in Kent."<sup>20</sup> Thornden, therefore, had not merely been a passive bystander in the stripping of the altars, but stood accused of being an active proponent of heresy's spread. For these reasons, Goldwell explained, Thornden's newfound commitment to the Roman Catholic church was still suspect: "...men think that yet if any new mutation (the which God forbid) should chance, you would be as ready to change as any other." Goldwell admitted that his own suspicions were still raised, especially since Thornden had so seamlessly continued in his ecclesiastical duties upon the restoration of the mass, rather than recuse himself until penance was made. Goldwell writes, "...what honour should it have been both to God and yourself, and also edification to all good people (though all worldly men and heretics would therefore have laughed you to scorn) if you considering your great offences toward God, & his goodness again toward you, would like as you have offended in the face of the world to the damnation of many,

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<sup>18</sup> T. F. Mayer, "Goldwell, Thomas (*d.* 1585)," *ODNB*.

<sup>19</sup> Michael Zell, "Thornden, Richard (*c.* 1490–1558)," *ODNB*.

<sup>20</sup> Foxe, 1570 ed., 1887.

likewise have showed yourself penitent in the face of the world.”<sup>21</sup> By not abstaining from the sacrament, as he should have done, Thornden had revealed that he was “more regarding the vanity of the world than the offence of God.” Notwithstanding these grievances, Goldwell tells Thornden that he has still vouched for him to Cardinal Pole. Thornden had sinned, Goldwell explained, “but that which is past cannot be called again. And I thought it not my part to leave your lordship mine old friend and master in the mire.”<sup>22</sup> For the Marian regime, this reluctant willingness to reintegrate recent evangelicals paid dividends, especially in Thornden’s case. As suffragan bishop of Dover and assistant to Archdeacon Nicholas Harpsfield in the visitation of the diocese of Canterbury, Thornden proved to be a tireless prosecutor of Protestants: of the estimated 313 men and women prosecuted for heresy who were either executed or died in prison during Mary’s reign, Thornden personally examined or condemned at least 43.<sup>23</sup>

Not surprisingly, Thornden’s old friend and patron Cranmer was furious at this sudden volte-face. Writing from his prison cell, Cranmer condemned Thornden’s reinstatement of the mass, calling him “a false flattering, lying, and dissembling monk.”<sup>24</sup> As other evangelicals throughout England began to renounce their recent past and seek reconciliation with the papacy, such condemnations would become a consistent motif of Marian protestant polemic. Often these grievances were expressed with discretion. In Oxford, for example, the public defections of the evangelicals Nicholas Grimald and Nicholas Cartwright prompted intense backlash in Protestant circles. While the two men could not be safely criticized in print, there are more ephemeral signs of evangelical resentment: in the mangled margins of a 15th century illuminated vellum manuscript, for example, an anonymous Oxford schoolboy sloppily scribbled a pair of satirical Latin poems that ruthlessly mocked the two men for their recent conformity.<sup>25</sup> Grimald was portrayed as a turncoat, who was now shamelessly praising those whom he had recently criticized.<sup>26</sup> Likewise, Cartwright is denigrated as a fool who feigns holiness while preaching what he knows to be false.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Foxe, 1570 ed., 1887.

<sup>22</sup> Foxe, 1570 ed., 1887.

<sup>23</sup> In determining this estimate I have compared the various records of Thornden’s activities to the comprehensive list of Marian martyrs recently printed in *Mary Tudor: Old and New Perspectives*, eds. Susan Doran and Thomas S. Freeman, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 229-271.

<sup>24</sup> *Writings and Disputations of Thomas Cranmer*, Parker Society, ed. John Cox (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1844), 430.

<sup>25</sup> Bodl. Oxford, MS Duke Humfrey b. 1, fol. 186r; The two poems, written in doggerel Latin, are titled “*Versus in laudem insignissimi doctoris Cartewritus*” and “*Carmen in laudem Grimmoaldi*.” Both are mostly legible, with a few exceptions where the vellum is badly mangled and stained. The subject of the host manuscript, a 15th century copy of a Latin exposition of Exodus by John Capgrave, appears to be unrelated. I would like to thank Tyler Lange for his extremely helpful comments on this manuscript.

<sup>26</sup> “*Quos modo vituperas nunc illos perfide laudas*”: Bodl. Oxford, MS Duke Humfrey b. 1, fol. 186r.

<sup>27</sup> “*Ortus es a stulto stolidus clarissime doctor / Quid falso predicas hic ideota, precor?*”: Bodl. Oxford, MS Duke Humfrey b. 1, fol. 186r.

Yet others took a more confrontational approach, and some were even arrested after making public condemnations of those former evangelicals who had reconciled with the Marian church. The Sussex evangelical Richard Woodman, for instance, was apprehended after he criticized a local minister who had been a fervent reformer during Edward's reign, yet now preached Catholic doctrine. Although not initially charged with heresy, Woodman was still arrested for violating a Marian statue that forbade the harassment of authorized preachers.<sup>28</sup> Later, as he was examined on heresy charges before John White, the Bishop of Winchester, Woodman bluntly voiced a line of critique that was increasingly becoming a common feature of Protestant polemic:

*Wood.* I will believe none of you all, for you be turncoats, and changelings, and be wavering minded, as sayeth S. James: you be neither hot nor cold, as sayeth S. John, therefore God will spew you out of his mouth. Wherefore I can believe none of you all, I tell you truth.

*Winchest.* What? Be we turncoats, and changelings? What meanest thou by that?

*Wood.* I mean that in King Edward's time you taught the doctrine that was set forth then, every one of you, and now you teach the contrary: and therefore I call you turncoats, and changelings, as I may well enough.<sup>29</sup>

Protestant polemicists were also quick to remind readers that even high-level leaders in the regime, such as Stephen Gardiner and Edmund Bonner, had once been defenders of the royal supremacy during Henry VIII's reign.<sup>30</sup> For the martyrologist John Foxe, the religious mutability of certain Marian prosecutors was later used to suggest that Roman Catholicism itself was a religion of dissimulation and deceit. When describing the Protestant past of Richard Thornden, for example, Foxe claims he did so "to the intent it may appear what little truth or constancy is in these catholic persecutors."<sup>31</sup> Thornden and those of his ilk were "turncoats," whose faith was fickle and false. Aside from the usual hyperbole characteristic of anti-Nicodemite polemic, such statements are also a tacit reminder that many of "these catholic persecutors" were men whom evangelicals had only recently considered godly brethren.

While in prison awaiting execution, the preacher John Bradford used smuggled pen and ink to write a series of admonitory letters calling upon evangelicals to make open profession of their faith. He reserved particularly harsh opprobrium for many of his

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<sup>28</sup> Thomas S. Freeman, "Woodman, Richard (c.1525–1557)," *ODNB*.

<sup>29</sup> Foxe, 1576 ed., 1920.

<sup>30</sup> For example, in 1553 the clandestine press of John Day produced an edition of Stephen Gardiner's treatise in defense of the Henrician supremacy: Stephen Gardiner, *De vera obedientia An oration made in Latine by the ryghte reuerend father in God Stephan B. of Winchestre, nowe lord Chau[n]cellour of england, with the preface of Edmund Boner...touching true obedience* (1553: STC 11586); On the printing of this text, see: Thomas Freeman and Elizabeth Evenden, *Religion and the Book in Early Modern England: The Making of John Foxe's 'Book of Martyrs'* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 67.

<sup>31</sup> Foxe, 1570 ed., 1887.

former in brethren in Cambridge; for while the university had only recently been a bastion of Reformed thought, many of the most prominent Protestants of both town and gown had now conformed. The problem, however, was not only that Protestants were concealing their faith, but that some had dramatically changed their religious orientation in lock-step with the new monarch. Such changes, Bradford warned, would inevitably evoke divine retribution: "...and now I tell you, before I depart hence, that the ears of men will tingle to hear the vengeance of God that will fall upon you all, both town and university, if you repent not, if you leave not your idolatry, if you turn not speedily to the Lord, if you are still ashamed of Christ's truth, which you know. O Perne, repent; O Thomson, repent; O ye doctors, bachelors, and masters, repent; O mayor, aldermen, and town-dwellers, repent, repent, repent, that you may escape the near vengeance of the Lord."<sup>32</sup> It is not surprising that Bradford explicitly shames Andrew Perne, the master of Peterhouse. As Patrick Collinson has shown, Perne was notorious for his shifting religious opinions.<sup>33</sup> A former reformer, Perne famously presided over the ritual desecration of the bones of Martin Bucer and Paul Fagius in 1556, and then at the re-interment of their remains in 1560. The "Thomson" Bradford names was likely another cleric who had recently conformed: John Thomson, a fellow of St. John's and preacher noted for his Reformed beliefs during Edward's reign.<sup>34</sup> Associated with the "Athenian" intellectual circle of Sir John Cheke, Thomson had written one of the Latin elegies of Bucer in 1552; in the poem, Thomson praised Bucer's spiritual guidance, and bemoaned his death as a grave loss to godly teaching in England.<sup>35</sup>

That Thomson, Perne, and others had not only forgone exile, but were now even aiding in the prosecution of their former brethren, represented, for Bradford, a profound betrayal. "Remember the readings and the preachings of God's prophet, and true preacher, Martin Bucer," Bradford wrote, "Call to mind the threatenings of God, now something to be seen by thy children, [Thomas] Lever and others. Let the exile of Lever, Pilkington, Grindal, Haddon, Horne, Scory, Ponet, &c. something awake thee. Let the imprisonment of thy dear sons, Cranmer, Ridley, and Latimer, move thee. Consider the martyrdom of Rogers, Saunders, Taylor. And now cast not away the poor admonition of me, going to be burned also, and to receive the like crown of glory with my fellows."<sup>36</sup> If Thomson, Perne, and others continued to be complicit in the prosecution of their former fellows, Bradford argued, then divine punishment would be inevitable: "But if you repent not, but be as you were, and go on forwards with the wicked, following the fashion of the world, the Lord will lead you on with wicked doers, you shall perish in your wickedness,

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<sup>32</sup> John Bradford, *The Writings of John Bradford...Containing Sermons, Meditations, Examinations, &c., Vol. 1*, ed. Aubrey Townsend (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1848), 446.

<sup>33</sup> Collinson, *Elizabethan Essays*, 185-191.

<sup>34</sup> Charles Henry Cooper and Thompson Cooper, *Athenae Cantabrigienses, Volume I: 1500-1585* (Cambridge, Deighton, Bell, & Co., 1858), 295.

<sup>35</sup> John Cheke, *De obitu doctissimi et sanctissimi theologi doctoris Martini Bucerij in celeberrima Cantabrigiensi Academia apud Anglos publice sacrarum literarum praelectoris epistolae duae. Item, epigrammata varia cum Graecae tum Latine conscripta in eundem fidelissimu[m] diuini uerbi ministrum* (1551, STC 5108), sig. K2r.

<sup>36</sup> Bradford, *Writings*, Vol. 1, 445.

your blood will be upon your own heads, your part shall be with hypocrites, where shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth; you shall be cast from the face of the Lord for ever and ever. Eternal shame, sorrow, woe, and misery, shall be both in body and soul to you, world without end.”

## II.

Shortly before her own execution, Jane Grey wrote an anti-Nicodemite diatribe against her former spiritual advisor, Thomas Harding. Harding was an Oxford theologian known for his Protestant views during Edward’s reign. He had been a proponent, for example, of John Frith’s attacks on purgatory, and was friends with the Swiss reformer Heinrich Bullinger. He would later become the chaplain to Jane’s father, Henry Grey. As the Scottish preacher John Wollocke later recalled, Harding had been a devout Protestant up until the moment “God called him to his mercy” during Mary’s reign. At first he was racked with “a great hurly burly and doubt,” but within days “he was clean turned.”<sup>37</sup> Harding would publicly recant his earlier opinions, and later disputed against Ridley and Latimer in Oxford. He would eventually become chaplain to Bishop John White of London, and confessor to that bugbear of evangelicals, Stephen Gardiner.<sup>38</sup> Jane Grey was furious at this change of events, and mercilessly harangued Harding:

I cannot but marvel at thee and lament thy case: which seemedst sometime to be the lively member of Christ, but now the deformed imp of the devil, sometime the beautiful temple of God, but now the stinking and filthy kennel of Satan, sometime the unspotted spouse of Christ, but now the unshamefast paramour of Antichrist, sometime my faithful brother, but now a stranger and *Apostata*, sometime a stout Christian soldier, but now a cowardly runaway. Yea, when I consider these things, I cannot but speak to thee, and cry out upon thee, thou seed of Satan, and not of Judah, whom the devil hath deceived, the world hath beguiled, and the desire of life subverted, and made thee of a Christian an Infidel.<sup>39</sup>

Despite such evangelical disdain, Harding still made an effort to convince his Protestant friends to recant as he had done. In February 1555, for instance, he visited the imprisoned John Bradford in an attempt to convince him to conform. Harding made “a solemn protestation, showing how that he had prayed to God before he came to turn his talk to Bradford’s good, he began to tell of the good opinion he had of Bradford.” Bradford dismissed the niceties, however, and told Harding “to consider from whence he was fallen, and not to follow the world, nor to love it: for the love of God is not where the world is.”<sup>40</sup> At this Harding spoke brusquely, telling Bradford that he was “in a damnable estate, as one being out of the church, & therefore willed him to take heed of his soul, & not to die in such an opinion.” In response Bradford again reminded Harding of his own

<sup>37</sup> Bodl. Oxford, Tanner MS 50, fol. 33v.

<sup>38</sup> L. E. C. Wooding, “Harding, Thomas (1516–1572),” *ODNB*; on Protestant views of Gardiner, see: Michael Riordan and Alec Ryrie, “Stephen Gardiner and the Making of a Protestant Villain,” *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 34, no. 4 (2003), 1039-1063.

<sup>39</sup> Foxe, 1583 ed., 1444.

<sup>40</sup> Foxe, 1583 ed., 1636.

recent past: “What M. Harding? ...I have heard you with these ears maintain this that I stand in.” Harding responded by qualifying his past positions. “I have taught that the doctrine of transubstantiation was a subtle doctrine,” Harding conceded, “but otherwise I never taught it.” Besides, Harding argued, he was vehemently against the marriage of priests, and by breaking their vows, leading Protestants such as Martin Luther, Martin Bucer, and Peter Martyr Vermigli had fallen into heresy.<sup>41</sup> This encounter suggests that some protestants were willing to reconcile with the Roman Catholic Church by selectively emphasizing certain doctrinal points of agreement, even while some outstanding differences were downplayed or explained away. While Harding could admit to Bradford that he believed transubstantiation was “a subtle doctrine,” he could still justify his conformity to the Marian church through his longstanding theological commitment to clerical celibacy.

Edmund Bonner’s chaplain Henry Pendleton had also been a prominent Protestant preacher during Edward’s reign, and had continued as such into the opening year of Mary’s reign.<sup>42</sup> As the regime began heresy prosecutions, Pendleton was said to have convinced his close friend Laurence Saunders to remain steadfast, even if he faced a martyr’s death. In Foxe’s description of the encounter, it was Saunders who initially considered conformity: “...M. Saunders, whether through very frailty in deed of his weak flesh that was loath to taste of the bitter cup, though his spirit was ready thereunto: or whether it were upon the mistrust of his own strength, that he might receive the greater power from above...seemed so fearful and feeble spirited, that he showed himself in appearance, like either to fall quite from God his word, which he had taught, or at least to betake him to his heels and to fly the land, rather than to stick to his profession and abide by his tackle.”<sup>43</sup> By contrast, Pendleton pledged that he was prepared for death, and tried to steel Saunders’ nerve, “admonishing him (as he could do it very well) not to forsake cowardly his flock when he had most need to defend the wolf from them: neither having put to his hand to God’s plough, to start not aside and give it over, nor yet (that is worst of all) having once forsaken Antichrist, to fall either himself, or to suffer others by his example to return to their vomit again.”<sup>44</sup> Pendleton was so certain of his own constancy, Foxe reports, that he told Saunders “There is a great deal more cause in me to be afraid than you, for as much as you see, I carry a greater mass of flesh upon my back than you do, and being so laden with a heavier lump of this vile carcass ought therefore of nature to be more frail than you: & yet...I will see the uttermost drop of this grease of mine molten away, & the last gobbet of this flesh consumed to ashes, before I will forsake God and his truth.”<sup>45</sup>

However, after the two men traveled to London to preach, it was Saunders who was arrested. Heeding Pendleton’s advice, Saunders refused to recant, and was burned at the stake in February 1555. By contrast, Pendleton conformed, and shortly thereafter became one of the leading proponents of Marian religious policy. In Foxe’s words, Pendleton “changed his tippet, & played the *Apostata*, preaching instead of sound

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<sup>41</sup> Foxe, 1583 ed., 1637.

<sup>42</sup> L. E. C. Wooding, “Pendleton, Henry (d. 1557),” *ODNB*.

<sup>43</sup> Foxe, 1583 ed., 1523.

<sup>44</sup> Foxe, 1583 ed., 1523.

<sup>45</sup> Foxe, 1583 ed., 1523.

doctrine, nothing almost but errors and lies.” To Foxe, Pendleton had become “of a faithful pastor a false runnagate, and of a true Preacher a sworn enemy of God’s everlasting Testament, to the great offence of his brethren, the hurt of his flock, and the utter undoing, without God’s greater mercy, of his own soul.”<sup>46</sup> By 1556 he was chaplain to Bonner, and as such became directly involved in the examination and interrogation of suspected heretics. Pendleton personally examined several prominent Protestants, including John Philpot and Bartlet Green, and he was present at one of the most infamous and gruesome scenes memorialized in the *Acts and Monuments*: Bishop Bonner’s burning the flesh from Thomas Tomkins’ hand with a candle.<sup>47</sup>

Yet it was because of Pendleton’s evangelical history that John Bradford, then imprisoned in the Counter, requested that he be allowed to meet with him. When Pendleton appeared, Bradford told him: “I had rather speak with you than with any of all the other. Now the cause why I so would, I will briefly tell you: I remember that once you were (as far as man might judge) of the religion that I am of at this present, & I remember that you have set forth the same earnestly. Gladly therefore would I learn of you, what thing it was that moved your conscience to alter, and gladly would I see what thing it is that you have seen sythen, which you saw not before.”<sup>48</sup> Scholars have usually assumed Bradford was being antagonistic here—sarcastically seeking Pendleton’s counsel while condescendingly reminding him of his recent volte-face.<sup>49</sup> However, it is just as likely that Bradford was being sincere, as he seems genuinely interested in ascertaining how, specifically, Pendleton had come to change his own mind on the question of transubstantiation.

As Bradford explained to Pendleton: “Transubstantiation is the cause wherefore I am condemned, & because I deny that the wicked men receive Christ’s body: wherein I would desire you to show me what reasons, which before you knew not, did move your conscience now to alter. For once (as I said) you were as I am in religion.”<sup>50</sup> Foxe describes the scene: “Here M. Pendleton half amazed, began to excuse himself if it would have been, as though he had not denied fully transubstantiation in deed, although the word (quoth he) I said was not in scripture, & so he made an endless tale of the thing that moved him to alter: but (said he) I will gather to you the places which moved me, and send you them.”<sup>51</sup> The two men then proceeded to extensively discuss the issue, with each invoking various patristic authors.<sup>52</sup>

Foxe presents such moments as being rooted in a martyr’s desire to admonish backsliders: when imprisoned evangelicals requested access to conformed former brethren, it must have only been for the purpose of chastisement and correction. But this encounter between Pendleton and Bradford calls that interpretation into question. It is important to note that this was no public disputation, and therefore no occasion to sway

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<sup>46</sup> Foxe, 1583 ed., 1523.

<sup>47</sup> Foxe, 1570 ed., 1749.

<sup>48</sup> Foxe, 1563 ed., 1282.

<sup>49</sup> See, for example: Duffy, *Fires of Faith*, 106.

<sup>50</sup> Foxe, 1563 ed., 1282.

<sup>51</sup> Foxe, 1563 ed., 1282.

<sup>52</sup> Foxe admits that he omitted parts of their discussion, which focused on Archbishop Cranmer, Peter Martyr Vermigli, and other topics.

popular opinion, but rather a semi-private discussion in a prison cell, with Bradford facing imminent execution. Furthermore, while the two men disagreed theologically, their exchange does not seem to have been contentious. As Pendleton departed, for example, he promised to return often, which suggests that Bradford had not insulted him or rudely admonished him. It is therefore entirely possible that Bradford requested the meeting not to persuade Pendleton, but rather because he wanted Pendleton to persuade him.

This exchange may also provide a fleeting glimpse into the various ways in which Pendleton reconciled his new role as a heresy prosecutor with his recent Protestant past: on one hand, he was apparently willing to use his common history to establish an empathetic bond with the imprisoned Bradford, and thereby increase his chances of securing a recantation. On the other hand, Pendleton, like Harding, was obviously defensive about the ways in which his past was used against him, and sought to deemphasize the strength of his earlier evangelical opinions. While Pendleton never discussed his personal religious history in print, he did contribute two sermons to one of the central achievements of the Marian press: Bonner's *Homilies*. In this respect Pendleton became, in Duffy's estimation, "one of the key official voices of the regime."<sup>53</sup> While Pendleton does not explicitly address his own reconciliation, in one sermon he makes a collective apology for the sins of the people in separating from the Roman Catholic Church: "...in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, let us all together lament, and be sorry for our going astray; let us come, and fall down before God our father, and confess our transgression, and humbly desire that we may be received into his house, which is the church, though we should all the days of our lives, be but hirelings."<sup>54</sup> Some readers would have also recognized that Pendleton spoke from personal experience when warning of the dangers of schism. "If in such case," Pendleton writes, "ye will fly from the catholic church, & ask counsel of yourselves, or of any that doth swerve from the said church, then for so much as the holy ghost is not your guide, you shall fall from ignorance to errour, and from doubting and disputing to plain heresy, and so from one, to another, to the utter confusion of both body and soul."<sup>55</sup>

The Marian regime's use of reconciled evangelicals was widespread. During Hugh Latimer's April 1554 disputation in Oxford, for example, Nicholas Cartwright joined the Catholic disputants Hugh Weston, Richard Smith, and Nicholas Harpsfield. Cartwright's participation in the disputation was a calculated move by the Catholic authorities: not only was he an erstwhile evangelical, but he was also a prominent member of Peter Martyr Vermigli's inner circle. During the famous Oxford "Disputation on the Sacrament of the Eucharist" in May 1549, it was Cartwright alone who had assisted Martyr in defending reformed positions against the Catholic arguments of

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<sup>53</sup> Edmund Bonner, *A profitable and necessary doctrine with certayne homelyes adioyned therunto / set forth by the reuerend father in God, Edmund Byshop of London* (1555, STC 3285.5); Duffy, *Fires of Faith*, 13.

<sup>54</sup> Henry Pendleton, "An homely, of the auctoritie of the churche declaryng what commoditie and profyt we haue thereby," in *A profitable and necessary doctrine with certayne homelyes*, sig. 42r.

<sup>55</sup> Pendleton, "An homely, of the auctoritie of the churche," sig. 39v.



William Chedsey, William Tresham, and Philip Morgan.<sup>56</sup> Now, five years later, Cartwright was on the Catholic side of the debate. When the Catholic disputant Hugh Weston concluded his own arguments against Latimer, he brought Cartwright into the fray, telling Latimer that “one that hath been of your mind, shall dispute with you. Master Cartwright, I pray you dispute.” For his part, Cartwright attempted to convince Latimer to do as he had done, and renounce his heretical opinions. “Reverend father,” Cartwright began, “because it is given me in commandment to dispute with you, I will do it gladly. But first understand ere we go any further, that I was in the same error that you are in, but I am sorry for it, and do confess myself to have erred. I acknowledge mine offence, and I wish and desire God that you may also repent with me.” To this, Latimer scoffed: “Will you give me leave to tell, what hath caused maister Doctor here to recant? It is *paena legis*, the pain of the law, which hath brought you back and converted you, and many more: the which letteth many to confess God. And this is a great argument, there are few here that can dissolve it.” But Cartwright replied, “That is not my cause, but I will make you this short argument, by which I was converted from mine errors. If the true body of Christ be not really in the sacrament, all the whole church hath erred from the Apostles’ time, But Christ would not suffer his church to err: Ergo, it is the true body of Christ.”

Despite his participation in the Oxford disputation, Cartwright continued to have a strained relationship with the Catholic authorities. Two years later Cartwright again found himself suspected of heresy, and Bishop Ralph Bayne of Coventry and Lichfield (along with his heresy-hunting chancellor Anthony Draycot) eventually deprived him.<sup>57</sup> But Cartwright reconciled yet again, signing a recantation in which he was made to explicitly retract his earlier opinions on transubstantiation.<sup>58</sup> His recantation is remarkable in its specificity, as Cartwright not only acknowledges that he had “spoken, affirmed, taught, and preached diverse errors [and] heresies,” but also explicitly lists his heretical claims: “That is to wit, that an evil man receiving the sacrament of the altar doth not receive the body of Christ. And also the sacrament of the Altar after the words of consecration then remaineth the substance of bread and wine.” It was likely important for Bishop Bayne that Cartwright abjure these two specific points, because these were the exact arguments Cartwright had defended during the 1549 disputation.<sup>59</sup> That

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<sup>56</sup> Peter Martyr Vermigli, *The Oxford Treatise and Disputation on the Eucharist, 1549: The Peter Martyr Library, Vol. 7*, trans. and ed. by Joseph C. McLelland (Kirksville, Missouri: Truman State University Press, 2000), 201-3.

<sup>57</sup> Foxe, 1563 ed., 1617.

<sup>58</sup> BL Harleian MS 421, fol. 88r; scholars have usually assumed that Cartwright’s recantation occurred before his involvement in the April 1554 disputation. However, because the document refers to Ralph Bayne as the Bishop of Coventry and Lichfield, and Bayne was not consecrated bishop until November 1554, it is more likely that this particular recantation was written after Cartwright’s 1556 deprivation, probably as a pre-condition to his reinstatement as vicar of Nuneaton.

<sup>59</sup> During the 1549 disputation, Cartwright’s first argument was “If transubstantiation exists, the wicked also would receive the body of Christ, but they do not; therefore transubstantiation is not granted.” His second, “I will prove that the body of Christ is not

Cartwright's servant, Michael Haulton, simultaneously made an abbreviated version of the same recantation is yet another reminder that the decision to conform was rarely a solitary one.<sup>60</sup> By the final year of Mary's reign Cartwright was again in good standing, serving as the vicar of Nuneaton under Bishop Bayne's jurisdiction.<sup>61</sup> While Cartwright was able to momentarily accommodate himself by accepting arguments for traditional authority, he momentarily returned to an evangelical view of the Eucharist, at least until his deprivation in 1556. Cartwright's complicated relationship with the Marian church is a reminder that conformity did not necessarily entail wholesale acceptance of every point of Catholic doctrine.

### III.

In addition to serving as mouthpieces for the regime, many former Protestants were also leading the prosecution of heresy. In Oxford, for example, a chief prosecutor was the Dean of Christ Church, Richard Marshall.<sup>62</sup> Son of the evangelical polemicist William Marshall, Richard had himself been a client of Cromwell, and was reputed to have maintained reformist positions during Edward's reign.<sup>63</sup> However, as vice-chancellor of Oxford in the 1550s, Marshall became a leading participant in the Marian counter-reformation agenda: overseeing the disputation against Cranmer, Latimer, and Ridley, and testifying against Cranmer at his trial.<sup>64</sup> Marshall was also an examiner at Ridley's final interrogation and ritual degradation on 15 October 1555. The following day, as Ridley and Latimer were led to the fire to be burned as heretics, Marshall again took center stage in one of the most iconic moments of the Marian persecution.<sup>65</sup> Following the condemnatory sermon, Ridley attempted to make a response, but was immediately silenced by Marshall. Foxe describes the tense scene:

...Ridley said, 'I beseech you my Lord, even for Christ's sake, that I may speak but two or three words,' and whilst my Lord bent his head to the Mayor and Vice-chancellor, as it appeared, to know whether he might give him leave to speak, the Bailiffs and Doctor Marshal Vice-chancellor ran hastily unto him, and with their hands stopped his mouth, and said: 'Maister Ridley, if you will revoke your erroneous opinions, and recant the same, you shall not only have liberty so to do, but also the benefit of a subject, that is, have your life.'

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really in the sacrament": Vermigli, *The Oxford Treatise and Disputation on the Eucharist*, 201, 203.

<sup>60</sup> Haulton's recantation is BL Harleian MS 421 fol. 89r.

<sup>61</sup> 'Nicholas Cartwright (CCEd Person ID 25250)', *The Clergy of the Church of England Database, 1540–1835* <<http://www.theclergydatabase.org.uk>>, accessed 10 June 2012.

<sup>62</sup> On the state of Oxford in this period, see: Elizabeth Russell, "Marian Oxford and the Counter-Reformation," in *The Church in Pre-Reformation Society*, eds. Caroline Barron and Christopher Harper-Bill (Woodbridge, Suffolk: The Boydell Press, 1985), 212-227.

<sup>63</sup> Christopher Haigh, "Marshall, Richard (b. 1517, d. in or after 1575)," *ODNB*.

<sup>64</sup> Diarmaid MacCulloch, *Thomas Cranmer: A Life* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996), 585.

<sup>65</sup> For a detailed overview of the executions of Ridley and Latimer, see: David Loades, *The Oxford Martyrs* (London: B.T. Batsford, 1970), 193-233.

‘Not otherwise,’ said maister Ridley?  
 ‘No’ quod Doctor Marshall. ‘Therefore if you will not do so, then there is  
 no remedy but you must suffer for your deserts.’<sup>66</sup>

Marshall’s actions here demonstrate the complexities of the affair; while on one hand he is a primary antagonist, stopping Ridley from openly testifying, on the other hand, it is Marshall who makes a last-ditch effort to convince Ridley to recant and save his life. Ultimately, however, Marshall’s words stand as the final condemnation before Ridley and Latimer were chained to the stake and burned alive.

Marshall would further enrage evangelicals when he oversaw the desecration of the body of Catherine Dammartin, an ex-nun and the late wife of the Italian reformer Peter Martyr Vermigli. Dammartin had died in February 1553, and was buried in Christ Church Cathedral. For Cardinal Pole and other Marian church leaders this was sacrilegious, especially because Dammartin’s remains were interred near the reliquary of St. Frideswide.<sup>67</sup> The initial plan was to posthumously condemn Dammartin as a heretic, and then have her remains publicly burned, as had been done in Cambridge to the bones of the reformers Martin Bucer and Paul Fagius.<sup>68</sup> Such an act would have had important symbolic significance in the Marian campaign against heresy, especially because of Vermigli’s central influence on the Oxford evangelical community.<sup>69</sup> However, the Marian commissioners faced a problem: because Dammartin had spoken no English, they could not find anyone able to testify that she had ever professed heretical opinions, and therefore her remains could not be legally burned. Instead, Marshall had Dammartin’s body exhumed, and then reburied in a dunghill in his stableyard.<sup>70</sup> In the opinion of the Marian exile and Magdalen College fellow Laurence Humphrey, Marshall’s reformist history made his actions especially deplorable. Marshall, Humphrey argued, was “homo versipellis”- a treacherous shape-shifter.<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>66</sup> Foxe, 1563 ed., 1446.

<sup>67</sup> Peter Marshall, *Beliefs and the Dead in Reformation England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 122.

<sup>68</sup> On the desecration of the remains of Bucer and Fagius, see: Collinson, *Elizabethan Essays*, 188-90.

<sup>69</sup> On Vermigli’s influence on the university, see: Charlotte Methuen, “Oxford: Reading Scripture in the University,” in *A Companion to Peter Martyr Vermigli*, eds. Torrance Kirby, Emidio Campi, and Frank A. James III (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 71-94.

<sup>70</sup> James Calphill, *De Katherinae nuper vxoris doctissimi viri D. Petri Martyris vermilij Florentini, regij theologiae apud Oxonienses tempore Edwardi sexti professoris, Cardinalis Poli mandato, regnante Maria, effossae exhumatione, ac eiusdem ad honestam sepulturam sub Elisabetha regina restitutione, studiosorum quorundam tam Oxoniensium quàm aliorum carmina cum praefatione quadam totam rei gestae seriem depingente* (1561, STC: 24662.5), sig. A4r-B1r.

<sup>71</sup> Tellingly, in the classical tradition the word “versipellis,” which literally means “turn-skin,” was also the word for werewolf, as in Petronius’ *Satyricon*: Jan Veenstra, “The Ever-Changing Nature of the Beast: Cultural Change, Lycanthropy and the Question of Substantial Transformation (from Petronius to Del Rio),” in *The Metamorphosis of Magic*

Humphrey also dubbed Marshall “Hecebolius,” a reference to an obscure figure described in the writings of the fifth-century church historian Socrates of Constantinople.<sup>72</sup> This comparison was carefully chosen: Hecebolius was a rhetorician in Constantinople who had been an outspoken Christian during the reign of Constantius II. But following the restoration of traditional Roman religion by the emperor Julian (“the Apostate”), Hecebolius renounced Christianity and became a zealous pagan.<sup>73</sup> Following the rediscovery of Socrates’ *Historia Ecclesiastica* in the mid-sixteenth century, Hecebolius had come to signify one who shamelessly shifted religious allegiances for personal and political gain.<sup>74</sup> Theodore Beza, for example, had regularly used the name as an epithet against turncoats.<sup>75</sup> Likewise, the puritan preacher Henoeh Clapham grouped Hecebolius with the notorious Nicodemite Francis Spira.<sup>76</sup>

In Suffolk, one of the most prominent heresy hunters was Dr. Richard Argentine. This was a dramatic volte-face, as during Edward’s reign Argentine had been well respected in evangelical circles as one of the foremost translators of continental

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from *Late Antiquity to the Early Modern Period*, eds. Jan N. Bremmer and Jan R. Veenstra (Leuven: Peeters, 2002), 138-9.

<sup>72</sup> “*Saepe ei D. Martialis Aedis Christi Decanus struxit insidias, saepe persequutus est, homo versipellis & vere Ecebolus, sub Edouardo publice retractans, sub Maria reversus ad vomitum, sub Elizabetha primum vagus & erro, mox captus & Londini examinatus, iterum mutat sententiam, iterum ac tertio aliam canit cantilenam, eam palam in suggestu Paulino contestaturus, si vita longior superfuisset*”: Laurence Humphrey, *Ioannis Iuelli Angli, Episcopi Sarisburiensis vita & mors eiusq[ue] verae doctrinae defensio, cum refutatione quorundam obiectorum, Thomae Hardingi, Nicol. Sanderi, Alani Copi, Hieronymi Osorij Lusitani, Pontaci Burdegalensis. Laurentio Humfredo s. theologiae apud Oxonienses professore regio, autore* (1573, STC: 13963), 81.

<sup>73</sup> Upon Julian’s death, Hecebolius returned to Christianity: Wolfram Kinzig, “‘Trample Upon Me’: The Sophists Asterius and Hecebolius: Turncoats in the Fourth Century A.D.” in *Christian Faith & Greek Philosophy in Late Antiquity* eds. Lionel Wickham and Caroline Bammel (Leiden: EJ Brill, 1993), 92-111.

<sup>74</sup> For an example of this usage, see: John Jewel, *A Replie unto M. Hardinges answere* (1565: STC 14606), sig. Iii2r; During the sixteenth century editions of Socrates’ *Historia Ecclesiastica* were first coupled with the ecclesiastical history of Eusebius: a Greek edition was printed by Robert Estienne in 1544, and in 1549 the Protestant theologian Wolfgang Musculus produced a Latin translation. Mary Basset, the granddaughter of Sir Thomas More and daughter of Mary Roper, also produced both Latin and English translations which circulated in manuscript during Mary’s reign: Jaime Goodrich, “The Dedicatory Preface to Mary Roper Clarke Basset’s Translation of Eusebius’ *Ecclesiastical History*,” *English Literary Renaissance*, Vol. 40, No. 3 (Autumn 2010), 301-328.

<sup>75</sup> Theodore Beza, *Ad Francisci Balduini apostate Ecebolii convicia...responsio* (Geneva, 1563).

<sup>76</sup> Henoeh Clapham, *Theological axioms or conclusions publikly controuerted, discussed, and concluded by that poore English congregation, in Amstelredam: to whome H.C. for the present, ad-ministreth the ghospel. Together with an examination of the saide conclusions, by Henoeh Clapham. Here-vnto is added a litle tractate entituled. The carpenter* (1597: STC 5346), sig. F2v.

Protestant texts. Several of these works featured prefatory commentary, in which Argentine denigrated the papacy while promoting reformist thought. In the preface to his 1548 translation of a sermon by Martin Luther on absolution, for instance, he extolled Edwardian religious policy, while claiming he had undertaken the project to show “the true use of the keys of absolution, whom the bishop of Rome hath shamefully abused.”<sup>77</sup> In the same year Argentine translated Ulrich Zwingli’s “On the Education of the Youth,” a brief yet influential treatise that laid out principles for Reformed instruction- a choice that was likely meant to appeal to the boy-king Edward.<sup>78</sup> Argentine also translated a collection of sermons by the Italian preacher Bernardino Ochino, focusing primarily on predestinarian themes. In the preface, Argentine extolled Ochino’s steadfast commitment to godly teaching in the face of persecution: “...because he sincerely followed the true Gospel, and did not forbear to reprehend the public abuses of the Romish church, he was persecuted of Paul the third, and constrained to forsake Italy, & to flee into Germany. Where he hath not ceased with his pen to follow the virtuous exhortations, that before time with his mouth he preached.” Ochino was a man to be admired, Argentine wrote, because “for the love of Christ and of the truth, [he] hath rather chosen exile and persecution, than continuance of wealth, honours, and friendship.”<sup>79</sup>

While as late as 1552 Argentine was still working to popularize Reformed theology, upon Mary’s accession he conformed and became a vocal proponent of the new regime. After which, there was “none more hot in all papistry and superstition than [Argentine], painting the posts of the town with ‘*Vivat Regina Maria*’ in every corner.” Following his wife’s death, Bishop Hopton ordained him a priest, and granted him the livings of St. Clement and St. Helen in Ipswich. Foxe claimed that Argentine would often use public ceremonies and processions as an opportunity to search out Protestants: “Who so would not receive him, he made them heretics, and such also as would not give his fagot to the bonfire for Queen Mary’s child. And thus he continued...molesting there good men: some for not going to the church, some for not being confessed, some for not receiving.”<sup>80</sup> In one harrowing episode detailed in the *Acts and Monuments*, Argentine was cast as the relentless pursuer of Agnes Wardall: when Argentine heard word that Wardall was in Ipswich, secretly visiting her children, he organized a party to apprehend her under the cover of darkness. Wardall escaped only by hiding in a locked cupboard,

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<sup>77</sup> Martin Luther, *A ryght notable sermon, made by Doctor Martyn Luther, vppon the twentieth chapter of Iohan, of absolution and the true vse of the keyes full of great co[m]forte. In the which also it is intreated of the mynysters of the Church, and of scolemaisters, what is dewe vnto them. Ande of the hardnes and softenes of the harte of manne*, trans. Richard Argentine, (1548: STC 16992), sig. A3r.

<sup>78</sup> Ulrich Zwingli, *Certeyne preceptes, gathered by Hulrichus Zuinglius, declaring how the ingenious youth ought to be instructed and brought vnto Christ. Translated out of latin into English by master Richard Argentyne Doctour in Physyck*, trans. Richard Argentine (1548: STC 26136).

<sup>79</sup> Bernardino Ochino, *Certayne sermons of the ryghte famous and excellent clerk master Barnardine Ochine, borne within the famous vniuersitie of Siena in Italy, now also an exyle in this lyfe, for the faithful testimony of Iesus Christe. Faythfully translated into Englyshe* (1552: STC 18766), sig. A3r.

<sup>80</sup> Foxe, 1570 ed., 2164.

while her home was ransacked and her servants questioned.<sup>81</sup> Argentine's background also proved useful to the crown commissioners, as he was likely responsible for the creation of lists of suspected Protestants.<sup>82</sup>

The Marian regime routinely used former evangelicals as informants; in Essex, for example, the movements of fugitive Protestants were often reported to Bonner by Thomas Tye, the parson of Great Bentley.<sup>83</sup> In the first two years of Mary's reign Tye was said to have been a staunch evangelical. "He came not to the church," Foxe writes, "but frequented the company of godly men and women, which abstained from the same, and as they thought, he laboured to keep a good conscience." Yet he eventually became, in Foxe's assessment, "a false brother and a bloody persecutor," who revealed his knowledge of the secret "places of refuge for honest men" to Bonner.<sup>84</sup> Also in Essex, the evangelical preacher Rowland Taylor and his family were antagonized by Robert Bracher, the vicar of Aveley. A vociferous preacher with a reputation as a staunch Edwardian reformer, Bracher was deprived for marriage in 1554.<sup>85</sup> Shortly thereafter, however, Bracher dramatically shifted his religious affiliation, and quickly reinvented himself as formidable flag-bearer for Marian religious policy.<sup>86</sup> Visiting the town of Hadleigh, for instance, Bracher went to the market, and preached a public sermon in which he attacked the doctrine of justification by faith while defending transubstantiation, prayers for the dead, and auricular confession. When Rowland Taylor heard word of Bracher's sermon, he wrote a spirited reply. As the deprived rector of a Hadleigh parish, and the small market town's leading evangelical voice, Taylor apparently felt obligated to respond: "Though an other have the benefice, yet as God knoweth, I cannot but be careful for my dear Hadley. And therefore as I could not but speak, after the first abominable Mass began there, I being present, no more I can not but write now being absent, hearing of the wicked profanation of my late Pulpit, by such a wily Wolf."<sup>87</sup> The animosity between Taylor and Bracher would not end there, however, as Foxe would later claim that after Taylor's execution for heresy in February 1555, it was Bracher who "unmercifully thrust Dr. Taylor's wife and children out of the doors, as she herself can testify."<sup>88</sup>

IV.

As Duffy has shown, the Marian Privy Council understood that the large-scale prosecution of heresy required the cooperation of local officials. In conjunction with ecclesiastical commissioners, magistrates were encouraged to recruit lay informers to aid in detection, and village constables were often ordered to apprehend suspects.<sup>89</sup> This

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<sup>81</sup> Foxe, 1570 ed., 2163-4.

<sup>82</sup> J. M. Blatchly, "Argentine, Richard (1510/11–1568)," *ODNB*.

<sup>83</sup> On Tye's actions as a Catholic preacher, see: Duffy, *Fires of Faith*, 20.

<sup>84</sup> Foxe, 1570 ed., 2238.

<sup>85</sup> H.E.P. Grieve, "The Deprived Married Clergy in Essex, 1553-1561," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 22 (1940): 143 n.2.

<sup>86</sup> In Foxe's assessment, Bracher was "a false pretended Protestant in K. Edward's days, and afterward a deadly enemy to the same": Foxe, 1570 ed., 1742.

<sup>87</sup> Foxe, 1570 ed., 1744.

<sup>88</sup> Foxe, 1570 ed., 1742.

<sup>89</sup> Duffy, *Fires of Faith*, 95.

meant that, in some cases, fugitive Protestants were arrested for heresy by their fellow Protestants. For example, in Mendlesham, Suffolk, the constable George Revet was known as “a great reader of the scripture” and “a talkative Gospeller.” However, when a local magistrate, the noted heresy hunter Sir John Tyrell, ordered Revet to find and arrest Adam Foster for refusing to attend Mass, Revet complied.<sup>90</sup> Taken before Tyrell, Foster was temporarily cast into prison, and then sent to Norwich where he was condemned to die by Bishop Hopton.<sup>91</sup> It was reported that after Foster was taken away, Revet and his fellow constable, Thomas Mouse, were horrified, and “stricken with a great fear and sickness.”<sup>92</sup> Characteristically, Foxe gives his account of Revet a providential gloss: despite “the fair warning given him of God, ...[Revet] had not the grace so to consider it,” and even allowed his son to assist the parish priest in the saying of mass. Revet’s complicity brought disdain from several in the evangelical community, who pressured him to remove his son from the priest’s service. Foxe writes, “...as many men were offended with him in the parish, so honest women especially (being mightily grieved at his ungodly doings) came to him and said: ‘Neighbor Revet, are ye not afraid to let your son help the naughty priest to say mass, and to serve the abominable Idol?’ And he said no.” Revet’s frustrated response reveals the difficulty of his situation. Torn between his civic and parish obligations, on one hand, and the pressures from his fellow evangelicals on the other, Revet threw up his hands and appealed to God: “O Lord, if it be not thy will that my son should so do, then I beseech thee send some strange token to let me understand what thy good please is therein.” In Foxe’s account, God signaled his disfavor to Revet when a neighbor’s bull found his way into Revet’s pasture, and gored his prized gelding. Yet Revet continued to act “against his own conscience,” allowing his son to continue in parish service. For this Foxe claimed that Revet was punished by God, dying “most miserably” from “a very strange sickness.”<sup>93</sup> Foxe’s providential interpolations aside, Revet’s experience may have been much more common than scholars have realized. For while Revet clearly had no personal animosity against the evangelical community, and was even an evangelical himself, he still continued to exercise his duties as constable with a determined yet apprehensive compliance.

The difficulty of this situation was even more pronounced when Protestants received a direct order from the Marian Privy Council to assist in the detection of other Protestants. In March 1556, for instance, Sir Walter Mildmay, a leading administrator (and future Elizabethan privy councillor) known for his staunch Calvinist beliefs, was instructed to detain and deliver his servant Thomas Penny. In addition, Mildmay was ordered to search through Penny’s personal belongings for any “books, letters and writings as he shall find which concern not his accompt or service, and to send the same

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<sup>90</sup> On Tyrell, see: Thomas S. Freeman, “Burning Zeal: Mary Tudor and the Marian Persecution,” in *Mary Tudor: Old and New Perspectives*, eds. Susan Doran and Thomas S. Freeman (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 185.

<sup>91</sup> Foxe, 1570 ed., 2138; Foster’s sentence, signed by Hopton, is BL Harleian MS 421, fol. 179r.

<sup>92</sup> Foxe, 1570 ed., 2138.

<sup>93</sup> Foxe, 1570 ed., 2138.

also hither.”<sup>94</sup> Mildmay apparently complied with the order, because Penny was imprisoned shortly thereafter.<sup>95</sup> Sir Walter’s brother, Sir Thomas Mildmay, was also active in the apprehension and examination of suspected heretics. A Member of Parliament and an auditor for the Court of Augmentations, Thomas had helped oversee the dissolution of religious houses in the mid-1530s.<sup>96</sup> Serving as the Sheriff of Essex during Mary’s reign, Mildmay was on the commission tasked with examining Thomas Wattes, a linen draper from Billericay. In an official report to Bishop Bonner, Mildmay and the other commissioners reported that when Wattes was asked to explain his non-attendance at church, he told them he refused to go, because “the service of the church, set out in the days of the late King Edward the sixth, was said by us now to be abominable, heretical, schismatical, and all naught: So he said that all that is now used and done in the church is abominable, heretical, schismatical, and all naught, with diverse other erroneous and arrogant words.”<sup>97</sup> For this reason Wattes was sent directly to Bishop Bonner, condemned as a heretic, and then burned at the stake in June 1555. Mildmay also examined the Essex laborer John Derifall. Just as he had done with Wattes, Mildmay sent Derifall to Bonner for further examination, who then sent him to the fire.<sup>98</sup> When Mildmay went to arrest the vice-chancellor of Cambridge, Edwin Sandys, he was rebuked as a turncoat. “I shall not be ashamed of bonds,” Sandys reportedly said, “But if I could do as M. Mildmay can, I needed not fear bonds: for he came down in payment against Queen Mary, and armed in the field, and now he returneth in payment for Queen Mary, before a traitor, and now a great friend. I cannot with one mouth blow hot and cold after this sort.”<sup>99</sup> These examples suggest that a willingness to comply with the prosecution of Protestants did not necessarily prove a personal commitment to the Marian religious program.

Furthermore, some prosecutors enforced anti-heresy measures halfheartedly, and some even appeared to have intentionally sabotaged the process. There is evidence that sympathetic local officials would sometimes turn a blind eye; during the pursuit of the fugitive Agnes Wardall, for instance, one member of the search party spotted her hiding in a field, but then distracted his fellow searchers so that she would not be noticed.<sup>100</sup> Although publicly compliant with the regime’s religious agenda, the conformist Bishop Anthony Kitchin was at times intentionally obstructionist in his enforcement of anti-heresy policy. In the case of the Cardiff fisherman Rawlins White, for example, Kitchin was repeatedly reluctant to prosecute. It was only after White “was taken by the officers

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<sup>94</sup> *Acts of the Privy Council of England, Vol. VI: 1556-1558*, ed. John Roche Dasent (London: HMSO, 1893), 62.

<sup>95</sup> Stanford Lehmberg, *Sir Walter Mildmay and Tudor Government* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1964), 41; It is possible this is the same Thomas Penny who was a nonconformist puritan preacher in the 1560s: Patrick Collinson, *Archbishop Grindal: 1519-1583: The Struggle for a Reformed Church* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979), 116.

<sup>96</sup> *The House of Commons, 1509-1558, Vol. 2* (London: Secker & Warburg, 1982), 600-1.

<sup>97</sup> Foxe, 1563 ed., 1232.

<sup>98</sup> Foxe, 1563 ed., 1592.

<sup>99</sup> Foxe, 1583 ed., 2111.

<sup>100</sup> Foxe, 1570 ed., 2164.



of the town as a man suspected of heresy,” and then brought before Kitchin, that he was forced to take action. Failing to procure a recantation after extensive questioning, Kitchin had White sent to Chepstow Prison. As Foxe would observe, Kitchin intentionally kept White under little security, in the apparent hope that White would escape: “...this his keeping, whether it were by the Bishop’s means because he would rid his hands of him, or through favour of his keeper, was not so severe and extreme, but that (if [White] had so listed) he might have escaped oftentimes.”<sup>101</sup> Eventually White was remanded to Cardiff Castle, but still the bishop delayed prosecution. After a year with no progress, Kitchin had White brought into his own house, in the hope that he could personally coax a recantation: “...and whilst he continued there, the Bishop assayed many ways how to reduce him to conformity. But when all means either by their threatening words or flattering promises were to no purpose, the Bishop willed him, to advise and be at a full point with himself, either to recant his opinions, or else to abide the rigor of the law, and thereupon gave him a day of determination.”<sup>102</sup>

With White still refusing to conform, he was eventually summoned before Kitchin and his chaplains. Public interest was high, and a large number of townspeople crowded into the bishop’s chapel. Kitchin began the proceedings by ordering silence from all those present, and then he addressed White directly:

Rawlins you have been oftentimes since your first trouble, both here in my house and elsewhere been travailed withal touching your opinions, and that notwithstanding ye seem altogether obstinate & willful. Now, hereupon we thought good to send for you, to see if there were any conformity in you. So that the matter is come to this point, that if you shall show yourself repentant for that which you have done both against God and the Prince’s law, we are ready to use favour towards you. But if by means we can persuade with you touching your reformation, we are minded at this time to minister the law unto you, and therefore advise yourself what you will do.

When White continued to refuse, Kitchin finally “told him plainly that he must proceed against him by the law, and condemn his as a heretic.” But Kitchin again stalled in making a pronouncement, and instead announced that all present should pray, in the hope that God “would send some spark of Grace upon him (meaning Rawlins), and that it may so chance that God through our prayer will turn & convert his heart.” When the prayer was over, Rawlins still refused to conform. By this point Kitchin was exasperated, and “with hot words reprovved him, and forthwith was ready to read the sentence.” Yet again, however, Kitchin found reason to delay. Conferring with his chaplains, Kitchin ordered that a mass be said, “thinking that indeed by so doing, some wonderful work should be wrought in Rawlins.” White, however, would not be subdued. As the priest elevated the host and the sacring-bell rang out, White stood up, and loudly declared: “Good people, if there be any brethren amongst you, or at the least if there be but one brother amongst you, the same one bear my witness at the day of judgment, that I bow not to this Idol.”

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<sup>101</sup> Foxe, 1570 ed., 1765.

<sup>102</sup> Foxe, 1570 ed., 1766.

When the mass was over, Kitchin tried to persuade White one last time, but then finally allowed for the sentence to be pronounced. Sentenced to be executed for heresy, White was sent to Cockmarel Prison in Cardiff. But even though White was now a condemned man, Bishop Kitchin had not set a date of execution. Even more remarkably, Kitchin had also never sent for the official writ *de heretico comburendo*, without which Rawlins could not be legally executed for heresy.<sup>103</sup> It was only weeks later, when several town officers, who were described as being “determined to burn [White], because they would be the sooner rid of him,” realized that the writ had never been issued, and sent for it themselves.

V.

When we attempt to interpret Kitchin’s actions in this episode, it reveals the extent to which the realities of the Marian counter-reformation cannot be easily reduced to oppositional confessional categories. For example, if we ask whether Kitchin was a successful convert to Marian Catholicism, then we are left only with contradictory answers that are susceptible to interpretive bias: on one hand, Kitchin can be cast as a success for the Marian counter-reformation, because he engaged in both the implementation of Catholic policy and the prosecution of heresy; on the other hand, Kitchin can be cast as a failure for the Marian counter-reformation due to his obstructionist approach to prosecuting Protestants, and because he conformed to a Protestant queen after Mary’s death. Furthermore, Kitchin cannot be simply dismissed as an “incorrigible time-server” or false Christian, as Duffy and others have done.<sup>104</sup> For while Kitchin had been a proponent of the royal supremacy since the 1530s, he was still willing to voice dissent against royal policies. In 1549, for example, he vocally opposed the introduction of clerical marriage, even though he still accepted the overall implementation of Edwardian religious policy. Upon Mary’s accession, Kitchin was apparently unapologetic about his history of service to the Henrician and Edwardian churches, as he never sought absolution from Rome.<sup>105</sup> This in itself is ample evidence that the long-standing caricature of Kitchin as a cowardly and shameless timeserver should be drastically reconsidered, as he is clearly someone who agreed to a series of conscientious and nuanced accommodations with the English state.

However, historical assessments of Kitchin have proved remarkably persistent in their negativity, in large part due to Kitchin’s status as the only Marian bishop to conform to the Elizabethan supremacy. Yet upon close scrutiny, even this act of conformity suggests that Kitchin was not motivated by feckless compliancy, but by a positive maintenance of certain personal and pastoral obligations. In a curious document addressed to Queen Elizabeth in the first year of her reign, Kitchin thanked her for allowing him time to reconcile his conscience to her demands for obedience: “Where the

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<sup>103</sup> Normally the bishop would send a signification of excommunication for Chancery court approval. The court would then issue the writ *de heretico comburendo* to a local sheriff or other secular official tasked with overseeing the execution: Gina Alexander, “Bonner and the Marian Persecutions,” in *The English Reformation Revised*, ed. Christopher Haigh (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987) 174-5.

<sup>104</sup> See, for example: Duffy, *Fires of Faith*, 23, 99, 195.

<sup>105</sup> The biographical information in this paragraph is largely drawn from: Madeleine Gray, “Kitchin, Anthony (1477–1563),” *ODNB*.

Queen's Majesty of her bountiful grace, tendering the quiet of my conscience, hath deferred the rendering of the oath of her supremacy within myself in the expending of godly learning." Remarkably, however, Kitchin does not personally affirm her supremacy, but instead promises to uphold her secular and spiritual authority within his diocese. Kitchin explains, "I do assure her grace by these points subscribed by my hand that as a true & faithful subject to her authority I shall for my power, cunning, and ability set forth in mine own person and cause all other under my jurisdiction to accept and obey the whole cause of religion now approved in the state of her grace's realm." Furthermore, Kitchin insists that he will enforce conformity requiring "the said oath of others, receiving office ecclesiastical or temporal as in the statute thereof provided."<sup>106</sup> This measured and nuanced statement suggests that, rather than being a man without religious and political loyalties, in this moment Kitchin was desperately trying to juggle three distinctive obligations; first of all, he affirmed his loyalty to the sovereign as a true and faithful subject. Secondly, he promised to fulfill the pastoral and legal obligations of his ecclesiastical office by enforcing subscription to the oath. And finally, he attempted to satisfy his own conscience by postponing his personal conformity until such time as he could justify doing so through the consultation of "godly learning." That Kitchin also declined participation in the consecration of Archbishop Matthew Parker, thereby calling into question the legal consecrations of the entire Elizabethan episcopate, further suggests that Kitchin had not simply "caved in" to the will of the sovereign.<sup>107</sup>

It should be recognized that while Kitchin was the only Marian bishop to maintain his office during Elizabeth's reign, his actions were typical for most of the clergy and magistrates who had enforced Marian counter-reformation measures. Even some of the most notorious of heresy prosecutors were able to effectively reinvent themselves after Queen Mary's death. Dr. Richard Argentine, for instance, was said to have gone to London after Elizabeth's accession, where he "began to show himself again a perfect protestant."<sup>108</sup> Robert Bracher, the Protestant turned persecutor of Rowland Taylor's family, may have even attempted to create a new identity: in the 1570 edition of the *Acts and Monuments*, Foxe reported that after Elizabeth's accession Bracher "had since become a Protestant again, calling himself Harry Bradshawe, and served at St. Denis in London in Fanchurch Street, and after that in the Queen's chapel."<sup>109</sup> After Mary's reign the Colchester alderman Benjamin Clere maintained a successful political career for decades, in large part because of his strong ties to the Elizabethan godly community. But in 1575 Clere's reputation was permanently ruined after his political enemies publicized

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<sup>106</sup> CCCC MS 114b, p. 509.

<sup>107</sup> On Parker's consecration, see: Kenneth Carleton, *Bishops and Reform in the English Church, 1520-1559* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2001), 178; Quotation from Duffy, *Fires of Faith*, 195.

<sup>108</sup> Foxe, 1570 ed., 2164; While Argentine continued to hold livings throughout the 1560s, he occasionally clashed with his bishop and ecclesiastical commissioners: CCCC MS 114a, p.473.

<sup>109</sup> Foxe, 1570 ed., 1742.

their discovery that Clere had been responsible for the arrest of the Marian martyr George Eagles twenty years before.<sup>110</sup>

In this chapter, I have shown how even the Marian persecution of Protestants, an episode in which confessional divisions have been assumed to be at their most visible, cannot be fully understood without sensitivity to the vicissitudes of religious affiliation. When we realize that those tasked with the enforcement and maintenance of Marian religious policy, and in particular those who were involved in the detection, examination, and prosecution of Protestants, were often themselves former Protestants, then it not only calls into question the feasibility of using religious conformity as an indicator of conversion, but it also forces us to examine our basic assumptions about Marian religious identity.

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<sup>110</sup> Freeman, "Burning Zeal," 194; Laquita M. Higgs, *Godliness & Governance in Tudor Colchester* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1998), 179.

## Chapter 2

### The Wages of Recantation: Religious Conformity, Reputation, and the Marian Protestant Community

As with any shrewd religious polemicist in early modern England, the Roman Catholic apologist Henry Cole appreciated the effectiveness of an *ad hominem* attack. In 1560 Cole found this tactic particularly useful as he engaged in a heated theological controversy with the Church of England's most formidable defender: John Jewel, the well-respected Bishop of Salisbury. Jewel, by this time the epitome of the established church, had become a lightning rod of Roman Catholic criticism following his famous "Challenge Sermon."<sup>1</sup> Cole, the former Dean of St. Paul's, was the first to answer Jewel's challenge, and quickly found himself embroiled in a literary war that grew increasingly vitriolic and personal. When Jewel criticized Cole for acquiescing to the royal supremacy under Henry VIII, Cole responded with a cutting description of Jewel's own embarrassing recantation under Mary.

The details surrounding Jewel's subscription were well-known to contemporaries interested in religious controversy: shortly after serving as notary for Thomas Cranmer and Nicholas Ridley during their Oxford disputation in April 1554, Jewel had himself come under suspicion of heresy.<sup>2</sup> Under threat of prosecution, Jewel signed articles of recantation and was released.<sup>3</sup> Fearing that he would be quickly arrested again, Jewel immediately fled Oxford, alone and on foot. A friend eventually found him lying on the side of the road, disoriented and hypothermic.<sup>4</sup> Taken to London, Jewel would spend the next few months in hiding until he was able to procure passage to the continent.<sup>5</sup> It was on the memory of this humiliating past that Cole now based his attack six years later: "And where ye mean I had condescended to the primacy of king Henry at my first coming home, or I had laboured the matter, ye did the like yourself: for in Queen Mary's time ye subscribed to the articles, some of them we are entered to talk in, to your no less blame than mine. There be in this town that both saw you subscribe, and can bring forth your hand."<sup>6</sup>

Jewel's response to Cole is initially puzzling. He acknowledged his recantation, but reminded Cole that he had long ago made public repentance for the deed. However,

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<sup>1</sup> W.M. Southgate, *John Jewel and the Problem of Doctrinal Authority* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1962), 53; Gary Jenkins, *John Jewel and the English National Church: The Dilemmas of an Erastian Reformer* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), 115-154.

<sup>2</sup> Loades, *The Oxford Martyrs*, 130.

<sup>3</sup> Charles Webb Le Bas, *The Life of Bishop Jewel* (London: J.G. & F. Rivington, 1835), 27-31.

<sup>4</sup> Jewel's escape on foot was particularly difficult because he reportedly suffered from a lifelong walking disability. He was rescued by Augustine Bernher, Hugh Latimer's former assistant: Webb Le Bas, *The Life of Bishop Jewel*, 31-3.

<sup>5</sup> It appears that Jewel escaped England by mid-1554. On the circumstances of his exile: Humphrey, *Ioannis Iuelli*, 78-98.

<sup>6</sup> John Jewel, *The Works of John Jewel*, vol. 1, ed. John Ayre (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1845), 60.

he is not entirely apologetic, and even seems to border on flippancy: “But as I have subscribed, ye say, as well as ye, and my hand is to be seen, and there be some that saw me when I did it. These proofs were needful, if I had denied the fact. But I have confessed it openly, and unrequired, in the midst of the congregation [at Frankfurt]...I confess I should have done otherwise; *but, if I had not done as I did, I had not been here now to encounter with you.*”<sup>7</sup> In this short corollary Jewel effectively dismissed his recantation as nothing more than a providential turn of events. His act of apostasy, therefore, was the will of God: as in the fall of a sparrow, there was a special providence in his recantation. The implications of Jewel’s riposte are especially intriguing when considered within the context of early modern Protestant condemnations of religious dissimulation. Jewel’s friend Nicholas Ridley, for example, had argued that any Protestant who conformed to the Roman Catholic Church was an accomplice of the Antichrist. The Protestant who signed articles of recantation was actually, Ridley argued, willfully inscribing the “Mark of the Beast” onto his or her own forehead.<sup>8</sup> As Carlos Eire and others have shown, such stark rhetoric was typical of Protestant thought throughout the mid-sixteenth century.<sup>9</sup> However, this poses a historical problem: if Jewel’s recantation is set within this intellectual climate then his irreverent rejoinder to Cole is rendered incomprehensible. If early modern Protestant discourse dictated that Jewel’s 1554 recantation was a deplorable act, then how could he dismiss it so easily only a few years after the fact?

This chapter is, on one level at least, an attempt to make sense of Jewel’s retort. Jewel’s seemingly flippant response provides a fleeting glimpse into an aspect of early modern religious culture that was rarely discussed yet omnipresent: the practical acceptance and justification of religious acquiescence. While Jewel’s case was obviously extreme due to his high profile and the nature of his recantation, it can still help us to understand the willingness of the overwhelming majority of the English people to repeatedly conform. That Jewel could take his recantation, an act which by evangelical standards represented the ultimate failure of faith, and so quickly and caustically justify it through an *ex postfacto* appeal to divine providence, may also help to explain how Jewel could go from being a tearful dissimulator to the great apologist of the Church of England in only a few short years. In addition to an analysis of Jewel’s conformity, this chapter will examine a series of evangelicals whose high profile recantations took place during the height of the Marian heresy prosecutions of the 1550s. However, the purpose of this chapter is not to rehabilitate these controversial figures, but rather to show that the rigid rhetorical polarities constructed by early modern polemicists often failed to capture the practical flexibility that existed in the mid-sixteenth century.

Historians of the English Reformation have rightly begun to recognize the importance of understanding the dynamics of religious dissimulation. Alec Ryrie and

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<sup>7</sup> Emphasis mine: Jewel, *Works*, vol.1, 61.

<sup>8</sup> Nicholas Ridley, *The Works of Nicholas Ridley*, ed. Henry Christmas (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1843), 69.

<sup>9</sup> Carlos Eire, “Calvin and Nicodemism: A Reappraisal,” *Sixteenth Century Journal* 10, no. 1 (Spring 1979), 44-69. See also: Perez Zagorin, *Ways of Lying: Dissimulation, Persecution, and Conformity in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1990).

Susan Wabuda have persuasively shown that Protestants during the reign of Henry VIII often did not hesitate to recant their religious beliefs.<sup>10</sup> Likewise, scholars of Elizabethan and Stuart Catholicism, such as Michael Questier and Alexandra Walsham, have proven that questions of religious conformity were at the core of the post-Reformation English Church.<sup>11</sup> As Walsham has convincingly argued, “Conformity needs to be seen as a positive option rather than a form of spineless apathy or ethical surrender; as a position of moral principle rather than an inferior, interim stage on the road to full-blown recusancy.”<sup>12</sup> In his groundbreaking work on the Marian Protestant diaspora, Andrew Pettegree has argued that Nicodemism should be a central focus of future historical assessments of mid-sixteenth century religious culture.<sup>13</sup> This chapter is, therefore, an attempt to heed this charge by carefully examining what was perhaps the most contentious of sixteenth century episodes: the prosecution of Protestants during the reign of Mary Tudor.

Both Brad Gregory’s seminal study *Salvation at Stake: Christian Martyrdom in Early Modern Europe*, and a recent collection of essays edited by Thomas Freeman and Thomas Mayer, have reasserted the centrality of the martyr in early modern English culture.<sup>14</sup> However, this emphasis on martyrdom provides only a limited understanding of early modern religious action. Freeman, for example, notes, “A number of Marian Protestants did recant, but in this changed climate such actions were regarded as shameful aberrations to be passed over in silence or explained away.”<sup>15</sup> And yet, I would argue, if we want to more fully understand the English Protestant community then we must focus on precisely how and why acts of conformity were “explained away.” Mid-sixteenth century Protestant thought was not wholly defined by its public rhetoric and doctrine, with its inflexible condemnations of religious capitulation, but also encompassed a mode of practical and experiential theology that was often flexible enough to accommodate and justify moments of dissimulation and acquiescence. It should also be recognized that, far from being “aberrations,” acts of religious conformity were common, and therefore

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<sup>10</sup> Alec Ryrie, *The Gospel and Henry VIII: Evangelicals in the Early English Reformation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003); Susan Wabuda, “Equivocation and Recantation during the English reformation: The ‘Subtle Shadows’ of Dr Edward Crome,” *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 44 (1993): 224-42.

<sup>11</sup> Michael Questier, *Conversion, Politics, and Religion in England, 1580-1625* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996); Alexandra Walsham, *Church Papists: Catholicism, Conformity and Confessional Polemic in Early Modern England* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 1993).

<sup>12</sup> Alexandra Walsham, “‘Yielding to the Extremity of Time’: Conformity, Orthodoxy and the Post-Reformation Catholic Community,” in *Conformity and Orthodoxy in the English Church, c.1560-1660*, ed. Peter Lake and Michael Questier (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2000), 213.

<sup>13</sup> Pettegree, *Marian Protestantism*, 87-9.

<sup>14</sup> Brad Gregory, *Salvation at Stake: Christian Martyrdom in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1999).

<sup>15</sup> Thomas Freeman, “Introduction: Concepts of Martyrdom,” in *Martyrs and Martyrdom in England, c.1400-1700*, eds. Thomas Freeman and Thomas Mayer (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2007), 18.

cannot be easily dismissed. As Pettegree has convincingly argued, the fact of sheer numbers is in itself evidence enough that these conformists are more representative of English people in the sixteenth century.<sup>16</sup>

Furthermore, a recognition that the rationalization of religious conformity was the default Protestant position is readily apparent in the literature of the period; anti-Nicodemite tracts, martyrological texts, and even monarchomach arguments for direct insurrection, often assumed the existence of a large population of Nicodemites.<sup>17</sup> As scholars of Protestant resistance theory have often pointed out, the machinations of John Knox, John Ponet, and others often relied on a tacit recognition that the majority of evangelicals had conformed.<sup>18</sup> And so, while an understanding of martyrdom is obviously important to an understanding of the ideals and rhetorical constructions enshrined by the religious writers of the period, the historian cannot assume that the martyr was the paragon of Christian virtue by which all others should be judged. This over-reliance on the rhetoric of the martyrologists is largely due to the continued influence of John Foxe's *Acts and Monuments*. Even though Foxe's work is perhaps the greatest source base in understanding the dynamics of the Marian prosecution, historians cannot allow their analysis to rely on Foxe's rhetorical categories.<sup>19</sup>

This chapter will show that despite the dominance of anti-Nicodemite rhetoric, there was often tacit acceptance of religious dissimulation or even outright recantation. Furthermore, this impulse was not limited to the esoteric writings of a fringe casuist, or the cynicism of an apathetic *politique*, but rather was culturally and intellectually pervasive in early modern English society. Even among the most strident polemicists there was often an underlying recognition that acts of religious dissimulation were not abnormalities or aberrations, but rather the norm of Protestant praxis: the Nicodemite cracks were readily visible beneath the veneer of Foxe's image of the heroically steadfast martyr. Furthermore, when specific cases of religious conformity are examined in detail, then we can begin to reconcile this apparent disconnect between prescriptive rhetoric and practical action, and it becomes evident that acts of recantation were not seen solely as failures to attain martyrdom, but were often understood and justified through a myriad of valid claims and caveats, including appeals to community, divine providence, human nature, English law, political obedience, or even Christian theology itself.

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<sup>16</sup> Pettegree, *Marian Protestantism*, 87-9.

<sup>17</sup> Carlos Eire, *War Against the Idols: The Reformation of Worship from Erasmus to Calvin* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 234-275.

<sup>18</sup> Indeed, this "fifth column" of Nicodemites existed, though the potential for political mobilization may not have been as viable as the monarchomachs had hoped and imagined: Jane Dawson, "The Two John Knoxes: England, Scotland, and the 1558 Tracts," *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, Vol. 42, No. 4, October 1991, 555-576; Scott Doff, "The two John Knoxes and the justification of non-revolution: A response to Dawson's argument from Covenant," *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, Vol. 55, No. 1, January 2004, 58-75.

<sup>19</sup> I want to emphasize that I am not dismissing the value of Foxe as a historical source. The wealth of material in the *Acts and Monuments* is unparalleled, and it is a central text in this chapter. However, I am criticizing the tendency of Reformation scholars to adopt Foxe's categories.



## I.

In November 1560 the London merchant William Winthrop wrote a letter to his friend John Foxe. Winthrop, aware of Foxe's attempt to chronicle the history of the martyrs of the Marian persecution, provided some information he thought Foxe would find noteworthy. "For your memento," Winthrop reported, "I have noted a few names, which have not bowed their knees to Baal, which I commit to your remembrance." That Winthrop believed this short list of Protestants, which ran only five names long, was noteworthy enough to be recorded for posterity, suggests just how rare indeed it was for an early Elizabethan Protestant to have survived Mary's reign without having conformed, to some degree or another, to the Roman Catholic Church. And yet, despite the pervasiveness of religious conformity amongst the Protestant circles of Marian England, there are no known examples of Protestant authors making positive arguments for the Nicodemite position, at least not in print. The nature of these arguments, however, can be reconstructed by examining anti-Nicodemite tracts.<sup>20</sup> For instance, the anonymous author of *An Apologie or Defence Agaynst the Calumnacion of Certayne Men*, who identified himself only as "J.T.," wrote in response to some friends and fellow Protestants who had raised three principal points in favor of conformity and against exile.

First of all, his friends argued, J.T.'s standing in the world would be irreparably damaged if he did not conform. Since he "neither had art, faculty, or occupation to live by" while in exile in a foreign land, he would "be compelled either to beg or labor" in order for him and his family to survive.<sup>21</sup> Furthermore, the author admitted, his career prospects would be forever limited. Even "if God should turn the impiety of this time, I should never be able to recover the like rowme or office, and so all my life wander in misery, which they as my very friends much lamented."<sup>22</sup> This was a serious concern, especially because the author reveals he had "never haunted schools or any universities...Nor never was brought up in any other state than with them, as a most poor man and soldier, simple and unworthy."<sup>23</sup>

The second argument made in favor of conformity was the example of others who were respected within the Protestant community. J.T. complains that his friends had "alleged against me the doings of other men, which ye named both good, honest, and godly, and of an upright conscience, which men observed the order of this time."<sup>24</sup> Indeed, he admits, many of the most respected Protestants had eschewed exile. "I think there be a great many of honest and good men," the author writes, "which in times past have been fervent Gospellers, and yet at this day love the truth, sorrowing in their hearts

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<sup>20</sup> Andrew Pettegree, *Marian Protestantism*, 98-100.

<sup>21</sup> J.T., *An apologie or defence agaynst the calumnacion of certayne men which preferring wylfull wyll and carnal reason before the playn trueth of Gods gospel, (do sclaundre those men, which for the better seruinge of God with a more pure conscience, according to his holy word) haue abandoned theyr liuinges and vocacion, abydinge as exyles in poore estate oute of theyr natyue cou[n]trye* (1555, STC: 23619), sig. A3r-v.

<sup>22</sup> J.T., *An apologie*, sig. A3r.

<sup>23</sup> This passage makes it possible to conjecture that the anonymous author of the text, "J.T.," was the exile John Turpin of Calais. On Turpin, see: Garrett, *Marian Exiles*, 315-6.

<sup>24</sup> J.T., *An apologie*, sig. A3v.

the impiety of this time.”<sup>25</sup> However, the author objects, these same men would likely admit that their conformity is an uncomfortable one: “But this much I write and think, that if they be good men fearing God, and of a good conscience, as ye say they be, which observe the order of this time, (and truly I think they be so a great number of them), then I say they have a prick of conscience, which testifieth to them their doings to be unlawful.”<sup>26</sup> Furthermore, they would also be going into exile if only the material and physical risks were not so great: “...if it were not for fear to lose their livings, riches, and country, and to become poor in a strange land, [they] would follow and seek Christ in the wilderness: searching with pain to seek out the narrow way.”<sup>27</sup> Their ultimate reason for conforming, J.T. argues, is fear. It is because “the terror of laws maketh us to stoop and decline to things, sinning against knowledge, for the preservation of this uncertain life and keeping of our goods.”<sup>28</sup> Yet for J.T.’s friends, his refusal to conform signified that he was a religious precisian: “...Ye laid against me the doings of other men, which being both good and godly observed the order of this time. Laying to my charge, why I should be more precise and scruple of conscience, than other men, they being godly.”<sup>29</sup>

The third argument for conformity was that it was, at best, no sin at all, and at worst, only a minor offence in the eyes of God. J.T. reports a conversation in which a friend chided him for being of too “straight-laced” a conscience. “You for your part judged it no sin,” the author recollects, “nor felt any repugnance of conscience for your so doing, whereby ye judged it no offence. And if it were sin, as ye said ye doubted, yet it was a light sin, and easily to be forgiven saying: ‘God must omit greater offences, or else ye should never come in heaven.’”<sup>30</sup> J.T., of course, does not accept this justification, and replies that conformists should be careful not to presume too much of God’s mercy, “for he is not merciful, but to them that repent their wickedness.”<sup>31</sup>

All of this underlines an obvious yet often overlooked point: the most convincing arguments for conformity were often made not by Catholic polemicists or the Marian authorities, but by fellow Protestants. While imprisoned in the Bocardo in Oxford, for instance, Bishop Nicholas Ridley was encouraged to conform by one of his chaplains, Reginald West. In a letter that is known only from Ridley’s reply, West apparently pleaded with his master to acquiesce, and revealed that he had been intensively lobbying for the bishop’s life to be spared. Ridley, however, refused help, telling West he hoped “that you have not in sueing for my worldly deliverance impaired or hindered the furtherance of God’s word and his truth.”<sup>32</sup> Ridley, of course, would choose martyrdom. And yet his exchange with West illustrates just how fraught of a choice this must have been. West was a close friend and godly companion, and Ridley recognized that his chaplain was acting out of compassion and brotherly concern. As Ridley woefully confessed to West, “I perceive you have an entire zeal and desire of my deliverance out

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<sup>25</sup> J.T., *An apologie*, sig. A6r.

<sup>26</sup> J.T., *An apologie*, sig. B2r.

<sup>27</sup> J.T., *An apologie*, sig. A6r.

<sup>28</sup> J.T., *An apologie*, sig. A8v.

<sup>29</sup> J.T., *An apologie*, sig. A8r.

<sup>30</sup> J.T., *An apologie*, sig. A3v.

<sup>31</sup> J.T., *An apologie*, sig. B2v.

<sup>32</sup> CCCC MS 105 p. 323.

of this captivity and worldly misery, if I should not bear you a good heart in God again, me think I were to blame.”<sup>33</sup> Ridley also expressed deep regret that, like West, most of those closest to him had chosen to conform. He writes:

This conscience moveth me, considering you were one of my family, and of my household, of whom then (I think) I had a special cure, and of all them also, which were within my house, which indeed ought to have been an example of godliness unto all the rest of my cure, not only in godly life, but also in the promoting of God's word, to the uttermost of their power. But alas now when the trial doth separate the corn from the chaff, how small a deal it is (God knoweth) which the wind doth not blow away. This conscience (I say) doth move me, to fear less the lightness of my family, shall be laid unto me for lack of more earnest and diligent instruction, which should have been done. But blessed be God, which have given me grace, to see and perceive this my default, and to lament it from the bottom of my heart, before my departure hence.<sup>34</sup>

Although he warned West of the dangers of apostasy, and urged him “to remember your promises made unto me in times past of the pure setting forth and preaching of God’s word and truth,” he also reassured him that he would not admonish him publicly, as “ye shall not need to fear to be charged with them of me hereafter, before the world.”<sup>35</sup> There is a degree of practical understanding here, and even compassion for West’s situation. This, however, is tempered with a stern warning that West’s soul may be in peril: “And because, I dare say, you wrote of friendship unto me, this short earnest advertisement, and I think verily wishing me to live and not to die, therefore bearing you in my heart no less love in God, than you do unto me in the world, I say unto you in *verbo Dei*, except you (and this that I say unto you, I say unto all my friends and lovers in God), except ye confess and maintain to your power, and knowledge, things which ye know be grounded upon God's word, but will either for fear, or gain of the world, shrink and play the *Apostata*, indeed you shall die the death. You understand what I do mean.”<sup>36</sup>

Ridley’s vacillation between, on one hand, a strict martyrological message, and, on the other, a recognition that West genuinely and compassionately did not want him to die, is indicative of the quandary Marian protestants often found themselves in. In many of the cases in which a leading Protestant was targeted for prosecution, we can find his or her closest friends encouraging conformity. For instance, when the preacher John Bradford was imprisoned, his old friend Percival Creswell visited him. Distraught, Creswell asked Bradford to allow him to make suit for his release. Bradford, however, refused any help: “Forsooth that ye will do, do it not at my request, for I desire nothing at your hands. If the Queen will give me life, I will thank her. If she will banish me, I will thank her. If she will burn me, I will thank her. If she will condemn me to perpetual imprisonment, I will thank her.” Realizing that Bradford would not be easily persuaded,

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<sup>33</sup> CCCC MS 105 p. 324.

<sup>34</sup> CCCC MS 105 p. 324.

<sup>35</sup> CCCC MS 105 p. 324.

<sup>36</sup> CCCC MS 105 p. 324-5.

Creswell began to beg him to continue to allow visits from those who might be able to convince him to conform. Foxe records the painful exchange:

*Creswell.* Oh, if ever ye loved me, do one thing for me.

*Bradford.* What is it?

*Creswell.* Desire and name what learned man or men ye will have to come unto you. My Lord of York, my Lord of Lincoln, my Lord of Bath, and others will gladly come unto you.

*Bradford.* No, never will I desire them or any other to come to confer with me, for I am as certain of my doctrine as I am of any thing. But for your pleasure, and also that all men may know I am not ashamed to have my faith sifted and tried, bring whom ye will, and I will talk with them.

Creswell's pleas, of course, would not be successful, as Bradford was burned at the stake in July 1555; however, this exchange is a poignant reminder that the pressure to conform often came from one's own friends and fellow evangelicals. When the Cardiff fisherman Rawlins White faced a similar fate, it was his fellow Protestants who pressured him to save himself. As John Foxe recorded, "...many of those which had received comfort by his instructions, did resort unto him and by all means possible began to persuade him to shift for himself, and to dispose his goods by some reasonable order to the use of his wife and children, and by that means he should escape that danger which was imminent over his head." For his part, White "thanked them most heartily for their good will," yet insisted he was obligated to openly profess Christ. But, as Foxe notes, his friends were persistent in arguing against martyrdom, and continued to be "very importunate with him."<sup>37</sup> Here we find, therefore, the godly brethren acting not as sustainers encouraging martyrdom, but as friends urging religious conformity as the dutiful and sensible path. And so while it is certainly true that in some circumstances martyrs were encouraged until death by some of their fellow Protestants, it is also true that, in practice, some Protestants urged those under duress to conform.

## II.

John Scory, the Bishop of Chichester, was perhaps the most prolific author writing among the community of Protestant English exiles at Emden.<sup>38</sup> Scory was at the center of the exile printing operation, and he may have even been overseeing the entire press.<sup>39</sup> While in Emden he personally produced two major works that have generally been described by modern scholars as representative of the strong anti-Nicodemite trend in Protestant scholarship of the 1550s. As one historian has observed, John Scory produced his 1555 *Epistle* and his 1556 English translation of Cyprian with the purpose of "exhorting Protestant Christians to steadfastness and condemning capitulation to Catholic authorities."<sup>40</sup> However, this characterization reveals the danger of accepting at face value the strident religious rhetoric of early modern authors. For while Scory's works undeniably contain a pro-martyrological message, they were also written in the

<sup>37</sup> Foxe, 1570 ed., 1765.

<sup>38</sup> Garrett, *The Marian Exiles*, 285-6.

<sup>39</sup> Andrew Pettegree, "Scory, John (d. 1585)," *ODNB*.

<sup>40</sup> Gregory, *Salvation at Stake*, 155.

immediate aftermath of Scory's own recantation. On May 4, 1554, Queen Mary instituted a series of clerical injunctions, by which she hoped to purge the church of evangelicals.<sup>41</sup> Since Scory had married during the reign of Edward VI, he now found himself in danger of dismissal and prosecution.<sup>42</sup> He immediately went to Edmund Bonner and claimed separation from his wife. He then made penance to Bonner for his marriage, and his clerical license was consequently renewed.<sup>43</sup> A consideration of the circumstances of Scory's recantation, along with a close reading of his works written in the weeks and months after his escape, reveals that he may not have been wholly committed to an "anti-Nicodemism without compromise" as historians have long presumed.<sup>44</sup>

Shortly after reconciling with his wife and fleeing to Emden in 1555, Scory wrote and published an address to the evangelicals who remained in England. Entitled *An Epistle written by John Scory the late bisshope of Chichester unto all the faithful that be in prison in Englande, or in any other troble for the defence of Goddes truthe*, the work begins by describing the dire situation in England: "Who will not (dear brethren in Christ) call the state of our time most miserable, and most wicked... And who will not say, that we should not take it in good part, forasmuch as a man may behold all godly men (as most meek lambs) to be slain of their own shepherds: the little flock of our Lord Christ (as fatherless children) to be spoiled and robbed of their own tutors... the very sons of God to be murdered of their own spiritual fathers."<sup>45</sup> Scory explicitly names and memorializes the recent victims of the Marian burnings as "valiant champions" of Christ who fought to their deaths against the minions of Satan and the Antichrist. The martyrological message of this work cannot be denied; clearly, Scory views these men and women as true martyrs, who can serve as heroic examples for those who find themselves called to accept a godly death. Although Scory extols martyrdom, he also argues that persecuted Protestants should think first to flight.<sup>46</sup> Regardless of the enormous financial and emotional burden of exile, Scory claims, it is imperative that Protestants flee England in order to preserve the state of their souls. Citing a bevy of

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<sup>41</sup> "Injunctions of Queen Mary," in *Documents Illustrative of English Church History* (London: MacMillan, 1896), 380-383. This is a transcription from Edmund Bonner's *Register*.

<sup>42</sup> The injunction in question states: "Item, that every bishop, and all persons aforesaid, do foresee that they suffer not any religious man, having solemnly professed chastity, to continue with his woman or wife; but that all such persons, after deprivation of their benefice or ecclesiastical promotion, be also divorced every one from his said woman, and due punishment otherwise taken for the offence therein." *Documents Illustrative*, 382.

<sup>43</sup> William Stephens, *Memorials of the South Saxon See and Cathedral Church of Chichester* (London: Richard Bentley & Son, 1876), 237.

<sup>44</sup> Gregory, *Salvation at Stake*, 154.

<sup>45</sup> John Scory, *An Epistle written by John Scory the late bisshope of Chichester unto all the faithful that be in prison in Englande, or in any other troble for the defence of Goddes truthe* (Emden: E. van der Erve, 1555; STC 21854), sig. A2.

<sup>46</sup> For an examination of Protestant arguments for exile, see: Jonathan Wright, "Marian Exiles and the Legitimacy of Flight from Persecution," *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, vol. 52, no. 2, (April 2001), 220-243.

biblical passages, Scory argues: “And if they shall pursue you, that you shall be compelled to forsake your native country, with other of your poor brethren and countrymen, and to leave your labors and livings unto merciless strangers, and bloody papists: Remember that the whole earth is the Lord’s, and all that is in it. Remember also how that holy David was compelled through the tyranny of Saul, not only to forsake his own native country, but also to flee and save himself among the heathen idolaters.”<sup>47</sup> While even the most strident of anti-Nicodemite authors argued that fleeing into exile was a scripturally defensible action, the checkered circumstances behind Scory’s own flight opens up the scope of this passage.

For Scory, successful flight from England is indicative of a providential plan. Just as God had returned David from exile, so too will the exiled Christian be returned to England when the time is right. Scory writes, “. . .the same God that helped David, and the babe Christ in all dangers, and brought them home again into their own country, is yet alive, and as able both to save you now, and also to throw down your enemies, as ever he was.”<sup>48</sup> Essentially, Scory is encouraging all Christians to submit themselves to God’s will, whatever it may be. Citing 2 Kings 15, Scory continually points to David as a model exile. This allusion is particularly fascinating, because Scory and his readers would have been aware that David accepted his exile as a just punishment from God. David understood from the prophet Nathan that his exile was deserved because he was guilty of murder and adultery.<sup>49</sup> Scory insists that the true believer in England should remember David’s words: “If I shall find favor in the eyes of the Lord, he will bring me home again in to mine own country: but if the Lord thus say, I have not lust unto thee, behold here am I, let him do with me what seemeth good in his eyes.”<sup>50</sup> While Scory invokes divine providence as justification for exile, it seems that he may have been envisioning his own recantation as part of God’s plan. He acknowledges, for instance, the existence of those who were vulnerable to the charge of having previously “shrunk” from their duties to God. Yet rather than castigate these people as Nicodemites who have placed their own souls in peril, Scory’s tone is far more pragmatic and consolatory, and he reminds his readers that even the apostles had recanted.<sup>51</sup> He writes: “. . .If you shall perceive that any for fear of trouble, shall shrink and recant the open truth of Christ’s holy doctrine (which the cursed papists desire chiefly that so they may gratify their father the Devil, in murdering both souls and bodies) remember that Christ hath both told you aforehand of such shrinkers in the parable of the sower, by the seed that fell on the rocks. And also that all his apostles shrank from him in his most trouble: and of them, one denied and abjured him, as the papists now compel men to abjure that truth, and is more manifest than the

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<sup>47</sup> Scory, *Epistle*, sig. A6v-A7r.

<sup>48</sup> Scory, *Epistle*, sig. A7r.

<sup>49</sup> This reading of 2 Kings was common, and well known from Thomas Aquinas’ commentary on Psalm 3.

<sup>50</sup> Scory, *Epistle*, sig. A7r.

<sup>51</sup> Reformation scholars have often recognized the early modern tendency to look to Christ as a martyrological model. For example, see: Thomas Freeman, “‘Imitatio Christi with a Vengeance’: The Politicisation of Martyrdom in Early Modern England” in *Martyrs and Martyrdom*, 35-69; However, scholars have not adequately addressed the use of the apostles as exemplary figures.

noon day.”<sup>52</sup> His flexible stance towards recantation is even more obvious in his reading of the letters of Paul, in which he emphasizes the apostle’s refusal to blame his followers who had abandoned him before Nero. “Remember also,” Scory writes, “that when Paul was first presented before Nero in the judgment at Rome, all the brethren forsook him! For whom he prayeth unto God, that he will not lay that shrinking and backsliding unto their charges.”<sup>53</sup>

If Paul could forgive his fearful followers, then would not Scory’s own recantation also be excusable? While he does not directly encourage recantation, he is portraying it as an understandable and forgivable act that in no way inhibits the Protestant mission. “If such [shrinking and backsliding] have or shall happen,” he explains, “be nothing discouraged (dearly beloved) to continue your fight against Antichrist, (as ye have began) with the sword of the spirit, and patient suffering: but pluck up your hearts like valiant soldiers.”<sup>54</sup> An act of outright religious conformity, then, is not a major hurdle in the fight against the Antichrist, but rather an understandable hiccup that is to be expected and excused. In this respect Scory’s stance is both pragmatic in its assessment and providential in its forecast.

Scory’s nuanced approach to Nicodemism can also be seen in another of his major works produced in exile at Emden: his English translation of selections from the writings of St. Cyprian. One of these was a translation of Cyprian’s treatise *De Mortalitate*, in which the third century bishop offered consolation to his flock during an outbreak of plague at the height of the Decian persecution.<sup>55</sup> Cyprian wrote the work partly with the purpose of strengthening the resolve of those who faced death. However, Cyprian was also writing to those Christians who were frustrated and saddened that they might be killed by plague before being given the chance to face execution by the Roman state. They understood death by disease to signify that God had not granted them the crown of martyrdom. For Cyprian, Christians who were not given a path to martyrdom should not be disappointed, since it is not something to be expected or demanded. As Scory translates from the church father, “But peradventure some man may object and say: ‘This present mortality maketh me heavy, that were as I was prepared to confess the faith, and had with my whole heart and full strength addict myself to suffer passion, I am now being prevented with death, deprived of my martyrdom.’ For answer to this, we must first consider, that martyrdom standeth not in our power, but in the estimation of God, neither canst thou say that thou has lost out, which knowest not whether thou did deserve to

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<sup>52</sup> Scory, *Epistle*, sig. B1r.

<sup>53</sup> Scory, *Epistle*, sig. B1r. Scory is here referencing 2 Timothy 16-18: “At my first defense no one came to stand by me, but all deserted me. May it not be charged against them! But the Lord stood by me and strengthened me, so that through me the message might be fully proclaimed and all the Gentiles might hear it. So I was rescued from the lion’s mouth. The Lord will rescue me from every evil deed and bring me safely into his heavenly kingdom.”

<sup>54</sup> Scory, *Epistle*, B1r-v.

<sup>55</sup> Cyprian, *Saint Cyprian: Treatises*, ed. Roy Deferrari (New York: Fathers of the Church, 1958), 195-6.

receive.”<sup>56</sup> In fact, it may be wrong to allow oneself to be martyred if it was preventable: “For it is one thing to want a will to martyrdom, and another to want martyrdom to a ready will. Look what manner of one God findeth thee when he calleth thee hence, such a one doth he also judge thee, as himself witnesseth saying: ‘And all congregations shall know, that I am the searcher of the reins and of the heart. For God seeketh not the effusion of your blood, but faith.’”<sup>57</sup> The individual believer, therefore, does not become a martyr unless it is the will of God.<sup>58</sup> By this reasoning an act of recantation such as Scory’s own can be understood as a providential act. Throughout Cyprian’s work the path to salvation is described as a complicated and trying one. The individual Christian, therefore, is bound to have moments of weakness and infirmity. Scory translates, “When therefore either sickness, either weakness, or any destruction doth violently assail us, that is our strength made perfect, then is our faith crowned, if thee endure steadfast in temptation: according as it is written: ‘The furnace trieth the potters vessel, and the temptation of trouble trieth just men.’”<sup>59</sup>

Thus, the Christian’s life is portrayed as series of trials and tribulations. By this metric an act of reluctant recantation could be understood as a part of the believer’s inevitable spiritual trial. Scory’s exile writings reveal that even within evangelical exegesis of the Christian martyrological tradition, there was often ample intellectual room to justify moments of religious conformity. Exhortations to martyrdom insisted that it was not something to be courted or desired, but rather could only be accepted with selfless resolve. However, scholars have often failed to recognize that this very emphasis on the heroic exclusivity of martyrdom could itself serve as an excuse for conformity. An act of recantation, like Scory’s own, did not have to be considered a terminal failure of faith, but could also be interpreted as a temporary switchback on God’s mysterious yet providential path. After all, the apostle’s journey did not end when the cock crowed.  
III.

In the 1563 edition of the *Act and Monuments*, John Foxe provided an account of the imprisonment and eventual suicide of Sir James Hales, a prominent judge of the Court of Common Pleas and a well-respected evangelical. In a section entitled “The lamentable and pitieful history of Master James Hales Judge,” Foxe described how Hales was imprisoned by the Marian regime, but then recanted before committing suicide in August 1554. The circumstances of Hales’ abjuration and death provide a telling example of the ways in which English persons continually found themselves caught between mutually exclusive obligations of conscience and duty.

Hales, in particular, attempted to remain committed to the letter of English law, even as he maintained positions that were politically dangerous. This would lead him to refuse to swear loyalty to Jane Grey in 1553, despite his personal religious beliefs. His enduring legalism would also lead to his imprisonment only months later for using Edwardian statutes to render judgments against the saying of mass. While he was legally

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<sup>56</sup> John Scory, *Certein workes of blessed Cipriane the martyr, translated out of laten by J. Scory* (Emden: E. van der Erve, 1556; STC 6152), sig. B3r-v.

<sup>57</sup> Scory, *Ciprian*, sig. B4r.

<sup>58</sup> As Gregory has observed, “it was risky to presume that God was still calling one to martyrdom despite mercifully providing for one’s escape”: *Salvation at Stake*, 103.

<sup>59</sup> Scory, *Ciprian*, B1r.



justified because the Edwardian laws had not yet been officially overturned, he still found himself in Star Chamber for acting against Mary's prerogative. As Foxe explained:

As such as would stick to the laws made in King Edward's time till other should be established: were some of them marked, and some of them presently apprehended: among whom Sir James Hales, a knight of Kent and Justice of the Common Pleas was one, who notwithstanding he had ventured his life in Queen Mary's cause in that he would not subscribe to the disinheriting of her by the king's will, yet for that he did at a quarter sessions give charge upon the statues made in the time of Henry the eight and Edward the sixth for supremacy and religion, he was imprisoned in the Marshalsea, Counter, and Fleet, and so cruelly handled, & so put in fear, by talk that the warden of the Fleet used to have in his hearing, of torments that were in preparing for heretics, (or for what other cause god knoweth) he was so moved, that he sought to rid himself out of this life by wounding himself with a knife: and afterward was content to say as they willed him, whereupon he was discharged but never quiet in conscience till he had drowned himself in a river half a mile from his house in Kent.<sup>60</sup>

Foxe is not the only source for the scandal, as Hales' prosecution appears to have become a minor *cause célèbre* of the period, prompting a treatise from Bishop John Hooper and considerable discussion in Robert Wingfield's pro-Catholic history *Vita Mariae Reginae*.<sup>61</sup> While in basic agreement about the general facts of the case, each of these accounts provides a remarkably different reading of Hales' recantation and eventual suicide.

Hales had become a controversial figure for both Protestants and Catholics in the final days of the reign of Edward VI. As Edward lay on his deathbed he attempted to bypass his Catholic sister Mary in the royal succession, and instead bequeathed his throne to the Protestant daughter-in-law of Northumberland, Lady Jane Grey.<sup>62</sup> For staunch Marian loyalists such as Wingfield, this attempt to exclude Mary was an unlawful conspiracy engineered by Northumberland.<sup>63</sup> In their view, the young and feeble king had fallen victim to his uncle's wiles, and consequently proposed Jane Grey as his heir. While the legal counselors were shocked by the proposition, Wingfield explains, they felt compelled to acquiesce to the king's deathbed requests due to fear of Northumberland. Wingfield laments the scene: "The lawyers were thunderstruck by the words of the dying king, who had no power to shun death by any human strength, or to flee it by any human counsels; with great sorrow but still greater fearfulness, as if they were holding a wolf by

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<sup>60</sup> Foxe, 1563 ed., 905.

<sup>61</sup> Robert Wingfield, "The *Vita Mariae Angliae Reginae* of Robert Wingfield of Brantham," in *Camden Miscellany XXVIII, Fourth Series*, vol. 29, trans. and ed. Diarmaid MacCulloch (London: Royal Historical Society, 1984), 182; John Hooper, "A Brief Treatise Respecting Judge Hales," in *The Later Writings of John Hooper*, ed. Charles Nevinson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1852), 374-380.

<sup>62</sup> MacCulloch, *Thomas Cranmer*, 538-548.

<sup>63</sup> Wingfield, "*Vita Mariae*," 248.

its ears, they sought an interval of a few days to consult their books.”<sup>64</sup> After a short deliberation, the lawyers granted the king’s request, because “fear finally overcame their sense of duty.”<sup>65</sup> Hales, however, refused to acknowledge the legitimacy of the plan. Due to his reputation as a devout evangelical, it had been assumed that he would support Jane Grey, especially considering the backing she held among his fellow lawyers.<sup>66</sup> Yet surprisingly, Hales refused to acknowledge Jane’s claim to the throne. For this, Wingfield extolled Hales’ constancy: “All of [the lawyers] except James Hales and John Gosnold supported Northumberland’s proposal up to the hilt, with the result that they appeared to be in very little hurry. Only Hales, like an undaunted athlete, offered his head in his hand sooner than to be forced to subscribe to their opinion.”<sup>67</sup> Wingfield is portraying Hales here as the paragon of loyalty to the true and *lawful* monarch. In defiance of the illegal machinations of Northumberland, Hales is unshakeable and committed, and even claims to be willing to be executed for treason rather than swear a false oath.

Despite the obvious ideological differences between the Catholic loyalist Wingfield and the Protestant martyrologist Foxe, both accounts are fairly corroborative. Both agree that Hales was recognized as a leading Protestant. Foxe, for instance, notes that Hales’ fervent devotion to the law was matched only by his “like sincerity & hearty affection to religion and the Gospel of Christ. Whereunto he had been by many years most earnestly set and addicted, showing himself to be a Gospellor, no less by his word than deed, and no less at home than abroad.”<sup>68</sup> Hales even held daily religious service within his own home, “which was not ministered by any of household, or waiting chaplains, but by his own self, to the intent he might be the better example to the rest, joining with his devotion, the often reading of the holy scripture.”<sup>69</sup> And yet, Foxe also recounts Hales’ refusal to legitimize Jane Grey, and even praises his constancy and prudence.<sup>70</sup> Throughout his discussion of Hales, Foxe continually notes that the Marian regime should have treated the judge with gratitude and friendship due to this history of loyalty: “...Judge Hales, who alone taking Queen Mary’s part, would in no wise subscribe to have any other Queen but her, for that he thought he could not do other wise with a safe conscience, though all the rest in manner had subscribed to Edward the sixth his will and testament: whereby as he did cast himself into manifest jeopardy of the Duke

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<sup>64</sup> Wingfield, “*Vita Mariae*,” 248

<sup>65</sup> Wingfield, “*Vita Mariae*,” 248

<sup>66</sup> On legal support for Edward’s “Devise,” see: Lewis Abbott, “Public Office and Private Profit: The Legal Establishment in the Reign of Mary Tudor,” in *The Mid-Tudor Polity, c. 1540-1560*, eds. Jennifer Loach and Robert Tittler (London: Macmillan Press, 1980), 137-158.

<sup>67</sup> Wingfield, “*Vita Mariae*,” 248.

<sup>68</sup> Foxe, 1563 ed., 1114.

<sup>69</sup> Foxe, 1563 ed., 1114.

<sup>70</sup> Foxe, 1563 ed., 901: “To this order subscribed all the kings counsel, and chief of the Nobility, the Mayor and City of London, and almost all the Judges and chief Lawyers of the Realm, saving only Justice Hales of Kent, a man both favoring true religion, and also a Judge: I say as upright a Judge as any was in this realm, giving his consent unto Lady Mary, would in no case subscribe to Lady Jane.”

of Northumberland, to lease both body & goods: so he deserved at Queen Mary's hands, & her adherents marvelous thanks, and reward of his singular faithfulness and true heart, towards her."<sup>71</sup> Although Foxe's commendation of Hales' piety and loyalty is initially puzzling, it appears to have been a subtle attempt to cast Marian Protestants as inherently loyal subjects, while also emphasizing that Hales' later prosecution by the regime was an act of ruthless betrayal.

After Mary's accession, while many of Hales' evangelical colleagues were eschewing London for continental exile or the safety of the countryside, Hales obstinately refused to abandon his work: "...to him in especial it appeared most perilous who was in that office and calling, that he could neither be long absent from it at London, neither be there occupied without present peril or jeopardy, thus the state of religion being changed and altered... [Hales] came up to do his office, and function, persuading & knowing himself to be clear, and inculpable, but as a mouse (according to the old said saw) falling into the glue pot."<sup>72</sup> Thus in Foxe's presentation it was Hales' devotion to the law that eventually led to his prosecution by Lord Chancellor Stephen Gardiner. For while Mary had publicly signaled a return to the mass, the Edwardian statutes were still in effect. This moment of disparity between the legal statutes and the royal prerogative placed judges like Hales in a dangerous quandary, because any attempt to enforce the current laws could be perceived as a direct affront to the crown. By October 1553, as Hales stubbornly continued to allow the prosecution of priests in Kent, he caught the attention of Gardiner. Refusing to allow Hales to be sworn in for his new term, Gardiner summoned him to Westminster Hall for questioning:

[Hales] was not so soon at London, but that the Bishop of Winchester sent for him, and did expostulate, about the calling and vexing of certain prevent-law Priests. For as yet, the mass was not by the laws received and restored, although the Queen herself by her consent and example, set it forward, wherewith diverse Priests being encouraged, presumed to say Mass. And like as in a mayne, and set battle, there are certain nimble and light armed soldiers, which in skirmishes amongst their enemies go before the force of battle, even so in this troublesome time there lacked none before-law prelates, or light armed, but much more light hearted soldiers, which ran before the law, who of duty should rather have followed and obeyed it.<sup>73</sup>

In Foxe's assessment, therefore, Gardiner's accusation that Hales was a radical was rooted in Hales' conservative commitment to the existing legal statutes.

An account of Gardiner's interrogation of Hales, supposedly verbatim, was quickly published as a short pamphlet.<sup>74</sup> During the examination, Gardiner began by

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<sup>71</sup> Foxe, 1563 ed., 1113.

<sup>72</sup> Foxe, 1563 ed., 1114.

<sup>73</sup> Foxe, 1563 ed., 1114.

<sup>74</sup> Stephen Gardiner, *The communication betwene my Lord Chauncelor and iudge Hales being among other iudges to take his oth in VWestminster hall* (London [?]: John

acknowledging Hales' past loyalty to the crown during the succession crisis, but then accused him of acting "against certain her highness doings" by indicting priests in Kent for the saying of mass.<sup>75</sup> Hales responded that while he had not indicted the priests himself, he was duty bound by the law to judge against them: "My Lorde it is not so, I indicted none, but in deed certain indictments of like matter were brought before me at the last assizes there holden, and I gave order therein as the law required. For I have professed the law, against which, in cases of justice will I never (god willing) proceed, nor in any wise dissemble, but with the same show forth my conscience, and if it were to do again, I would do no less then I did."<sup>76</sup> Thus for Hales, his actions were completely defensible under the law. "I did as well use justice in your said mass case by my conscience as by the law," Hales explained, "Wherein I am fully bent to stand in trial to the uttermost that can be objected, and if I have therein done any injury or wrong: let me be judged by the law, for I will seek no better defense, considering chiefly that it is my profession."<sup>77</sup>

Indignant, Gardiner quickly dismissed Hales' defense as legal precisianism. "Why master Hales," Gardiner replied, "although ye had the rigor of the law on your side, yet ye might have had regard to the Queen's highness present doings in that case."<sup>78</sup> Yet Hales continued to insist that he was both acting in accordance with law while remaining loyal to the queen: "But both in conscience and such knowledge of the law as God hath given me, I will do nothing but I will maintain and abide in it. And if my goods and all that I have be not able to counterpoise the case: my body shall be ready to serve the turn, for they be all at the Queen's highness pleasure."<sup>79</sup> Gardiner, however, was not swayed, and he accused Hales of using his judicial authority to pursue his personal religious agenda: "But as it should seem, that which ye did was more of a will, favoring the opinion of your Religion against the Service now used, than for any occasion or zeal of justice, seeing the Queen's highness doth set it forth, as yet wishing all her faithful subjects to embrace it accordingly: and where ye offer both body and goods in your trial, there is no such matter required at your handes, and yet ye shall not have your own will neither."<sup>80</sup> After this examination was concluded, Hales was arrested.

News of the judge's prosecution spread throughout the evangelical community, and prompted exhortations to martyrdom from several major Protestants. John Bradford, for instance, wrote a letter to Hales while imprisoned in the Counter. Encouraging Hales to remain steadfast in his faith, Bradford assured him that his suffering was mark of holiness. Appealing to Hales' refusal to subscribe to Northumberland as an example of his constancy, Bradford writes: "To the reading whereof and hearty prayer, I heartily commend you, beseeching almighty God, that of his eternal mercies he would make perfect the good he hath begun in you, and strengthen you to the end, that you might have

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Day, 1553; STC 11583). A version of this exchange also appeared in Foxe 1563 ed., 1114-5.

<sup>75</sup> Gardiner, *The communication*, sig. Air.

<sup>76</sup> Gardiner, *The communication*, sig. Air-v.

<sup>77</sup> Gardiner, *The communication*, sig. Aiv.

<sup>78</sup> Gardiner, *The communication*, sig. Aiir.

<sup>79</sup> Gardiner, *The communication*, sig. Aiir.

<sup>80</sup> Gardiner, *The communication*, sig. Aiiv.

no less hope, but much more, of his help to your comfort now against your enemies, then already he hath given you against [Northumberland] for not subscribing to the King's will."<sup>81</sup> Yet despite Bradford's hopes, Hales eventually recanted and was released. However, shortly thereafter Hales attempted to commit suicide by stabbing himself repeatedly with a penknife. He survived, but news of the attempt was said to have prompted Gardiner to openly proclaim Protestantism to be a "doctrine of desperation."<sup>82</sup> Soon after, Hales returned to his home in Kent, where he drowned himself.<sup>83</sup>

Sensitivity to Gardiner's accusation may help explain why Foxe's discussion of Hales is largely sympathetic. Hales, of course, is not portrayed as a martyr, but he is still cast as a hapless victim of Roman Catholic persecution. Foxe even speculated that Hales likely repented his recantation, suggesting that he may have committed suicide out of fear he would be forced to partake in the idolatrous mass: "The unhappy chance of this so worthy a judge was surely the cause of great sorrow and grief unto all good men: and it gave occasion besides unto certain divines to stand something in doubt with themselves whether he were reprobate, or saved, or no. About which matter it is not for me to determine, either this way or that way: for he that is our judge, the same shall be his judge, and he it is that will lay all things open, when the time cometh....seeing God's judgments be secret, and we be likewise in doubt upon what mind and intent he did thus punish himself, and then beside no man is certain and sure whether he did repent or no."<sup>84</sup> This was all, as he admits, pure speculation on Foxe's part. And yet, Foxe's willingness to allow for the possibility that Hales had been saved, despite his recantation and suicide, reveals that, even for the great martyrologist, the wages of recantation were not always clear.

#### IV.

Perhaps the most scandalous recantation during the reign of Mary was that of Sir John Cheke. Cheke, the former tutor to Edward VI and a leading evangelical, was kidnapped while in exile abroad and imprisoned in the Tower.<sup>85</sup> As news of Cheke's arrest initially spread to the exile community in Strasbourg, there appeared to have been an assumption among the exiles that Cheke would refuse to recant. In a letter to Heinrich Bullinger in June 1556, John Ponet writes: "I wish that what you wrote to me concerning Sir John Cheke may not prove prophetic. I doubt not but that he will seal his testimony to the gospel with his blood. What will not Pharaoh attempt against Israel, especially on his return from exile?"<sup>86</sup> Yet within only a few days Ponet's confidence would prove misplaced, as Cheke would publicly recant. As Eamon Duffy has argued, this was "a

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<sup>81</sup> Foxe, 1570 ed., 1818-9.

<sup>82</sup> Foxe, 1563 ed., 1116.

<sup>83</sup> Foxe, 1563 ed., 1116; Michael MacDonald and Terence Murphy, *Sleepless Souls: Suicide in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990) 60-62.

<sup>84</sup> Foxe, 1563 ed., 1116.

<sup>85</sup> John Ponet wrote a sympathetic account of Cheke's capture in 1556: John Ponet, *A Shorte Treatise of Politike Power* (Strasbourg: 1556, STC 20178).

<sup>86</sup> "John Ponet to Henry Bullinger, June 1556," *Original Letters Relative to the English Reformation Written During the Reign of King Henry VIII, King Edward VI, and Queen Mary: Chiefly from the Archives of Zurich, Volume 1*, ed. Hastings Robinson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1846), 117.

devastating blow” to the English Protestant community, especially as the regime kept Cheke on public display at heresy trials.<sup>87</sup> While his recantation may have been forced and reluctant, Cheke by all accounts assumed the role of prodigal son in the Marian court, and was reported to have publicly denied that he recanted from fear of damnation.

Despite this prolonged conformity, Foxe’s account of Cheke in *The Book of Martyrs* is still sympathetic. From the very onset of Foxe’s discussion of Cheke it is clear that it was an uncomfortable subject for the martyrologist. He continually notes that while Cheke’s life could generally be praised, his recantation was not something that could be easily addressed. He presented Cheke as a victim of Marian aggression, but he is also careful not to become an apologist for Cheke’s recantation: “The worthiness of which man deserveth much to be said: but his fall would rather be covered in silence and oblivion.”<sup>88</sup> Foxe repeatedly emphasizes the difficulty of the situation in which Cheke found himself: “Thus the good man being entrapped, and in the hands now of his enemies, had but one of these two ways to take, either to change his religion, or to change his life. Other remedy with these holy Catholics there was none. Neither could his conscience excuse him, nor truth defend him, nor learning help him.”<sup>89</sup> While Foxe reluctantly described how Cheke had become a puppet for the Marian regime, he is even more hesitant to discuss the explicit content of Cheke’s statements of recantation. Foxe states, “Then after his recantation, he was through the crafty handling of the Catholics, allured first to dine and company with them, at length drawn unawares to sit in place, where the poor Martyrs were brought before Bonner and other Bishops to be condemned, the remorse whereof so mightily wrought in his heart, that not long after he left this mortal life. Whose fall although it was full of infirmity, yet his rising again by repentance was great, and his end comfortable, the Lord be praised.”<sup>90</sup>

There was widespread speculation among the Protestant community that Cheke’s recantation was insincere. The late seventeenth century historian John Strype claims to have seen a letter from Edmund Grindal to Peter Martyr Vermigli, dated 15 March 1556, in which Grindal suggested that Cheke was regretting his subscription.<sup>91</sup> The letter, which now appears to be lost, is known only from a few quotations in Strype’s biography of Cheke.<sup>92</sup> Grindal writes that Cheke indicated “that his faith was rather bent, than broke and quite extinguished, however reports might be carried of him.”<sup>93</sup> Strype also notes that

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<sup>87</sup> John Strype, *The Life of the Learned Sir John Cheke* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1821), 113-127; Duffy, *Fires of Faith*, 148.

<sup>88</sup> Foxe, 1563 ed., 2141.

<sup>89</sup> Foxe, 1563 ed., 2141.

<sup>90</sup> Foxe, 1563 ed., 2141-2; As with Hales, historians have often accepted Foxe’s unsubstantiated claim that Cheke’s sorrow over his recantation somehow caused his eventual death.

<sup>91</sup> Strype claims that the letter to Martyr was not signed, but he confidently attributes it to Grindal: Strype, *Sir John Cheke*, 130.

<sup>92</sup> This letter is listed in the *Register Epistolarum Vermiglii* based solely on Strype’s mention: John Patrick Donnelly and Robert Kingdon, eds., *A Bibliography of the Works of Peter Martyr Vermigli* (Kirkville, MO: Sixteenth Century Journal Publishers, 1990), 175.

<sup>93</sup> Strype, *Sir John Cheke*, 130.

Martyr replied with skepticism: “But Martyr added, that he thought it almost past belief, that he should persevere while he tarried in England; and subjoined his earnest prayer, ‘that God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, would so by his Spirit repair his shipwreck, that, with as little loss as might be, he might at last arrive at the haven of salvation.’ And God heard his prayer: for it was not long after that Cheke made his exit.”<sup>94</sup> Like Foxe, Strype was eager to portray Cheke’s death in 1557 as somehow connected to guilt over his recantation. Yet despite Strype’s willingness to accept the letter as proof of Cheke’s remorse, there are a few problems with this account. First of all, at the time Grindal was exiled in Strasbourg and Martyr was in Zurich.<sup>95</sup> Any news of Cheke would have likely been little more than old rumor, and could have only been obtained indirectly. Secondly, even if Cheke had actually claimed his faith “was rather bent than broke” in March 1556, there is evidence that he continued to play the loyal Marian subject up until his death. As late as November 2, 1556, the Venetian Ambassador to England, Giovanni Michiel, reported that Cheke’s example was influencing other imprisoned evangelicals to recant. “The fruit of Dr. Cheke's recantation begins already to take effect,” Michiel wrote, “well nigh 30 persons who were in prison in danger of being burned, having lately by the grace of God and through the efficacy of his language been converted.”<sup>96</sup> This account, months after Cheke’s initial recantation, brings into question the veracity of both Foxe and Grindal’s respective claims that he regretted his conformity. While he may have expressed private regrets, the report from the Venetian ambassador proves that Cheke was still maintaining a public image of conformity to the Marian regime.

Despite the strict anti-Nicodemite rhetoric of the period, contemporary Protestant accounts of Cheke invariably portrayed him as an unfortunate victim. That Cheke’s conformity was enduring and public, and yet evangelical observers responded with affection and sympathy rather than indignation or reproach, is further evidence of the ways in which religious conformity was often accepted and justified in the mid-sixteenth century. A poignant example of this can be seen in Cheke’s letter of recantation to Mary, in which he had sworn to be in complete “obedience of your laws and other orders of religion.”<sup>97</sup> During Elizabeth’s reign the original letter of recantation came into personal possession of Archbishop Matthew Parker. Confronted with the physical evidence of the beloved Cheke’s recantation, Parker scribbled a simple note in the margins: “*Homines Sumus*” . . . We are but men.<sup>98</sup>

<sup>94</sup> Strype, *Sir John Cheke*, 130-1.

<sup>95</sup> Collinson, *Archbishop Grindal*, 70-80.

<sup>96</sup> “Giovanni Michiel, Venetian Ambassador in England, to the Doge and Senate,” *Calendar of State Papers Relating to English Affairs in the Archives of Venice, Volume 6: 1555-1558*, ed. Rawdon Brown (London: HMSO, 1877), 763-782.

<sup>97</sup> Sir John Cheke to Queen Mary, 25 July 1556, *Original Letters of Eminent Literary Men of the Sixteenth, Seventeenth, and Eighteenth Centuries*, ed. Henry Ellis (London: John Bowyer Nichols and Son, 1843), 19; BL Lansdowne MS 3, fols. 115r-v.

<sup>98</sup> CCC MS 102 fols. 321-324; Strype, *Sir John Cheke*, 128; John Cheke, *The Gospel According to St. Matthew, also VII Original Letters of Sir J. Cheke*, ed. James Goodwin (Cambridge: J. & J.J. Deighton, 1843), 121n; Another copy of Cheke’s recantation is BL Additional MS 32091, fol. 150r.

V.

In this chapter we have examined some of the various ways in which Protestants justified and legitimized acts of outward religious conformity. In doing so, I have shown how the strict anti-Nicodemism so often associated with Marian Protestant thought was not, in practice, as wholly accepted as scholars have usually assumed. Building on this observation, I would now like to return where this chapter began: John Jewel's unapologetic dismissal of his Marian recantation. In order to more fully understand Jewel's nonchalant defense of his conformity, we must look not to the details of the recantation itself, but rather to the ways in which this act was interpreted and contested within the English exile community.

The experiences of the English Protestants who fled to the European mainland during the reign of Queen Mary are known primarily from the anonymously penned *Brief Discourse of the Troubles at Frankfurt*, printed in 1575.<sup>99</sup> Although this work is well-trodden ground for Reformation historians, the Marian exile has been almost exclusively viewed either as a moment of embarrassing squabbling, or for the purpose of explaining later Elizabethan religious disputes, particularly due to its well-known discussion of the prayer book controversy. A.G. Dickens, for example, viewed the troubles at Frankfurt as a moment of historical foreshadowing: "The little group of English refugees amid the seething population of the great free city on the Main may have mystified their kindly and tolerant hosts, but to historians they display a preview of the tensions and divisions which have ever since that day beset Protestant society in the English-speaking world."<sup>100</sup> However, the Frankfurt disputes are significant not only due to their relevance to the liturgical history of the English Prayer Book, but also because they can tell us about the dynamics of Protestant thought in the 1550s. I contend that the disputes of the Marian exiles are valuable not only for their pertinence to later Elizabethan ecclesiastical debates, but also because they reveal the ways in which some Marian Protestants grappled with the quandary of balancing religious and political conformity at a time of state persecution. It must be recognized that the English Prayer Book was not the only focal point of conflict; additionally, by disputing over the reintegration of those who had recanted or dissimulated their religious beliefs before escaping to the continent, the exiles were forced to address the ubiquity and normalcy of Protestant conformity to the Marian regime.

The major dispute began on March 13, 1555 when Richard Cox, John Jewel, and several other prominent church leaders appeared in Frankfurt and petitioned John Knox and the other English exiles for admission into their congregation. Up until this point the Frankfurt congregation, led by Knox and William Whittingham, had attempted to maintain a service that followed an amended version of the Edwardian Prayer Book that

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<sup>99</sup> Thomas Wood (?), *A Brief Discourse of the Troubles at Frankfurt, 1554-1558*, ed. Edward Arber (London: Elliot Stock, 1908). This work was traditionally attributed to William Whittingham, but Patrick Collinson has argued that the anonymous author was Thomas Wood: Patrick Collinson, "The Authorship of A Brieff Discours off the Troubles Begonne at Franckford," *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 9 (1958): 188-208.

<sup>100</sup> A.G. Dickens, *The English Reformation*, 2nd ed. (University Park, Penn.: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1989), 345.



closely agreed with the Reformed liturgy.<sup>101</sup> Additionally, “five notable learned men,” namely, Calvin, Musculus, Martyr, Bullinger, and Viret, had approved this modified version of the English service.<sup>102</sup> However, within days of their arrival, Cox and his companions made it clear that they did not share in this agreement, but rather favored a strict adherence to the Edwardian Prayer Book. During service on March 17 the Coxians began to openly resist the Reformed order. The author of the *Troubles* describes the events as a malicious hijacking of the service, masterminded by Cox: “...the Sunday following, one of his company, without the consent and knowledge of the Congregation, got up suddenly into the pulpit, read the Litany; and Doctor Cox with his company answered aloud: whereby the determination of the Church was broken.”<sup>103</sup> The Coxians defended their actions by insisting, “that they would do as they had done in England; and that they would have the face of an English Church.”<sup>104</sup> In addition to their obstinate adherence to the Edwardian Prayer Book, Cox and the other newcomers also prompted resistance and suspicion from many in the Frankfurt congregation because some of them were known to have recanted their Protestant beliefs in England before fleeing into exile. At the center of the controversy was Jewel, whose recantation and subsequent escape to Frankfurt now made him suspect.

When Knox had his chance to preach on March 17, he delivered a fiery sermon that was obviously targeted at Jewel and the other new arrivals. His chosen text was Genesis 9, in which Noah fell into drunkenness: “...he was come to Noah as he lay open in his tent, he spake these words following: ‘As divers things,’ saith he, ‘ought to be kept secret; even so such things as tend to the dishonour of God, and disquieting of His Church ought to be disclosed and openly reprov’d!’”<sup>105</sup> Within days of their arrival, therefore, the perceived apostasy of Jewel and his companions appears to have been one of the main points of tension. Two days later, the congregation met again to debate whether Jewel and the newcomers should be fully admitted into the church. They demanded that two issues should be resolved before the Coxians could be allowed into the flock: First of all, they required that the controversy over the Prayer Book be resolved. And secondly, they noted that several of the Coxians were known to have recanted their Protestant beliefs, and therefore many in the congregation were unwilling to allow them into the fold. As the author of the *Troubles* explained, “...It was greatly suspected that they had been, some of them, at Mass in England; and that others had subscribed to wicked Articles (as one of them [Jewel], shortly after, even in the pulpit, sorrowfully confessed). For these considerations, and such like, the Congregation withstood the admission of Doctor Cox and his company.”<sup>106</sup> This version of events is corroborated by Knox’s own account of the turmoil. Knox describes the fray:

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<sup>101</sup> For an excellent examination of the Frankfurt controversies, see: Karl Gunther, “The Intellectual Origins of English Puritanism, ca. 1525-1572” (Ph.D. dissertation, Northwestern University, 2007), 178-208.

<sup>102</sup> Wood (?), *Troubles at Frankfort*, 53.

<sup>103</sup> Wood (?), *Troubles at Frankfort*, 54.

<sup>104</sup> Wood (?), *Troubles at Frankfort*, 54.

<sup>105</sup> Wood (?), *Troubles at Frankfort*, 54.

<sup>106</sup> Wood (?), *Troubles at Frankfort*, 55.

It was again required, that such men amongst them as were known to have been at Mass, and to have subscribed to idolatrous articles, and to have behaved themselves slanderously in Christ's cause and matter of religion, should first, of conscience, either purge them[selves], or show some sign of repentance, before the Congregation.

'Fie! Nay! This was abominable injury!' say they: and, departing twice or thrice, they seemed to be much offended.

The most part of the Congregation denied their admission.<sup>107</sup>

Knox's account is particularly revealing, because it shows the continued hesitance among some of Cox's group to apologize for their recantations. This was clearly something they thought was justified, or at least not grievous enough to prompt public repentance. Despite the perceived inflexibility of the Coxians, Knox tried to reach a compromise. Expressing his desire to have them allowed into the congregation, he appears to have convinced Jewel to apologize for his recantation. This was the tipping point for the cautious congregation, which then voted to officially allow in the newcomers. Thus, the admittance of Cox and Jewel did not hinge on their acceptance of the Genevan service, but rather was reluctantly allowed after Jewel's publicly apologized for his recantation.

Yet following their admittance to the congregation, the newcomers continued to insist on the use of the Edwardian Prayer Book, and launched a congregational coup against Knox. At the center of this coup was the recently embarrassed Jewel, who sided with a few of the other new congregants in an attempt to discredit Knox to the local magistrates by showing them a copy of Knox's *Admonition to Christians*.<sup>108</sup> Highlighting passages in the *Admonition* that referred to "the wicked Mary" as a "monster," they accused Knox of high treason against the English crown.<sup>109</sup> Fearing that Charles V would perceive the harboring of the seditious Knox negatively, the magistrates quickly forbade Knox to preach at Frankfurt, and he subsequently fled to Geneva. In his account of the dispute, Knox claims the accusation was an act of retribution by those newcomers "who seemed to be sore offended with my Sermon, [and] devised how to have me cast into prison."<sup>110</sup> He angrily protested, "So, seeking their old shot-anker [sheet-anchor], they cried against me, *Non est amicus Caesaris!* 'He is not Caesar's friend! The which dart the Devil doth ever shoot, by the craft of Priests, against the true Preachers. For when neither doctrine, nor life, can be reprov'd in Christ and his Saints; yet this serveth at all assays! Yea, though they love not the Emperor no more than did the Old Pharisees; yet, for hatred of their brethren, they can produce such cautels."<sup>111</sup> This episode, however, may tell us more about Jewel than it does about Knox. For while in the eyes of Knox's faction Jewel's recantation was so deplorable that he was initially disqualified admission to the congregation, Jewel himself was not hesitant to embrace the role of dutiful civil subject.

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<sup>107</sup> Wood (?), *Troubles at Frankfort*, 65.

<sup>108</sup> The group of informants included Edward Isaac and Henry Parry: Garrett, *Marian Exiles*, 245.

<sup>109</sup> Wood (?), *Troubles at Frankfort*, 60.

<sup>110</sup> Wood (?), *Troubles at Frankfort*, 67.

<sup>111</sup> Wood (?), *Troubles at Frankfort*, 67.

After Knox's banishment, the newly reformed Frankfurt congregation sent a letter to Calvin, in which they justified their actions against the controversial Scot. Noting that Knox's works were rife with "horrible calumnies against the Queen of England," they argued that it was "neither profitable, nor safe to ourselves, that Knox should be received with favor by our Church."<sup>112</sup> Furthermore, they insisted that Knox's sedition was ungodly: "For you cannot but be aware, how unbecoming it would have been in us impotently to rage in half-muttered abuse against Magistrates; not, perhaps, because they do not deserve it: but because of the office imposed upon them by God."<sup>113</sup> Even though Jewel, Cox, and the others were themselves exiles who had been prosecuted by the Marian authorities, they still demanded a semblance of civil obedience to the English monarch. Therefore while an act of recantation or religious dissimulation could be excused or justified, outright noncompliance with the English crown would not be tolerated. While Jewel could be reintegrated into the evangelical community despite his perceived apostasy, Knox's sedition- even against the tyrannous and popish Queen Mary- could never be allowed.

Jewel's position on the matter would prove to be consistent. Years later he would write a letter to Knox's friends William Whittingham and Christopher Goodman, in which he expressed regret that his appearance in Frankfurt had been so tumultuous, but still maintained unwavering confidence that his actions were right and defensible: "Wherefore, brethren, if in that matter, which I cannot even now condemn, I have at all injured both or either of you, or, carried away with zeal and the heat of contention, have applied to you any unbecoming word, I beg and beseech you to forgive me this wrong, and to bury it in everlasting oblivion."<sup>114</sup> Jewel's consolatory gesture here is also a reminder that these fundamental divisions were later hidden away. After Elizabeth's accession many who had dissembled simply ignored their recent history, and were quickly reintegrated into the European Protestant community. For instance, the prominent London merchant Richard Hilles had returned to mass attendance during Mary's reign, at which time he also suspended his correspondence with his long-time friend, the Swiss reformer Heinrich Bullinger. After Mary's death, however, Hilles simply began writing to Bullinger again, pretending as though nothing had happened.<sup>115</sup> Some of those who had urged conformity during the persecution were even leading the call for godly reformation in the Elizabethan church. In November 1559, for instance, it was none other than Reginald West, the same man who had begged the martyr Nicholas Ridley to conform, who now championed the returning exiles; newly appointed by Archbishop Parker as rector of St. Michael Paternoster Royal, West delivered a feisty Paul's Cross sermon in which he "railed of the rood-loft," while also insisting "that we ought to help

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<sup>112</sup> "David Whitehead and Others to John Calvin, 20 September 1555," *Original Letters Relative to the English Reformation, Written During the Reigns of King Henry VIII, King Edward VI, and Queen Mary*, Vol. 3 pt. 2, ed. Hastings Robinson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1847), 755-763.

<sup>113</sup> "David Whitehead and Others to John Calvin," *Original Letters*, 761.

<sup>114</sup> "John Jewel to William Whittingham and Christopher Goodman, June 1557," *Works of John Jewel*, Vol. 4, 1192-1193.

<sup>115</sup> David Loades, "Hilles, Richard (c.1514–1587)," *ODNB*.

them that fled for the word of God, and to give them a living.”<sup>116</sup> And yet, as we shall see in later chapters, even though the Protestant community was able to publicly reconstitute itself upon Elizabeth’s accession, this uncomfortable history of religious conformity would continue to haunt the English religious landscape for decades to come.

VI.

In this chapter I have attempted to resolve a fundamental disjunction between the beliefs that early modern people professed and the actions that they took. What we end up with is a picture of the Marian Protestant community that is drastically different than that presented by some recent scholars. Although in public polemic those who recanted or dissimulated were cast as idolatrous false brethren who deserted the army of God in favor of the Antichrist, it must also be remembered that conformity was often the winning argument. After all, the vast manuscript collection of John Foxe, now primarily in the Harleian Collection of the British Library, is rife with the recantations of Marian Protestants who professed their beliefs openly enough to be arrested and examined, and yet ultimately chose not to take the martyrs’ path.<sup>117</sup> Furthermore, when the specifics of many of these cases are examined closely, we find that individuals often found ways to justify their actions. Jewel’s flippant reply to Harding, for example, reveals that he did not understand his Marian recantation as a failure of belief, but as the actualization of another religious truth claim: his trust in divine providence. And so, we find that early modern patterns of belief and action were always nuanced and variegated enough to allow for a wide range of justifiable decision strategies. If there was a “willingness to suffer and die,” then there must have also been a willingness to obey and survive.<sup>118</sup> Martyrdom was not, and could never be, the only defensible option.

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<sup>116</sup> Henry Machyn, *The Diary of Henry Machyn, Citizen and Merchant-Taylor of London, from AD 1550 to AD 1563*, ed. John Gough Nichols (London: J.B. Nichols and Son, 1848), 216; Brett Usher, *William Cecil and Episcopacy, 1559-1577* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2003), 41; “Reginaldus West (CCEd Person ID: 33375),” *The Clergy of the Church of England Database 1540–1835* <<http://www.theclergydatabase.org.uk>>, accessed 27 November 2012.

<sup>117</sup> See, for example, BL Harleian MS 421.

<sup>118</sup> On the “willingness to die,” see: Gregory, *Salvation at Stake*, 97-138, *passim*.

### Chapter 3 The Imitation of Cicero: Persecution, Conformity, and Nicholas Grimald's *Duties*

History has not been kind to the Tudor scholar and preacher, Nicholas Grimald. In the early twentieth century his modern biographer and editor, the literary scholar L.R. Merrill, dubbed him “The Judas of the Reformation.”<sup>1</sup> Despite Merrill’s penchant for vilification, he was not being original: the early eighteenth century historian John Strype had also cast Grimald as antagonist in his account of the Marian martyrs. In Strype’s history, Grimald was the villainous chaplain to Nicholas Ridley, who betrayed his heroic master in a cowardly act of self-preservation:

As they had true friends, so they had false ones too, treacherous Judases, that betrayed them...Of this sort was Grimbald;<sup>2</sup> who this year being in the Marshalsea for religion, was persuaded to recant; and confessed and revealed everything he knew concerning the professors. Many writings of Ridley he got, and secretly put them into the hands of the popish superiors. But this recantation of his was kept secret from the prisoners, and they were not to know it, though they suspected him: and so remaining among them, he served as a spy upon them.<sup>3</sup>

Although Reformation historians have largely portrayed Grimald negatively, scholars interested in his role as a poet, playwright, and classical translator have generally been more kind.<sup>4</sup> He has especially garnered interest as a contributor (and possibly editor) to the first printed anthology of English poetry, the 1557 work *Songes and Sonettes* (commonly referred to as *Tottel's Miscellany*).<sup>5</sup> Literary scholars, however, have never contextualized Grimald’s poetical and philological achievements within his life as a preacher and purported turncoat; for example, this biographical disconnect led the late

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<sup>1</sup> L. R. Merrill, “Nicholas Grimald, the Judas of the Reformation,” *PMLA: Publications of the Modern Language Association of America* 37, no. 2 (1922), 216-227; *The Life and Poems of Nicholas Grimald*, ed. L. R. Merrill. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1925).

<sup>2</sup> His name also appears as Grimauld, Grimoald, Grymald, Grimbald, and other variant spellings. I have used the spelling found in the *ODNB*: Michael G. Brennan, “Grimald, Nicholas (b. 1519/20, d. in or before 1562),” *ODNB*.

<sup>3</sup> John Strype, *Ecclesiastical Memorials: Relating Chiefly to Religion, and Its Reformation Under the Reigns of King Henry VIII, King Edward VI, and Queen Mary the First: With the Appendixes Containing the Original Papers, Records, &c., Volume 4* (London: Samuel Bagster, 1816), 237.

<sup>4</sup> For example, see: Louise Guiney, *Recusant Poets* (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1939), 82-99; Nicholas Grimald, *Christus redivivus, Archipropheta*, ed. Kurt Tetzeli von Rosador (New York: Georg Olms, 1982), 5-23.

<sup>5</sup> Henry Howard Surrey, Thomas Wyatt, Nicholas Grimald, and Richard Tottel, *Songes and Sonettes Written by the Right Honorable Lorde Henry Haward Late Earle of Surrey, and Other* (1557, STC 13861).

nineteenth century scholar Edward Arber to assert wrongfully that the Grimald who had betrayed the Protestant martyr Ridley in 1555 could not have possibly been the same Grimald who dedicated a translation of Cicero's *De Officiis* to a Roman Catholic bishop only a few months later.<sup>6</sup>

This chapter attempts to reconcile Grimald's seemingly paradoxical religious life with his English translation of Cicero's *De Officiis*, published in 1556 as *Marcus Tullius Ciceroes Thre Bokes of Duties*.<sup>7</sup> Grimald's *Duties* went through at least seven editions, and remained the preeminent English translation of Cicero throughout the sixteenth century.<sup>8</sup> Although Grimald's *Duties* has been recognized as a pivotal work in the history of English translation, the circumstances of its creation have been largely ignored.<sup>9</sup> Merrill dismissed the translation as yet another example of Grimald's treachery, because the work was dedicated to the Roman Catholic prelate and Marian Privy Councillor Thomas Thirlby, Bishop of Ely. For Merrill, that Grimald would praise a Roman Catholic bishop so soon after his recantation was "further evidence of the duplicity of Grimald's character, and of his seeking to curry favor with the great."<sup>10</sup>

Merrill was correct in asserting that the *Duties* was a work of duplicity, though not for the reasons he claimed. Produced in the months following his supposed apostasy, Grimald used his English translation of Cicero's *De Officiis* to make a veiled yet profound political and religious statement at the height of the Marian persecutions. This chapter will demonstrate that when Grimald's *Duties* is considered within the context of his recantation, it reveals itself to be a work of subversive Protestant conformity. An intentionally kaleidoscopic work, the *Duties* can be read, in one sense, as a conformist's guidebook, a philosophical enchiridion for the morally conflicted citizen. The *Duties* is Cicero's answer to the problem of competing loyalties, repackaged by Grimald at a time in which obedience to the English state often conflicted with religious convictions. In this sense the *Duties* is simultaneously Grimald's apologia for his own recantation, and an

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<sup>6</sup> Henry Howard Surrey, Thomas Wyatt, Nicholas Grimald, and Richard Tottel, *Tottel's Miscellany*, ed. Edward Arber (London: A. Constable, 1870), ix, xi.

<sup>7</sup> Marcus Tullius Cicero and Nicholas Grimald, *Marcus Tullius Ciceroes thre bokes of duties to Marcus his sonne, turned out of latine into english, by Nicholas Grimalde* (1556, STC 5281).

<sup>8</sup> Although the grammarian Robert Whyttington had published a Latin and English edition of the work in 1534, this version had been poorly received. See, Howard Jones, *Master Tully, Cicero in Tudor England*, (Nieuwkoop: De Graaf Publishers, 1998), 132-7; Grimald was obviously aware of Whyttington's translation, because in his own preface he alludes to it negatively: Grimald, *Duties*, N.G. to the reader, sig. 5v.

<sup>9</sup> For assessments of Grimald's *Duties* as a work of Latin translation, see: Marcus Tullius Cicero, *Marcus Tullius Ciceroes thre bokes of duties, to Marcus his sonne, turned out of latine into english, by Nicolas Grimalde*, ed. Gerald O'Gorman (Washington, DC: Folger Books, 1990), 13-29; Jones, *Master Tully*, 138-42; John Butler Gabel, "Tudor Translations of Cicero's *De Officiis*" (PhD diss., Ohio State University, 1961); Massimiliano Morini, *Tudor Translation in Theory and Practice* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2006), 17-23.

<sup>10</sup> Merrill, *Life and Poems*, 51.

intellectual defense of a complex and nuanced position of Protestant conformity steeped in civic republicanism.

Since Patrick Collinson first postulated the existence of an Elizabethan “monarchical republic,” historians have increasingly examined the ways in which Tudor “commonwealth men” such as William Cecil conceived of themselves as quasi-republican citizens in a mixed-polity.<sup>11</sup> Working from Collinson’s thesis, Stephen Alford has shown that Cecil and other Elizabethan councillors were not mere servants, manipulated by the monarch, but rather served the commonwealth in conjunction with the queen in the determination of state policy.<sup>12</sup> Likewise, Markku Peltonen’s *Classical Humanism and Republicanism in English Political Thought* has shown that early modern Englishmen drew upon an existing civic humanist tradition in their conception of themselves as active participants in the commonwealth.<sup>13</sup> Each of these works has pointed to the existence of a vibrant political culture that was understood, conceptualized, and contested using the language of classical republicanism.

However, historians have largely envisioned this quasi-republicanism as a distinctly secular phenomenon, divorced from its pervasive religious context. As Jonathan Scott has observed, “the greatest shortcoming of the existing literature on English republicanism” has been “the relative neglect of its religious dimension.”<sup>14</sup> I contend that historical assessments of this burgeoning civic humanist discourse must recognize that conflict over the duty of religious conformity was the dominant and recurring cause of political and social discord in Tudor England. It should also be recognized that many of the humanists who introduced the rhetoric of classical republicanism into Tudor political discourse were deeply embroiled in the religious controversies of the Reformation. Therefore, borrowing from another famous Collinsonian phrase, I suggest that historians looking to conceptualize the multifaceted role of the citizen in the monarchical republic should look to politics, but with the religion put back.<sup>15</sup> In this chapter I will use Grimald’s English translation of the *De Officiis* to show one instance in which the intellectual problem of religious conformity

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<sup>11</sup> Patrick Collinson, “The Monarchical Republic of Queen Elizabeth I” reprinted in *Elizabethan Essays* (London: Hambledon Press, 1994), 31-57; *The Monarchical Republic of Early Modern England: Essays in Response to Patrick Collinson*, ed. John F. McDiarmid (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2007).

<sup>12</sup> Stephen Alford, *The Early Elizabethan Polity: William Cecil and the British Succession Crisis, 1558-1569* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

<sup>13</sup> Markku Peltonen, *Classical Humanism and Republicanism in English Political Thought, 1570-1640* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995); Anne McLaren has argued that gender dynamics were the catalyst for the “monarchical republic”: *Political Culture in the Reign of Elizabeth I* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

<sup>14</sup> Jonathan Scott, “Classical Republicanism in Seventeenth-century England and the Netherlands,” in *Republicanism: A Shared European Heritage, Volume I: Republicanism and Constitutionalism in Early Modern Europe*, eds. Martin van Gelderen and Quentin Skinner (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 61.

<sup>15</sup> Patrick Collinson, “*De Republica Anglorum*: Or, History with the Politics Put Back” in *Elizabethan Essays*, 1-29.

was an impetus for an appeal to classical republicanism. When examined within its religious and political context, Grimald's *Duties* signifies an infusion of republican thought into Tudor political discourse, not as a direct reaction to the theoretical powers of the monarchy, but from the crucible of religious conformity. As such, it may serve as a synecdoche for a pervasive problem in Tudor history.

I.

In his 1557 work *Scriptorum Illustrium Maioris Britanniae Catalogus*, the exiled churchman and controversialist John Bale provided an index of his friend Nicholas Grimald's works.<sup>16</sup> Considering that only a small number of Grimald's works are extant, Bale's list provides the only real evidence of the scope of Grimald's scholarship. Grimald's literary output was apparently considerable, even for a humanist scholar of his ilk. Bale lists around forty different works. There are numerous Latin editions of works by Roman authors, with particular emphasis on Cicero and Virgil. Grimald also appears to have produced a few classically and biblically themed plays, as well as a few biblical commentaries.<sup>17</sup> One of the entries is entitled "Ad amicum Joan. Baleum," and is further evidence of Bale and Grimald's friendship. Bale also listed books that he obtained "Ex eiusdem Grimaldi museo."<sup>18</sup>

Several of the religious works also appear to have featured a strong evangelical message; for example, Bale lists a work entitled *Vox populi*, which was addressed to "All those who have the care of souls."<sup>19</sup> Although the work is lost, Bale provides a brief description in the *Index*: "He wrote in English *The Voice of the People* to those rectors, vicars, archdeacons, deans, prebendaries, etc., who spend their lives far from their flocks, or do not perform their sacred duties. Also to those unlearned laymen who greedily seize and wrongly retain for themselves the tithes and sacred offerings which ought to provide a livelihood for the preachers and ministers of religion."<sup>20</sup> This work seems to have been a popular one within Protestant circles: in 1556 a layman in Beverly arrested for unlawful preaching against transubstantiation confessed to having read Grimald's *Vox Populi*.<sup>21</sup> Bale prefaced his index by providing a brief biographical sketch of Grimald in which he extols his abilities as a scholar and orator, and concludes by praising Grimald as a true man of faith. Bale writes: "...applying his mind to the truth of Christianity as much in writing as in speaking, he fervently showed and taught that our salvation is alone in Jesus

<sup>16</sup> John Bale, *Scriptorum Illustrium Maioris Britanniae Catalogus* (Basel, 1557), 701. This work was later expanded as the *Index Britanniae Scriptorum*.

<sup>17</sup> Bale, *Catalogus*, 701.

<sup>18</sup> John Bale, *Index Britanniae Scriptorum Quos Ex Variis Bibliothecis Non Parvo Labore Collegit Ioannes Baleus, Cum Aliis, John Bale's Index of British and Other Writers, Anecdota Oxoniensia. Mediaeval and Modern Series, Pt. Ix.*, eds. Reginald Lane Poole and Mary Bateson. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1902), 302-4.

<sup>19</sup> Bale, *Catalogus*, 701.

<sup>20</sup> Quoted in Merrill, *Life and Poems of Nicholas Grimald*, 27.

<sup>21</sup> A.G. Dickens, *Lollards and Protestants in the Diocese of York, 1509-1558*, (London: Oxford University Press, 1959), 228. Although Bale does not provide a date for this work, the seventeenth century antiquarian Anthony Wood claimed that the work was published in October 1549: Merrill, *Life and Poems*, 27.



the Saviour, and that he himself was intent not on his own, but on the divine glory.”<sup>22</sup> Bale rhetorically asks, “What liberality can be greater, what generosity can be broader, than to impart to others free of charge what we have learned at great expense and with labor, as our friend Grimald did?” Thus Bale presented Grimald as a classical scholar *par excellence*, who used his humanist skills for the advancement of the cause of reform.

Although Grimald had been associated with Protestantism throughout Edward’s reign, he became fully engaged with the cause of reform once he left Oxford for a preaching appointment at Eccles in January 1552.<sup>23</sup> Nothing is known of Grimald’s tenure there, but within a few months he apparently left Eccles to become a chaplain to Nicholas Ridley, the Bishop of London. Several of Ridley’s surviving letters show Grimald at the heart of the Protestant reform movement, and in a November 1552 letter to Sir William Cecil and Vice Chamberlain Sir John Gates, Ridley recommended that Grimald be appointed to the chancery of St. Paul’s Cathedral.<sup>24</sup>

With the accession of Mary in the summer of 1553, however, any chance for further preferment was dashed, as Ridley was quickly arrested along with Thomas Cranmer and Hugh Latimer.<sup>25</sup> Eventually all three were taken to Oxford and imprisoned at the Bocardo. In one of his earliest letters from prison, Ridley wrote to Latimer’s chaplain Augustine Bernher, asking him to have Grimald translate works that would contribute to the cause of Protestant reform. Yet there is also a sense that Bernher had begun to suspect Grimald’s constancy. Ridley writes:

But that at your last being here you cast cold water upon mine affection towards Grimbald, else methinks I could appoint wherein he might occupy himself to his own profit in learning which he liketh, and to no small profit which might ensue afterward to the church of Christ in England: as, if he would take in hand and interpretate Laurentius Valla (which, as he knoweth, is a man of singular eloquence), I say, his book, which he made and wrote against that false feigned fable, forged of Constantius Magnus, and his dotation [sic] and glorious exaltation of the see of Rome: and, when he hath done that, let him translate a work of Aeneas Sylvius, *De gestis Basiliensis Concilii*. In the which although there be many things that savoureth of the pan, and also he himself was afterward a bishop of Rome, yet, I dare say, the papists would glory but a little to see such books go forth in English.<sup>26</sup>

This letter is significant not only because it shows how Grimald’s skills as a humanist scholar were still being utilized for specific religious objectives, but also because it reveals that some in the godly community were already viewing Grimald with suspicion.

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<sup>22</sup> Quoted in Merrill, *Life and Poems of Nicholas Grimald*, 17.

<sup>23</sup> Merrill, *Life and Poems*, 14.

<sup>24</sup> Nicholas Ridley, *The Works of Nicholas Ridley*, 337.

<sup>25</sup> Loades, *The Oxford Martyrs*, 167-9.

<sup>26</sup> “Bishop Ridley to Bernhere,” *The Writings of John Bradford*, Vol. 2, ed. Aubrey Townsend (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1853), 160.

In December 1554, the Marian authorities intercepted several works that Ridley had secretly sent from prison to Grimald. In the process the courier, Ridley's brother-in-law George Shipside, was also arrested. In a letter to Cranmer and Latimer, Ridley writes:

The cause of my brother's imprisonment is this, so far as I can perceive. There is a young man called Mr. Grimbold, which was my chaplain, a preacher, and a man of much eloquence both in the English and also in the Latin. To this man, being desirous of all things which I had written and done since the beginning of mine imprisonment, my brother (as I said) hath sent copies, no more but of all things that I have done...All these things they have gotten of Grimbold, as my brother doth suppose; not that Grimbold hath betrayed him, but (as is supposed) one which my brother trusted to carry his letters unto Grimbold; for it will not sink into my head to think that Grimbold would ever play me such a Judas's part.<sup>27</sup>

Although Ridley was loath to believe it, suspicion had unquestionably been placed on Grimald. The confiscated works that Grimald had apparently requested comprised the bulk of Ridley's prison writings, including his joint works with Latimer, and his *Three Positions to the Three Questions*.<sup>28</sup> That Ridley would have entrusted Grimald with his works (regardless of whether or not that trust was eventually proven misguided) shows that Grimald was a key player in the Oxford Protestant circle.

Even though Grimald was suspected of cooperating with the Marian authorities, within a few weeks he was also arrested and imprisoned in the Bocardo.<sup>29</sup> However, by the last week of January rumors began to circulate that Grimald had been released. "I have heard that Master Grimbold hath gotten his liberty," Ridley reported, "if without any blemish of Christ's glory, I am right glad thereof."<sup>30</sup> In a letter to the imprisoned John Bradford, Ridley stated that Grimald had been sentenced to death, yet somehow had managed to be set free: "With us it is said that Master Grimbold was adjudged to be hanged, drawn, and quartered; of whom we hear now, that he is at liberty."<sup>31</sup> Although there is not any sense in this letter that Ridley had suspected his former chaplain of recanting, he quickly became convinced that Grimald had conformed to save himself from execution. In May 1555 Ridley confirmed Grimald's apostasy in a letter to the exile Edmund Grindal: "Grimbold was caught by the heel and cast into the Marshalsea [prison], but now is at liberty again; but I fear me he escaped not without some becking and bowing (alas) of his knee unto Baal."<sup>32</sup>

Since Ridley's information was based largely on hearsay, his letters alone do not conclusively prove that Grimald recanted. However, corroborative accounts from other imprisoned Protestants confirm that Grimald relented to the Catholic authorities.

<sup>27</sup> Ridley, *Works of Nicholas Ridley*, 361.

<sup>28</sup> Ridley, *Works of Nicholas Ridley*, 361.

<sup>29</sup> Merrill, *Life and Poems*, 46.

<sup>30</sup> Ridley, *Works of Nicholas Ridley*, 372.

<sup>31</sup> Ridley, *Works of Nicholas Ridley*, 379.

<sup>32</sup> This is a reference to 1 Kings 19:18: Ridley, *Works of Nicholas Ridley*, 391.

Bradford, for example, claimed that the Marian examiner Hugh Weston had urged him to submit by telling him of Grimald's recantation. Bradford states: "And so when he Master Weston had overly read my arguments, and here and there spake little to the purpose for avoiding of them...he began to tell me how and what he had done for Grimbald, and how that I needed not to fear any reproach or slander I should sustain, belike meaning to have me secretly to have come to them, as Grimbald did; for he subscribed."<sup>33</sup> This letter is the most convincing case for Grimald's recantation, and is consistent with an account of the martyr Laurence Saunders printed in John Foxe's *Acts and Monuments*. This account claimed that Grimald came to visit Saunders shortly before his execution:

The day following in the morning, the Sheriff of London delivered him to certain of the Queen's guard, which were appointed to carry him to the city of Coventry, there to be burned. The first night he came to Saint Albons, where master Grimoald (a man which had more store of good gifts than of constancy) did speak with him. After Saunders had given him a lesson meet for his lightness, he took a cup into his hand, and asked him if he would pledge him of that cup, of which he would begin to him. Grimoald by his shrugging and shrinking, showing what he was, said of that cup which is in your hand, I will pledge you: but of that other which you mean, I will not promise you. Well, said Saunders. My dear lord Jesus Christ hath begon to me of a more bitter cup, then mine shall be, and shall I not pledge my most sweet Saviour? Yes I hope.<sup>34</sup>

For Merrill, this episode revealed "something of the undaunted courage of the martyrs, and the inconstancy, the self-acknowledged guilt, of the tricky Grimald, who betrayed the martyrs to their deaths."<sup>35</sup> Although Foxe's account does portray Grimald in a highly negative manner, there is no evidence from Foxe that Grimald had been sent as an agent of the Marian authorities. Coupled with the account of the examiner Weston's invocation of Grimald's secret conformity, however, it does suggest that Grimald may have been attempting to convince his friend Saunders to save himself by recanting.

The very nature of the account also suggests that it was rhetorically constructed to glorify the martyr Saunders' actions in his final hours. In particular, the account echoes the scene in Mark 10, when Christ predicted his own death. When the apostles James and John asked for seats of glory in heaven, Christ responded, "Ye know not what ye ask: can ye drink of the cup that I drink of? and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?"<sup>36</sup> By refusing Saunders' offer, therefore, Grimald was symbolically refusing the cup of Christ's suffering, that is, martyrdom. This is not to suggest that Foxe fabricated the episode in any sense, especially since Saunders may have been consciously making the parallel himself. It does open the possibility, however, that the details of the episode were exaggerated or dramatized in order to emphasize Saunders' resolve. It is also

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<sup>33</sup> John Bradford, *The Writings of John Bradford, Vol. I*, 548.

<sup>34</sup> Foxe, 1563 ed., 1116.

<sup>35</sup> Merrill, *Life and Poems*, 48.

<sup>36</sup> Mark 10:38; I owe enormous thanks to Karl Gunther for his helpful thoughts on this passage.

significant that Foxe emphasizes Grimald's lack of "constancy" rather than attacking him outright as a religious traitor. If Grimald was actually a Catholic informant and "Judas" as Merrill and others have asserted, it is likely that Foxe would have attacked him far more harshly. In this sense Foxe's portrayal of Grimald as more of an irresolute weasel than a Romish wolf suggests that his recantation was an act of outward political conformity, rather than a wholesale abandonment of his prior beliefs.

In any case, Grimald's recantation and subsequent conformity cut against the stark rhetorical demands of Ridley and the other English Protestant leaders. While imprisoned during the winter of 1554-5, for example, Ridley wrote a pamphlet entitled *A Piteous Lamentation of the Miserable Estate of the Church of Christ in England*.<sup>37</sup> Written at a time when Ridley was certainly aware of his impending execution, it seems to have served as a contemplative reinforcement against his own fears of death. An unabashed critique of religious conformity, the treatise exhorted conflicted Protestants to remain steadfast in their faith. The *Lamentation* also provides a glimpse into the intellectual justifications of martyrdom within the Protestant circle of which Grimald was very much a part, and is a stark counter-balance to the position that would later be presented by Grimald in the *Duties*. Considering that Ridley wrote the *Lamentation* shortly after Grimald's suspected apostasy, it is also likely that he thought of his former chaplain's recantation while composing the work.

The *Lamentation* begins as anti-papal jeremiad, and ends with a scriptural attack on Protestant conformity. For Ridley, the English Protestant under Mary has been placed in an inherently precarious situation. While he recognized that it was not easy to forsake one's homeland and monarch, he still maintained that it was a spiritual necessity.<sup>38</sup> Although fleeing into exile was the best available recourse, he argued that true Christians should be prepared to face death at the hands of civil authorities: "What can be hereafter looked for by reason, to the man of God and true Christian abiding in the realm, but extreme violence of death, or else to deny his Master?"<sup>39</sup> Echoing the stringent anti-Nicodemite position that had come to characterized Reformed political thought, Ridley established a strict dichotomy of choice for the conflicted Protestant in England: either deny your faith and thus deny Christ, or else accept the martyr's cup. In this sense, Ridley's *Lamentation* was an attack on those Protestants who attempted to justify civil conformity as a mere act of outward obedience, divorced from their inner spiritual convictions. Yet Ridley also regretfully recognized that this manner of thinking was commonplace.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> Ridley, "A Piteous Lamentation of the Miserable Estate of the Church of Christ in England," in *Works of Nicholas Ridley*, 49-80. The work appears to have circulated among the Protestant underground via Latimer's former secretary Bernher, before making its way to the exiles on the continent. Although Ridley explicitly stated that he did not want the work published before his death, it was certainly read by many of the key players in the Protestant movement within weeks of its production.

<sup>38</sup> Ridley, *Works of Nicholas Ridley*, 62.

<sup>39</sup> Ridley, *Works of Nicholas Ridley*, 61.

<sup>40</sup> Ridley, *Works of Nicholas Ridley*, 66: "...[A] sort of men there be, which also will be counted favourers of God's word, and are, I fear, in number far more, and worse to be persuaded to that which is the godly mean."

For Ridley there could be no conflict between the Christian's public and private conscience, because "God's word requireth not only the belief of the heart, but also the confession of the mouth."<sup>41</sup> Therefore inconsistency between outward action and spiritual conviction was impermissible, even in situations of extreme duress. By Ridley's estimation, such explanations were only examples of egregious excuse-making, and show that "a man is ready to find and invent some colour to cloak his conscience, to do that thing his heart desireth."<sup>42</sup> It is telling that much of the *Lamentation* uses language that parallels Foxe's account of Grimald. For example, Ridley argues that the true Christian "should not shrink, not relent one inch, or give back, whatsoever shall befall, but stand to their tackle, and stick by it even unto death, as they will Christ shall stick by them at the latter day."<sup>43</sup> By this formulation, Foxe's Grimald, "shrugging and shrinkyng" in the face of death, was the antithesis of a true Christian.<sup>44</sup>

Regardless of Grimald's inner convictions, the accounts of Ridley, Bradford, and Foxe show that in all likelihood he recanted. It does not seem likely that he served willingly as a Catholic informant, as Merrill and others have suggested, but there is no question that he acquiesced to the Marian authorities rather than accept the role of Protestant martyr. Yet as a close friend and colleague of many of the martyrs, their deaths likely weighed heavily on his mind as he found himself a free man. On October 16, 1555, his friends and former patrons Ridley and Latimer were burned to death as heretics. Less than six months later, on March 21, 1556, Cranmer was also executed. After the fire was lit observers could hear Cranmer reciting the dying words of St. Stephen- "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit," until he was silenced by the flames.<sup>45</sup> This may have had particular resonance with Grimald, who had once written a tragedy called *Protomartyr*, based on Stephen's death.<sup>46</sup> It is in this same year that Grimald's translation of the *De Officiis* appeared.

II.

Grimald begins the *Duties* with a dedication to Thomas Thirlby, the Bishop of Ely and a member of Queen Mary's Privy Council: "To the Right Reverend father in god, and his singular good lord, Thomas, Bishop of Ely, one of the King, and Queen's Majesties most honorable privy counsel."<sup>47</sup> It is for this reason that Merrill and other modern scholars have been convinced of Grimald's Catholicism after his 1555 recantation.<sup>48</sup> After all, how could a true Protestant have dedicated a work to a prominent Catholic bishop and advisor to the Queen at the height of the Marian persecutions? However, the public visage of Thirlby as a Marian advisor and Roman Catholic bishop obfuscates the complicated and conflicted relationship that Thirlby had with many of the prominent Protestants of the period. In one respect Grimald could not have found a more perfect

<sup>41</sup> Ridley, *Works of Nicholas Ridley*, 68.

<sup>42</sup> Ridley, *Works of Nicholas Ridley*, 67.

<sup>43</sup> Ridley, *Works of Nicholas Ridley*, 65.

<sup>44</sup> This is a reference to Hebrews 10:35-8.

<sup>45</sup> MacCulloch, *Thomas Cranmer*, 603.

<sup>46</sup> This work is no longer extant, but is cited by Bale: Bale, *Index*, 302.

<sup>47</sup> Grimald, *Duties*, Prefatory epistle to Thomas Thirlby, sig. 2r.

<sup>48</sup> The literary scholar Louise Guiney even classified Grimald as a Catholic recusant, see: Guiney, *Recusant Poets*, 82-99.

symbol of religious conformity than Thirlby: by choosing Thirlby as a patron, Grimald allied himself with a great model for the separation of public duty and private conscience. As we shall see, by dedicating the work to Thirlby, Grimald could simultaneously appear to be completely orthodox in his beliefs and intentions, while also making it clear to certain English Protestants that he was still sympathetic to their aims. By all appearances Thirlby's commitments to the Roman Catholic Church and the Marian government were sincere; however, he had flirted with Protestantism throughout the late 1530's, and was a personal friend to both Cranmer and Latimer.<sup>49</sup> Although Thirlby was designated to lead an investigation of married clergy following the institution of the Six Articles, the secretly married Cranmer was never officially questioned; a concession that Diarmaid MacCulloch attributes to Thirlby and Cranmer's friendship.<sup>50</sup> During Edward's reign he was not dismissed, though he increasingly appeared to be allied with conservative interests. For example, in a December 1548 debate in the House of Lords over the treatment of the Eucharist in the prayerbook, Thirlby emerged as one of the most vocal critics of further reform.<sup>51</sup> Despite his reservations, Thirlby remained a fairly active member of the Edwardian church leadership. In April 1549 he even sat on a commission, headed by Cranmer, meant to prosecute radical evangelicals as heretics, and he also took part, though likely reluctantly, in the December 1550 royal order to destroy stone altars.<sup>52</sup> Nonetheless, Thirlby was appointed to the Privy Council shortly after Mary's accession in 1553, and was later elevated to the bishopric of Ely. As a member of the Privy Council, Thirlby found himself in constant disagreement with Gardiner and the other strict conservatives. He appears to have hoped that Mary would not attempt to completely restore papal authority in England, but rather return to a more Henrician approach towards the church.<sup>53</sup>

In February 1556, near the time Grimald likely completed his translation, Mary selected Thirlby, along with Edmund Bonner, to preside over the ritual degradation of Cranmer in Christ Church Cathedral.<sup>54</sup> As MacCulloch has observed, "...it was a cruel addition to the many uncongenial duties which Thirlby had been forced to perform in his career to be responsible for the ritual humiliation of his old Cambridge friend."<sup>55</sup> Although the primary account of this episode comes from Foxe, Thirlby was still shown to have been a reluctant and embarrassed participant. Bonner, conversely, appears to have relished the chance to degrade Cranmer. At one point during the ritual Thirlby became visibly upset, and tried to convince Bonner to desist. Foxe described the scene: "The Bishop of Ely diverse times pulled [Bonner] by the sleeve to make an end, and said to him afterward when they went to dinner that he had broken promise with him: for he had

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<sup>49</sup> MacCulloch, *Thomas Cranmer*, 136.

<sup>50</sup> MacCulloch, *Thomas Cranmer*, 251.

<sup>51</sup> T.F. Shirley, *Thomas Thirlby, Tudor Bishop*, (London: William Clowes and Sons, 1964), 96-118; MacCulloch, *Thomas Cranmer*, 404-6.

<sup>52</sup> MacCulloch, *Thomas Cranmer*, 422-3, 438.

<sup>53</sup> David Loades, *The Reign of Mary Tudor: Politics, Government, and Religion in England, 1553-1558*, (London: Longman, 1991), 155.

<sup>54</sup> Shirley, *Thomas Thirlby*, 158-161.

<sup>55</sup> MacCulloch, *Thomas Cranmer*, 591.

entreated him earnestly to use him with reverence.”<sup>56</sup> Foxe’s intent here was to show Bonner’s cruelty, but he also revealed that Thirlby had maintained a great deal of respect and sympathy for Cranmer. This also suggests that Grimald’s dedication to Thirlby was not simply a sign of his treachery, as Merrill and others have insisted, but was rather a nuanced and sage choice for someone who had recently conformed. This may also help explain how Bale, who was evidently aware of the dedication since he listed the *Bokes of Duties* in his catalogue of Grimald’s works, was still able to praise Grimald as a true Christian, years after his purported betrayal.<sup>57</sup> By selecting a patron who maintained a public image of conformity yet was simultaneously known to have sympathies with the persecuted Protestants, Grimald was able to signify a veiled commitment to his former coreligionists without bringing himself to the attention of the Marian authorities.

A close examination of Grimald’s translation reveals that he intentionally paralleled himself with Cicero by emulating passages of the *De Officiis* throughout both the prefatory letter to Thirlby and the address to the reader. Grimald begins, for example, by claiming that he returned to reading the *De Officiis* because he had newfound time for his studies. It would have been obvious to Thirlby, and to certain other readers, that Grimald’s return to classical study was not voluntary, but was a result of his inability to continue preaching. Grimald muses:

Having recourse of late (right reverend father) to the old studies, that I once applied in the uniuersity: and getting some fruit of quiet life to the perusing, and recording of those things, wherewith in time past I felt myself greatly both delighted, and furdered: I gave my mind chiefly to such kind of learning: as would serve best both to the order of my study, and also to the governance of my life: so that comparing my experience, and reading together, I might make my private diligence in studying do service to the open use of living.<sup>58</sup>

This introduction is suspiciously similar to a statement by Cicero in the second book, in which he declared his own return to study as the single fortunate outcome of the fall of the Roman republic. Both men thus portrayed themselves as citizens in newfound solitude. Cicero writes:

I thought, sorrows might be put away most honestly, if I returned myself to philosophy. Whereunto when being young I had given much time, to learn it: after that I began to attend honours, and betook myself wholly to the commonweal: so much leisure was left for philosophy: as remained of the times spent about my friends, and in the commonweal’s causes...In our most miseries therefore, we seen to have gotten this so great a commodity: that wee might put those maters in writing: which were not sufficiently

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<sup>56</sup> Foxe, 1563 edition, 1492.

<sup>57</sup> Bale, *Scriptorum Illustrium Maioris Britanniae Catalogus*, 701.

<sup>58</sup> Grimald, *Duties*, Prefatory epistle to Thomas Thirlby, sig. 2r.

known to our men, and yet were most worthy of knowledge. For what is there in faith more wishful, than wisdom?<sup>59</sup>

By echoing Cicero in his explanation for writing the work, Grimald was identifying himself with the Roman orator. Furthermore, by drawing the comparison, Grimald was by extension equating Cicero's circumstances with his own. Therefore, Grimald subtly implied a parallel between his own fall from religious and political life after the collapse of the English Reformation, and Cicero's enforced solitude after the collapse of the Roman republic.

The thematic content of the *De Officiis* is centered on the question of the individual citizen's proper behavior when faced with conflicting obligations. Written after the Roman Republic had fallen into political chaos following the Ides of March in 44 BC, the *De Officiis* was Cicero's final work before his execution by Marc Antony. As the classical scholars M.T. Griffin and E.M. Atkins have observed, Cicero wrote the work "at a time of genuine political ambiguity, and the concern of the work with the difficulty of moral decision exactly suits the corresponding moral ambiguity that individuals faced."<sup>60</sup> In this sense, the *De Officiis* was meant to guide the reader towards ethically defensible action that would pacify the rampant discord in the republic. By translating the *De Officiis* into English, Grimald was applying this work to the religiously ambivalent landscape of Marian England, since he was keenly aware that Cicero had explicitly intended for the work to be an aid for the conflicted citizen.

In Cicero's estimation, the correct course of action was often relative to a particular set of circumstances. There were often situations that required to individuals to reprioritize or even reverse their previous obligations: "But often there befall seasons, that those duties, which seem to be most meet for a just man, and him, whom we call a good man, be changed, and become contrarious."<sup>61</sup> Cicero's flexible approach sharply contrasts with Ridley, who saw the choice of conscience as clearly and unquestionably set forth by Christ. While Ridley's *Lamentation* asserted that the Christian was always presented with a clear choice, the *Duties* recognized that the proper decision is often unclear: "...men doubt, whether it, that falleth in advisement, be honest to be done, or dishonest: in weighing whereof, many times, men's minds are diversely drawn into contrary opinions."<sup>62</sup> The *Duties*, therefore, was intended to guide conflicted citizens who were trapped in a morally ambiguous situation. Also in contrast to Ridley, the Ciceronian model allowed for individuals to be excused for actions that were performed under duress: "Now who seeith not, that it is not meet to stand to those promises, which a man hath promised being constrained with fear, or deluded with guile?"<sup>63</sup> By this standard Grimald's recent recantation was not necessarily a culpable act, because it had been committed while under the threat of execution.

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<sup>59</sup> Grimald, *Duties*, sig. I1r.

<sup>60</sup> Marcus Tullius Cicero, *On Duties*, eds. Miriam T. Griffin and E. M. Atkins (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), xv.

<sup>61</sup> Grimald, *Duties*, sig. B4v.

<sup>62</sup> Grimald, *Duties*, sig. A4v.

<sup>63</sup> Grimald, *Duties*, sig. B5r-v.



Using the example of his friend Cato, who had committed suicide rather than submit to Caesar's tyrannical authority, Cicero also argued that different men are suited to different types of death, depending on their nature. In Cicero's eyes, "nature had given Cato an incredible gravity, and the same he had strengthened with a continual steadfastness: and always had remained in his intent, and determined purpose: it was meet for him rather to die, than to look upon the tyrant's face."<sup>64</sup> Cicero clearly viewed Cato's death as a glorious one, but he also maintains that it would have been wrong for men of a different mettle to take their own life. By excusing those who refused the suicide's sword, Cicero was obviously defending his own actions, since he had publicly acquiesced to Caesar rather than commit suicide himself.<sup>65</sup> "For Marcus Cato was not in one quarrel, and the rest in an other, who yielded themselves unto Caesar in Africa," Cicero admitted, "Yet to the rest perchance it should have been counted a reproach, if they had slain themselves: because their life had been daintier, and their manners milder."<sup>66</sup> By the standards of the Stoic philosophy of *De Officiis*, all individuals had a natural duty to preserve their own life. Choosing to die, therefore, would be discouraged, unless particular circumstances gave the individual no honorable alternative. For Cato, the dishonor of accepting pardon from a tyrant trumped his natural duty towards self-preservation. Thus the nobility of one's death was relative to one's individual nature: "this difference of natures hath so great a power: that otherwhile some one man ought to kill himself, some other in the same quarrel ought not."<sup>67</sup> It seems that this Stoic standard could have excused Grimald for having recanted to save his own life: just as Cicero had denied himself the suicide's sword, Grimald had refused the martyr's cup.

In the *Duties*, Cicero recognized that the citizen was constantly placed in situations of moral uncertainty: "men are wont not only to doubt, whether a thing be honest, or dishonest: but also two honest things laid before them, whether is the honest."<sup>68</sup> The work, therefore, was meant to aid the citizen in determining the course of action most beneficial to both himself and the republic. Since in one respect *De Officiis* was Cicero's attempt to empower the citizens of the republic even after it had fallen to tyranny, so too Grimald's translation was intended to nurture the commonweal in its diseased state. In his prefatory letter to Thirlby, for example, Grimald insisted upon the *Duties'* applicability to both private and public affairs: "that either in private life, to attain quietness, and contention: or in officebearing, to win fame, and honour: or in every estate, both to avoid disorder, and enormity, and also to keep a right rule, and commendable behaviour: this book plainly is the mirrour of wisdom, the fortress of justice, the master of manliness, the school of temperance, the jewel of comeliness."<sup>69</sup> Thus Grimald positioned *De Officiis* as a moral compass for both citizen and the state. As Grimald tells Thirlby, the *Duties* contains "the whole trade, how to live among men discreetly, and honestly: and so rightly pointing out the pathway to all virtue: as none can

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<sup>64</sup> Grimald, *Duties*, sig. F4r-v.

<sup>65</sup> Griffin and Atkins, *On Duties*, 44 n.2.

<sup>66</sup> Grimald, *Duties*, sig. F4v.

<sup>67</sup> Grimald, *Duties*, sig. F4r.

<sup>68</sup> Grimald, *Duties*, sig. H7v.

<sup>69</sup> Grimald, *Duties*, Prefatory epistle to Thomas Thirlby, sig. 3r.

be righter, only Scripture excepted.”<sup>70</sup> By following Cicero’s advice, Grimald explained, the citizen will be morally strengthened, and will therefore benefit the whole of the commonweal, thus promoting order within the state. With typical flattery, Grimald explains to Thirlby it is to this end that he has produced the translation in dedication to him: “so your lordship’s judgment must needs be well liked: which is wont to allow lovely knowledge, and goodness: so will the common people more highly esteem the thing: as it is expedient for them to do: and the sooner also will they follow these wholesome lessons: which is full necessary, in a well ordered state.”<sup>71</sup> In this sense, the work’s philosophical applicability relies on an understanding of citizenship, since the welfare of the state rests on the moral strength of collective individuals. When Grimald’s emphasis on order is considered in the context of his religious conformity, the translation appears not only as a refashioned classical enchiridion to be wielded by the conflicted individual, but also as a moral prescriptive for the entire commonweal in a time of religious tyranny.

By translating the work into English, Grimald was cleverly co-opting this Ciceronian approach to conformity and setting it in a contemporary context. A central message of the *De Officiis* is that while commitment to the republic is unquestionable, the philosophical embodiment of the state does not rest in any single individual. Thus Cicero’s message is simultaneously conformist and anti-tyrannical. In Cicero’s formulation, the citizen’s duty to the republic should always take precedence over all other obligations.<sup>72</sup> In agreement with reason and natural order, the citizen must recognize that all other interests should be subordinated to the good of the commonwealth: “But when ye have perused all these things in your reason, and mind: of all fellowships there is none more acceptable, nor dearer, than the same, which every one of us hath with the commonweal.”<sup>73</sup> Cicero is adamant that duty to one’s country is preeminent, but he warns that the citizen should not let the republic fall into tyranny. Criticizing the recently assassinated Caesar, Cicero asserted that tyrants are contrary to any just and well-ordered society: “The storme of Caius Caesar declared that of late: who turned topsy-turvy all the laws of God, and man, for that sovereignty’s sake, which he to himself, by the error of his own conceit, had imagined.”<sup>74</sup>

*De Officiis* is also Cicero’s lamentation of the fall of the republic. As he continually reminds the reader, although he had sought the preservation of the republic, it had nevertheless been overthrown by tyranny:

Indeed as long as the commonweal was governed by them, to whom she had committed herself: I did employ all my care, and study upon it. But when one man kept al in thralldom: and there was no place at all for counsel, and authority: and I besides had forgone my companions of preserving the state, who had been singular men: neither I gave myself to grieves, wherewith I should have been wasted, unless I had resisted them:

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<sup>70</sup> Grimald, *Duties*, Prefatory epistle to Thomas Thirlby, sig. 2v.

<sup>71</sup> Grimald, *Duties*, Prefatory epistle to Thomas Thirlby, sig. 4r.

<sup>72</sup> Grimald, *Duties*, sig. C7v.

<sup>73</sup> Grimald, *Duties*, sig. C7r.

<sup>74</sup> Grimald, *Duties*, sig. B2v-3r.

nor again, to pleasures unseemly for a learned man. And would god, the commonweal had stood in the state, wherein it began: and had not light upon men, who were not so desirous of altering, as overthrowing of things.<sup>75</sup>

The subversive connotations of such passages are overt, particularly when we recognize that someone who was only recently arrested for heresy translated them.

While a work of translation can always allow for the translator to claim plausible deniability, the evidence suggests that Grimald's *Duties* was both a subtle critique of the Marian regime and a carefully crafted defense of his own religious conformity.

### III.

This interpretation proves compelling once we consider that there are signs Grimald's recantation had been an act of political conformity, rather than a dramatic change of faith. In addition to being a preacher and classical scholar, Grimald was also a prominent poet, now best remembered for his involvement with a popular anthology of English poetry, *Tottel's Miscellany*. Aside from the 1556 *Bokes of Duties*, Grimald's contributions to this work are the only direct evidence of his public life following his purported betrayal of the Oxford martyrs. Considering that Grimald released the poems in 1557, only months after the appearance of his Ciceronian translation, it is likely that the works would have been intellectually and philosophically consistent. While Merrill and other literary scholars have (far too) occasionally looked to facts of Grimald's public life to better understand his poems, no modern scholars have adequately used the poems to shed light on his complicated religious and political life.

Like much of Grimald's later life, the nature of his contributions to *Tottel's Miscellany* is opaque. We know he must have had a close working relationship with the printer Richard Tottel, since he was the publisher of the first edition of the *Duties* in 1556, and of the second in 1558.<sup>76</sup> In the first edition of the *Miscellany*, printed on June 5, 1557, Grimald is listed as the author of 40 poems. However, in a second edition printed only eight weeks later, 30 of Grimald's poems were removed, and his name had been replaced with his initials on the remaining ten poems.<sup>77</sup> The reason why Grimald's contributions were so drastically limited after the first edition has been an issue of considerable dispute among literary scholars.

In the early twentieth century the literary scholar Hoyt Hudson discovered that several of Grimald's poems in the *Miscellany* were not his original work, but were rather English translations from Latin epigrams by the Calvinist reformer Theodore Beza.<sup>78</sup> Yet

<sup>75</sup> Grimald, *Duties*, sig. H8r-v.

<sup>76</sup> Hyder Rollins, ed., *Tottel's Miscellany, 1557-1587*, vol. 2 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1966), 3-20.

<sup>77</sup> H.J. Byrom, "The Case for Nicholas Grimald as Editor of Tottel's Miscellany," *Modern Language Review*, 27 (1932), 125.

<sup>78</sup> Grimald appears to have worked from Beza's 1548 *Iuvenilia*, reworked in 1569 as the *Poemata*: Hoyt Hudson, "Grimald's Translations from Beza," *Modern Language Notes*, Vol. 39, No. 7. (Nov., 1924), pp. 388-94; Anne Lake Prescott, "English Writers and Beza's Latin Epigrams: The Uses and Abuses of Poetry," *Studies in the Renaissance* 21 (1974), 83-9.

Hudson failed to grasp the religious and political significance of this discovery. Beza, a confidant and theological defender of Calvin, was one of the leading figures of the continental reformation. Although modern scholars did not recognize the Bezan source until Hudson, this connection would have been far clearer to many early modern readers. In 1577, for example, Timothy Kendall also translated several of Beza's poems into English, emphasizing those of an explicitly Calvinist and anti-Catholic content.<sup>79</sup> Although Kendall appears to have primarily worked from Beza's *Poemata*, one of his translations was an exact copy from Grimald's version in the *Miscellany*.<sup>80</sup>

Remarkably, most of Grimald's Bezan translations were classically themed works consistent in message with the *De Officiis*. By translating from one of the most publicly divisive Calvinists of the period, Grimald was intentionally showing the figure of Cicero through a subtly Protestant filter. Grimald's final two poems in the *Miscellany*, for example, are elegies on the death of Cicero. In the poem "Marcus Tullius Ciceroes death," Grimald begins:

*Therefore, when restless rage of wynde, and wave  
Hee saw: By fates, alas calld for (quod hee)  
Is hapless Cicero: sayl on, shape course  
To the next shore, and bryng me to my death.  
Perdie these thanks, and reskued from civil sword,  
Wilt thou, my countrey, paye? I see mine end:  
So powrs divine, so bid the gods above,  
In citie saved that Consul Marcus shend.<sup>81</sup>*

The poem itself is a heartfelt rumination on Cicero's death, and an indictment of Cicero's executioner, Marc Antony. By choosing to translate this particular poem of Beza, Grimald was intentionally portraying Cicero's death as a civil martyrdom, unjustly enacted by the tyrant Antony. The symbolic connections with Grimald's own life would have been obvious to the discerning reader. Since Grimald was nearly killed by the Marian authorities, and several of his friends had been publicly executed little more than a year before the poems were printed, it is likely that Grimald may have been intentionally making this parallel as a commentary on the Marian regime.

It is also clear that Grimald was not merely translating Beza for stylistic purposes, because he selectively reconfigured the content of some of the poems. Grimald's last poem in the *Miscellany* is a four-line tribute entitled "Of M.T. Cicero":

*For Tullie, late, a toomb I gan prepare:  
When Cynthie, thus, bad mee my labour spare:*

<sup>79</sup> Prescott, "English Writers and Beza's Latin Epigrams," 89.

<sup>80</sup> The poem is "The Description of Vertue," from Beza's *Descriptio virtutis*; Timothy Kendall, *Flowers of epigrammes, out of sundrie the moste singular authours selected, as well auncient as late writers. Pleasant and profitable to the expert readers of quicke capacitie...* (1577, STC 14927), sig. 72v; This poem is copied from *Tottell's Miscellany*, ed. Rollins, 104.

<sup>81</sup> Rollins, ed., *Tottell's Miscellany*, vol. 1, 118.

*Such maner things becom the ded, quoth hee:  
But Tullie liues, and styll alyue shall bee.*<sup>82</sup>

This poem was also a nearly verbatim translation from Beza, except the original version had been on the death of Livy.<sup>83</sup> By replacing Livy with his beloved Cicero, Grimald had in effect cloaked Cicero in a subtle Protestant guise. It is also significant that at the time of the *Miscellany*'s publication Beza had been causing quite a stir on the continent. Throughout the spring and summer of 1557, Beza, along with his fellow Calvinist Guillaume Farel, had been publicly defending the Waldensians against civil persecution at the hands of the French authorities, while also promoting the unification of Protestant resistance against the Roman Catholic Church.<sup>84</sup> By releasing a translation of Beza at this time, therefore, Grimald may have been tacitly aligning himself with Beza and the Reformed church. Thus Grimald's poems in the *Miscellany*, published only months after his translation of *De Officiis*, show that he understood Cicero from a distinctly and clandestinely Protestant perspective.

Another peculiarity of Grimald's involvement in the *Miscellany* that may shed light on the *Bokes of Duties*, is that many of his poems in the first edition were dedicated to prominent Edwardian Protestants, most of whom had obvious connections to Edward Seymour, Duke of Somerset and Lord Protector of England under Edward VI. It is clear from Bale's *Index* that Grimald had previously allied himself with Somerset, because Grimald had produced a collection of laudatory poems, *Congratulatorium carmen*, praising Somerset's (short-lived) release from the Tower in 1551.<sup>85</sup> Grimald still seems to be committed to the fallen Lord Protector's memory in 1557, because nearly all of his dedicated poems in the *Miscellany* are in tribute to someone connected to the Seymour family. Although Grimald referred to living persons only through their initials, many of these references would have been obvious to the discerning reader. For example, Grimald dedicated several poems to "I. J. S.," "I. M. S.," "I. K. S.," and "I. E. S.," in reference to Jane Seymour, and Somerset's other three daughters: Margaret, Katherine, and Elizabeth.<sup>86</sup>

Likewise, Grimald's "An epitaph of Sir James Wilford knight" is an elegy in tribute to another prominent Edwardian figure: Wilford was well known in England as a war hero after serving as an army general under Somerset in the Scottish campaigns of 1547. Wounded in battle, Wilford eventually succumbed to his wounds in 1550. He was widely memorialized upon his death, and Miles Coverdale preached his funeral sermon.<sup>87</sup> Wilford also appears to have been associated with Protestant reform, and was well known

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<sup>82</sup> Rollins, ed., *Tottell's Miscellany*, vol. 1, 120.

<sup>83</sup> Theodore Beza, *A View from the Palatine: The Iuvenilia of Theodore de Beze*, ed. Kirk Summers (Tempe: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2001), 188.

<sup>84</sup> John S. Bray, *Theodore Beza's Doctrine of Predestination*, (Nieuwkoop: De Graaf, 1975), 27.

<sup>85</sup> This work is not extant, and is known only from Bale: Bale, *Index*, 302.

<sup>86</sup> For Merrill's discussion of Somerset's daughters in Grimald's poetry see: Grimald, *Life and Poems*, 423.

<sup>87</sup> Marcus Merriman, *The Rough Wooings: Mary Queen of Scots, 1542-1551*, (Trowbridge: Tuckwell Press, 2000), 368-70.

as one of Thomas Wyatt the younger's closest friends.<sup>88</sup> Considering that Mary had executed Wyatt after his failed rebellion only three years before Grimald's writing, this seemingly innocuous dedicatory poem to Wilford bears a potentially subversive connotation.<sup>89</sup>

Considering the heavy emphasis on Edwardian Protestants, it is not surprising that every one of Grimald's dedicatory poems was removed from the *Miscellany* after the first edition sold out. Merrill claimed that Tottel had limited Grimald's association with the poems because he feared the former preacher's recantation would have hurt the sales of the second edition. For Merrill, Grimald's betrayal of the Protestant martyrs had made him "*persona non grata*" to both Protestants and Catholics.<sup>90</sup> However, this does not seem likely since Tottel continued to release Grimald's works after the *Miscellany*, publishing the second edition of the *Bookes of Duties* in 1558. Also, several literary scholars have persuasively argued that Grimald was the primary editor of the *Miscellany*.<sup>91</sup> It seems more likely, therefore, that Grimald had certain poems removed once he realized that the book was gaining a wide readership. As the modern editor of the *Miscellany* has observed, the creators of the work had not anticipated the popularity of the first edition, as evidenced by its barebones typographical decor.<sup>92</sup> Thus it follows that the first edition may have brought more attention to Grimald than he had expected. Considering that many of the poems were glaring examples of his previous connections to prominent Edwardian Protestants, including Somerset and Walter Haddon, it is possible that Grimald removed these works so as not to bring himself to the attention of the Marian authorities. This would also explain why Grimald's name was reduced to his initials, a technique that had long been employed by religious polemicists (including Ridley, Latimer, and Cranmer) who sought to obscure their identity.

Grimald's Bezan translations in the *Miscellany* also demonstrate that he was particularly preoccupied with the death of Cicero. As a humanist scholar with a strong classical background, Grimald appears to have understood the circumstances surrounding Cicero's death upon the order of Marc Antony, as the Bezan poems testify. It is fitting then, that of the entire Ciceronian corpus, he chose to translate the *De Officiis*; written while in hiding from Marc Antony, and shortly before his assassination, *De Officiis* was

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<sup>88</sup> J. D. Alsop, "Wilford, Sir James (b. in or before 1517, d. 1550)," *ODNB*.

<sup>89</sup> Other poems are more opaque in their intentions. For example, Grimald translates a poem by Walter Haddon that made a brief reference to Queen Mary as "The perelless princessse": Rollins, ed., *Tottell's Miscellany*, vol. 1, 114; Although at least one modern editor has taken this as a sign of Grimald's affection for Mary, it is far too minor of a reference to draw such a conclusion; it is, however, further evidence of Grimald's outward conformity. Furthermore, the poem is littered with glowing praise of Edward VI: Rollins, ed., *Tottell's Miscellany*, vol. 2, 3.)

<sup>90</sup> Merrill, *Life and Poems*, 366.

<sup>91</sup> For example, see: Byrom, "The Case for Nicholas Grimald as Editor."

<sup>92</sup> Rollins, ed. *Tottell's Miscellany*, vol. 2, 4.

the last of Cicero's works.<sup>93</sup> Grimald was clearly familiar with these details, and he would have therefore readily recognized the anti-tyrannical nature of the work.

Grimald would have been equally aware of the humanist precedent of equating Cicero's death at the hands of Antony with Christian martyrdom, particularly in an English context. One of the most widely circulated accounts of the deaths of Sir Thomas More, Bishop John Fisher, and the other Henrician martyrs was the *Expositio fidelis de morte D. Thomae Mori, et quorundam aliorum insignium virorum in Anglia* (*Trustworthy Account of the Death of Thomas More and Certain Other Distinguished Men in England*).<sup>94</sup> Written either by Erasmus or his pupil Philippe Dumont around 1535, the work paralleled the execution of More with the deaths of several figures from classical antiquity, particularly ones who had died unjustly at the hands of civil authorities. Specifically, More's execution is paralleled with Cicero's death under Antony. As Brad Gregory has observed, the humanist author of the *Expositio* was more concerned with connecting the martyr's death with Cicero's than he was with any biblical martyrs.<sup>95</sup> This classical framing of martyrdom as civil execution appears to have been common within Erasmian humanist circles. As Gregory notes, "There seems to have been humanists for whom the primary register of More's death was not Christian martyrdom, but rather something like classical virtue crushed by tyranny."<sup>96</sup> Printed versions of the *Expositio* were available in Latin, German, and French, and manuscript copies in Italian and Spanish also circulated widely during the mid-sixteenth century. Grimald would have undoubtedly been familiar with the work, especially considering his fondness for Erasmus.<sup>97</sup> Portions of the work were also printed in Nicholas Harpsfield's *Life and Death of Moore*, which appeared in 1556, the same year as Grimald's *Bokes of Duties*. Harpsfield explicitly conflated More's execution and Cicero's murder: "A rueful and a pitiful spectacle for all good Citizens and other good Christians, and much more lamentable to see their christian English Cicero's head in such sort, than it was to the Romans to see the head of Marcus Tullius Cicero set up in the City."<sup>98</sup>

There is also evidence that English Protestants were regularly employing the figure of Marc Antony, Cicero's executioner, as a symbol of the Marian persecution and Roman Catholic tyranny. In 1552, Stephen Gardiner published his *Confutatio cavillationum*. Written while imprisoned in the Tower, the *Confutatio* was a reply to Cranmer's 1551 work, *An Answer unto a Craftie and Sophisticall Cavillation*. The *Confutatio* had been smuggled out of the Tower, and made its way to the continent where it was published in Paris. Although it was widely known that Gardiner was the author, he used the pseudonym Marcus Antonius Constantius. This proved to be an ill-advised

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<sup>93</sup> For the political circumstances of Cicero's production of the *De Officiis*, see: Andrew Dyck, *A Commentary on Cicero, De Officiis* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1996), 29-39.

<sup>94</sup> Gregory, *Salvation at Stake*, 262-3, 473.

<sup>95</sup> Gregory, *Salvation at Stake*, 262.

<sup>96</sup> Gregory, *Salvation at Stake*, 262-3.

<sup>97</sup> Grimald, *Duties*, N.G. to the reader, sig. 5r.

<sup>98</sup> Nicholas Harpsfield, *The life and death of Sr Thomas Moore, knight, sometymes Lord high Chancellor of England*, ed. Elsie Hitchcock (London: Oxford University Press, 1932), 217.

choice of pen name, because thereafter Cranmer, Ridley, and Latimer often referred to Gardiner as “the Antonian” or “Marcus Antonius.” Upon Mary’s accession to the throne in 1553, Gardiner was released from prison and restored as the Bishop of Winchester and a powerful royal advisor. Following the imprisonment of Cranmer, Ridley, and Latimer for heresy, Gardiner was quickly cast as the enemy of Protestant reform.<sup>99</sup>

The prison writings of Cranmer, Latimer, and Ridley are rife with references to Gardiner as the quintessential symbol of Roman tyranny. However, they seldom referred to Gardiner in name, but rather gave him a Biblical or classical nickname with villainous implications. For example, he was occasionally referred to as Diotrephes. In the third epistle of John, Diotrephes appears as a malicious and self-serving member of the Church, who sought to drive out other members.<sup>100</sup> More commonly, Gardiner was Marcus Antonius. By dropping Constantius and referring to Gardiner as Marcus Antonius, the imprisoned Protestants were intentionally drawing comparisons between Gardiner and the Roman general, an analogy that would have been obvious to any discerning reader at the time. In the *Second Conference Between Ridley and Latimer in Prison*, for example, this symbolism was at the forefront, as each argument was made in response to an “Objection of the Antonian.”<sup>101</sup> This association of Gardiner with the historical Antony was made explicit by Ridley as he addressed Latimer in the *Second Conference*:

Sir, now I look daily when Diotrephes with his warriors shall assault me; wherefore I pray you, good father, for that you are an old soldier and an expert warrior, and, God knoweth, I am but a young soldier, and as yet of small experience in these feats, help me, I pray you, to buckle my harness. And now I would have you to think that these darts are cast at my head of some one of Diotrephes’ or Antonius’ soldiers.<sup>102</sup>

Thus Gardiner appears as Marcus Antonius, the persecuting man of war. This historical association also had subtler implications that would have not been lost to the classically educated reader. Marc Antony, after all, had risen to prominence as Julius Caesar’s primary military commander. If the analogy is extended in reference to Gardiner, the Oxford martyrs were slyly making Mary into Julius Caesar, the quintessential symbol of tyranny and despoiler of the republic.

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<sup>99</sup> Gardiner had long been considered the Protestants’ *bête noire*: Ryrie and Riordan, “Stephen Gardiner and the Making of a Protestant Villain.”

<sup>100</sup> This is a reference to 3 John: 9-11.

<sup>101</sup> The “Conferences” were written between September 1553 and March 1554. It appears that their initial purpose was not to be published, but was rather a written preparation of defense before the two men were to face an interrogation led by Gardiner.

<sup>102</sup> Ridley and Latimer, “A Second Conference Between Ridley and Latimer in Prison,” in *The Works of Nicholas Ridley*, 117; The Italian reformer Peter Martyr Vermigli also referred to Gardiner as “Antonius”: “Martyr to an Unknown Friend, 15 March 1557,” *Gleanings of a few scattered ears during the period of the Reformation in England*, ed. George Gorham (London: Bell and Daldy, 1857), 373.



Grimald, as Ridley's chaplain, would have been aware of the imprisoned reformers' association of Gardiner with Antony, particularly since it is clear from Ridley's letters that Grimald had access to their writings.<sup>103</sup> Grimald's poems in the *Miscellany* also confirm that he readily employed the negative imagery of Marc Antony as tyrant, and that he understood Antony's role as Cicero's executioner. Grimald would have also been aware that the *De Officiis* was Cicero's final work, written shortly before he was executed by Antony's soldiers. It seems that the Oxford Martyrs' identification of Gardiner with Antony would have still been fresh in Grimald's mind as he translated the *De Officiis* into English. Within this context, Grimald's glorification of Cicero can be read as an indictment of Marc Antony, and, by extension, Gardiner and the Marian regime.

IV.

It is perhaps telling that the only surviving letter of Grimald was one sent to Sir William Cecil in May 1549.<sup>104</sup> Written while Grimald still held his university post at Christ Church, Oxford, the private letter not only reveals that Grimald had a relationship with Cecil that extended far beyond this single correspondence, but it also shows that the two men were actively promoting Protestant reform. In particular, the letter- which Merrill took to be an early "indication of the poet's duplicity"- shows that Grimald was spying on Roman Catholic students at Oxford at Cecil's behest. "As you asked on my departure," Grimald reported to Cecil, "I have collected the names of those who have not yet rejected the evil conceptions acquired on religious matters, and I have made them into a list, which I am sending you along with this letter."<sup>105</sup> Cecil seems to have directed Grimald to specifically monitor students whose Roman Catholic tendencies could be disruptive to the Protestant agenda. Grimald writes, "Those [students] have been passed over in silence by me who can do very little or nothing, and who, as an ignoble herd, vainly waste their time with us." Grimald seems particularly horrified by the prospect of these Roman Catholic students inflicting spiritual harm on their congregations once they've taken positions as pastors and preachers. These men, Grimald writes, "...oppress our people with their authority, cozen them with craft, and deceive them by persuasion, in short, either harry or corrupt them by whatever means they can...for it is the common opinion of all those who, since they constantly desire to promote pure and simple piety, perceive not only today, but have seen for a long time, that these pests, on account of that one thing, are destroying all too much, alas and alack! the entire efforts of good characters in their course of development."<sup>106</sup> Grimald's stated concern, therefore, is not for the souls of the Roman Catholic students themselves, but rather that the common laypersons be ministered to in proper Protestant fashion.

The letter also reveals that Cecil had previously sponsored some of Grimald's literary endeavors. Grimald writes, "...through your favor, your kindness, and your efforts, you brought it about that when quiet for my studies was not to be had, I could be placed in a situation not only most desirable, but most advantageous for my literary

<sup>103</sup> Nicholas Ridley, *The Writings of John Bradford*, 160.

<sup>104</sup> BL Lansdowne MS 2, fols. 77r-78v; This letter has been accurately transcribed in: Grimald, *Life and Poems*, 39-43.

<sup>105</sup> Grimald, *Life and Poems*, 41-2.

<sup>106</sup> Grimald, *Life and Poems*, 42.

progress...this was surely characteristic of a noble nature, for you were not incited by any merit of mine, since you did it of your own accord.”<sup>107</sup> With a healthy dose of humanist flattery, Grimald promises: “And so I shall not only show that I am mindful of this great kingdom of yours, observant of your very wholesome advice, and grateful to such a patron as you, in short, devoted to you, but I pledge and promise besides that I will be most eager for learning, most studious of holy things, most bitter against the Papacy, most unwearied in displaying my talent, most ready to extend and adorn the Christian state.”<sup>108</sup> Thus, Grimald presented himself as a loyal civil servant and a true Protestant, who was willing to employ his considerable literary skills in order to further the cause of Reformation.

What makes Grimald’s connection to Cecil particularly interesting is that Grimald appears to make a veiled reference to his former correspondent in the preface of the *Duties*. In his introductory address, Grimald reiterates the usefulness of his translation to all readers, insisting that many worthy men have praised the *De Officiis* as a source of wisdom and reason: “...to my testimonial I am able to adjoin princely peers, wellbeknown, and well approved: then shall both the worthiness of the work, and also the weight of the authority win credit, and assent.”<sup>109</sup> Grimald even claims to know individuals that treasure the *De Officiis* to such a degree that they cannot bear to part with it, and so they carry a copy of the book around with them. “Tullie’s duties have I known good clerks, and well learned men bear about in their bosoms: laying it full near their hearts, that they would have lodged in their heads: and entirely loving Tullie’s heavenly company, which way so ever they went.”<sup>110</sup> Although this initially appears to be a mere literary embellishment, Grimald was likely making a direct reference to Cecil. In his 1622 work *The Compleat Gentleman*, Henry Peacham recorded Cecil’s well-known admiration for the *De Officiis*: “[Cecil] to his dying day, would always carry it about him, either in his bosom or pocket, being sufficient (as one said of *Aristotle’s Rhetoriques*) to make both a Scholar and an honest man.”<sup>111</sup> That Peacham thought this was worth noting nearly forty years after Burghley’s death may suggest that it was rare for someone to literally carry the *De Officiis* with him as Cecil apparently did. It may also suggest that this was a relatively well-known anecdote about the statesman. Considering that we know from the aforementioned letter from May 1549 that Grimald and Cecil were correspondents, it is highly possible that Grimald was subtly making reference to the statesman’s habit of carrying around a copy of the work. There is also evidence that Cecil was particularly interested in translations of the *De Officiis* conterminous with Grimald’s edition: an account of Cecil’s book purchases between January 1554 and December 1555 reveal that he purchased a Spanish translation of the work.<sup>112</sup>

<sup>107</sup> Grimald, *Life and Poems*, 41.

<sup>108</sup> Grimald, *Life and Poems*, 41.

<sup>109</sup> Grimald, *Duties*, N.G. to the reader, sig. 4v.

<sup>110</sup> Grimald, *Duties*, N.G. to the reader, sig. 4v-5r.

<sup>111</sup> Henry Peacham, *The compleat gentleman fashioning him absolute in the most necessary & commendable qualities concerning minde or bodie that may be required in a noble gentleman* (1622, STC 19502), 45.

<sup>112</sup> Conyers Read, *Mr. Secretary Cecil and Queen Elizabeth*, (London: Cape, 1955), 114.

Another interesting nod to Cecil comes in the prefatory letter, in which Grimald makes references to the classical Athenians as the “best philosophers.”<sup>113</sup> Cicero had ostensibly written the *De Officiis* for his son Marcus, who was studying philosophy in Athens. Grimald chooses to emphasize this point, and suggests that the *De Officiis* must have been welcomed by “the learned Athenians.”<sup>114</sup> Again, Grimald’s emphasis on the Athenians may have had subtle political and religious connotations, particularly since he had a Cambridge background: throughout Edward’s reign, the circle of Protestant scholars associated with Cecil, Thomas Smith, and John Cheke had been known as the “Athenians” because they advocated the Erasmian style of Greek pronunciation, in defiance of Gardiner, who was committed to the traditional, Reuchlinian style of pronunciation.<sup>115</sup> This debate had been intensified in 1542, when Gardiner, as Chancellor, issued an edict ordering that any undergraduates caught speaking Greek in the Erasmian fashion would be publicly birched.<sup>116</sup> Gardiner would insist on the enforcement of this rule well into Mary’s reign.<sup>117</sup> The sides in this linguistic debate appear to have been reflective of larger religious struggles. As Winthrop Hudson has observed, “the issue of Greek pronunciation was of great symbolic importance as a tag by which one’s loyalty and stance on other issues could, with some assurance be ascertained.”<sup>118</sup> For example, in his English translation of the *Orations of Demosthenes*, Grimald’s contemporary Thomas Wilson used the Greek orator’s attacks on Philip II of Macedon as an obvious allusion to Philip II of Spain (husband of Mary). Wilson dedicated the work to Cecil, and urged the reader to “compare the time past with the time present, and ever when he heareth Athens, or the Athenians, to remember England and Englishmen.”<sup>119</sup> Within this context Grimald’s veiled references to Cecil and the Athenians may signify his attempt to reiterate his commitment to the cause of reform.

If Grimald had been attempting to reestablish favor with Cecil, it would have been a particularly apt choice: like Grimald, Cecil had been active in the reform movement under Edward, but outwardly conformed to Marian religious policy.<sup>120</sup> Cecil was even

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<sup>113</sup> Grimald, *Duties*, N.G. to the reader, sig. 3v.

<sup>114</sup> Grimald, *Duties*, N.G. to the reader, sig. 3v.

<sup>115</sup> Winthrop Hudson, *The Cambridge Connection and the Elizabethan Settlement of 1559* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1980), 43-61.

<sup>116</sup> Strype, “Edicta Stephani Vintoniensis Episcopi, Cancellarii Cantabrigiensis, de Pronuntiatione Linguae Graecae et Latinae,” in *Ecclesiastical Memorials*, vol. 1, 479-81.

<sup>117</sup> James Muller, *Stephen Gardiner and the Tudor Reaction*, (New York: Octagon Books, 1970), 124.

<sup>118</sup> Hudson, *The Cambridge Connection*, 45.

<sup>119</sup> Demosthenes, *The Three Orations of Demosthenes Chiefe Orator among the Grecians...with Those His Fower Orations Titled Expressely & by Name against King Philip of Macedonie: Most Nedefull to Be Redde in These Daungerous Dayes, of All Them That Loue Their Countries Libertie, and Desire to Take Warning for Their Better Auayle, by Example of Others*, ed. Thomas Wilson (1570, STC 6578), sig. B1v.

<sup>120</sup> An estate book endorsed by William Cecil proves that he attended mass: “Easter Book, 1556,” printed in *England Under the Reigns of Edward VI and Mary: With the Contemporary History of Europe Illustrated in A Series of Original Letters*. vol. 2, ed. P.F. Tytler. (London: Richard Bentley, 1839), 443.

commissioned by Mary to accompany Cardinal Pole on his return journey to England- a puzzling detail that Cecil's twentieth century biographer, Conyers Read, admitted was "a strange paradox...completely at variance with all that he had previously stood for and fought for."<sup>121</sup> Read's befuddlement betrays his inability to recognize that complicity with the Marian regime did not necessarily mean that Cecil was any less sincere in his beliefs than the Oxford Martyrs or the Marian exiles. As Stephen Alford has asserted, Cecil cannot be simply written off as a religious *politique*.<sup>122</sup> Alford has observed that Cecil maintained a "sharp and defined sense of the part solid religion and honest faith played in encouraging the stability of the commonwealth and the political security of England."<sup>123</sup> In this sense Cecil's conformity may have been consistent with a commitment to the order of the commonwealth that transcended his personal religious loyalties, a position in harmony with the philosophical message of the *De Officiis*.  
V.

Considering sixteenth century England's dramatic and continual shifts in official religious policy, there must have been a practical flexibility towards religious conformity. This may help explain why John Foxe and John Bale, although close friends, provide seemingly incommensurable depictions of Grimald in the years after his recantation. In Foxe's *Book of Martyrs*, Grimald is presented as the antithesis of the ideal Protestant. Foxe's Grimald is an apostate, who willfully betrayed his Protestant faith in order to save his own life. Conversely, Bale portrays Grimald as a model Protestant scholar. He even concludes his index of Grimald's works by making an attack on Queen Mary: "And many other things he did, being most famous in verse and prose, and renowned in England in this year of our common salvation in 1556, in which we have written these things, while the great Antichrist reigns in the form of a woman, glutting herself with the blood of the holy martyrs."<sup>124</sup> Thus the picture of Grimald presented by his friend Bale is stridently Protestant and explicitly anti-Marian.

Aside from Bale, the scholar Barnabe Googe also publicly praised Grimald after his recantation. An ardent Protestant whose works exhibit a sharp anti-Catholic streak, Googe published "An Epytaphe on the Death of Nicholas Grimaold" in his 1563 work, *Eglogs, Epytaphes, and Sonettes*.<sup>125</sup> In the epitaph, Googe chastises Death for taking the wise Grimald too soon, lamenting that "Ne had the Muses loste so fyne a Floure."<sup>126</sup> A kinsman of Cecil and member of his household at the time of the publication of the epitaph for Grimald, Googe was also a part of the Protestant circle surrounding that most

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<sup>121</sup> Conyers Read, *Mr. Secretary Cecil and Queen Elizabeth*, 104.

<sup>122</sup> Alford, *The Early Elizabethan Polity*, 26.

<sup>123</sup> Alford, *The Early Elizabethan Polity*, 26.

<sup>124</sup> Bale, *Catalogus*, English translation in Grimald, *The Life and Poems of Nicholas Grimald*, 19.

<sup>125</sup> William E. Sheidley, *Barnabe Googe* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1981), 54-5; It is from this epitaph that Grimald's death is usually dated. In a later edition of the *Book of Martyrs* Foxe makes a suspect claim that Grimald, along with his Roman Catholic examiner Weston, had both died conterminously with Elizabeth's coronation, see: Foxe, 1583 edition, 1496.

<sup>126</sup> Barnabe Googe, *Eglogues, Epitaphs, and Sonnets*, ed. Judith M. Kennedy (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1989), 83.

famous of conformed Protestants, Queen Elizabeth herself.<sup>127</sup> Since several of Googe's poems are vitriolic attacks on the papacy as a corrupter of secular authority, it does not seem likely that he would have been praising Grimald had he been viewed as a traitor to the Protestant cause.<sup>128</sup> That Grimald could be publicly praised by a number of prominent Protestants after his recantation further suggests that many maintained an attitude towards religious conformity that was far more flexible than has been traditionally thought. Despite the strict anti-Nicodemite rhetoric promulgated by Ridley and other partisans, it is clear that the overwhelming majority of Protestants in Marian England publicly conformed. This likely explains how Grimald could maintain a positive image in the eyes of several Protestants, and yet also be viewed by some as a traitor to the cause of reform. Aside from the condemnatory accounts in Foxe, an anonymous Latin epigram, ironically entitled *Carmen in laudem Grimmoaldi*, also lambastes Grimald as a self-serving turncoat:

*You meet everybody at the cross-roads, the churches, the theaters,  
That you may gain brief praise, O Grimald.  
You have praised few, but many you have branded with infamy,  
That you may gain brief praise, O Grimald.  
Those whom you have just blamed you now praise, O deceiver!  
That you may gain brief praise, O Grimald.  
A grammarian, a rhetorician, a detractor, a crier, a poet,  
That you may gain brief praise, O Grimald.  
Since you do all things with a desire for transitory praise,  
May the gods give you praise, but brief praise, O Grimald.*<sup>129</sup>

Obviously the religious and political loyalties of the anonymous epigrammatist cannot be definitively assessed, though these words appear to have been written by an embittered Protestant who knew Grimald. That the epigrammatist penned this poem denouncing Grimald contemporaneously with the publication of works praising him attests to the contested nature of Protestant identity in Tudor England.

As Leo Strauss observed more than sixty years ago, state persecution often necessitates authors to write for two audiences. "Persecution," he posited, "...gives rise to a peculiar technique of writing, and therewith to a peculiar type of literature, in which the truth about all crucial things is presented exclusively between the lines. That literature is addressed, not to all readers, but to trustworthy and intelligent readers only. It has all the advantages of private communication without having its greatest disadvantage- that it reaches only the writer's acquaintances. It has all the advantages of public communication, without having its greatest disadvantage- capital punishment for the

<sup>127</sup> Sheidley, *Barnabe Googe*, 19.

<sup>128</sup> For an example of Googe's anti-papal poetry see: Nicolaus Cabasilas and Thomas Gressop, *A Briefe Treatise, Conteynyng a Playne and Fruitfull Declaration of the Popes Usurped Primacye...* (1560, STC 4325), sig. A7v.

<sup>129</sup> Merrill, *Life and Poems of Nicholas Grimald*, 37; Bodl. Oxford, MS Duke Humfrey b. 1, fol. 186r.

author.”<sup>130</sup> Strauss’ assessment is consistent with the case we have presented in this chapter. Despite his conformity, as a renowned Protestant scholar Grimald would have been under an incredible degree of political and religious scrutiny. In the months after his recantation he could no longer produce a work of biblical exegesis or religious polemic, unless he wanted to quickly find himself back in the Bocardo; however, he could employ his humanist skills in the creation of a classical translation.

Grimald’s *Duties* was not the only work of classical republicanism in this period that seems to be an intellectual byproduct of the religious struggle of Marian Protestants. In the preface to his *The Three Orations of Demosthenes*, Thomas Wilson tells Cecil that the genesis of the project had been Cheke’s lectures on Demosthenes while the men had been Marian exiles. Noting the commonalities between Cicero and Demosthenes, Wilson continually emphasized that the work was pertinent to spiritual matters, “seeing Demosthenes is so good a Schoolmaster for men to decipher the Devil and his ministers for the advancement of uprightness in all things.”<sup>131</sup> Wilson’s *Art of Rhetorique*, which was perhaps the most popular digest of Ciceronian thought at the time, also appears to have been affected by the Marian Protestant experience. Wilson modified the preface to the second edition of the work in 1560 in order to include an account of his hardships at the hands of Roman Catholic inquisitors while exiled on the continent.<sup>132</sup> The preface of John Dolman’s 1561 translation of Cicero’s *Tusculan Disputations* explicitly pointed to Grimald’s work as a model, and dedicated the work to his patron, John Jewel.<sup>133</sup> As we have seen in Chapter 2, Jewel was not only a member of Ridley’s circle at the height of the Marian persecution, but he also recanted his Protestant beliefs before fleeing into exile. It may have also been more than coincidence that the library of Tudor England’s most famous religious turncoat, the churchman Andrew Perne, reveals that he was especially fond of Cicero’s *De Officiis*.<sup>134</sup> Indeed, it seems that the ambiguous language of classical republicanism, with its dualistic and paradoxical ideals- simultaneously in favor of devout obedience to the commonwealth while also holding the potential for anti-monarchical action- may have had particular appeal to individuals struggling to understand their own relationship with the state during religious persecution.

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<sup>130</sup> Leo Strauss, *Persecution and the Art of Writing* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), 25.

<sup>131</sup> Wilson, “A Preface to the Reader, conteyning the commendation of Demosthenes,” *The Three Orations of Demosthenes*.

<sup>132</sup> Thomas Wilson, “A Prologue to the Reader,” *The arte of rhetorique for the vse of all soche as are studious of eloquence, set forthe in Englishe, by Thomas Wilson* (1560, STC 25800).

<sup>133</sup> Marcus Tullius Cicero, *Those fyue questions, which Marke Tullye Cicero, disputed in his manor of Tusculanum: written afterwarde by him, in as manye bookes, to his frende, and familiar Brutus, in the Latine tounge. And nowe, oute of the same translated, & englished, by Iohn Dolman, studente and felowe of the Inner Temple* (1561, STC 5317).

<sup>134</sup> Jones, *Master Tully*, 238.

## Chapter 4 Crisis, Constitutionalism, and the Exile Network of Katherine Willoughby, Duchess of Suffolk

As Anthony Grafton has often quipped, citing an aphorism of the Italian historian Arnaldo Momigliano, “A great man with good handwriting is twice a great man.”<sup>1</sup> It may be fitting, then, that scholars have so often ignored the mid-Tudor evangelical Richard Bertie. While his only work, a manuscript treatise written against John Knox’s infamous *First Blast of the Trumpet Against the Monstrous Regiment of Women*, has a claim to historical importance as the first known response to Knox, analysis of the text has usually consisted of little more than complaints about the shoddiness of Bertie’s penmanship.<sup>2</sup> More well known, however, is Bertie’s wife: Katherine Willoughby, the Duchess of Suffolk, whose patronage circle was a veritable who’s who of Edwardian protestantism, and included Martin Bucer, William Cecil, John Foxe, and Hugh Latimer, amongst others.<sup>3</sup> Willoughby was also the highest-ranking of the English exiles, and her “providential” escape from the Marian authorities was dramatized in Foxe’s “Book of Martyrs.”

As Christina Garrett observed, the tale of the Duchess’ exile became so popular that, aside from Queen Elizabeth, Willoughby and Bertie became perhaps the most well known survivors of the Marian persecution, embodying Protestant defiance and perseverance in the face of Catholic tyranny.<sup>4</sup> This association only grew in the seventeenth century, in no small part because the balladeer Thomas Deloney took Foxe’s narrative, set it to the tune of “Queen Dido,” and crafted a song so popular that people were still singing it more than one hundred years later.<sup>5</sup> Yet such highly dramatized accounts of the Duchess’ exile bear only a passing resemblance to actual events. Her plan to escape to the continent, for example, had been the worst-kept secret in Marian

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<sup>1</sup> Anthony Grafton, “Editing Technical Neo-Latin Texts: Two Cases and their Implications,” in *Editing Greek and Latin Texts: Papers given at the Twenty-Third Annual Conference on Editorial Problems, University of Toronto, 6-7 November 1987*, ed. John Grant (New York: AMS Press, 1987), 170.

<sup>2</sup> Kristen Post Walton, *Catholic Queen, Protestant Patriarchy: Mary Queen of Scots and the Politics of Gender and Religion* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 41; Amanda Shephard, *Gender and Authority in Sixteenth-Century England: The Knox Debate* (Keele, Staffordshire: Keele University Press, 1994), 27; Sharon Jansen, *Debating Women, Politics, and Power in Early Modern Europe* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 41-3; Susan Wabuda, “Bertie, Richard (1517–1582),” *ODNB*.

<sup>3</sup> Melissa Franklin Harkrider, *Women, Reform and Community in Early Modern England: Katherine Willoughby, duchess of Suffolk, and Lincolnshire’s Godly Aristocracy, 1519-1580* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2008).

<sup>4</sup> Garrett, *The Marian Exiles*, 89.

<sup>5</sup> Thomas Deloney, *Strange histories, of kings, princes, dukes earles, lords, ladies, knights, and gentlemen With the great troubles and miseries of the Dutches of Suffolke. Verie pleasant either to bee read or sunge, and a most excellent warning for all estates.* (London, 1602: STC 6566); Tessa Watt, *Cheap Print and Popular Piety, 1550-1640* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 90-4.

England: she had even advertised the sale of her furniture a year before leaving.<sup>6</sup> Her relationship with the Marian government was also much more complicated than later Protestant mythology would suggest.

By examining the exile experiences of Willoughby, Bertie, and their religious network, we can begin to answer some of the questions that are at the heart of this study: how did the experience of religious persecution shape understandings of political obedience, and, in particular, conceptions of the citizen's relationship to a persecuting state? And furthermore, how did this experience influence English political thought? This chapter, therefore, has two purposes: first of all, it reconstructs the crisis of obedience faced by exiles who attempted to maintain a modicum of obedience to the Marian regime, even while they faced the threat of heresy prosecution, property confiscation, and religious exile. This dilemma, I argue, was intensified by the exiles' belief that acquiescence to the religious policies of the Catholic Queen Mary was tantamount to idolatry. Had the Berties outwardly conformed while some of their friends were being martyred, they would have likely been condemned by their co-religionists as Nicodemites or apostates.

Secondly, this chapter analyzes Bertie's heretofore-ignored treatise as it relates to this crisis of obedience. In particular, when we place this text within the context of the Berties' incredibly fraught relationship with the Marian government, it reveals itself to be a unique contribution to the history of Tudor political thought. By emphasizing the corporate and constitutionally-bound nature of the English body politic, Bertie was able to disassociate obedience to the state from submission to the monarch. The treatise shows not only that ideas of limited monarchy were built on *both* classical humanist precepts and older traditions within English common law, but it also reveals the Janus-faced nature of what has come to be called "monarchical republicanism." For while Bertie's text anticipates some of the arguments later used to support and complement the Protestant Queen Elizabeth, its fundamental political assumptions were formulated as a theoretical check and balance on the powers of the Catholic Queen Mary: this was a theory of obedience to the English body politic *in spite* of the monarch.

I.

In 1554, as the Marian prosecution of heretics began to be implemented, Richard Bertie was summoned before the newly restored Lord Chancellor, Stephen Gardiner, the Bishop of Winchester. "I hear evil of your religion," Gardiner told Bertie, "yet I hardly can think evil of you." The two men had common ties of friendship and patronage: not only did Gardiner know Bertie's mother Alice "to be as godly and Catholic as any in the land," but he also recognized that Bertie had been "brought up with a master, whose education if I should disallow, I might be charged as the author of his error."<sup>7</sup> This man was Gardiner's former protégé, Lord Chancellor Thomas Wriothesley. Bertie had been brought up in Wriothesley's household, where he was rigorously educated and trained in Latin, French, and Italian.<sup>8</sup> Furthermore, Gardiner notes, "I know you myself, and

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<sup>6</sup> Harkrider, *Women, Reform and Community*, 95.

<sup>7</sup> John Foxe, 1570 ed., 2323.

<sup>8</sup> N.M. Fuidge, "Bertie, Richard (1517-82), of Grimsthorpe and Stamford, Lincs." in *The House of Commons, 1558-1603: Introductory survey; Appendices; Constituencies*;



understand of my friends, enough to make me your friend.” Notwithstanding these ties, Gardiner made it clear to Bertie that his wife’s religious activities would not be tolerated: “...I pray you, if I may ask the question of my Lady, your wife: is she now as ready to set up the Mass, as she was lately to pull it down?”

Gardiner then recounted three separate instances when the Duchess had previously insulted him. The first was when, Gardiner remembered, she had publicly mocked him by having “in her progress, a dog in a rochet to be carried” and called in his name. The second offense had occurred during Edward’s reign, while Gardiner was imprisoned in the Tower of London; he had once spotted the Duchess outside his cell window, he recalled, and so he respectfully “veiled my bonnet to her.” To this, however, the Duchess had scornfully replied, “that it was merry with the Lambs, now the Wolf was shut up.”<sup>9</sup> Finally, Gardiner remembered when the Duchess had once humiliated him at a dinner party hosted by her late husband, Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk. Before dinner, the Duke had announced that the seating arrangements would be determined by having each lady “choose him whom she loved best, and so placed themselves.” As Gardiner told Bertie, “My Lady, your wife, taking me by the hand, for that my Lord would not have her to take himself, said that for so much as she could not sit down with my Lord whom she loved best, she had chosen me whom she loved worst.”<sup>10</sup> Bertie responded to this litany of charges by first claiming that the issue of the dog could not be blamed on the Duchess, as she “was neither the author nor the allower.” As to the rest, Bertie could only try to soften the blow. “The words,” Bertie explained, “though in that season they sounded bitter to your Lordship, yet if it should please you without offence to know the cause, I am sure the one will purge the other.”

Bertie’s defense of his wife’s religious beliefs was also couched in the language of obedience: “As touching [the] setting up of Mass, which she learned not only by strong persuasions of diverse excellent men, but by universal consent & order whole 6 years past, inwardly to abhor: if she should outwardly allow, she should both to Christ show herself a false Christian, & to her prince a masquing subject.” Furthermore, Bertie questioned the effectiveness of enforcing token conformity. “You know my Lord,” Bertie remarked, “one by judgment reformed, is worth more than a M.[thousand] transformed temporizers. To force a confession of religion by mouth, contrary to that in heart, worketh damnation where salvation is pretended.”<sup>11</sup> To this, Gardiner dismissively replied, “that deliberation would do well if she never required to come from an old religion to a new. But now she is to return from a new to an ancient religion.” Yet Bertie was quick to add that his wife believed “that Religion went not by age but by truth, and therefore she was to be turned by persuasion and not by commandment.” Bertie’s purpose in this exchange seems to be two fold: first of all, he is simply attempting to defend his wife, by emphasizing both her political obedience and religious sincerity. Secondly, he seems to be trying to convince Gardiner that it would be more effective for the Duchess to be softly persuaded than harshly prosecuted. Likely in an attempt to give Gardiner the

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*Members, A-C*, ed. P.W. Hasler (London: HMSO for the History of Parliament Trust, 1981), 434.

<sup>9</sup> Foxe, 1570 ed., 2323.

<sup>10</sup> Foxe, 1570 ed., 2323.

<sup>11</sup> Foxe, 1570 ed., 2324.

impression that the Duchess could be swayed to conform, Bertie continually provided ambiguous answers. “I pray you,” Gardiner asked Bertie, “think you it possible to persuade her?” Bertie replied, “Yea, verily with the truth: for she is reasonable enough,” adding, “they should find no fruits of infidelity in her.”

Early in 1555, with the Duchess, Bertie, and their infant daughter now in exile on the continent, Bertie sent Gardiner an appeal for leniency. Although his wife, Bertie explains, was one who might have chosen to stay in England, where she could “live most happily” since she enjoyed both the “commodities of heritage” (this was true) and the “Queen’s highness favour” (this was not true), she had instead “abandoned herself to the infinite miseries of a strange country most unhappily, with choice of chalk for cheese.”<sup>12</sup> Since in England “wise men mislike and ill men rejoice” at the news of his wife’s exile, Bertie complains, “I cannot but flow with tears flying to your L[ord], and to all such as in uneven times hath felt the force of unrighteousness.” Bertie then asked Gardiner not to let the desire for revenge trump justice, especially as it pertained to those “who never deserved ill of England, neither on men who hath not offended any jot of the law.” By writing to Gardiner, Bertie admitted, he was guilty of “vanity of writing, considering what part I play” in the whole affair, but he still insisted that he maintained a position of obedience. His situation was difficult, he explained, and so he could only try to fulfill all of his disparate obligations as a husband, subject, and godly man: “And so long as I shall do nothing but the office of a husband towards [the Duchess], of a subject toward the King and Queen majesties, of a Christian towards God, my hope is my suit shall find favor in God’s sight, my body in the K[ing] and Q[ueen’s], my credit in all honest men’s.”<sup>13</sup>

Bertie concluded his appeal with a plea to Gardiner that he would “stretch forth to me your helping hand if I ask it lawfully, but to the altar and no further.” Bertie’s choice of words here was highly significant: by asking Gardiner to remain his friend “but to the altar and no further,” Bertie was alluding to a particularly nuanced view of the limits of loyalty. As the classically trained Gardiner would have certainly recognized, the cryptic phrase “usque ad aras amicus” (“a friend as far as the altar”) was drawn from Latin translations of Plutarch’s *Moralia*, where it had been attributed to the Athenian statesman Pericles.<sup>14</sup> By the early sixteenth century the meaning of this unusual proverb would come under scrutiny, most notably in Erasmus’ *Adagia*. According to Erasmus, the phrase signified the point at which the duties of friendship were nullified.<sup>15</sup> It was in this sense, for instance, that the Henrician humanist Sir Thomas Elyot had used it: following the execution of his friend and mentor Sir Thomas More in 1535, Elyot employed the proverb as he tried to regain favor with Henry VIII. Writing to Thomas Cromwell, Elyot pleaded, “I therefore beseech your good lordship now to lay apart the remembrance of the amity between me and Sir Thomas More, which was but *usque ad aras*, as is the proverb,

<sup>12</sup> BL Additional MS 33,271, fols. 9v-10r.

<sup>13</sup> BL Additional MS 33,271, fol. 10r.

<sup>14</sup> Pericles uttered the phrase in reply to a friend who asked him to provide a false testimony on his behalf: G.L. Hendrickson, “Amici Usque Ad Aras,” *The Classical Journal* 45, no. 8 (1950): 395–397.

<sup>15</sup> Desiderius Erasmus, *The Collected Works of Erasmus, Vol. 34: Adages, II vii 1 to III iii 100*, ed. and trans. R.A.B. Mynors (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1982), 228.

considering that I was never so much addict unto him as I was unto truth and fidelity toward my sovereign lord, as god is my judge.”<sup>16</sup>

This rare proverb would be given yet another gloss during the reign of Mary, as Protestants who were steeped in the classical tradition grappled with the limits of their own obedience to a persecuting state. From Aristotle’s *Politics*, for example, the resistance theorist Christopher Goodman claimed to have learned that pagans had once given religion “the highest place in their commonwealths,” even though they had been idolaters. In the ancient world, he explained, religion had been inviolable by secular authorities, and so subjects were entitled to “demand anything of their kings and rulers, and they durst not deny them, and [they] might also without offence deny all things which their Rulers demanded contrary to their religion.”<sup>17</sup> Therefore, Goodman explained, “this proverb was common amongst all: *Usque ad Aras*, meaning that against their religion (as they were persuaded), they were bound to no person: father, mother, friend, or governour: their love and obedience towards them could stretch no further than to the Altars, that is, so far with observing their religion they might lawfully perform.” For Goodman, “If the heathen kings and Magistrates could compel their subjects no farther than the Altars, shall any authority or power compel us farther than God, and his anointed, our chief king, Lord, and Master?”<sup>18</sup> Likewise, the Italian reformer Peter Martyr Vermigli used the proverb to demarcate the line at which lesser magistrates were no longer obligated to obey the wicked or superstitious commandments of a higher ruler. As a rule, higher powers were usually to be obeyed, he argued, yet he added this corollary: “...but (as the saying is), *usque ad aras*, that is until they do come to matters of religion, and until they do command in religion things contrary to God’s word and truth. For when they shall command that which is against God, and is hurtful to the conscience of man, these magistrates must not obey them.”<sup>19</sup> It appears, therefore, that Bertie was trying to validate his political loyalty to Gardiner, while also delineating the right to depart from his religious strictures.

II.

This balancing act soon became even more difficult as the Marian government introduced legislation into Parliament that would have authorized the crown to confiscate the property of exiles. Its chief target was clear, as it was known as “The Bill for the Duchess of Suffolk, and such other Persons, as be gone over Seas contemptuously

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<sup>16</sup> BL Cotton Cleopatra E/IV, fol. 260r.

<sup>17</sup> Christopher Goodman, *How superior powers ought to be obeyd of their subiects and wherein they may lawfully by Gods Worde be disobeyed and resisted. Wherin also is declared the cause of all this present miserie in England, and the onely way to remedy the same* (Geneva, 1558: STC 12020), 155.

<sup>18</sup> Goodman, *How superior powers ought to be obeyd*, 156.

<sup>19</sup> Peter Martyr Vermigli, *A treatise of the cohabitacyon of the faithfull with the vnfaithfull Whereunto is added. A sermon made of the confessing of Christe and his gossell, and of the denyng of the same*, trans. Thomas Becon(?) (Strasbourg: 1555, STC 24673.5), sig. 47v.

without Licence.”<sup>20</sup> This would have been a devastatingly powerful legislative tool. Even the lands of those who had left the country legally were at risk, since the crown could simply revoke a license or declare it invalid, thereby using this as a pretext for confiscation. Tempers ran high as the dispute over the bill intensified a domestic situation that was already volatile. In one heated argument, for instance, the godly sustainer Sir John Perrot was said to have drawn his dagger against the Earl of Pembroke. The bill was eventually defeated in the Commons, but only after the MP Sir Anthony Kingston had the chamber door locked, and then compelled the Speaker to put the bill to an immediate vote before other supporters could be summoned. The Marian authorities were furious: for his actions Kingston was imprisoned in the Tower. So too was the serjeant-at-arms, who was blamed for having allowed Kingston to take his keys from him.<sup>21</sup>

Even after the immediate threat of the parliamentary bill had passed, the lands and holdings of the exiles were still in constant jeopardy. Early in Elizabeth’s reign, for instance, the recently returned exile John Aylmer was forced to petition Robert Dudley for help in recovering some of his property that had been sold away by a family member during his absence. “Whereas of late in the time of my grievous exile,” Aylmer complained, “among the rest of my mishaps an unthrifty nephew of mine, either for lack of soil wisely to sell it, or through want of wit orderly to use it, made foolishly away that small lot of inheritance, which of right should have descended unto me.”<sup>22</sup> Left with no other recourse, Aylmer resorted to pleading with the new property owner to sell his own land back to him. The Berties were even more vulnerable. Worried that the government would confiscate the Duchess’ lands, the couple left some of their holdings in the care of Richard’s Catholic mother, Alice.<sup>23</sup> They also conveyed some of their largest estates to their lawyer, Walter Herenden. While this had technically been a legal transfer of ownership, the Berties and Herenden also made a secret agreement that Herenden would convey the said lands back to them after they had returned from exile. When the Berties eventually did come home, however, Herenden simply refused to relinquish ownership of the estates. In 1560, Bertie successfully sued Herenden in Chancery. With Sir Nicholas Bacon presiding over the case, the court ruled that the lands had been conveyed to Herenden only “upon special, faithful and secret trust and confidence and to have been employed to the use and behoof of the said complainant [Richard Bertie] and Lady Katharine...and not meant to be to the profit or benefit of the said defendant.”<sup>24</sup> Even with this favorable ruling, the lands were only returned in 1563 after Bertie lobbied for a parliamentary bill to enforce the court’s decision.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> “House of Commons Journal Volume 1: 05 December 1555,” *Journal of the House of Commons: Volume 1: 1547-1629*, British History Online, <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=314>

<sup>21</sup> Jennifer Loach, *Parliament and the Crown in the Reign of Mary Tudor* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986), 139.

<sup>22</sup> BL Additional MS 32091, fol. 172r.

<sup>23</sup> Harkrider, *Women, Reform and Community*, 106.

<sup>24</sup> “Bartie v. Herenden (1560),” in Sir John Baker, *Baker and Milsom Sources of English Legal History: Private Law to 1750* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 144.

<sup>25</sup> The 1563 bill was listed in the parliamentary record as “The Bill for Assurance of the Manors of White Acre and White Acre Borough, to Ric. Bartye, and Katheryne, Duchess

The 1555 exile bill controversy also elicited a number of polemical pamphlets that circulated both at home and abroad.<sup>26</sup> One such text was the anonymously-penned *Certayne questions demaunded and asked by the Noble Realme of Englande*.<sup>27</sup> Written as a series of interrogatories addressed from “England” to “Englishmen,” this short pamphlet reveals a conceptualization of the state in which the person of the monarch was not necessarily conterminous with the body politic. The tract begins, for instance, by asking, “Whether there be two kind of treasons, one to the king’s person, & another to the body of the realm or not, & whether the body of the realm, may pardon the committed treason unto the person of the prince, and again whether the Prince may pardon treason done to the body of the realm?”<sup>28</sup> The author was clearly struggling with his own dilemma of religious obedience, as he boldly suggested that the English monarch was commanding things that contravened scripture. Would a man be damned, the author asks, if he followed his monarch’s commandments that were contrary to divine law?<sup>29</sup> Other questions make the work’s subversive nature even more clear: the author posits, for instance, “whether the commons may not lawfully by the laws of God, and of nature, stand against such a Prince, to depose her which hath and doeth seek all means possible to give away the realm forever, by Parliament, or otherwise from her right heirs and natural subjects, to a stranger?”<sup>30</sup> In an obvious reference to the exile bill, the right of the monarch to punish and dispossess subjects without due process was also discussed: “Item, whether that Prince doth commit oppression & extortion, which taketh away his subjects’ goods, when he is out of his realm, before he be condemned, or called home to his answer? And whether god will revenge such extortion or not?” This question was coupled with the suggestion that the crown might repossess former church lands, on the basis that the Pope could simply excommunicate property holders.<sup>31</sup> While this pamphlet’s use of anti-Catholic and anti-Spanish tropes were in many ways similar to other works of Protestant polemic from the period, it is unique in the direct manner with

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of Suffolk, his Wife, from Walter Herenden, being a Feoffee of Trust”: “House of Commons Journal Volume 1: 18 January 1563,” *Journal of the House of Commons: volume 1: 1547-1629* (1802), 63. URL: <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=10363> Date accessed: 27 September 2013.

<sup>26</sup> One such work, reported as “A book in praise of those peers who voted against the government’s bill to reinstitute penalties for heretics,” has been lost: Edward J. Baskerville, “A Chronological Bibliography of Propaganda and Polemic: Published in English Between 1553 and 1558 from the Death of Edward VI to the Death of Mary I,” *Memoirs of the American Philosophical Society* vol. 136 (1979), 43.

<sup>27</sup> Anon., *Certayne questions demaunded and asked by the noble realme of Englande, of her true naturall chyldren and subiectes of the same* (1555, STC 9981); This text has been largely ignored by scholars, perhaps because its author’s identity has not been ascertained: Charlotte A. Panofré, “Certayne questions demaunded and asked by the Noble Realme of Englande,” *The EEBO Introductions Series*, eebo.chadwyck.com (accessed December 10, 2013).

<sup>28</sup> Anon., *Certayne questions demaunded*, sig. A2r.

<sup>29</sup> Anon., *Certayne questions demaunded*, sig. A4r.

<sup>30</sup> Anon., *Certayne questions demaunded*, sig. A5r.

<sup>31</sup> Anon., *Certayne questions demaunded*, sig. A5v.

which it implies that loyalty to the state could sometimes be disassociated from obedience to the monarch. Furthermore, by boldly asking “whether the Realm of England belong[s] to the Queen, or to her subjects,” the author was opening the door for resistance while justifying it in the language of obedience.

### III.

While the exile bill controversy was still brewing, the Berties’ chaplain and traveling companion, Bishop William Barlow of Bath and Wells, was embroiled in his own crisis of obedience. A longtime associate of Archbishop Cranmer, Barlow had distinguished himself on the Edwardian religious scene by becoming an unapologetic critic of church images. During one of Barlow’s fiery sermons at Paul’s Cross, for example, he had famously brought out a number of religious images for the crowd to view. Once the sermon was over, a group of boys commenced smashing the images to bits as evangelicals in the crowd cheered.<sup>32</sup> But like much of the Edwardian church leadership, Barlow found himself in dire straits after Mary’s accession, and he was imprisoned in the Tower in September 1553. Accompanied by his close friend and diocesan chancellor, John Cardmaker, Barlow twice attempted to escape into exile, but was apprehended both times.<sup>33</sup> Now imprisoned in the Fleet, both Barlow and Cardmaker faced the possibility of execution for heresy. After the two men were examined before Gardiner in January 1555, they made formal recantations, and were scheduled for release. Within weeks the news of their conformity had spread to the exile community in Strasbourg and Geneva, and was reported directly to John Calvin.<sup>34</sup>

Freed from prison, Barlow immediately fled into exile. While Cardmaker awaited his own release from the Bread Street Compter, however, he began to regret his recantation. Consulting with his fellow prisoner, Laurence Saunders, Cardmaker decided to revoke his previous submission, and wrote a letter explaining his volte-face. “You shall right well perceive,” Cardmaker insisted, “that I am not gone back as some men do report me, but as ready to give my life, as any of my brethren that are gone before me, although by a policy I have a little prolonged it, and that for the best, as already it appeareth unto me, and shortly shall appear unto all.” His earlier recantation was now dismissed as a temporary setback on his path to martyrdom, and he proclaimed himself willing to “suffer twenty kinds of death” before he would again “recant any point of doctrine.” He also issued a stern warning to his fellow evangelicals not to trust the Marian examiners: “I have conferred with some of my adversaries, learned men, and I find that they be but Sophists and shadows.”<sup>35</sup> On May 30, 1555, Cardmaker was burned at the stake at Smithfield.<sup>36</sup> Barlow, by then safely in exile, would have heard news of his friend’s execution later that summer.

By this point it would have been well known that Barlow had stuck to his recantation long enough to escape, even though his companion Cardmaker had chosen to be martyred. It is not apparent how this affected his standing in the evangelical

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<sup>32</sup> Diarmaid MacCulloch, *The Boy King: Edward VI and the Protestant Reformation* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 71-2.

<sup>33</sup> Machyn, *The Diary of Henry Machyn*, 75.

<sup>34</sup> “Thomas Sampson to John Calvin, 23 February 1555,” *Original Letters*, Vol. 1, 171.

<sup>35</sup> Foxe, 1583 edition, 1605.

<sup>36</sup> Thomas S. Freeman, “Cardmaker, John (c.1496–1555),” *ODNB*.

community. What is clear, however, is that Barlow's recantation was masterfully exploited by the Marian regime.<sup>37</sup> To his embarrassment, the government delved into his past, and reprinted an anti-Lutheran text he had written, at Henry VIII's behest, in 1531.<sup>38</sup> The new edition of the book, *A Dialogue Describing the Original Ground of these Luther Factions, and Many of their Abuses*, was prominently advertised as a work by "Sir William Barlow canon, late Bishop of Bath." A new preface was also added, which presented the work as an exposé of Protestant heresy, revealing not only the "beastly beginning of Luther's furious faction in Saxony, with the seditious schisms of the sacramentaries Zwinglius, Oecolampadius, and others of Switzerland," but also "what filthy fruit buddeth out of this frantic fraternity, and sinful Synagogue of Satan, infernally invented, to seduce simple souls." The reader was led to believe that Barlow had fully consented to the book's republication, and that his recent experiences as a leading Protestant had informed the new edition: "...here is most lively and truly set forth to the world, by the author hereof, who had evident experience of their manners, fashion, and order of all states of them, being long time by his own confession, in their company, and conversant with them."<sup>39</sup>

Barlow's friend William Turner responded by chastising the Marian government, and Stephen Gardiner in particular, for having Barlow's book republished, despite knowing full well that Barlow no longer believed its contents. For Turner this misuse of Barlow's past was also hypocritical, because Gardiner would himself never consent to the republishing of his own works in support of the Henrician supremacy: "If that master Gardiner allow his doctrine still, of King Henry's marriage, let him set forth the same doctrine in English at large, because the common people may learn from wholesome doctrine of it even as he, or at the least some of his, have handled mister Barlow, which wrote a naughty and a false lying book, compelled by fear to do so. But if he will not set out his book in English both because he knoweth in his conscience that it is a false book, and an heretical book, and therefore will not knowledge it now to be his book, because he was compelled by fear to write against the open truth: he (or at the least some of his popish prentices) is very uncharitable and unjust unto mister Barlow, which handleth him otherwise than he would or will be handled himself."<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> Barlow's case corroborates Eamon Duffy's convincing argument that the Marian government was far more astute at manipulating print than scholars have previously believed: Duffy, *Fires of Faith*, 57-78.

<sup>38</sup> William Barlow, *A dyaloge describing the originall grou[n]d of these Lutheran faccyons, and many of theyr abusys, compyled by syr William Barlow chanon* (1531: STC 1461); On the context surrounding the initial writing of this text, see: Peter Marshall, *Religious Identities in Henry VIII's England* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2006), 39.

<sup>39</sup> William Barlow, *A dialoge describing the originall ground of these Lutheran faccions, and many of their abuses, compyled by syr William Barlow chanon, late byshop of Bathe* (1553: STC 1462).

<sup>40</sup> William Turner, *A nevve booke of spirituall physik for dyuerse diseases of the nobilitie and gentlemen of Englande*, (1555: STC 24361), sigs. 40v-40r.

By the summer of 1556 Barlow had joined the group of English exiles, led by Willoughby and Bertie, who were staying at Weinheim castle.<sup>41</sup> Yet even in exile their relationship with the English government continued to be confrontational. In July, the royal servant John Brett journeyed to Weinheim, carrying warrants that ordered Willoughby and Bertie to return to England.<sup>42</sup> According to Brett's official report, after arriving in the town he and his servant left their horses at an inn, and then walked up the road to the castle. There they found the gates shut, with "a stripling like an English lackey standing afore them." The boy confirmed that Willoughby and Bertie were inside, but Brett was refused entry. Brett then told a gatekeeper "that I had certain letters to deliver them from certain their friends," and was directed to wait while Bertie was summoned. Yet while Brett stood outside the castle walls he heard "a noise of laying down stones in the window of a little turret over the gate." Then, Brett reported, "casting up our eyes we saw one or two look out, as though they had been loathe to have been seen." This was suddenly followed by voices crying out in French, "Kill them! Kill them!" as stones were thrown at them from above. Brett claimed that one stone "missed my head, but it hit so big a blow on the right hand that I could not rule my forefinger and thumb a fortnight after."<sup>43</sup> A group of servants then rushed out of the gates "with great fierceness" as Brett and his servant ran away. He reported that "some cast stones after me and my man from the steep hilltop," while a half-dozen more pursued them as they retreated to the town.

In the town marketplace, Willoughby's servants began to raise a hue and cry, telling the Weinheim villagers that Brett and his servant were "thieves and papists" who had come "to carry away the Duchess their lady, or by some secret mean to poison her and their Master, favourers of the Gospel and truth."<sup>44</sup> Yet Brett loudly proclaimed his innocence to the crowd. "In the best Dutch I could," he reported, "I did the people to understand that their childish exclamations were false, and that I came thither to try no matters with weapon in hand, but in a most honest and just cause." Soon after a local magistrate was summoned, and he decided to go to the castle to speak with Willoughby and Bertie himself. Yet when the magistrate returned he was accompanied not by the duchess or her husband, but by their appointed spokesperson: Bishop William Barlow. Speaking with Brett directly, Barlow demanded to know whether the letters he carried "were from the Queen's Majesty or not, and whether they were letters missives or process." Barlow explained that while Willoughby and Brett would willingly accept letters of correspondence, they would not receive legal warrants, on the grounds that "they were within another Prince's dominions." Brett, however, was unwilling to reveal the letters' contents before delivering them, telling Barlow only "they were letters, and given [to] me for letters, and for letters would I deliver them." Brett reported that Barlow then became exasperated by his evasive responses: "He began to threaten me, saying that

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<sup>41</sup> Barlow appears to have been serving as the Duchess' chaplain: Harkrider, *Women, Reform and Community*, 103; LPL MS 2523, fols. 1r-v, 14r-15v.

<sup>42</sup> Sarah Covington, "Heretic Hunting Beyond the Seas: John Brett and His Encounter with the Marian Exiles," *Albion* 36, no. 3 (2004): 407-429.

<sup>43</sup> Brett's report is printed as: "A Narrative of the Pursuit of English Refugees in Germany Under Queen Mary," ed. I.S. Leadam, *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 11 (1897): 113-131.

<sup>44</sup> "A Narrative of the Pursuit," 123.



I might well repent myself for my presumption in taking upon me such an enterprise in case my letters were found to be process.”<sup>45</sup> Barlow’s attempts to prevent Willoughby and Bertie from being subpoenaed underline the precarious and confusing legal situation the exiles were in. As Sarah Covington has observed, had the Berties officially accepted a subpoena, and then ignored it, they would have been vulnerable to further prosecution and arrest.<sup>46</sup> By simply refusing to receive Brett’s letters of “process,” therefore, they were clinging to a legally defensible position. This is telling: for, as we shall see, while Willoughby and Bertie undoubtedly viewed Queen Mary as a religious tyrant, they were also committed to the legitimacy of English legal authority.

#### IV.

As scholars have so often noted, for all of John Knox’s skills as a polemicist, he had horrible timing. His 1558 work, *The First Blast of the Trumpet Against the Monstrous Regiment of Women*, was a vitriolic assault on the legitimacy of female rule, specifically targeted at the two Catholic Marys: Mary I in England and Mary of Guise in Scotland. Knox, of course, had no way of knowing that within a year of his book’s appearance this line of attack would become anathema to Protestant interests once Elizabeth Tudor ascended the throne. The official replies to Knox’s text have also garnered attention, especially John Aylmer’s 1559 *An Harborowe for Faithfull and Trewe Subiectes*, which attacked Knox’s arguments by emphasizing the corporate structure of English government.<sup>47</sup> Far less attention has been paid, however, to the first response to Knox: a manuscript treatise written by Bertie in 1558, while he and his family were still in exile. The manuscript has survived in the British Library as part of the Yelverton collection (now Additional Manuscripts), because at some point it came into the possession of the Elizabethan clerk of the privy council, Robert Beale.<sup>48</sup> Although several scholars have noted the manuscript’s existence, it has never received detailed analysis. This is an oversight likely due, at least in part, to the difficulty of Bertie’s handwriting, and the disorganized nature of the text.<sup>49</sup> Some scholars have also wrongfully assumed it to be a later Elizabethan work, even though Beale clearly dated it 1558, and Bertie himself explains within the text that he was writing from exile.<sup>50</sup> There is also not a single mention of Queen Elizabeth anywhere in the work, and so it is likely

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<sup>45</sup> This tense encounter only concluded days later, when a local magistrate finally confiscated Brett’s letters, and sent him and his servant on their way: “A Narrative of the Pursuit,” 126-131.

<sup>46</sup> Covington, “Heretic Hunting Beyond the Seas,” 426.

<sup>47</sup> John Aylmer, *An harborovve for faithfull and trevve subiectes agaynst the late blowne blaste, concerninge the gouernme[n]t of vvemen. wherin be confuted all such reasons as a straunger of late made in that behalfe, with a breife exhortation to obedience* (1559, STC 1005).

<sup>48</sup> BL Additional MS 48043 (Yelverton MS 48), fols. 1r-10r; the treatise is untitled, but was labeled by Beale: “These Answers were made by Mr Rychard Bartye, husband to the lady Catharine Duchess of Suff. against the book of John Knoxe: 1558”

<sup>49</sup> Walton, *Catholic Queen, Protestant Patriarchy*, 41; Shephard, *Gender and Authority*, 27.

<sup>50</sup> The reoccurring mistake of misdating this text to 1568 can be first traced to: Evelyn Read, *Catherine, Duchess of Suffolk: A Portrait* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1962), 170.

that it was written either before Queen Mary's death on 17 November 1558, or sometime shortly thereafter. This is a crucial point, because it shows that Bertie was reacting more to the experience of living under a Catholic queen than he was the prospect of a Protestant one.

Close examination of the treatise reveals that Bertie had three chief aims: the first, and most obvious, is to dismiss Knox's arguments that female rulers are illegitimate, and therefore deposable, by reason of their gender. Secondly, it argues that private persons may not destroy the head of the body politic, even if that head is evil or deficient. Thirdly, and most importantly for our purposes of understanding the political-theological assumptions of the Duchess' circle, it formulates how a wicked, corrupt, or defective head could be controlled and coerced. Bertie begins the work by reminding the reader that he was writing while still in exile: "Before this bearer desired me to note the weakest (as I thought) places in the author's work, I had sent my books forth onward the journey I intend god willing to follow, wherefore I cannot at a hairsbreadth point out every law or paragraph. Neither in other things so exactly proceed as I would and might, but am fettered by the short bind of my memory."<sup>51</sup> Summarizing Knox's principal claim that "Horrible is the vengeance for the promoted woman at government, and for the promoter," Bertie began by accusing Knox of making an argument of convenience. If Knox actually believed this, Bertie asks, then "why in the due season preached not the author of this doctrine against the government of Jane?"<sup>52</sup> Not only should Knox have made these arguments against the short reign of Jane Grey, but he also should have condemned Queen Mary as an usurper as soon as she took the throne. That Knox had first attempted to move Mary to his cause, rather than immediately dismissing her out of hand as illegitimate, shows that his anti-gynocratic argument was one of insincere expedience. "For if at the writing of the letter he were of this judgment," Bertie insists, "duty and order required first to pronounce to her that the occupying of the throne was against God's word and will, and hasted vengeance upon her, and not further encourage or instruct to the execution of an office, whereof she is utterly incapable."<sup>53</sup> To Bertie's mind, therefore, Knox's argument against female rule was little more than a convenient lie- a transparent pretense that Knox himself did not truly believe.

For Bertie, therefore, the kernel of the matter was not actually the principle of female rule, but rather Knox's underlying argument about the limits of obedience to an imperfect civil magistrate. Bertie agrees with Knox's contention that the body politic is

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<sup>51</sup> BL Additional MS 48043, fol. 1r; The "bearer" in question was most likely the Bertie's chaplain, Bishop William Barlow. Not only was Barlow the family's occasional spokesperson (as we have already seen), but he is also known to have delivered correspondence from various exiles and foreign dignitaries to the nascent Elizabethan government upon his return to England in early 1559: Kenneth Fincham and Nicholas Tyacke, *Altars Restored: The Changing Face of English Religious Worship, 1547-c.1700* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 32; The impending "journey" Bertie mentions could either be a reference to the return trip to England, or to one of the several migrations the Duchess and her retinue made while moving throughout Germany and Poland.

<sup>52</sup> BL Additional MS 48043, fol. 3r.

<sup>53</sup> BL Additional MS 48043, fol. 3r.

“in best proportion when it hath the best governor.” Indeed, Bertie notes, “the best government is when Plato’s king reigneth, a man amongst men best endowed with all [the] gifts of fortune, nature, and from above.”<sup>54</sup> However, he objects, this “persuadeth not that the body may refuse a head with one eye, because it is not the perfect head.” Even if being a woman was a mark of imperfection, Bertie asked, then how was it any different from other imperfections. Was it not true that a “doting lunatic, a fool, an unthrift, or a child, all being imperfect, may sit in the royal seat by the word of God?”<sup>55</sup>

Bertie's understanding of basic monarchical principles can also be glimpsed in his objections to Knox's interpretation of the specific conditions of Israelite kingship described in Deuteronomy 17. What Knox failed to grasp, Bertie charged, was that the stipulations in this passage belonged to a particular context, and therefore were not applicable to all instances of kingship. Knox “must prove that we are not only bound to the Jewish judicials, but to their circumstances, and formalities, which I am sure he cannot do, neither will attempt to do.”<sup>56</sup> Furthermore, Bertie insisted, the passage did not specify that the Israelites were forever bound to elect their king in this same manner in perpetuity. Rather, it was not clear “whether these words, ‘You shall chooseth, etc,’ bindeth the Israelites always by election to have their king, or that these may have him by succession, or by testament of another, and whether they may admit woman, or infant, or a man unlettered, because he is bound to read the Law.”<sup>57</sup> The general means by which a king could legitimately come into power, therefore, were more variable than the particular strictures placed upon the Israelites in this single circumstance.

In order to understand God's approved forms of kingship, Bertie contends, one must look not to the particular conditions given to the Israelites, but rather to the general conditions prescribed by God: “The Israelites (you know), would needs have a K[ing], and that in anywise after the heathenish fashion. God permitteth that, only a very few things excepted.” The first of these particular exceptions was that, when God appointed the Israelites a king, they were required to accept him. They were also mandated to only choose a ruler “from among their brethren, that he have not many horses, wives, nor much treasure, that he read and study the laws all the days of his life.”<sup>58</sup> According to Bertie, it is clear that “these clauses...are special exceptions to them [the Israelites]. In the rest they have liberty to follow the Gentiles.”<sup>59</sup>

To understand the basic principles of legitimate monarchy, therefore, one must understand the earliest forms of kingship “the heathens used, so much as in writing is left.” Government first began, Bertie claims, when “necessity persuaded men to order.” He writes, “People distressed, being by the wisdom and virtue of some man among them singularly endowed, delivered, or hoping by him to be delivered, by common election committed, and submitted themselves to him as to their head and governor.” Later, Bertie explains, the practice of elective kingship often gave way to hereditary succession, for reasons of stability and expedience: “Afterward as dominions grew great, contentions

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<sup>54</sup> BL Additional MS 48043, fol. 5r.

<sup>55</sup> BL Additional MS 48043, fol. 5r.

<sup>56</sup> BL Additional MS 48043, fol. 6r.

<sup>57</sup> BL Additional MS 48043, fol. 6r.

<sup>58</sup> BL Additional MS 48043, fol. 6r.

<sup>59</sup> BL Additional MS 48043, fol. 6v.

grew also about them, violence and corruption usurped the place of free election; by which inconvenience succession by birth and testament was first planted, and being tried by long experience the least harm, spreadeth out, and yealdeth...even to these our days.” For the Gentiles, therefore, both elective and hereditary monarchies had been legitimately established.

Furthermore, Bertie argues, questions of gender and age never disqualified the rightful ruler from the throne. “And that children and women in their turns were accepted,” Bertie notes, “nothing is less doubtful. For long before Moses, in the blood of the first monarchy among the Chaldees, it was no monster a woman to reign.”<sup>60</sup> Likewise, when God allowed the Israelites to institute kingship, they followed the Gentile model: “Wherefore that the Jews in these cases (as none of the special prohibitions) followed the heathen, their stories everywhere testify, God by his word and ordinance sometime also approving it. They began their kingdom as the heathen, with election. They continued it as the heathen, by succession and testament (God not appointing out a special man), without question of age, sex, or learning.”<sup>61</sup>

Furthermore, God had “often warned them by his prophets, that for their sinfulness he will give women, fools, and children to be governors as the imperfect kind of heads, yet heads not to be cut off, witness all laws of man and God.”<sup>62</sup> If, indeed, God intended to use the rule of an imperfect head as punishment, then why would he also disallow their rule from the beginning, or allow someone “immediately to dispatch them?”<sup>63</sup> In this respect Bertie’s line of argument was in keeping with standard Pauline obedience theory, with its emphasis on passive non-resistance. Echoing Romans 13, Bertie asserts, “the powers that be are ordained of God.” Anyone who would attempt to resist, therefore, “shall receive damnation,” regardless of whether the authorities in question are “good or bad, men or women.” To resist a wicked monarch, therefore, is tantamount to resisting God: “For as the good magistrate is thy comfort, so God will make the indurated tyrant brother to thee as to Daniel, or else when he shall mean thy bitter destruction, to crown thee with immortal glory. So that he is to thee, the minister of God every way to thy good, so is he the minister of God to the wicked for his punishment.”<sup>64</sup> It is for this reason that individuals are not allowed to kill tyrants. Furthermore, this would be beyond the duty of any single person, “For if a private man may not kill a murderer, or an idolater neglected by the magistrate, much less may he kill the magistrate.” However, Bertie reassures the reader, this does not mean that wicked magistrates are to be permanently endured without recourse. “Besides,” he writes, “we have a present remedy of deliverance from such a magistrate if he be evil, even by the same self mean to pull him down, whereby we set him up, which is the only orderly mean: that is either by the civil mean, which erected him, or if God give not access thereunto, let us amend ourselves and he will amend our magistrates.”<sup>65</sup> While Bertie

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<sup>60</sup> BL Additional MS 48043, fol. 6v.

<sup>61</sup> BL Additional MS 48043, fol. 6v.

<sup>62</sup> BL Additional MS 48043, fol. 7r.

<sup>63</sup> BL Additional MS 48043, fol. 7r.

<sup>64</sup> BL Additional MS 48043, fol. 7v.

<sup>65</sup> BL Additional MS 48043, fol. 7v.

does not specify by what “civil mean” the wicked magistrate might be legally pulled down, he emphasized that the monarch was bound by the rule of law.

This, for him, is precisely why Knox was wrong to attack the legitimacy of female rulership. Wise men, Bertie explained, had long ago found “it by experience a horrible shaking of a common weal upon every lack of issue male to run to election, [and so] gave liberty and decreed that issue female shall supply in the dignity of monarchy.” This was especially true because the common weal was one which “yealdeth to the supreme governor not *maxime merum imperium*.”<sup>66</sup> Drawn from Roman law, “*merum imperium*” signified the highest form of sovereign power; in Justinian’s Code, for example, it described the power of the emperor to independently and arbitrarily create laws or make wars.<sup>67</sup> By claiming that the English monarch does not hold absolute power, Bertie was affirming a tradition within civil law which allowed for the potential of conciliar authority to limit or control monarchical authority. There are Henrician roots here as well, as this was a line of argument closely aligned with the ideas of mixed constitutionalism featured in Thomas Starkey’s *A Dialogue between Reginald Pole and Thomas Lupset*.<sup>68</sup>

Bertie’s English monarch, therefore, is one wholly bound by the rule of law. According to Bertie, “For so it is where that succession is commonly admitted, that is that the King or Queen may not command what he will, but what the laws will, so that the sinews of government consist in the laws nobility and commons.”<sup>69</sup> This conceptualization of the law as “the sinews of government” also reveals one of the main influences on Bertie’s political thought: the 15th century Lord Chief Justice and legal theorist, Sir John Fortescue.<sup>70</sup> In *De laudibus legum Angliae*, for example, Fortescue had employed the image of a body politic united by the law. “The law, under which the people is incorporated,” Fortescue wrote, “may be compared to the nerves or sinews of the body natural; for, as by these the whole frame is fitly joined together and compacted, so is the law that ligament...by which the body politic, and all its several members are bound together and united in one entire body.”<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>66</sup> BL Additional MS 48043, fol. 9v.

<sup>67</sup> Quentin Skinner, *Foundations of Modern Political Thought, Vol. 2* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), 127; Donald Kelley, “Civil Science in the Renaissance: the problem of interpretation,” in *The Languages of Political Theory in Early-Modern Europe*, ed. Anthony Pagden (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 59.

<sup>68</sup> Thomas Mayer, *Thomas Starkey and the Commonwealth: Humanist Politics and Religion in the Reign of Henry VIII* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

<sup>69</sup> BL Additional MS 48043, fol. 9r.

<sup>70</sup> Bertie does not appear to have formally trained in the law, but likely received a considerable legal education from his mentor Thomas Wriothesley, whose agents were known for their skills in Chancery: Alan Cromartie, *The Constitutionalist Revolution: An Essay on the History of England, 1450-1642* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 101.

<sup>71</sup> Sir John Fortescue, *De laudibus legum Angliae*, trans. A. Amos (Cambridge: J. Smith, 1825), 38.

A similar image of the corporate body politic had also been used by Bertie's fellow exile, the resistance theorist John Ponet. However, Ponet had taken an anti-Fortescuean approach by claiming that the other members of the body politic could decide to remove their own head. "Commonwealths and realms may live," Ponet argued, "when the head is cut off, and may put on a new head, that is, make them a new governour, when they see their old head seek too much his own will and not the wealth of the hole body, for the which he was only ordained."<sup>72</sup> According to Bertie such understandings of the body politic were preposterous, because they did not in any way correspond to "man's natural body as pattern of such policy." When "the perfectest head" is not available, it was simply necessary for the other members of the corporate body to compensate for the deficiency. He writes, "For no man wholly commiteth the conduct of his body to a head without eyes, neither cutteth off or refuseth the head because it is eyeless and cannot not direct him, but rather feeleth for the way with his feet, gropeth it out with his hands, and so supplieth the lack in the imperfect head, so must man do in the greater common weale."<sup>73</sup>

Furthermore, Bertie explains in a striking image, "the politic body hath herein a great advantage, *for he hath a strangle cord to direct him never to wander out of the right way. I mean the Law, a governor without affection.*"<sup>74</sup> Again, Bertie's choice of words here is highly significant. It is telling that the law is not described as a yoke, leash, or bridle, but as "a strangle cord," pulling and directing the head of the body politic. For early modern readers the "strangle cord" had coercive and punitive connotations, as it was most commonly used to describe the piece of rope used in the torture and execution of traitors. The term appears, for example, throughout Thomas Norton and Thomas Sackville's play *The Tragedie of Gorboduc*, when they described the punishment of traitorous subjects: those rebels who were not "with revenging sword slain in the field," were afterwards "with the strangling cord hanged on the trees."<sup>75</sup>

Bertie concludes his treatise by recognizing that, in this formulation, the deficient monarchical head no longer wielded the lion's share of *imperium*. However, he argues, the name of the office alone does not always reflect the balance of power within a polity. If Knox, Bertie concludes, "like not this reason, but will needs have the head to have absolute power, let the Senate of Venice make him answer, where the Duke hath the name, and they the power; if he allow the reason, so it were put in execution, let him disallow them to whom the execution appertaineth."<sup>76</sup> In this sense it was perfectly acceptable for the monarchical head, like the Venetian Duke, to assume the public appearance of official power, even while real power was held by other members of the body politic. By appealing to the Venetian model of government Bertie was also

<sup>72</sup> Ponet, *A shorte treatise of politike pouer*, sig. D7r.

<sup>73</sup> BL Additional MS 48043, fol. 9v.

<sup>74</sup> Emphasis mine: BL Additional MS 48043, fol. 9v.

<sup>75</sup> Thomas Norton and Thomas Sackville, *The tragedie of Gorboduc, whereof three actes were wrytten by Thomas Nortone, and the two laste by Thomas Sackuyle. Sett forthe as the same was shewed before the Quenes most excellent Maiestie, in her highnes court of Whitehall, the. xvij. day of Ianuary, anno Domini. 1561. By the Gentlemen of thynner Temple in London* (1565, STC 18684), sig. D8r.

<sup>76</sup> BL Additional MS 48043, fol. 9v.

revealing his ties to the vibrant classical republican tradition that has been described in detail by recent scholars, most notably Markku Peltonen.<sup>77</sup> The Italian diplomat Gasparo Contarini's 1543 description of the Venetian constitution, *De magistratibus et republica Venetorum*, was widely read in English humanist circles. Six years later, the Edwardian evangelical William Thomas drew upon this work when he published *The historie of Italie*. In the section "Of Dignities and Offices," for example, Thomas described the limited role of the Duke in the tripartite Venetian state. While the Duke was appointed for life, Thomas observed, "And though in appearance he seemeth of great estate, yet in very deed his power is but small. He keepeth no house, liveth privately, and is in so much servitude, that I have heard some of the Venetians themselves call him an honourable slave."<sup>78</sup> Thomas also directly compared aspects of the Venetian constitution to England: "This foresaid great council may be likened to our parliament: For unto it many matters of importance are appealed, and that that it doeth, is unreformable. By it all offices are given, and into it entereth the Duke, and all the other officers."<sup>79</sup>

The Venetian model could also be viewed as a functional, contemporary example of the Polybian version of the mixed constitution. This classical ideal would be most famously applied to England in 1559 by Aylmer. "The regiment of England is not a mere Monarchy, as some for lack of consideration think," Aylmer wrote, "nor a mere Oligarchy, nor Democratie, but a rule mixte of all these, wherein each one of these have or should have like authority. The image whereof, and not the image, but the thing in deed, is to be seen in the parliament house, wherein you shall find these 3 estates: the King or Queen, which representeth the Monarche. The noble men, which be the Aristocratie, and the Burgesses and Knights the Democratie."<sup>80</sup> Unlike Aylmer, Bertie never explicitly employed the classical image of the three estates, and his work was not a comprehensive or systematic theory of the state. However, his general understanding of the English body politic still operated through a tripartite separation of powers: First is the monarchical head, which in normal and natural circumstances "ought to have the highest place."<sup>81</sup> Secondly, there is the rest of the body: these members have their own responsibilities, and no member can "without necessity leapeth out of his place to usurp the other's office." It was still natural, however, for one member to expect the other to fulfill its own obligations, and so it follows that "hands want feet to supply their run." The body also has the ability to function autonomously if necessary, stumbling along when the head is imperfect or incapacitated.<sup>82</sup> This part of the body also includes the "nobility and commons" which produce the law. Thirdly, there is the "Law" itself, that

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<sup>77</sup> For the influence of Venice on classical republicanism in England, see: Peltonen, *Classical Humanism and Republicanism*, 102-118; Andrew Hadfield, "Two Representations of Venice in Late Tudor and Early Stuart England," *Parergon* Vol. 15, No. 2 (January 1998), 47-69.

<sup>78</sup> William Thomas, *The historie of Italie a booke excedyng profitable to be redde: because it intreateth of the astate of many and diuers common weales, how thei haue ben, [and] now be gouerned* (1549, STC 24018), sig. 77r.

<sup>79</sup> Thomas, *The historie of Italie*, sig. 78v-79r.

<sup>80</sup> Aylmer, *An harborovve for faithfull and trevve subiectes*, sigs. H2v-3r.

<sup>81</sup> BL Additional MS 48043, fol. 5v.

<sup>82</sup> BL Additional MS 48043, fol. 5v.

“governor without affection,” which is imagined as a “strangle cord” tied around the neck, always leading and dragging the body politic in the right direction.

In this respect, Bertie’s treatise puts a great deal of stress on the limits of the English monarchy. He was not simply suggesting that the monarch was theoretically bound by the rule of law; rather, he was claiming that Law rules in deed. While Fortescue had insisted that the monarch could not “change the laws thereof, nor take from the people what is theirs, by right, against their consents,” he did not go so far as to emphasize the coercive power of the law.<sup>83</sup> Fortescue believed that the law set limits on what the monarch should do, but Bertie was taking this a step further by casting the law as governour, always able to direct and control the body politic. Bertie’s treatise is also fascinating because it was an intellectual meld of various trends that scholars have usually assumed to be parallel and disconnected; he seems, for example, to have been influenced by traditions as varied as late medieval common law, Roman law, Reformed political theology, Protestant scripturalism, Henrician and Edwardian humanism, and imported ideas of classical republicanism.

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Criticizing the tendency of some scholars (most notably Peltonen and David Norbook) to “see steps towards constitutional republicanism” in Tudor political thought, Blair Worden has argued, “There was nothing inherently anti-monarchical about pleas for the rule of law.”<sup>84</sup> This serves as an important reminder that, even though this language persisted, in the years between Bertie and James Harrington it lost much of its bite, and was increasingly used both by Elizabethan and Stuart authors to defend or even expand monarchical privilege.<sup>85</sup> The question becomes, then, how we explain the temporary disappearance of this coercive valence without resorting to something uncomfortably close to- as Conrad Russell complained of puritanism- a “Cheshire Cat” theory of limited monarchy.<sup>86</sup> An answer may begin to appear if we follow the intellectual career of another member of the Duchess of Suffolk’s circle: the scholar and administrator Thomas Wilson.<sup>87</sup> His 1553 work, the *Arte of Rhetorik*, was heavily influenced by Ciceronian and

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<sup>83</sup> Fortescue, *De laudibus legum Angliae*, 38.

<sup>84</sup> Blair Worden, “Republicanism, Regicide and Republic: The English Experience,” in *Republicanism: A Shared European Heritage: Volume 1, Republicanism and Constitutionalism in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 313; For a similar view, see: Arihiro Fukuda, *Sovereignty and the Sword: Harrington, Hobbes, and Mixed Government in the English Civil Wars* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997).

<sup>85</sup> J.P. Sommerville, *Politics & Ideology in England, 1603-1640* (London: Longman, 1986), 10-1; Michael Mendle, *Dangerous Positions: Mixed Government, the Estates of the Realm, and the Making of the ‘Answer to the six propositions’* (University, AL: University of Alabama Press, 1985).

<sup>86</sup> John Guy, “The Henrician Age,” in *The Varieties of British Political Thought, 1500-1800*, ed. J.G.A. Pocock (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 19.

<sup>87</sup> Wilson had tutored Willoughby’s two sons, and after their deaths published a collection of letters celebrating their lives: Thomas Wilson and Walter Haddon, *Vita et obitus duorum fratrum Suffolciensium, Henrici et Caroli Brandoni prestanti virtute et*



Italian humanist ideals, and emphasized the importance of godly counsel.<sup>88</sup> Wilson was also willing to apply classical arguments for resistance against tyranny to contemporary political situations: in what was clearly an attack on Phillip II of Spain, for example, Wilson translated the *Olynthiacs* and the *Philippics*- written by the Athenian orator Demosthenes against Philip II of Macedon.<sup>89</sup> Yet by the latter years of Elizabeth's reign Wilson would become firmly entrenched in state administration, becoming at first a diplomat, and then a chief examiner of suspected traitors. As we might suspect, Wilson's letters in these years reveal a very different type of Renaissance humanist, one less committed to Ciceronian or Demosthenic ideals of anti-tyranny and prescriptive counsel, but more willing to invoke classical assertions of state obedience and uniformity. In a July 1574 letter to Lord Burghley, for instance, Wilson recommended Julius Caesar's *Commentarii de Bello Gallico* as their guide. While it may be true, Wilson wrote, that "the state in which nothing is permitted to anyone is unhappy," it was much worse when "all things are lawful for everyone."<sup>90</sup> Caesar's writings showed that the discussion of state matters was best left to those who were tasked with the state's maintenance. Yet in England, Wilson complained, not only were matters of state allowed to be openly debated, but so too were religious controversies. Anyone could "set himself up as a judge, even the lowest plebeian, the greatest idiot, or the most foolish woman."<sup>91</sup> While this letter may have captured Wilson at his most dyspeptic, it shows how the same classical tradition that had once been used to express an ideology of counsel and anti-tyrannical defiance was now the republicanism of rule, used to assert uniformity, stamp out dissent, and protect imperial interests against foreign threats.

We can see a similar process with Aylmer, whose *An Harborowe for Faithfull and Trewe Subiectes* marks the most well known assertion of mixed constitutionalist thought in Tudor England. In recent years this work has been interpreted, most notably by Anne McLaren, as an attempt to placate anxieties about Elizabeth's gender.<sup>92</sup> This was certainly true. Yet it also seems that, like Bertie, Aylmer's political ideas were undoubtedly shaped by the exile. His experience had been a difficult one: it was said, for

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*splendore nobilitatis ducum illustrissimorum, duabus epistolis explicata* (1551, STC 25817).

<sup>88</sup> Thomas Wilson, *The arte of rhetorique for the vse of all suche as are studious of eloquence* (1553, STC 25799); Donald R. Kelley, "Elizabethan Political Thought," in *The Varieties of British Political Thought, 1500-1800*, ed. J.G.A. Pocock (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 57.

<sup>89</sup> Demosthenes, *The three orations of Demosthenes*, trans. Thomas Wilson (1570, STC 6578); Alastair Blanshard and Tracey Sowerby. "Thomas Wilson's Demosthenes and the Politics of Tudor Translation," *International Journal of the Classical Tradition* 12, no. 1 (2005): 46 – 80; Markku Peltonen, *Rhetoric, Politics and Popularity in Pre-Revolutionary England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 106-9.

<sup>90</sup> "Interim ego dico, infaelix illa Resp. est, in qua nemini quicquam licet, sed multo infaelicior illa, in qua omnibus omnia licent": Cecil Papers MS 8/6, fol. 6r.

<sup>91</sup> "Nostrates omnia sibi permittunt, et passim, non solum in regni negotiis, sed in causis de religione contraversis; et quisque (si diis placet) se iudicem statuit, plebeius infimus, idiota maximus, imo foemina omnium stultissima.": Cecil Papers MS 8/6, fol. 6r.

<sup>92</sup> McLaren, *Political Culture in the Reign of Elizabeth I*, 42-74.

example, that during his escape into exile he had eluded the Marian authorities only because a merchant allowed him to hide in a secret compartment built into a wine barrel in the ship's cargo hold. In Thomas Fuller's telling of the tale, Aylmer sat behind a false bottom at one end of the barrel, while the oblivious search party proceeded to pour wine from the other end.<sup>93</sup> The story was surely embellished, but it still reminds us that Aylmer had ample reason to question the limits of his loyalty to a persecuting monarch. This is a subtle yet important point, because it means that, like Bertie, Aylmer's constitutionalism had likely been theorized not only *in complement* to a boy-king and a Protestant queen, but also *in opposition* to a Catholic one.

Yet like Wilson, Aylmer's political ideals seem to have been tempered by his experiences defending the Elizabethan status quo. As the Bishop of London, Aylmer was no longer worried so much about the problems of a defective, wicked, or tyrannical monarch so much as he was concerned with defending the English church against perceived threats from foreign Catholics and puritan subversives. In this respect, as Peter Lake has shown, late Elizabethan anti-puritanism effectively took the republicanism out of monarchical republicanism.<sup>94</sup> By 1588 the puritan polemicist Martin Marprelate could mercilessly mock Aylmer's monarchical turn by reminding readers of his constitutionalist past. "I see a bishopric hath cooled your courage," Marprelate sneered, "for in those days that you wrote this book, you would have our parliament to overrule her majesty, and not to yield an inch unto her of their privileges."<sup>95</sup> The Berties, too, would spend their post-Marian life as political insiders. Although the duchess, in particular, continued to serve as one of the staunchest advocates of godly reform, her religious grievances were now channeled through close friends like William Cecil.<sup>96</sup> Likewise, Cecil was consulting with Bertie on points of theoretical political policy well into Elizabeth's reign.<sup>97</sup>

This does not mean, however, that those earlier assumptions and assertions about the constitutional limits on the English monarchy forever vanished, becoming permanently unavailable to be reactivated again in a different political context. As Patrick Collinson observed in his original sketch of the Elizabethan monarchical republic: "Elizabeth was not actively resisted by her Protestant subjects but it does not follow that there was no ideological capacity for resistance, just as it would be a serious mistake to infer from the second Elizabethan peace that this country had no nuclear capability

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<sup>93</sup> Thomas Fuller, *The history of the worthies of England who for parts and learning have been eminent in the several counties: together with an historical narrative of the native commodities and rarities in each county* (1662), 248.

<sup>94</sup> Peter Lake, "The Monarchical Republic of Queen Elizabeth I' (and the Fall of Archbishop Grindal) Revisited," in *The Monarchical Republic of Early Modern England: Essays in Response to Patrick Collinson*, ed. John F. McDiarmid (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2007), 129-48.

<sup>95</sup> Martin Marprelate (pseud.), *The Martin Marprelate Tracts: A Modernized and Annotated Edition*, ed. Joseph L. Black (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 74.

<sup>96</sup> TNA SP 12/3 fols. 28r-29r.

<sup>97</sup> CP MS 156/34; TNA SP 12/71 fol. 6r; SP 12/43 fol. 97r.

between 1551 and the 1580s.”<sup>98</sup> While the appropriation of constitutionalist ideas by the Elizabethan and Stuart ruling class meant that its monarchical and aristocratic tendencies were most commonly emphasized, it also meant that this language continued to thrive.<sup>99</sup> The developmental history of early modern English constitutionalism, therefore, may be more accurately characterized by contextually determined changes in application and emphasis, rather than grand shifts of philosophical orientation; the ideological means of constitutional republicanism were present well before 1649, even if the motives and opportunity were not.

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<sup>98</sup> Collinson, “The Monarchical Republic of Queen Elizabeth I,” in *Elizabethan Essays*, 44.

<sup>99</sup> Peltonen, *Classical Humanism*; Cromartie, *The Constitutionalist Revolution*.

## Chapter 5

### Elizabethan Puritanism and the Politics of Memory in Post-Marian England

In May 1579, the parson of Bourton-on-Dunsmore, Richard Proude, nervously wrote a confidential letter to the most powerful man in England: William Cecil, Lord Burghley. Realizing that he was broaching the most sensitive of subjects, Proude reassured Cecil that he had kept the contents of the letter private: “I have written it none knowing of it, so you may burn it none seeing it.”<sup>1</sup> Putting on a brave face, Proude insisted that the letter, though admonitory, was written not only for Cecil’s own benefit, but in order to ensure the well being of the entire English church. After all, the parson explained, he was only letting Cecil in on what was actually being spoken of him in the godly community: “...me thinketh (wishing well to your goodness) I have committed no great fault, if any at all, but to let you to understand what is said of you, that I hear.” Proude’s intent was to make plain an open secret, one that for more than twenty years had been spoken of in hushed tones and whispers, but was never publicly pronounced: Proude would admonish Cecil for his idolatrous attendance at mass during the reign of Queen Mary, and explain how the great councilor’s failure to atone for this most egregious of transgressions had led him to allow the rebuilding of the Church of England on shaky foundations.

As Reformation historians have often observed, many Protestant theologians in the mid-16<sup>th</sup> century agreed that attendance at the Roman Catholic mass was tantamount to the worst form of idolatry.<sup>2</sup> Recent historians of Marian England have also noted that many of the major figures of the early Elizabethan state and church, when judged against the standards of advanced Reformed thought, were vulnerable to charges of Marian Nicodemism.<sup>3</sup> This included not only Queen Elizabeth, but also key members of her privy council, such as William Cecil, Nicholas Bacon, and Thomas Smith, and many of the leading members of her episcopate, including two who would become Archbishop of Canterbury: Matthew Parker and John Whitgift. Therefore it was imperative to the legitimacy of the state that this uncomfortable Marian history was sublimated and replaced with an official narrative that emphasized the martyrological tradition while upholding Elizabeth’s accession as a moment of national atonement. The myth of Gloriana, which from the moment of its inception was built on the premise that Elizabeth was a providential Protestant monarch, contrasted sharply with the memory of Elizabeth the Nicodemite, who had fallen to attendance at the idolatrous mass rather than risk a martyr’s death.

Scholars have long emphasized the ways in which Elizabeth’s reign was a break from the past. Her accession, Roy Strong argued, inaugurated a popular “Cult of Elizabeth,” which celebrated 17 November as a providential moment of Protestant

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<sup>1</sup> BL Lansdowne MS 28, fol. 214r.

<sup>2</sup> Eire, “Calvin and Nicodemism: A Reappraisal”; Zagorin, *Ways of Lying*, 70-75.

<sup>3</sup> Pettegree, *Marian Protestantism*, 116.

triumphalism.<sup>4</sup> While John Neale claimed that there was puritan disappointment with the Elizabethan Settlement, he also insisted that there was still a uniform Protestant recognition that the Queen's Accession Day was "the Birthday of the Gospel." With Elizabeth's accession, Neale argued, "the revolutionary spirit did not die down: rather, it spread and intensified. Yet, to the zealots, she, whose firmness alone kept them in check, remained their Deborah and Judith."<sup>5</sup> David Cressy's influential work on the commemorative culture of Tudor and Stuart England has also confirmed this consensus view of the providential succession: "Elizabethan Protestants held that 17 November represented more than the accession day of a monarch. Rather, it signified the turning point in England's religious history, a providential divide between the nightmare of popery and the promise of the development of God's true church."<sup>6</sup> More recently, scholars have begun to question the ways this public image was intentionally cultivated by the crown, while others have suggested that some memorials of Elizabeth's accession may have been more critical panegyric than blind laudation.<sup>7</sup> Thomas Freeman, for example, has skillfully shown that the martyrologist John Foxe included some controversial details of Elizabeth's Marian imprisonment in the *Acts and Monuments*, perhaps as a subtle critique of her religious policies.<sup>8</sup> In general, however, historians have ignored the ways in which views of Elizabeth's Marian conformity shaped later debates.

This chapter examines the ways in which the Marian experience, with its residual resentments and antagonisms, continued to shape many of the religious and political controversies of Elizabeth's reign. I argue that Elizabethan religion was marked by a fundamental disjunction between the official past, which emphasized Elizabeth's accession as a moment of general and collective atonement, and a repressed past, characterized by lingering puritan distrust of those who had revealed a propensity for idolatry by conforming during the Marian persecution. Throughout Elizabeth's reign this vestigial anti-Nicodemism continued to serve as a central, yet often cryptic, component of puritan critique, driven by the Reformed belief that those with a history of idolatry could only be reintegrated into the Church through public repentance. Furthermore, because this mode of admonishment implicated many of the chief officers of the Elizabethan church and state, including the Queen herself, it usually operated with a subtlety that could only be perceived by its target audience. In this manner puritan polemicists could

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<sup>4</sup> Roy Strong, "The Popular Celebration of the Accession Day of Queen Elizabeth I," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, Vol. 21, No. 1/2 (Jan. - Jun., 1958), 86-103; Roy Strong, *The Cult of Elizabeth*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977).

<sup>5</sup> Sir John Neale, "The Accession of Elizabeth I," in *Essays in Elizabethan History* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1958), 57.

<sup>6</sup> David Cressy, *Bonfires and Bells: National Memory and the Protestant Calendar in Elizabethan and Stuart England* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1989), 53.

<sup>7</sup> Susan Doran and Thomas Freeman, eds., *The Myth of Elizabeth*, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003); Julia Walker, ed., *Dissing Elizabeth: Negative Representations of Gloriana* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1998).

<sup>8</sup> Thomas Freeman, "'As True a Subiect being Prysoner': John Foxe's Notes on the Imprisonment of Princess Elizabeth, 1554-5," *The English Historical Review* 117, no. 470 (February 2002): 116; for an argument that Foxe gave Elizabeth's past a providential gloss, see: Pettegree, *Marian Protestantism*, 116.

maintain a degree of discretion and plausible deniability, even as they intentionally discredited their conformist counterparts by alluding to their history of Marian idolatry.

My intent here is not to deny that many English Protestants sincerely viewed Elizabeth's accession as a moment of providential deliverance from the Marian persecution. Rather, I want to suggest that as much as this official narrative was about remembering the past, it was also meant to obfuscate an uncomfortable history of conformity that some wished to be forgotten. Looking to the rare yet telling moments when this repressed past reared its ugly head, this chapter argues that the complex and contentious religious and political landscape of Elizabethan England was shaped not only by the official commemorations and celebrations of bonfires and bells, but also by the rumours and resentments of the remembered past that was left unresolved.

I.

In 1579 the archdeacon of Nottingham, John Louth, sent his old friend John Foxe a collection of personal memories and anecdotes, with the thought that some of the material could be useful for inclusion in the next edition of Foxe's "Book of Martyrs." The events described spanned from the late 1520s to the end of Mary's reign, and included Louth's candid assessments of several key events in the struggle for Reformation.<sup>9</sup> Louth's hope was that the material could help Foxe in his ongoing process of enriching the martyrology, and thereby "bring to repentance the rabble of the rest bloody butchers yet living, so many at least as are not given up into a reproachful mind, who have shut up their eyes that they may not see."<sup>10</sup> Despite Louth's efforts, it appears that Foxe made only minimal use of the text, as most of the conversations and occasions that Louth described would never appear in the book.<sup>11</sup> However, Louth's account not only provides rare insight into a moment in which the question of Nicodemism was debated at the height of the Marian persecution, but it also shows how these events were remembered, retold, and revised in Elizabeth's reign.

Louth's memories from the Marian years primarily centered on his experiences traveling with his former patron, George Zouche. A former member of the court circle that surrounded Anne Boleyn, Zouche had long been considered a stalwart of the evangelical community.<sup>12</sup> Not surprisingly, during Mary's reign his religious affiliation

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<sup>9</sup> BL Harleian MS 425, fols. 134r-145v; This document has been faithfully printed as John Louth to John Foxe, "Reminiscences," in *Narrative of the days of the reformation: chiefly from the manuscripts of John Foxe the martyrologist*, ed. J.G. Nichols (Westminster: Printed for the Camden Society, 1859), 15-59. Louth's name also commonly appears as Louthe, Loude, or Lowth.

<sup>10</sup> Louth to Foxe, "Reminiscences," 15.

<sup>11</sup> Freeman and Evenden, *Religion and the Book in Early Modern England*, 298-9.

<sup>12</sup> Reportedly George Zouche had first come to Protestantism after reading Anne Boleyn's copy of William Tyndale's *The Obedience of a Christian Man*. Zouche was so enthralled with the work that he refused to return it to the queen. It was only after Henry VIII personally interceded that the book was returned, at which point the curious king also read the book. This account is in Louth to Foxe, "Reminiscences," 52-7; the significance of this event within Henrician court culture is discussed in James Simpson, *Burning to Read: English Fundamentalism and its Reformation Opponents* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007), 152-3.

brought unwanted attention from the authorities, and he was forced to continually move his household from family estate to family estate in order to escape prosecution. It was while traveling with Zouche that Louth came into contact with an old acquaintance: Robert Cooke, the chaplain of Lincoln's Inn. Louth was appalled when he discovered that even though Cooke was "a little afore a detester of the mass," the chaplain was now performing them.<sup>13</sup> Reacting with righteous indignation, Louth felt his "spirit coerced, as Paul was to do before many," and took it upon himself to admonish Cooke, and "told him my mind very hotly."<sup>14</sup>

But Louth soon found that his anti-Nicodemite admonition had created a minor controversy. The problem was that Cooke "had on his side a great man," who apparently had taken offense at Louth's harsh condemnation. When Cooke's patron personally confronted Louth on the issue, his own patron, Lord Zouche, had to come to his defense: "yet this good Mr. George Zouche took my part, casting no perils nor danger, that was to me a great comfort."<sup>15</sup> However, this did not end the argument, as Cooke's patron continued to express concern that Louth's unabashed anti-Nicodemism would end up drawing the attention of the Marian authorities, and eventually lead to George Zouche's arrest. As Louth described the argument, the "great man" turned to Louth directly, and began to chastise him for putting the Lord Zouche into such a dangerous position: "You, Augustine Bar., and such others will make him lose life and livings all!"

This "Augustine Bar." was clearly a reference to Augustine Bernher, the Swiss companion to the Oxford martyr Hugh Latimer. Bernher was known as the most prominent sustainer of those who were facing martyrdom, and at one point during Mary's reign he served as the head minister of the secret protestant congregation in London.<sup>16</sup> Along with other anti-Nicodemite writers, Bernher explicitly dismissed considerations of property and self-preservation. For the true Christian, open testimony was the only option, even if that meant a martyr's death. As one of the tracts in his personal letter-book argued, "Let no man be so foolish that for the love of this mortal life, good prince, or of any other creature he would lose the favor of god, life everlasting & salvation, yea, rather [than] suffer all manner of deaths."<sup>17</sup> The admonishment of Nicodemites, therefore, was a godly imperative, rooted in the Reformed view that attendance at Mass was tantamount to the worship of an idol. To compromise one's faith in this way was to do irreparable damage to one's soul. In this sense Roman Catholic services were dangerous, as Louth would note, because "the mass was never devised without the devil, seeing [as] the hearing of mass hath so devilish effect in those that yield unto it."<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Louth to Foxe, "Reminiscences," 32; Cooke's shifting religious affiliations has led one historian of the Inns of Court to note, "Throughout the religious changes of three reigns, Robert Cooke proved himself capable of some fancy footwork": R.M. Fisher, "The Reformation of Clergy at the Inns of Court 1530-1580," *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 12, no. 1 (1981): 86.

<sup>14</sup> Louth to Foxe, "Reminiscences," 32.

<sup>15</sup> Louth to Foxe, "Reminiscences," 32.

<sup>16</sup> Foxe, 1570 ed., 2277

<sup>17</sup> Bodl. Oxford, Bodley MS 53, fol. 28r.

<sup>18</sup> Louth to Foxe, "Reminiscences," 32.

For Cooke's patron, however, this was not a question of theological certainties, but of practical realities. He clearly moved in Protestant circles, as he was consorting with George Zouche even while the latter was trying to evade the Marian authorities. He was also immersed enough in the Protestant underground to be familiar with Augustine Bernher and the other proponents of willing martyrdom. Louth seems to have taken efforts in the text to conceal the identity of Cooke's Nicodemite backer, even though the event had occurred more than twenty years before. He refers to him only cryptically, as a "great man, as Sir John Zouche knoweth," and, as "that great man yet living." The tone of Louth's text suggests that he intended for the identity of this "great man" to be obvious to Foxe and other discerning readers, while still maintaining a degree of public discretion. While scholars have never been able to ascertain the identify of this "great man," evidence suggests that this was likely in reference to William Cecil, Lord Burghley.<sup>19</sup>

Not only does the profile fit Cecil's known actions during Mary's reign, but he also had obvious ties to all of the other persons mentioned in the account. Most prominently, the Zouche family was well known for their close affiliation with Cecil. The Zouches had long been one of the most prominent land-holding families of Northamptonshire, where Cecil also owned estates.<sup>20</sup> The leading member of the family, Edward, Lord Zouche, had also been Cecil's ward since he was a young boy, and it was to Cecil that he owed his long career as a diplomat and state administrator.<sup>21</sup> This tie led even distant members of the Zouche family to consider Cecil their kinsman, and was a familial connection that many did not hesitate to exploit for personal and political favor well into Elizabeth's reign.<sup>22</sup> The "Sir John Zouche" mentioned in Louth's account was Sir John Zouche of Codnor, a cousin to Cecil's ward, and courtier who was often in the service of the Elizabethan Privy Council.<sup>23</sup> His association with Cecil is confirmed in the will of Sir John Sheffield, who listed both men as his friends and trustees.<sup>24</sup>

Cecil also had connections with Robert Cooke, the turncoat chaplain on the receiving end of Louth's tongue-lashing. While the exact nature of Cecil's relationship with him is not apparent, it is possible that he was related to Cecil's wife, Mildred Cooke. This may explain why Cecil maintained a long-time interest in the turncoat chaplain, despite Cooke's continued commitment to Roman Catholic rites well into Elizabeth's reign. For example, when Cooke was suspected of religious noncompliance in 1564, Cecil ordered one of his agents to personally find Cooke and bring him in for

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<sup>19</sup> J.G. Nichols, the 19th century editor of Foxe's papers, wondered whether the "great man" was Cecil, but he had no evidence to make a positive identification: *Narrative of the days of the reformation*, 58 n. b.

<sup>20</sup> Stephen Alford, *Burghley: William Cecil at the Court of Elizabeth I* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), 68; Several of Cecil's landholdings were near Benefield, where Louth claims the confrontation with Cooke and the "great man" took place.

<sup>21</sup> Alan G.R. Smith, *Servant of the Cecils: The Life of Sir Michael Hikes, 1543-1612* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1977), 34.

<sup>22</sup> For instance, see: Colonel John Zouche to Burghley, Dec. 4 1581, SP 63/87 fol. 6r. In this letter Zouche seeks Cecil's political backing by appealing to their ties of kinship.

<sup>23</sup> *The House of Commons: 1509 - 1558; 1, Appendices, constituencies, members A - C, Volume 4*, ed. Stanley Bindoff et al. (London: Boydell & Brewer, 1982), 686-7.

<sup>24</sup> TNA PROB 11/51 fol. 1r.



questioning.<sup>25</sup> Even after Cooke was imprisoned in 1569 for being involved in a clandestine network that was distributing Roman Catholic books, Cooke's brother wrote a personal appeal to Cecil, asking him to intercede.<sup>26</sup>

Cecil would have also been familiar with the "Augustine Bar." mentioned in Louth's text, as he likely knew Bernher when both men were associated with the evangelical circle of the Duchess of Suffolk during Edward's reign.<sup>27</sup> It is also striking that in Louth's story Cecil's argument for conformity had been based on a fear that open profession of faith would lead to the loss of one's life and lands. This is consistent with the criticisms that the returning exile Philip Nichols had set forth in 1560, which hinted at Cecil's history of Nicodemism while confessing that there were fears within the Reformed community that Cecil would prioritize covetousness over godly counsel.<sup>28</sup>

This episode is significant for several reasons. It reminds us that not all Marian Protestants shared the rigid anti-Nicodemism of Bernher and Louth. The case for Protestant conformity to the Marian church was clearly being made, even though these arguments never appeared openly in print, and are known only through the straw-man characterizations of anti-Nicodemite polemicists. But the question remains: why did Louth choose to withhold Cecil's name, even though he was writing of events that were more than twenty years past? The obvious answer is that Cecil was, aside from only the Queen, the most powerful person in England. By withholding Cecil's name while simultaneously signaling his identity to those already immersed in the proper circles, Louth was still able to cast aspersions on Cecil's history of Nicodemism without subjecting him to outright scrutiny and condemnation. It is also not surprising that Foxe chose not to print this story, despite Louth's half-hearted attempt to disguise Cecil's identity. Not only was Cecil the main patron of John Day, the printer of Foxe's book, but he may have also been Foxe's own patron.<sup>29</sup> Furthermore, to name and shame someone as a Marian Nicodemite was to put a lasting mark on their reputation.<sup>30</sup> It also appears

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<sup>25</sup> Christopher Thurgood to Sir William Cecil, 4 July 1564, CP MS 202 fol. 22r.

<sup>26</sup> Cooke's brother beseeched Cecil "to stand so much his good lord and mine, as that there be granted unto him the liberty and benefit of the house wherein he lieth imprisoned." Robert Cooke's brother to Lord Burghley, CP MS 159 fol. 68r; A copy of Cooke's 1569 conviction record is BL Harleian MS 2143, fol. 14r. For the complete case listing see: J.H. Baker, ed. *Reports from the Lost Notebooks of Sir James Dyer, Volume 1* (Selden Society, Vol. 109, 1993), 159-161.

<sup>27</sup> Katherine Bertie, Duchess of Suffolk to Sir William Cecil, June 1552, TNA SP 10/14 fol. 103r.

<sup>28</sup> Nichols contrasted the loss of lands suffered by those who went into exile with Cecil's considerable wealth: CP MS 144/71, fol. 74r-v.

<sup>29</sup> Elizabeth Evenden, "The Michael Wood Mystery: William Cecil and the Lincolnshire Printing of John Day," *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 35, no. 2 (2004): 383-394; Alford, *Burghley*, 223-4.

<sup>30</sup> In one notorious example, after Foxe printed an accusation that it was the minister Thomas Thackham who had betrayed the martyr Julians Palmer to the Marian authorities, Thackham sent an impassioned defence to Foxe in the desperate hope that the accusation would be retracted from future editions: Freeman and Evenden, *Religion and the Book in Early Modern England*, 144.

that Louth did not need to explicitly remind anyone of Cecil's Marian Nicodemism, because, as we shall see, this was already an open secret within the godly community.

II.

Richard Proude was uniquely suited for the task of admonishing Burghley. No meek country parson, Proude was a well-respected member of the godly community, whose puritan bona fides had been established for decades. A grizzled veteran of the Marian persecution, he had been a close friend of the martyr John Bradford, visiting him during his imprisonment in King's Bench and smuggling his correspondence to members of the Protestant underground.<sup>31</sup> Proude's escape from the Catholic authorities in Kent had even been memorialized in Foxe's "Book of Martyrs."<sup>32</sup> For much of Mary's reign Proude had been a member of the exile congregation in Aarau, before returning to England early in Elizabeth's reign.<sup>33</sup> In 1560 he was ordained by Edmund Grindal, and eventually made parson of Bourton-on-Dunsmore. By 1573 Proude's refusal to wear the surplice set off a decade long dispute with his churchwarden, who took umbrage at Proude's persistent nonconformity.<sup>34</sup> This history may partially explain why it has traditionally been assumed that Proude's admonishment of Cecil was over the issue of vestments, even though the subject is scarcely mentioned in the text.<sup>35</sup> This misreading began with the 17th century historian John Strype, who appears to have intentionally misrepresented the letter. Strype even printed a purported transcription of the text, which historians have long relied on.<sup>36</sup> However, a comparison of Strype's transcription with the original manuscript reveals that he purposely censored the letter's contents by removing references to the anti-Nicodemite program pursued by the secret London congregation in the early years of Elizabeth's reign.<sup>37</sup>

Proude began his admonition by reminding Cecil that during Edward's reign he had been known as a leading proponent of the godly. Proude reminisces, "Your bringing up in true religion, things published by you to the comfort of the brethren, that hath bewrayed the smacking that ye have of the sight of sin and wrath of God against sin, hath

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<sup>31</sup> John Bradford to Joyce Hales, 8 August 1554, *The Writings of John Bradford, Vol. 2*, 108.

<sup>32</sup> Foxe, *1563 edition*, 1679.

<sup>33</sup> Garrett, *The Marian Exiles*, 262.

<sup>34</sup> The churchwarden, Thomas Flavell, even refused to receive communion from Proude: Anthony Upton, "Parochial Clergy of the Archdeaconry of Coventry, c. 1500-c.1600" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Leicester, 2003), 77; Despite Proude's noncompliance he remained parson until at least 1586, when he was listed in a puritan survey of the ministry as being "in danger about subscription, which he refused": *The Seconde Parte of a Register: being a calendar of manuscripts under that title intended for publication by the Puritans about 1593, and now in Dr. Williams's Library, London, Volume II*, ed. Albert Peel (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1915), 172.

<sup>35</sup> See, for example: McLaren, *Political Culture in the Reign of Elizabeth I*, 39-41.

<sup>36</sup> John Strype, *Annals of the Reformation, Volume 2, Part 2* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1824), 662-665.

<sup>37</sup> In particular, Strype manipulated his transcription in order to make it appear that Proude was referring to the exile congregations during the time of Mary, and not the secret London congregation in the beginning of Elizabeth's reign.

made me ever to love and reverence god for you in my heart.”<sup>38</sup> These positive signs, Proude claims, had left him optimistic that Cecil would long continue in a state of godliness. However, these hopes were dashed during Mary’s reign, when it was discovered that Cecil had betrayed God by attending mass: “But afterwards the report went, that ye did openly revolt from your religion and fell to go to idolatrous service: and so, by your dead doings therein, consented to all the blood of the prophets and martyrs that was shed unrighteously in Manasseh’s days.”<sup>39</sup> Cecil’s Marian Nicodemism, therefore, represented not only a personal failing, but was also a mark of complicity in the persecution of the godly.

In a passage that Strype censored, Proude explains that although Cecil should have made complete repentance for this idolatry, he instead chose to be obstinate in his sin. Proude writes: “And now in Josiah’s days ye came not to God’s persecuted church, that he builded, maintained, and defended from time to time, against the force of the wolf and the lion, which was not corrupted nor polluted with Idolatry; and wherein was the word of god purely preached, the sacraments godly ministered, and discipline without partiality executed, and hearty prayers to God was made for God’s afflicted church (by the which I persuade myself, and for the suffering of the just of that church), that both ye and others now in great authority, and the whole land beside, fared the better.” Remarkably, it appears here that Proude does not mean “God’s persecuted church” in a figurative sense, but is specifically referring to one of the secret Protestant Congregations that had existed in London during Mary’s reign and early in Elizabeth’s.

Scholars have long known that during Mary’s reign there was a clandestine London congregation that had followed the Genevan service, while also asserting a strict discipline. Anyone who was known to have committed idolatry by attending mass was refused admittance, unless they were willing to make public repentance in front of the entire congregation.<sup>40</sup> Even though the evidence is scant, scholars have also known, mainly from an August 1559 letter from the returning exile Thomas Lever to the Swiss reformer Heinrich Bullinger, that this secret church had continued into Elizabeth’s reign.<sup>41</sup> In this letter Lever reported to Bullinger that the secret London congregation had need to remain in existence because Elizabeth had ordered the mass to continue until a new religious settlement was put into effect by order of Parliament.<sup>42</sup> This delay in

<sup>38</sup> BL Lansdowne MS 28, fol. 214r.

<sup>39</sup> Puritan polemicists often compared Queen Mary to the Old Testament King Manasseh. For example, see: Anthony Gilby, *A pleasant dialogue, betweene a souldior of Barwicke, and an English chaplaine Wherein are largely handled & laide open, such reasons as are brought in for maintenaunce of popishe traditions in our Eng. church...* (1581, STC 11888), sig. E3r.

<sup>40</sup> J.W. Martin, *Religious Radicals in Tudor England* (London: Hambledon Press, 1989), 138.

<sup>41</sup> For example, Foxe appears to have left this detail out of his discussion of the congregation in the *Acts and Monuments*: Brett Usher, “‘In a Time of Persecution’: New Light on the Secret Protestant Congregation in Marian London,” in *John Foxe and the English Reformation*, ed. David Loades (Aldershot: Scolar Press, 1997), 233-251.

<sup>42</sup> Thomas Lever to Henry Bullinger, 8 August 1559, *The Zurich letters: comprising the correspondence of several English bishops and others with some of the Helvetian*

abolishing the mass infuriated many of the godly, and so the secret congregation persisted, despite a royal proclamation forbidding all unlicensed preaching. Even those Protestants with more patience than Lever viewed this waiting period as a time of intense anxiety. One London vicar, for example, happily recorded Elizabeth's accession date in his diary, but then ruefully noted each month that the idolatrous service was allowed to continue: "December, Jan., Febr.: still Latin Church Service and Mass; yea and March & April, May, unto the 24 of June 1559."<sup>43</sup>

Although the secret church had no official sanction, Protestants began to flock to the congregation now that there was no longer any threat of prosecution. However, Lever explains that all those who had gone to mass were compelled to make public repentance for their idolatry. He writes, "...no strangers were admitted, except such as were kept pure from popery and even from the imputation of any evil conduct; or who, ingenuously acknowledging their backsliding and public offence, humbly sought pardon and reconciliation in presence of the whole assembly." For Lever this was the only way in which the Marian Nicodemite could be fully reconciled with the true church. He contrasted these eager penitents with those who shamelessly continued to tarry for the magistrate: "For while these things were taking place among private individuals, without the sanction of any public authority, behold, at the very same time masses were being celebrated with all the idolatrous superstition of popery among persons distinguished for their influence, their wealth, and their public offices, and this with the whole authority of law, proclamation, and practice."<sup>44</sup>

Now, more than twenty years later, Proude was still blaming Cecil for not seeking repentance from this secret congregation. Proude writes: "Ye came not I say thither, as others did that were in your fault, as ye ought to have done (for god had not then no other church in this land but that, that was so commonly known) and then there to later show your sorrowful heart for your fault, confessing therein your open falls and sinning in idolatry."<sup>45</sup> While historians have long been aware that some Protestants at the beginning of Elizabeth's reign chose to make public repentance for their Marian idolatry, it has not been known that some saw this as a prerequisite not just for admittance into the secret congregation, but as a requirement for true reintegration into the Church of England. Proude's letter reveals that the Secret London congregation was functioning as a sort of spiritual half-way house for Nicodemites, where even councilors such as Cecil were expected to purify themselves before rejoining the officially sanctioned church. Proude explains that repentance for idolatry must be done publicly, because it is the only way to prove that the idolater has sincerely reformed, and not merely changed his faith for reasons of political expediency.

Furthermore, Cecil's failure to make proper repentance was not just a personal matter, but had directly led to the building of the Church of England on an unstable foundation: "... it is said and reported, ye gave your consent to the building of God's house or church, that was not builded in all points so perfectly as the other that he himself

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*reformers, during the reign of Queen Elizabeth*, ed. Hastings Robinson (Second series, Cambridge: Parker Society, 1845), 28-30.

<sup>43</sup> Cambridge University Library (CUL) MS Mm. I. 29, fol. 45r.

<sup>44</sup> Lever to Bullinger, 8 August 1559, *Zurich Letters*, 30.

<sup>45</sup> BL Lansdowne MS 28, fol. 214r.

had builded without any lawful or godly magistrate, and left in those days for an example, as I suppose, for you to have followed.” While Proude chose not to explicitly mention the Queen’s own history of conformity, this is implicit in his attack on Cecil’s failure to provide honest counsel: “Also it [is] said, that you from time to time fearing to exasperate the prince and to make her worse in religion, hath spared your plainness, and hath not dealt with her so plainly from time to time as your knowledge hath required, both touching god’s church, her own preservation, and the safety, [and] profit of the commonwealth, to the increase of God’s gospel to us and our posterity for evermore.”<sup>46</sup> This critique of Cecil’s poor counsel also reminds us that Proude may not have been primarily concerned with Cecil, but may have been using him as a proxy to criticize the Queen’s own history of Marian Nicodemism.

III.

In his landmark work *The Elizabethan Puritan Movement*, the late Patrick Collinson argued that puritanism, as a politico-religious force, was borne largely in reaction to the “half-way religious settlement of 1559.” Drawing from a little-known admonition of Queen Elizabeth by the puritan William Fuller, Collinson used the phrase “But Halfly Reformed” as an axiomatic encapsulation of the nature of puritan discontent with the policies of the Church of England.<sup>47</sup> This phrase has since become an oft-quoted short-hand for the nature of Reformed critique of the Elizabethan church.<sup>48</sup> This traditional reading of Fuller’s admonition has in part stemmed from reliance on a version of the text that survived in the *Seconde Parte of a Register*, and was printed in an excerpted form by Albert Peel in 1915.<sup>49</sup> However, it has gone unnoticed that the original manuscript, the one presented by Fuller to the Queen in 1585, has survived among William Cecil’s papers at Hatfield House.<sup>50</sup> A close reading of this source reveals that Fuller’s book was not only, as historians have usually described it, a generalized critique of the official church’s policies. Rather, it was a specific attack on the Queen’s personal religious history as the root cause of England’s malformed reformation. For Fuller, it was Elizabeth herself who was “But Halfly Reformed.”

<sup>46</sup> BL Lansdowne MS 28, fol. 214r.

<sup>47</sup> Collinson, *The Elizabethan Puritan Movement*, 29-44.

<sup>48</sup> See, for example: Philip Benedict, “England: The Unstable Settlement of a Church ‘But Halfly Reformed’” in *Christ’s Churches Purely Reformed: A Social History of Calvinism* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002), 230-254; John Coffey and Paul Lim, eds., *The Cambridge Companion to Puritanism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 3.

<sup>49</sup> Albert Peel, ed., *Seconde Parte of a Register, Volume II*, 49-64; M.M. Knappen, *Tudor Puritanism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1939), 283-4; Collinson, *The Elizabethan Puritan Movement*, 29; Dan Danner, *Pilgrimage to Puritanism: History and Theology of the Marian Exiles at Geneva, 1555-1560* (New York: Peter Lang, 1999), 77-80; Natalie Mears, “Fuller, William (d. 1586?),” *ODNB*.

<sup>50</sup> CP MS 284/4; It has likely escaped notice because it was listed as undated, and catalogued with the miscellaneous manuscripts: E. Salisbury, ed., “Cecil Papers: Miscellaneous 1603,” *Calendar of the Cecil Papers in Hatfield House, Volume 14: Addenda*, British History Online, <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=112135>

In understanding Fuller's admonition, it must first be recognized that he was no fringe separatist or social outlier, but had long been associated with many of the leading Protestant families of England. During Edward's reign he was a member of Queen Catherine Parr's household, and had even been an attendant of the Princess Elizabeth. He was friend to the privy councilors Sir Walter Mildmay and Sir Thomas Parry, and through marriage he was associated with the Dudley family.<sup>51</sup> His godly credentials were also impeccable. Along with John Knox, Christopher Goodman, Miles Coverdale, and Anthony Gilby, he had been an elder of the English congregations in Frankfurt and Geneva during the Marian exile. While in Geneva he was advised directly by John Calvin himself, who encouraged him to return to England and continue the drive for Reformation.

Although this association with Geneva had hindered his prospects at court early in Elizabeth's reign, he quickly became one of the most prominent and active members of the London puritan community.<sup>52</sup> In 1562 Fuller appears as a communicant at the French Stranger church of London, itself a hotbed of Reformed thought.<sup>53</sup> When in 1574 the puritan Thomas Wood wrote to William Whittingham to complain about the recent arrest of those who had refused to subscribe to the prayer book, he noted sadly that "of which number our brother Mr Fuller is one."<sup>54</sup> A letter from Thomas Wilcox to Anthony Gilby confirms that Fuller was imprisoned in the Counter for several months, before being eventually remitted to house arrest.<sup>55</sup>

However, this nonconformist religious activity does not appear to have limited his lengthy career in government service. Working for the Court of Exchequer, Fuller viewed his service to the Crown as being inextricably tied to his godly faith: "...the almighty hath given me lii[52] years, to love his true religion, & hate the world's false belief & Idolatrous service. And moreover, at & since the suppression of Abbeys, faithfully to serve in my vocation (first under mine uncle, & after as an officer) your Majesty's dear father, brother, sister, & your highness, without enriching of my self thereby, or any of my kin and friends, & to do other things also, which care likewise not of the works of the flesh."<sup>56</sup> In 1570 he can be found as an auditor for the Exchequer, working under the supervision of Sir Thomas Gresham to survey the possessions formerly held by Edward

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<sup>51</sup> Garrett, *Marian Exiles*, 158.

<sup>52</sup> Fuller attempted to admonish the Queen immediately upon his return to England, but was turned away from the court due to his association with Christopher Goodman: CP MS 284/4, fols. 17r-18r.

<sup>53</sup> Patrick Collinson, "The Elizabethan Puritans and the Foreign Reformed Churches in London," in *Godly People: Essays on English Protestantism and Puritanism* (London: Hambledon Press, 1983), 262.

<sup>54</sup> Thomas Wood to William Whittingham, 15 February 1574, printed in "Letters of Thomas Wood, Puritan, 1566-1577," in *Godly People*, 88-9.

<sup>55</sup> CUL MS Mm. I. 43, fols. 439-41.

<sup>56</sup> CP MS 284/4, fol. 13v; William Fuller's uncle was likely Hugh Fuller, an auditor of the Court of Augmentations: TNA SP MS 1/85 fol. 193r; TNA SP MS 1/165 fol. 41r; TNA SP MS 5/4 fol. 133r.

Seymour, Duke of Somerset.<sup>57</sup> Fuller's 1574 imprisonment for religious nonconformity appears to have had little effect on his standing with the government, as he can again be found reporting directly to Cecil on the business of the Exchequer in 1582.<sup>58</sup>

Embracing the role of financial advisor to the crown, Fuller used this as his entrée to the court. As Fuller reported in his book, he first gained an audience with the Queen in 1579, on the pretext that he wanted to present his thoughts on various Acts of Parliament, "by force of which much land & revenue, and many sums of money, were unrighteously had from your Majesty."<sup>59</sup> This first meeting initially went well, as the Queen remembered Fuller from her Hatfield days, and was also pleased by his financial advice. However, Fuller then asked if he could also present his thoughts on religious matters. She told him to summarize his opinions into "brief notes," and then present them at a later date. But Fuller, afraid that "I should speak too late of God's chief matters, if I should tarry," and "fearing also God's wrath" if he would remain silent, did not depart until he delivered a short written admonition that he had already prepared.<sup>60</sup>

Not surprisingly, Fuller got a chilly reception when he returned to court to further discuss his religious views. He describes his encounter with an unnamed privy councilor: "And after I had made ready those brief notes, I sued again to his honor to help me to your Majesty's speech. At length...his honor told me plainly, that he could not so do, & said, that that which I had written did trouble them all, & was enough, to put your Majesty in despair. And when I demanded this: hath her Majesty showed my writings? His honor made me no answer, but turned to talk with another."<sup>61</sup> Realizing that the Queen had no intention of ever hearing his full admonition, Fuller departed from the court. While he was content that he had done his own godly duty, he was horrified at the perils that would undoubtedly beset the nation due to the Queen's obstinacy. He had no doubt that "your Majesty's refusing of my said godly offer would greatly kindle God's wrath, & hasten his plagues, as have plainly appeared since, by his manifest threats, of his terrible strokes, already prepared: which assuredly will light upon us, without repentance & amendment."<sup>62</sup> An apocalyptic turn was unavoidable, because there was "no likelihood that any of them that should, will hazard to tell your Majesty plainly, what be the causes thereof, & the remedies for the same."

Seven years later, as Fuller's health began to decline, he decided he would make one last-ditch effort to admonish the Queen. He would get the chance on July 2, 1585. Obtaining an audience with the Queen's Maid of Honour, Elizabeth Leighton, Fuller

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<sup>57</sup> Fuller's position as an auditor for the Court of Exchequer has previously gone unnoticed by historians. The distinctive matching autographs at TNA SP 12/73 fol. 5r and CP MS 284/4, fol. 22v, confirm that William Fuller the auditor and William Fuller the admonisher were one and the same.

<sup>58</sup> BL Lansdowne MS 35, fol. 23r.

<sup>59</sup> CP MS 284/4, fols. 20v-21r; William Fuller's report on the abuse of revenues has survived in the British Library, but has been misdated and misattributed: BL Additional MS 48101, fols. 192-198r.

<sup>60</sup> CP MS 284/4, fol. 21r.

<sup>61</sup> CP MS 284/4, fols. 21r-v.

<sup>62</sup> CP MS 284/4, fol. 21v.

asked for leave to deliver a “book” to the Queen.<sup>63</sup> When the Queen approved, Fuller returned the same night with the book in hand, and the Queen was reported to have read it the next morning. In the book, Fuller reminded the Queen that he had been one of her servants at Hatfield during her brother Edward’s reign, and recalled her reputation for godly learning. He had even attended her at the beginning of Mary’s reign, and “did wait on your highness in all your heavy journeys, made from the time of the decease, of your highness’ said brother, till you met your Majesty’s said sister, at Havering, and so rode with her, to the Tower.” Once Elizabeth was imprisoned, Fuller fled into exile to the continent, where he split his time between Frankfurt and Geneva. When he first went into exile he had been optimistic for England’s future, but then word began to spread among the exiles that Elizabeth had conformed to Roman Catholic rites: “...from Hatfield House, I was advertised, by godly friends, that had woeful hearts: First, that your Majesty went, to the Antichristian Abomination, and travailed to bring all your family also thereunto. And Secondly: afterwards, that your Majesty in process of time was so marvelously altered, in mind, manners, and many things, that there was no hope of any such reformation (when your Majesty should come to the Crown) as was before hoped for.”<sup>64</sup>

By yielding to the mass at a time when the godly were being martyred or driven into exile, the Queen had committed the gravest of atrocities. She had worshipped “a false god of bread,” which was “the most deceitful and hurtful Idol & Idolatry,” and was therefore guilty of the sin that was “most injurious to God, & abominable in his sight, that ever was.” Despite this antichristian conformity, God had shown himself to be doubly merciful by both allowing Elizabeth’s life to be spared, and then by placing her on the throne. Fuller explains, “In this our time, (after great and sharp persecution, for that Idol and Idolatry) our gracious God in great mercy towards your Majesty & his whole Church, preserved your life, (that were unworthy, by reason of your yielding to that Idolatry) and set you up, upon this mighty Imperial seat.”<sup>65</sup> However, these gifts from God had come with very specific conditions. In particular, Elizabeth should have immediately made public repentance: “For where your Majesty, in the beginning of your Reign, when our good God, had delivered you out of the Antichrist’s bondage, and put the whole power here, into your own hands: And when your Majesty and your states & people, should have performed the first step, for a godly repenting Queen, and right christian rulers and people, that is, in general assemblies, have confessed, and bewailed, the yielding to Idolatry, and other public abominations and sins of the former wicked persecuting time, and have prayed for pardon and remission, and for greater grace and strength thenceforth.”<sup>66</sup>

Furthermore, this public repentance should have been followed by an open vow to never again fall into such idolatry, and the mass should have been immediately abolished from the realm. But, Fuller asks rhetorically, “What was done, O gracious sovereign, instead of that holy and first dutiful step? What?” Eschewing repentance, the Queen did “that which of all things, was most abominable before God, and most grievous and

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<sup>63</sup> Fuller’s connection to Leighton was likely through her father, Francis Knollys, who had been in exile with Fuller: Garrett, *Marian Exiles*, 210-3.

<sup>64</sup> CP MS 284/4, fol. 15v.

<sup>65</sup> CP MS 284/4, fol. 6v.

<sup>66</sup> CP MS 284/4, fol. 7v.



offensive to godly hearts and reformed Churches, and most pleasant and acceptable, to all Antichristians and Neuters.” For Fuller, this “most horrible thing, was your majesty yielding to be crowned and anointed at a most monstrous and Idolatrous Mass, and by Antichristian Bishops, instead of God’s holy prophets.”<sup>67</sup> Therefore Elizabeth’s coronation was no occasion for celebration, but marked a moment of egregious backsliding, in which Elizabeth had shirked her agreement with the Lord, and returned yet again to idolatry.

Echoing Richard Proude’s admonition of Cecil, Fuller also complained that Elizabeth had allowed the mass to continue in England, even after her coronation. This was further confirmation that the Queen was obstinate in her idolatry: “...that your Majesty was crowned, so as is aforesaid, and had still the antichristian Abomination, and had, and did still, many other grievous things, yet did tolerate the secret reformed Churches, in London etc: My first good hope, and great rejoicing was quite quenched and extinguished, and was turned into so great heaviness, mourning, and lamentations, for the great evils, which I was sure must needs come from the same.”<sup>68</sup> It was this failure to expiate the sin of idolatry through public repentance, along with her continued preference for “Antichristians and Neuters” over the godly, that caused her to become increasingly cold towards true religion: “That but halfly, by your Majesty, hath God been honoured, his Church reformed and established, his people taught and comforted, his enemies rejected and subdued, and his lawbreakers punished.”<sup>69</sup>

Emphasizing the importance of this message to England’s future, Fuller threatened to publicize his arguments if the Queen would not heed his admonition and allow him to directly provide her with godly counsel: “I dare not, before God, but offer my humble, christian, and dutiful service, and to declare, what horrible destruction I so threatened, and what present and durable remedies I see for the same. Which, if your Majesty should refuse to hear in secret, (as God forbid), then, I fear, I shall be enforced (for discharge of my conscience and duty, to God, and your Majesty, and to his Church, and my country) to utter the same, otherwise than I fain would, though it be never so perilous.”<sup>70</sup>

The Queen made no comment as she read the book, but William Cecil was said to have stood by horrified as he realized Fuller’s purpose. As Fuller described the scene, “thereupon my Lord Treasurer [William Cecil] coming to her Highness, she told him of it, and it lying in a chair, as he went out he took it with him.” When the Queen returned to find that the book had been hidden from her, she was not happy: “...then her Majesty coming to the chair, asked the Lady [Leighton] for the book, and she answering that my Lord took it, her Majesty willed her to call for it and said, I will have it again, but the

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<sup>67</sup> Emphasizing the point that the Queen’s coronation was idolatrous and therefore in violation of God’s law, Fuller noted the first commandment in the margin, “Thou shalt have no other Gods but me”: CP MS 284/4, fol. 7r.

<sup>68</sup> CP MS 284/4, fol. 16r.

<sup>69</sup> CP MS 284/4, fol. 7r; For Collinson’s use of this quotation, see: *The Elizabethan Puritan Movement*, 29.

<sup>70</sup> Fuller’s approach here is in accordance with Matthew 18. The sinner should first be admonished privately; however, if he persists in his sin, then you should “tell it to the church”; CP MS 284/4, fol. 14r.

Lady durst never ask it.”<sup>71</sup> Shortly after this encounter Fuller received word that the Queen planned on sending a representative to discuss the book’s contents. He sent a reply through Lady Leighton, stating that these matters were not fit to be disclosed to “a second person.” Rather, Fuller requested that he be granted a secret meeting with the Queen, so that he could “explain which way Your Highness may yet, if it please you, greatly decrease and keep under the kingdom and power of Antichrist.”<sup>72</sup> If a private audience could not be arranged, Fuller hoped that at least he could meet instead with some privy councilors of his choosing. While there is no evidence that this meeting ever occurred, this letter does show that the government felt that Fuller’s charges, and in particular his threat to publicize them, had to be managed carefully.

#### IV.

While the admonitions penned by Richard Proude and William Fuller were clearly unusual in their brashness, the persistent anti-Nicodemism that characterized their arguments was far more common than has been previously realized. Historians now recognize the role that anti-conformist thought played in the Marian persecution. As Andrew Pettegree and others have shown, the Protestant exile communities produced a barrage a works attacking those Protestants who conformed to Roman Catholic rites rather accept martyrdom or exile.<sup>73</sup> However, these texts have primarily been understood as artifacts of the Marian persecution. What historians have not fully recognized is that while most of these anti-Nicodemite tracts were originally written in the 1550s, many of them did not appear in print until well into Elizabeth’s reign, and then usually within the context of puritan controversies. The Elizabethan revival of these texts was not merely for posterity’s sake, but rather was central to contemporary disputes.

For instance, while Nicholas Ridley’s *A pituous lamentation of the miserable estate of the churche of Christ in Englande* was written shortly before his execution at the stake in 1555, it was not published until the height of the Vestments Controversy in 1566.<sup>74</sup> The republication of Ridley’s text may have been a crafty attempt to focus on Ridley’s trenchant attacks on Marian Nicodemites, and thereby to diminish the memory of his defense of adiaphoric vestments during Edward’s reign.<sup>75</sup> The same tactic was employed in Robert Crowley’s *A briefe discourse against the outwarde apparell and ministring garmentes of the popishe church*, a work which Patrick Collinson has dubbed

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<sup>71</sup> This episode was reported by Elizabeth Leighton to Fuller, who included the account in a letter to the Queen the following year: *Seconde Parte of a Register, Volume II*, 49.

<sup>72</sup> *Seconde Parte of Register, Volume II*, 64.

<sup>73</sup> Pettegree, *Marian Protestantism*, 86-128.

<sup>74</sup> Nicholas Ridley, *A pituous lamentation of the miserable estate of the churche of Christ in Englande in the time of the late reuolt from the gospel, wherin is conteyned a learned comparison betwene the comfortable doctrine of the gospell, [and] the traditions of the popish religion: with an instruction how the true Christian ought to behaue himself in the tyme of tryall* (1566, STC 21052).

<sup>75</sup> The dispute between Ridley and Hooper is discussed in detail in John H. Primus, *The Vestments Controversy: An Historical Study of the Earliest Tensions within the Church of England in the Reigns of Edward VI and Elizabeth* (Kampen: JH Kok, 1960), 13-34.

“the earliest puritan manifesto.”<sup>76</sup> Crowley argued that the proponents of vestments were not to be trusted, because many of them had a history of unrepentant idolatry during Mary’s reign: “We hope that all wise men do see, what mark the earnest solicitors of this matter do shoot at. They are not, neither were at any time Protestants: but when time would serve them, they were bloody persecutors, and since time failed them, they have borne back as much as lay in them.”<sup>77</sup> Not only did these texts serve to associate the official church with a history of Nicodemism, but it also conflated conformist positions with the perpetrators of the Marian persecution.

It was within the context of the Cambridge divine Thomas Cartwright’s dispute with John Whitgift in 1571 that Cartwright’s former teacher, the deprived clergyman Thomas Lever, released a new edition of his anti-Nicodemite tract *A treatise of the right way from danger of sinne & vengeance in this wicked world*.<sup>78</sup> Originally written while Lever had been in exile in Geneva during Mary’s reign, the book had circulated among the clandestine Protestant community in England.<sup>79</sup> Lever’s initial intention was to admonish the vast majority of Marian Protestants who were dissimulating their beliefs, and in so doing move them to atone for their idolatry by either openly professing Christ and accepting martyrdom, or else fleeing into exile. In the 1571 edition, Lever explained that he republished the tract at the request of some in the godly community, who encouraged him to “put it to printing again, with some admonition meet for this time.”<sup>80</sup> Lever was shrewd enough to be ambiguous about whom he was admonishing, but there seems to be an implication of the Queen and her officers: “I have written this Epistle or Preface, advertising and desiring all such as will read it, so to search the holy Scriptures, and their own consciences, that they may see and take occasions to pity and pray for themselves, for all men, and especially for the Queen’s most excellent Majesty, and all those that be in authority under her, that we may live a peaceable and quiet life, with godliness and honesty.”<sup>81</sup> While this in itself may seem to be a harmless and formulaic mention of the monarch and her state, when the virulent anti-Nicodemism of the text is considered then Lever’s intent appears to be much more critical. He was particularly disdainful, for instance, of those who believed they could be in attendance at the

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<sup>76</sup> Collinson, *Elizabethan Puritan Movement*, 77; The chronicler John Stowe claimed that work was produced “by the whole multitude of London ministers, every one of them giving their advice in writing unto Robert Crowley,” see: *Three Fifteenth-Century Chronicles, with Historical Memoranda by John Stowe, the Antiquary, and Contemporary Notes of Occurrences written by him in the reign of Elizabeth*, ed. J. Gairdner (Westminster: Camden Society, 1880), 139.

<sup>77</sup> Robert Crowley, *A briefe discourse against the outwarde apparell and ministring garmentes of the popishe church* (1566, STC 6079), sig. C4v-C5r.

<sup>78</sup> Thomas Lever, *A treatise of the right way fro[m] danger of sinne & vengeance in this wicked world, vnto godly wealth and saluation in Christe. Made by Th. Leuer, and now newly augmented...* (1571, STC 15551.5); On Lever’s association with Cartwright see: AF Scott Pearson, *Thomas Cartwright and Elizabethan Puritanism, 1535-1603* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1925), 5-7.

<sup>79</sup> Lever, *A treatise of the right way*, sig. A3v.

<sup>80</sup> Lever, *A treatise of the right way*, sig. A4r.

<sup>81</sup> Lever, *A treatise of the right way*, sig. A4r.

idolatrous mass, but still maintain their Protestant beliefs inwardly. By “having good knowledge of God, and yet giving occasion of offence to the simple that lack knowledge,” Lever charged, “they deserve worse than a millstone to be tied about their neck, and to be drowned in the sea.”<sup>82</sup> It would not have been lost on readers that the target of his criticism, Protestants who had dissimulated their beliefs during the persecution, included the Queen, the majority of her privy council, and many of the leading bishops of the Elizabethan church.

That Lever’s indictment of Marian Nicodemites appeared while the puritan community was in a furor over John Whitgift’s attempts to have Thomas Cartwright deprived, suggests that Whitgift was likely the chief target. Whitgift’s own history of Marian conformity was suspect, he having remained at Cambridge rather than going into exile or openly professing his faith. This checkered past was all the more ripe for critique because of Whitgift’s close association with the arch-turncoat Andrew Perne.<sup>83</sup> In puritan circles Perne’s name was synonymous with religious inconstancy, as Patrick Collinson has shown, largely because the Cambridge Vice-Chancellor had presided over both the desecration of the bones of the reformers Martin Bucer and Paul Fagius in 1556, and then at the re-interment of their remains in 1560.<sup>84</sup> This history appears to have also tainted Whitgift’s credit among the godly. For while Perne was attacked with epithets such as Judas, Turner, and Father Palinode, Whitgift was derided as “Perne’s boy.”<sup>85</sup>

Even though Whitgift never publicly addressed the sensitive subject of his Marian conformity, his own understanding of the episode can be glimpsed in the first account of his life, written shortly after his death by his close friend and household officer, Sir George Paule.<sup>86</sup> The biography reveals that Whitgift understood his actions at Cambridge not as shameful Nicodemism, but as justifiable and expedient. As Paule tells it, Whitgift had every intention of fleeing into exile, but “D. Perne hearing of this purpose, talked with him, and found him resolute in his Religion, yielding (as D. Perne often acknowledged afterwards) many good and sound reasons therefore; whereupon the Doctor willed him to be silent, and not troublesome in uttering his opinion, whereby others might take occasion to call him in question: and he for his part, would wink at him, and so order the matter that he might continue his religion, and not travail out of the University; which accordingly, the good old man justly performed. For which his favor the Archbishop carried a loving, faithful, and true heart towards him, unto his dying day.”<sup>87</sup> In Whitgift’s version of events Perne was to be remembered not as a time-serving persecutor, but as a benevolent protector of Protestants. This inextricable connection also explains why Whitgift took personal umbrage whenever Perne’s reputation was attacked.

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<sup>82</sup> Lever, *A treatise of the right way*, sig. H7v

<sup>83</sup> Perne died at Lambeth Palace in 1589, with Whitgift at his side: Collinson, *Elizabethan Essays*, 179.

<sup>84</sup> Collinson, *Elizabethan Essays*, 185-191.

<sup>85</sup> “The Epistle,” in *The Martin Marprelate Tracts*, 29, 217 n.53.

<sup>86</sup> According to Powel Mills Dawley, Paule’s biography was based on Whitgift’s first-hand accounts of his life: Powel Mills Dawley, *John Whitgift and the Reformation* (New York: Scribner’s, 1954), 29.

<sup>87</sup> George Paule, *The Life of the Most Reuerend and Religious Prelate John Whitgift, Lord Archbishop of Canterbury* (1612, STC 19484), 4.

Martin Marprelate recounts an episode in which Margaret Lawson, a woman well-known in puritan circles for publicly admonishing bishops, was threatened with imprisonment by Whitgift when she broached the subject of Perne's Marian apostasy.<sup>88</sup> Not only did Whitgift feel obligated to protect the man who had once protected him, but their shared Marian history meant that Whitgift had to defend Perne's reputation if he wanted to defend his own.

At the height of the Admonition controversy, the puritan press directed by Thomas Cartwright published a satirical attack of the Archbishop of Canterbury, Matthew Parker. While Parker had absented himself from the Marian church and gone into seclusion, he was still susceptible to charges that he had shirked away from the battle against the Antichrist by neither publicly professing his faith, nor going into exile. The satire was in the form of a biography of the Archbishop, and it ruthlessly compared his actions in Mary's days with those who had willingly accepted martyrdom: "... for from the beginning of the reign of Queen Mary until the end thereof very many good men were burned. Not for murder, theft, whoredom, or any other crime, but only for their manifest constancy in the Religion of Christ and their open professing of the name of Christ against the Pope and all his confederates. Whose death very gloriously to their praise will be remembered together with the cruelty of that time off all posterity forever."<sup>89</sup> While the true professors of Christ had laid open their faith, thereby sacrificing themselves in the fight against the Antichrist, Parker had been enjoying a quiet retirement in the countryside. Parker had "lurked secretly for those years wherein Queen Mary reigned, within the house of one of his friends leading a poor life without any man's aid or succor, and yet so well contented with his lot that in that pleasant rest and leisure of his study he would never in respect of himself have desired any other kind of life, the extreme fear of danger only excepted."<sup>90</sup> The contrast was obvious: while the martyrs burned, Parker had fiddled away in his study. It was only after Mary died that Parker "crept out of his lurking hole into the open sight of the world," just in time to accept the Archbishopric of Canterbury.<sup>91</sup>

V.

Defining puritanism, as John Coffey and Paul Lim have mischievously observed, has long been "a favourite parlour game of early modern historians."<sup>92</sup> Playing this

<sup>88</sup> "The Epistle," in *The Martin Marprelate Tracts*, 13-14.

<sup>89</sup> John Stubbs[?], *The life off the 70. Archbishopp off Canterbury presentlye sittinge Englished, and to be added to the 69. lately sett forth in Latin. This numbre off seuenty is so compleat a number as it is great pitie ther shold be one more: but that as Augustin was the first, so Mathew might be the last* (1574, STC 19292a), sig. A5r-v. The author's radical implications are also clear from the title of text, which hoped that Parker would be the last Archbishop of Canterbury. How or why Parker would be made to be the last primate was left intentionally ambiguous. This text has traditionally been attributed to John Stubbs, the religious pamphleteer who would have his hand chopped off in 1579 for writing against the Queen's proposed marriage with the Duke of Anjou.

<sup>90</sup> Stubbs[?], *The life off the 70. Archbishopp off Canterbury*, sig. A5r.

<sup>91</sup> Stubbs[?], *The life off the 70. Archbishopp off Canterbury*, sig. A5v-A6r.

<sup>92</sup> John Coffey and Paul C.H. Lim, "Introduction," in *The Cambridge Companion to Puritanism*, 1.

game, of course, has not been the intention of this chapter. However, I am interested in the ways in which the history I have sketched here may allow us to reassess some of the long-held assumptions about the rhetorical and political meanings that the term “puritan” conveyed in Elizabethan England. Scholars have long known that in their first iterations “puritan” and “precisian” were terms of opprobrium, meant to draw a comparison to one of the heretical sects of the early church: the Novatians (or Cathari, as they called themselves).<sup>93</sup> In one of the earliest known usages, for example, John Bale criticized the Knoxian faction during the disputes of the Frankfurt exile church by calling them “our new Catharites.”<sup>94</sup> While the historian M.M. Knappen recognized that “puritan” was at first used as a reference to the Novatians, he thought this only had significance insofar as it reflected “the current practice of dubbing opponents heretics, and adherents of old worn-out heresies at that.”<sup>95</sup> Patrick Collinson argued that the term “puritan” originated with Roman Catholic polemicists, who used it as a blanket term of abuse against all Protestants. But like Knappen, he thought it was only a vague allusion to “ancient perfectionist heresies,” and therefore a “convenient tar with which to brush the Elizabethan Protestant establishment.”<sup>96</sup> Of course, on one level this was true, and appears to have been increasingly so as the word’s usage became popularized and detached from the moorings of its original meaning. However, scholars have underestimated the extent to which a reference to Novatianism or Catharism had very specific and nuanced connotations within evangelical discourse in mid-16th century England. This usage arose not only because the Novatians were recognized as generic separatists with perfectionist tendencies, but largely because they typified over-rigid anti-Nicodemism in the aftermath of persecution.

The Novatians were a sect that appeared during the 3rd century persecutions of Christians under the Roman Emperor Decius. During the persecution Christians were forced either to renounce their faith and make public sacrifice to the state idols, or else face execution. Those Christians who recanted their faith or fled out of fear, were deemed *lapsi*, and considered to be idolatrous by those who had remained steadfast. The orthodox position, asserted by Cyprian, was that *lapsi* should be allowed to return to the Church, provided that repentance was made. However, the theologian Novatian and his followers, who called themselves Cathari, refused to readmit the *lapsi*, arguing that acts of idolatry were unforgivable. It was over this issue that the Novatians separated from the orthodox church.<sup>97</sup> Not only was this history well known to many early modern Protestants through the writings of Cyprian and the church historian Eusebius, but during Elizabeth’s reign it also received detailed coverage in Foxe’s “Book of Martyrs”: “Upon the occasion of these and such other, which were a great number, that fell, and did renounce, as is aforesaid, in this persecution of Decius, rose up first the quarrel & heresy of

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<sup>93</sup> H.C. Porter, *Puritanism in Tudor England* (London: Macmillan, 1970), 2-3.

<sup>94</sup> Quoted in Collinson, *Elizabethan Puritan Movement*, 33.

<sup>95</sup> Knappen, *Tudor Puritanism*, 488.

<sup>96</sup> Patrick Collinson, “Antipuritanism,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Puritanism*, 19.

<sup>97</sup> On the influence of the Decian Persecution on the Novatian schism, see: Ronald Heine, “Articulating Identity,” in *The Cambridge History of Early Christian Literature*, eds. Frances Young, Lewis Ayres, and Andrew Louth (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 214-8.

Novatus, who in these days made a great disturbance in the church, holding this opinion that they, which once renounced the faith, and for fear of torments had offered incense to the idols, although they repented therefore, yet could not afterward be reconciled, nor admitted to the church of Christ.”

Throughout the reigns of Edward and Mary, leading English Protestants argued that the Novatians’ distinctive failing was their refusal to allow forgiveness. John Hooper, for example, saw the doctrine of the Novatians as “damnable and naught,” because they denied “mercy and remission of sin to sinners.”<sup>98</sup> While many anti-Nicodemite authors posited that falling into idolatry through attendance at mass was likely a sign that one was reprobate, others emphasized that the mysterious nature of divine providence meant that it was impossible to know whether a period of spiritual apostasy was merely a predestined prelude to an otherwise saintly life. The weak believer or even the adversarial persecutor, like Paul before he set off on the road to Damascus, may one day realize the errors of his ways upon receipt of God’s grace. To assume otherwise would be to presume to know the mind of God. This was the chief argument made by the martyr Hugh Latimer, in one of his most influential sermons: “As concerning the sin against the Holy Ghost, we cannot judge aforehand, but after.” We know, Latimer explained, that Judas, Nero, and Pharaoh were guilty, because they died obstinate in their sin. The infamous turncoat Francis Spira was also certainly reprobate, since he ultimately rejected the “admonition of the Holy Ghost, denied the word of God, and so finally died in desperation.” Latimer insisted, however, that there was always an available remedy for such transgressions: “Ask remission of sin in the name of Christ, and then I ascertain you that you sin not against the Holy Ghost.”<sup>99</sup> That even Spira, the most notorious of Nicodemites, could have been forgiven if he would have been truly repentant, only serves to underline Latimer’s point that the purpose of the anti-Nicodemite message was to push the faltering soul towards reformation.<sup>100</sup>

This is why the admonisher should always be cautious not to fall into the folly of the Novatians, who did not allow for the reintegration of the penitent. As Latimer explained, “Here I have occasion to speak against the Novatians, which deny remission of sins. Their opinion is, that he which cometh once to Christ, and hath received the Holy Ghost, and after that sinneth again, he shall never come to Christ again; his sins shall never be forgiven him: which opinion is most erroneous and wicked, yea, and clean against scripture. For if it should be so, there should nobody be saved.”<sup>101</sup> This historical example became increasingly relevant in the 1550s, as some Protestants began to view Mary’s heresy prosecutions as the new Decian persecution. Marian Protestants, for

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<sup>98</sup> John Hooper, *Early writings of John Hooper*, ed. Samuel Carr (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1843), 547, 169.

<sup>99</sup> Hugh Latimer, “Sermons on the Lord’s Prayer, Sermon the Sixth, 1552,” *Sermons by Hugh Latimer, Vol. 1*, ed. George Corrie (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1844), 425.

<sup>100</sup> On Francis Spira as a symbol of the perils of Nicodemism, see: M.A. Overell, “The Exploitation of Francesco Spiera,” *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 26, no. 3 (January 1995): 619–637.

<sup>101</sup> Latimer, “Sermons on the Lord’s Prayer, Sermon the Sixth, 1552,” in *Sermons by Hugh Latimer, Vol. 1*, 425.

example, often translated and referenced the consolatory works of the 3rd century bishop Cyprian, who was himself martyred in the persecution.<sup>102</sup>

This historical allusion seems to have had particular influence on John Whitgift, who often castigated Thomas Cartwright and his followers as Novatians or Cathari.<sup>103</sup> Historians have often seen Whitgift's usage of the term as an acknowledgement of a puritan tendency towards separatism, and this certainly was one aspect of the usage. However, Whitgift's conceptualization of the puritans as the new Novatians was also tied into an understanding that both groups were characterized by an antipathy to those who had conformed during persecution. Whitgift made this comparison explicit in his *Defence of the Answer to the Admonition*:

For why will they not come to our sermons or to our churches? Why will they not communicate with us in our sacraments, not salute us in the streets, nay, spit in our faces, and openly revile us? why have they their secret conventicles? You know all this to be true in a number of them. I know not why they should do so, except they think themselves to be contaminated by hearing us preach, or by coming to our churches, or by communicating otherwise with us: which if they do, it argueth that they persuade themselves not only of such an outward perfection, but of such an inward purity also, that they may as justly for the same be called Puritans, as the Novatians were. You know that the first occasion why Novatus did separate himself from the church was because he could not obtain the bishoprick of Rome, which he ambitiously desired. You know also that his pretence was because the bishops did receive those into the church which had fallen in the time of persecution.<sup>104</sup>

By drawing this comparison, is it possible that Whitgift was alluding to the lingering puritan distrust of Protestants, like himself, who had conformed during Mary's reign?

This interpretation seems probable, particularly when we recognize that while Whitgift was writing the *Defence of the Answer* he was also embroiled in a lengthy controversy at Trinity College, Cambridge that centered on the same issue. The dispute began in January 1573, when one of Cartwright's colleagues, the brash puritan minister John Browning, preached a sermon at Great St. Mary's, in which he argued that Protestants who had attended the idolatrous mass could never be granted redemption, even if they had repented their apostasy. After the sermon, the college heads were in an uproar, and accused Browning of "tending to the favoring of the heresy of Novatus," because he had denied "restitution and repentance to such as were fallen."<sup>105</sup> Browning's

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<sup>102</sup> John Scory, *Certain workes of blessed Cipriane the martyr, translated out of laten by J. Scory* (Emden: E. van der Erve, 1556; STC 6152).

<sup>103</sup> Powell Dawley, *John Whitgift and the English Reformation*, 136.

<sup>104</sup> John Whitgift, "The Defence of the Answer to the Admonition, Against the Reply of Thomas Cartwright: Tractates I-VI," in *The Works of John Whitgift, Vol. 1*, ed. John Ayre (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1852), 172.

<sup>105</sup> Vice-Chancellor Byng to the Lord Treasurer, 2 February 1572, BL Lansdowne MS 16 fol. 59r; CP MS 138/123, fol. 123r; Whitgift was Browning's master at Trinity.



sermon had expounded on Luke 9:62 (“And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God”) in order to dispute the belief that it was “lawful to receive a massmonger repenting unto the church.” Such “as had so revolted from the truth,” Browning argued, could never be reintegrated into the faith, and therefore should not be “received as chief pillars or stayes of the church.”

To the chagrin of many in the pews, Browning specifically attacked “some particular man” who “in the time of our Josias” [King Edward’s reign] did “renounce the works of darkness,” but then fell to attendance at mass during Mary’s reign. However, Browning’s most inflammatory statement, if the manicule scribbled into the margin of Cecil’s copy of the charges is to be believed, was an argument that the man in question should be executed as an idolater: “...taking the example of Josias (which as he said sacrificed all the Chymaryns), he said that if Josias were alive [the man] should be the first that should be sacrificed.”<sup>106</sup> Browning also “added to this effect, that he hoped that god would put the same mind unto the prince, or else stir up such a one as would follow Josias’ example.”<sup>107</sup> Not surprisingly, Whitgift and the other college heads, who were also denounced in the sermon, promptly suspended Browning from any further preaching until he was willing to retract his words. When Browning defied their ban and continued to openly preach on the topic he was detained and imprisoned in the Tolbooth. Vice-Chancellor Thomas Byng (who had himself conformed during Mary’s reign), then sent Browning off to be examined by the privy council, on the basis that the sermon “soundith to the touching of great matters.”<sup>108</sup> Cecil took the issue seriously, and had Browning examined directly by Sir Thomas Smith, who compelled him to recant the seditious and heretical nature of his sermon by declaring that he was no longer “in the opinion of Novatus.”<sup>109</sup>

VI.

While there was an Elizabethan Protestant consensus that Mary’s reign had been a period of wanton idolatry and persecution, there was profound disagreement over the extent to which this past had been resolved. This chapter has argued that while many looked to Elizabeth’s accession as a moment of providential deliverance, in which the return to Protestantism was in effect England’s collective atonement for the sins of the past, some puritans expected individual repentance from all who had fallen into idolatry during Mary’s reign. Recognition of this disjunction suggests that some points of puritan contention may have been proxies for underlying divisions and anxieties which, for various reasons, were not appropriate to broach publicly. While an object such as the Queen’s chapel crucifix, for example, could be dismissed as a trivial keepsake, it could also take on an ominous meaning when the woman maintaining it was known to have an unrepented history of idolatry.

In this light the Myth of Gloriana may not have been as convincing to contemporaries as scholars have previously assumed. Those rare moments when the

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<sup>106</sup> “Chymaryns,” or Chemarim, is in reference to the priests of Baal (Zephaniah 1:4).

<sup>107</sup> CP MS, 138/123, fol. 123r.

<sup>108</sup> BL Lansdowne MS 16, fol. 59r.

<sup>109</sup> Cambridge University Archives MS Lett. 9 C.5.b; Browning’s recantation is CP MS 138/127; In 1584 the Earl of Bedford would ask Cecil to restore favor to Browning: BL Lansdowne 42, fol. 93r.

official history was called into question are particularly telling. Burghley's awkward attempt to keep William Fuller's book hidden from the Queen, for example, not only shows the lengths that some in the government were willing to go to preserve this collective pretense, but it also reveals the perceived fragility of this facade. While Elizabeth's accession undoubtedly precipitated a political and religious sea change, it must also be recognized that the crisis of conformity that had been wrenching apart the English Protestant community during Mary's reign did not simply vanish on 17 November 1558, but continued to shape the politics of Elizabethan England.

## Chapter 6

### “Persecutors under the Cloak of Policy”: Revenge, Retributive Justice, and Anti-Catholicism in Elizabethan England

In September 1563, London was in a panic. The plague had returned for the first time in decades, and the situation was ghastly: roughly 1,600 people were dying every week, and a shortage of gravediggers and carts meant that bodies were left rotting in the city streets. Desperate to end the epidemic, both the Privy Council and the Court of Common Council ordered that a series of preventative measures be put into place: massive bonfires were lit throughout central London, in the futile hope that the smoke would dispel the infectious “miasma” that some believed caused the disease. Members of infected household were quarantined, and blue crosses were displayed on the front doors of the homes of the dead and dying. Stray dogs, blamed as carriers of the pestilence, were slaughtered in the streets.<sup>1</sup> These municipal efforts dovetailed with several religious initiatives. Holding the common view that the plague was a sign of God’s displeasure at the sins of the people, Archbishop Matthew Parker and the Bishop of London, Edmund Grindal, issued a special form of common prayer. Additionally, all householders were required to attend daily church services, and a program of public fasting was instituted.<sup>2</sup> These measures, it was hoped, would encourage humility and piety among the people, and thereby hasten the plague’s end. For some London Protestants, however, the plague could not be stopped with peaceful devotion, but with the sword. The popular author-turned-preacher William Baldwin proposed a simple solution: the deprived Marian bishops, currently kept as prisoners in the households of the Elizabethan bishops, should be publicly executed. Delivering a fiery sermon at Paul’s Cross, Baldwin demanded that a gallows be immediately constructed in Smithfield, and “the old bishops and other papists...hanged thereon.”<sup>3</sup>

From the very beginning of Elizabeth’s reign some members of the godly community had quietly warned the government that failure to fulfill divine vengeance by killing the Marian persecutors would bring about “some sore plague,” and when the plague appeared in London these private anxieties turned to public anger. Some Protestants began to openly blame the plague on the populace’s continued obstinacy in Roman Catholicism, and particularly the failure to fully punish the Marian clergy; for instance, William Bullein’s *Godly Regiment Against the Fever Pestilence*, a plague tract that was one part medical treatise and one part *Decameron*-esque dialogue, featured villainous Roman Catholics who bemoaned the end of the Marian persecution, and openly lobbied for the release of Edmund Bonner, the former Bishop of London known

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<sup>1</sup> Paul Slack, *The Impact of Plague in Tudor and Stuart England* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1985), 151, 205.

<sup>2</sup> Slack, *The Impact of Plague*, 228-230; Ole Peter Grell, “Plague in Elizabethan and Stuart London: The Dutch Response,” *Medical History* 34 (1990), 424-6; Collinson, *Archbishop Grindal*, 163-5.

<sup>3</sup> Baldwin would himself die of the plague only a few days later: John Stow, “Historical Memoranda,” in *Three Fifteenth Century Chronicles*, ed. James Gairdner, (Camden Society, 1880), 126.

as the most notorious prosecutor of Protestants.<sup>4</sup> Indeed, Baldwin's sermon and Bullein's treatise were only part of a growing chorus of Protestant hostility, inflamed by recent news that the Privy Council, in conjunction with Archbishop Parker, had moved the imprisoned Marian clergy out of plague-ridden London, and to the relative safety of the countryside. As one Londoner described the volatile scene, "the old bishops and diverse doctors were removed out of the Tower into the new bishops' houses, there to remain prisoners under their custody (the plague then being in the city was thought to be the cause), but their deliverance (or rather change of prison) did so much offend the people that the preachers at Paul's Cross and in other places both of the city and country preached (as it was thought of many wise men) very seditiously."<sup>5</sup> Despite this Protestant outcry, the government had no intention of executing the Marian clergy *en masse*. Rather, as their safeguarding of the Marian clergy during the 1563 plague suggests, the Privy Council was intent on using the deprived churchmen as symbols of Elizabethan clemency. For instance, when a French ambassador visited Lambeth Palace as the plague subsided in 1564, Archbishop Parker took care to emphasize the leniency that had been shown towards the Catholic prisoners kept in his own household: Thomas Thirlby, the former Bishop of Ely, and John Boxall, a former Marian Privy Councilor. Parker reported to William Cecil that he "noted unto them the Queen's clemency and mercy towards them, for the preservation of them from the plague, and for the distribution of them among their friends."<sup>6</sup>

While the unusually stressful conditions of the 1563 plague clearly intensified Protestant resentments towards the imprisoned Marian clergy, this episode is representative of an enduring point of contention between the Elizabethan establishment and a significant portion of the Protestant community. Historians have largely addressed the fate of the Marian clergy within the context of the Elizabethan Religious Settlement. The story is now well known: despite stiff Catholic resistance in Parliament, the Act of Supremacy was confirmed in May 1559, and a commission administered the oath of supremacy to all of the surviving Marian bishops.<sup>7</sup> When all but the Bishop of Llandaff, Anthony Kitchin, refused the oath, the remaining bishops were deprived of their sees.<sup>8</sup> Other notable Catholic leaders, including abbot John Feckenham, Henry Cole, Anthony Draycot, and Nicholas and John Harpsfield were also deprived and imprisoned.<sup>9</sup> While

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<sup>4</sup> William Bullein, *A dialogue bothe pleasaunte and pietifull wherein is a goodly regimete against the feuer pestilence with a consolacion and comfort against death* (1564, STC 4036.5), sig. C6r.

<sup>5</sup> John Stow, "Historical Memoranda," 126.

<sup>6</sup> Matthew Parker, *Correspondence of Matthew Parker, Archbishop of Canterbury*, ed. John Bruce (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1853), 215.

<sup>7</sup> Norman Jones, *Faith by Statute: Parliament and the Settlement of Religion 1559* (London: Royal Historical Society, 1982).

<sup>8</sup> On the initial deprivation and imprisonment of the Marian bishops, see: Kenneth Carleton, "English Catholic bishops in the early Elizabethan era," *Recusant History* 23 (1996), 1-15.

<sup>9</sup> Some of the Catholic clergy also fled abroad, including Thomas Goldwell, Bishop of St. Asaph, who was active in Rome and Trent until his death in 1585: T. F. Mayer, "Goldwell, Thomas (d. 1585)," *ODNB*; Duffy, *Fires of Faith*, 195-6.

some, such as the former Bishop of London, Edmund Bonner, were placed in strict confinement in the Marshalsea or the Tower, others were placed under house-arrest in the households of the Elizabethan bishops, or released on bail. Several of these men, including Cuthbert Tunstall of Durham, John White of Winchester, and Ralph Baynes of Coventry and Lichfield, would die of illness or old age within a few years of Elizabeth's accession, but several others, such as Bonner, Thomas Watson of Lincoln, and the former Archbishop of York, Nicholas Heath, lived well into Elizabeth's reign, much to the chagrin of their Protestant enemies. Although the parliamentary history of the early Elizabethan settlement has been meticulously scrutinized, less attention has been paid to the influence of the former Marian clergy beyond their initial deprivation and arrest.<sup>10</sup> There have been a few notable exceptions: in the late 19th century the Catholic priests T.E. Bridgett and T.F. Knox began to recover the tumultuous prison experiences of the Marian clergy during Elizabeth's reign, with the explicit purpose of placing them in the company of Edmund Campion and others as true Catholic martyrs.<sup>11</sup> Building on this study, the Rev. George Phillips' 1905 *The Extinction of the Ancient Hierarchy* specifically tracked the long-term treatment of the Catholic bishops, and it still remains the authoritative work on the subject.<sup>12</sup>

But for the most part, the former Marian clergy have been left out of historical appraisals of the Elizabethan religious world. John Bossy's landmark studies of the English Catholic community, for instance, presented Marian Catholicism as a vestige of the medieval church, and therefore dismissed its relevancy to the Elizabethan recusant culture of the late 16th century.<sup>13</sup> More recently, however, Eamon Duffy has convincingly argued that Mary Tudor's counter-reformation project did not simply vanish upon her death, but continued to pay dividends well into Elizabeth's reign.<sup>14</sup> Not only were the deprived Marian clergy at the forefront of resistance to the Elizabethan settlement, but they also continued to have a profound and enduring influence on the recusant Catholic community.<sup>15</sup> But while Duffy focused on this legacy's positive contributions to the long-term political and religious vibrancy of English Catholicism, the other side of the coin has gone unexamined: while for Elizabethan Catholics the deprived Marian clergy were enduring symbols of counter-reformation, for many Protestants they continued to represent a culpable history of violent persecution. And while scholars have long recognized that the commemoration of the Marian martyrs was central to English Protestant identity, far less attention has been paid to the ways in which post-Marian

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<sup>10</sup> In addition to individual biographies of the *ODNB*, some notable exceptions include: Patrick McGrath and Joy Rowe, "The Imprisonment of Catholics for Religion under Elizabeth I," in *Recusant History* 20, No. 4 (1991), 415-435; McGrath and Rowe, "The Marian Priests under Elizabeth I," in *Recusant History* 17, No. 2 (1984), 103-20.

<sup>11</sup> Revs. T. E. Bridgett and T. F. Knox, *The true story of the Catholic hierarchy deposed by Queen Elizabeth* (London: Burns & Oates, 1889).

<sup>12</sup> Rev. George E. Phillips, *The extinction of the ancient hierarchy: an account of the death in prison of the eleven bishops honoured at Rome amongst the martyrs of the Elizabethan persecution* (London: Sands & Company, 1905).

<sup>13</sup> John Bossy, *The English Catholic Community, 1570-1850* (London: Longman, 1975).

<sup>14</sup> Duffy, *Fires of Faith*, 188-207.

<sup>15</sup> Duffy, *Fires of Faith*, 195-9.

questions of revenge and retribution shaped the political and religious landscape. Rather, it has long been assumed that the leading officers of Elizabethan church and state were far too magnanimous to allow direct acts of retaliation against the representatives of the previous regime. David Loades, for example, has argued that such an approach was one of the undoubted successes of Elizabeth's reign: "Elizabeth effectively prevented her Protestant subjects from taking their revenge, and this was one of her most sensible and enlightened policies. It would have been so easy to let a fresh bunch of fanatics turn upon their tormentors, and so destructive of the peace and order which she needed. The revenge which they did take was peaceful and totally effective; it was called *Acts and Monuments of the English Martyrs*."<sup>16</sup> In this view it was the brilliant guidance of those twin pillars of English Protestantism, Queen Elizabeth and John Foxe, which ensured that any propensity for anti-Catholic reprisal that could have existed was immediately and definitively extinguished.

In this chapter, however, I suggest that Protestant demands for vengeance for the Marian persecution were not simply pacified by the martyrological tradition and the fact of Elizabeth's accession. By focusing on Protestant discourse pertaining to those held most culpable for the Marian persecution, the deprived Catholic clergy, I show that demands for retributive justice in the aftermath of Mary's reign continued to influence religious and political debate in Elizabethan England. Why, then, was there not an Elizabethan persecution of Catholic subjects of the sort that Mary had allowed against Protestants? The answer, it seems, was not simply the Elizabethan government's magnanimous or "enlightened" nature, but rather because (as we saw in Chapter 5) so many in power, including Queen Elizabeth and Cecil, had their own histories of Marian conformity that were vulnerable to Reformed critique. Indirectly, therefore, the Elizabethan government's history of Nicodemism and Catholic cooperation may have been a key reason why they were disinclined to heed puritan calls for post-Marian vengeance. Catholic subjects would not be hunted down and executed, provided that they do what Elizabeth and Cecil had themselves done during Mary's reign: publicly conform.<sup>17</sup>

This chapter will show how, from the moment of Elizabeth's accession, there was a fundamental tension between her government's claims that Catholics were only prosecuted for matters of state, and Protestant demands for the execution of those who were blamed for the deaths of the Marian martyrs. Furthermore, this division continued to serve as a source of puritan animus against the Elizabethan establishment, particularly as church officials began to more rigorously enforce uniformity in the mid-1560s. By the time of the Admonition Controversy in the 1570s, some were openly contrasting the lenient treatment of the deprived Marian clergy with the prosecution of puritans for nonconformity. This history may also help explain why, in some puritan circles, the rhetoric of antipopery became increasingly directed not only at Roman Catholics, but also against the officers of the established English church: by not killing the popish wolves, the Elizabethan bishops had shown themselves to be wolves in sheep's clothing.

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<sup>16</sup> David Loades, "The English Church during the Reign of Mary," in *Reforming Catholicism in the England of Mary Tudor: the achievement of Friar Bartolomé Carranza*, eds. John Edwards and Ronald Truman (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005), 47-8.

<sup>17</sup> I owe enormous thanks to Peter Lake for his thoughts on this point.

## I.

From the beginning of Elizabeth's reign, the vocal Protestant minority who had survived the heresy prosecutions of Mary's reign began to openly wonder what would be done with their former persecutors. The exile John Bale, for instance, was especially frustrated that many Marian partisans had never made repentance for their involvement in the persecution, and yet were still able to seamlessly ingratiate themselves to the new regime. Bale's anger was focused on one individual in particular: the Catholic polemicist James Cancellor. Cancellor was notorious for his 1556 work *The Pathe of Obedience*, in which he had applauded and justified the execution of Protestants for heresy.<sup>18</sup> As Eamon Duffy has shown, Cancellor's book had appeared immediately after the execution of Archbishop Thomas Cranmer, and explicitly contrasted the inconstant and heretical Protestant martyrs with the true and steadfast Catholic martyrs executed during Henry VIII's reign.<sup>19</sup> However, after Elizabeth's accession Cancellor quickly sought to distance himself from his Marian past: he successfully had his name entered on the Queen's Pardon Roll, and began to curry favor with the new regime.<sup>20</sup> This transformation was apparently effective, as Cancellor eventually found patronage with Robert Dudley.<sup>21</sup> Furious that Cancellor was successfully reinventing himself without repercussions, in 1561 Bale wrote a scurrilous refutation of Cancellor's 1556 polemic, and demanded that he make a public retraction of his past statements.<sup>22</sup> Titling his work *A Return of James Cancellor's Railing Book upon his own head, called the Path of Obedience: to teach him here after how he shall seditiously give forth a pernicious disobedience against the crown of this realm, instead of true obedience*, Bale implored his readers to remember Cancellor's Marian history. To forget Cancellor's past was also to invite danger, Bale argued, as he was a "Judas," who along with his "monkey confederacy" of former priests was secretly in league with the Antichrist.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> James Cancellor, *The pathe of obedience righte necessarye for all the King and Quenes maiesties louing subiectes, to reade, learne, and vse their due obediences, to the hyghe powers* (1556, STC 4564).

<sup>19</sup> Eamon Duffy, *Fires of Faith*, 74, 177.

<sup>20</sup> Stephen Wright, "Cancellor, James (fl. 1542–1565)," *ODNB*.

<sup>21</sup> Cancellor dedicated a book of prayers to Dudley in 1565: James Cancellor, *The alphabet of prayers very fruitefull to be exercised and vsed of euerye Christian man* (1565: STC 4558).

<sup>22</sup> Bale's tract was never published, but has survived in manuscript: Lambeth Palace Library MS 2001; In 1561 it was entered into the Stationers' Register by John Day and licensed by the Bishop of London, and printer's marks on several folios suggest that it was partially prepared for publication. The bibliographer E.J. Baskerville's theory that the book was withheld from print because it contained many scandalous rumours is plausible: E. J. Baskerville, "A Religious Disturbance in Canterbury, June 1561: John Bale's Unpublished Account," *Historical Research*, 65 (1992), 340–48.

<sup>23</sup> LPL MS 2001, fol. 1r-3r; Bale's repeatedly refers to Cancellor and former Roman Catholic priests as apes. This was likely a play on a popular Protestant joke: as the Puritan Thomas Cole crassly explained in a 1565 sermon, tonsured priests were called apes, because "they be both bald alike, but the priests be bald before, the apes behind": Stowe, "Historical Memoranda," 133.

While Cancellor and others could attempt to escape justice by hiding their Marian past, Bale predicted that they could not prevent divine retribution without immediate repentance. In this sense Bale was not unusual: as scholars such as Thomas Freeman, Patrick Collinson and Alexandra Walsham have shown, early modern Protestants often drew upon a well-established hagiographical tradition that celebrated the providential punishment of those who had persecuted the godly.<sup>24</sup> Anticipating Foxe's "Book of Martyrs," Bale argued that immediately after the death of Mary those who had been persecutors of the godly began to meet untimely ends. The first to die was Cardinal Pole, whom Bale claims had committed suicide: "So soon as Queen Mary was departed from this life, within a few hours after, the Cardinal Reginald Pole followed, and as the report then went, he poisoned himself."<sup>25</sup> Likewise, the recent deaths of Sir John Baker and Bishop John White, both men known for their rigorous pursuit of heresy, were extolled as signs of God's judgment. Persecutors who had been particularly cruel often suffered gruesome and painful deaths; for instance, Christopher Roper, "a wicked justice and steward of the Cardinal's house" whom Bale describes as "a great persecutor of Christians," was said to have "ended his life very miserably, his flesh rotting from his bones by lumps."<sup>26</sup> While the Protestant martyrs had faced death courageously, the persecutors were dying in fits of fear and desperation. For Bale these "most marvelous" deaths proved that those "execrable tyrants" who had carried out the persecution would not escape divine justice, even if civil prosecution was not forthcoming.

Likewise, the London printer and minister Robert Crowley concluded his *Epitome of Chronicles* by promising that God would have vengeance on those who had persecuted the martyrs: "But God hath their name in his book, and their tears in his bottle, and when the number shall be fulfilled, he will be revenged upon the murderers."<sup>27</sup> Most famously,

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<sup>24</sup> Thomas Freeman, "Fate, Faction, and Fiction in Foxe's Book of Martyrs," *The Historical Journal* 43, no. 3 (2000): 601-623; Patrick Collinson, "Truth and Legend: The Veracity of John Foxe's Book of Martyrs," in *Elizabethan Essays*; Alexandra Walsham, *Providence in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 71-5.

<sup>25</sup> LPL MS 2001, fol. 38r; Whether Bale sincerely believed that Pole had committed suicide, or simply chose to focus on that rumor because he believed it portrayed Pole in a more negative light, is open for speculation. Several years later John Foxe would hint that Pole's death was a matter of debate, but went with a less controversial version of events: "Now, after the Queen immediately followed, or rather waited upon her, the death of Cardinal Poole, who the next day departed: of what disease, although it be uncertain to many, yet to some it is suspected that he took some Italian Physicke, which did him no good," Foxe, 1570 ed., 2341.

<sup>26</sup> LPL MS 2001, fol. 38v; Bale's identification of Roper as a steward of the Archbishop's household is confirmed by: TNA SP 11/13, fols.130r, 135r; He is listed in 1555 as a justice of the peace for Kent: TNA SP 11/5, fol. 37v; Roper had also raised forces against Wyatt's rebellion: J.K. McConica, "The Social Relations of Tudor Oxford," in *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, Fifth Series, Vol. 27 (1977), 130.

<sup>27</sup> Robert Crowley, *An epitome of chronicles Conteyninge the whole discourse of the histories as well of this realme of England, as al other cou[n]treys, with the succession of their kinges, the time of their reigne, and what notable actes they did...gathered out of*



of course, John Foxe's "Book of Martyrs" would include a section on "The severe punishment of Gods mighty hand, upon Priests and Prelates, with such other, as have been persecutors of his people and the members of his true Church," in which he also described the providential deaths of those who had acted against the martyrs.<sup>28</sup> While Foxe never called for direct action against the surviving Catholic bishops, he printed a catalogue of "the residue that remained of the persecuting clergy," specifically noting where each of the most prominent of the deprived Marian clergy were currently imprisoned.<sup>29</sup> Such sentiments not only had a commemorative purpose, but were also meant to warn former persecutors that their transgressions would not go unpunished. Following the accidental death of Henry II of France in a jousting tournament in 1559, for instance, Edmund Grindal noted that it was commonly believed that the French king's death was a "manifest declaration of divine vengeance," meant specifically as a stark warning to the deprived English bishops.<sup>30</sup>

Not all Protestants, however, were content waiting for divine providence to run its course, and some began to publicly demand that the government launch a full-scale purge and prosecution of all who had been involved in the Marian persecution. On the first day of Parliament in January 1559, the returning exile and later Bishop of Ely, Richard Cox, began the opening sermon by demanding vengeance against those who had directed the killing of the martyrs. "They ought to be persecuted and punished by her Majesty," Cox argued, "as they were impious for having caused the burning of so many poor innocents under pretext of heresy."<sup>31</sup> By May John Parkhurst was reporting to the Swiss naturalist Conrad Gesner that Protestant crowds were harassing the Marian bishops, and "many call them butchers to their face." Fearful of reprisals, they "never creep out into public unless they are compelled to do so, lest perchance a tumult should arise among the people."<sup>32</sup> By June the Venetian ambassador observed that "there was much fear about [Bonner's] personal safety, he having been the individual who, during the reign of Queen Mary, persecuted the heretics more than anyone else."<sup>33</sup>

In October 1559 an irate Christopher Goodman wrote to William Cecil with a list of the godly community's complaints about the nascent Elizabethan church. While the government should "have sought all means, to retain and encourage such as desire nothing but the furtherance of God's glory, and wealth of their country," instead they have attempted "to deface their doings, discredit their persons, & take from them that liberty which god of his mercies had generally granted to the professors of his holy

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*most probable auctours. Firste by Thomas Lanquet, from the beginning of the worlde to the incarnation of Christe, secondely to the reigne of our soueraigne lord king Edward the sixt by Thomas Cooper, and thirdly to the reigne of our soueraigne Ladye Quene Elizabeth, by Robert Crowley (1559, STC: 15217.5).*

<sup>28</sup> Foxe, 1570 ed., pg. 2338.

<sup>29</sup> Foxe, 1570 ed., pg. 2341.

<sup>30</sup> *Zurich Letters*, II, 51.

<sup>31</sup> "Il Schifanoja to Octaviano Vivaldino, 30 January 1559," *Calendar of State Papers Relating to English Affairs in the Archives of Venice, Volume 7: 1558-1580* (1890), 23.

<sup>32</sup> John Parkhurst to Conrad Gesner, 21 May 1559, *Zurich Letters*, I, 31.

<sup>33</sup> *Calendar of State Papers Relating to English Affairs in the Archives of Venice, Volume 7: 1558-1580*, 100-101.

name.”<sup>34</sup> Blaming false brethren who sought to maintain popish ceremonies by diminishing the standing of the godly, Goodman concluding by confessing that a chief concern, “which sticketh in the heart of many,” was “the suffering of those bloody bishops, & known murderers of god’s people, & your dear brethren, to live, upon whom god hath expressly pronounced the sentence of death.”

Allowing the Marian bishops to live signified not only a failure to heed God’s explicit condemnation of idolatrous persecutors, but was also to neglect one of the essential duties of secular authority. God demanded the blood of the bishops, and it was “for the execution whereof, he hath committed the sword in your hands who are now placed in authority.”<sup>35</sup> While Goodman admittedly understood the government’s fears that the killing of the Marian clergy would likely incite Catholic violence, he dismissed such apprehensions as misguided: “I know what is alleged to excuse these doings. But let your wisdom consider whether the fear of papists should be preferred to the fear of the Almighty: the hearts of the godly wounded, or the rage of the adversaries bridled?” To follow such politic concerns was to grasp at a false and fleeting peace that would inevitably be shattered by “some sore plague to come: whereof you and all others (in whose hands the redress consisteth), shall be accused.”<sup>36</sup> It was not a Roman Catholic threat that should worry the Crown, but rather God’s wrath if retributive justice was not meted out.

## II.

However, there were no plans to launch a new persecution. The Elizabethan Privy Council regarded the deprived Marian clergy as valuable, yet potentially dangerous, political pawns, who needed to be managed and moved with careful consideration. For this reason imprisoned clergy were usually not left in the permanent custody of a single person or prison, but were often moved around as the religious and political situation dictated.<sup>37</sup> As early as July 1559 Grindal seems to have understood that violent retribution against the deprived clergy was not likely, confiding to a friend that imprisoned bishops were “treated with sufficient lenity, not to say too much so; for they are allowed to retire into private life, and devour, as master Bucer used to say, the spoils of the church.”<sup>38</sup> But many in the godly community were still unaware of the

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<sup>34</sup> TNA SP 52/1 f.23r.

<sup>35</sup> TNA SP 52/1 f.23r.

<sup>36</sup> TNA SP 52/1 f.23v.

<sup>37</sup> The government’s careful management of these prisoners continued throughout Elizabeth’s reign. For example, John Feckenham, the deprived Abbot of Westminster, was sent to the Tower in 1560, but then released to the custody of Dean Gabriel Goodman in Westminster. In 1563 he was moved to the household of Bishop Horne. After Horne complained about the burden of keeping him, Feckenham was sent back to the Tower in 1565, but was then later transferred to the Marshalsea. In 1574 Archbishop Parker released him on parole, and he lived freely for several years in Holborn. However, in 1577 Feckenham’s parole was revoked when he was accused of associating with known Catholics, and he was placed in the household of Bishop Cox. Three years later he was transferred to Wisbech Castle, where he remained until his death in 1584: C. S. Knighton, “Feckenham, John (c.1510–1584),” *ODNB*.

<sup>38</sup> Edmund Grindal to C. Hubert, 14 July 1559, *Zurich Letters*, II, 51.

government's intentions: in July 1560, for example, Thomas Lever could tell Heinrich Bullinger that several of the Marian bishops had been arrested, but reported that no one in the godly community knew what the government planned to do with them.<sup>39</sup>

While Goodman and his associates believed that the Marian bishops should be executed because they had proven themselves to be murderers of the godly, Parker still saw them as wayward brethren who were adhering to false doctrine. In March 1560, for instance, Archbishop Parker wrote a letter to the deprived bishops, in which he admonished them for their continued commitment to Rome. He also defended the Church of England as a true catholic faith, grounded in the teachings of the church fathers and the gospel. But while the tone of the letter was stern and reproachful, it was filled with regret: "I, and the rest of our brethren the bishops and clergy of the realm, supposed ye to be our brethren in Christ; but we be sorry that ye, through your perverseness, have separated yourselves not only from us, but from these ancient fathers, and their opinions."<sup>40</sup> Parker concludes his letter by urging the bishops to consider his arguments, and keep in mind that "it shall be the continual prayers of our reformed Church to convert ye all to the truth of God's Word, to obedience to your sovereign Lady Elizabeth our Queen."<sup>41</sup> The contrast with Goodman's position is striking: while Parker focused on reconciliation and rehabilitation, Goodman expected discipline and punishment.

This early approach by the new regime produced several early moments of embarrassment, and continued to fuel perceptions among the puritan community that the Catholic bishops would never be prosecuted. The government's handling of the theologian Richard Smyth, for instance, would prove particularly controversial. Smyth had been one of the most public faces of the Marian prosecution of heresy: as Vice-Chancellor of the University of Oxford Smyth had presided over the trial of Archbishop Cranmer in 1555. At the execution of Hugh Latimer and Nicholas Ridley in Oxford on 16 October 1555, it was Smyth who preached a sermon as the two men were burned alive.<sup>42</sup> Upon Elizabeth's accession Smyth attempted to flee to Scotland, but was arrested and placed under Parker's custody at Lambeth. While in Parker's household, however, Smyth quickly attempted to distance himself from his prior words and actions. He told Parker, for instance, that one of his polemical tracts against Peter Martyr Vermigli should not be held against him, as it had been published without his consent: "I wrote then to try the truth out, not to the intent it should be printed, as it was against my will. Wold God, I had never made it."<sup>43</sup> After Smyth subscribed to the royal supremacy, the Privy Council allowed Parker to release him on bail.<sup>44</sup> However, Smyth's conformity had been a ruse, and he immediately fled to Louvain where he quickly resumed writing anti-Reformed

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<sup>39</sup> Thomas Lever to Henry Bullinger, 10 July 1560, *Zurich Letters*, I, 85.

<sup>40</sup> Archbishop Parker to Dr Nicholas Heath, Deprived Bishop of York, and Other Deprived Bishops, 26 March 1560, *Correspondence of Parker*, 112.

<sup>41</sup> *Correspondence of Parker*, 113.

<sup>42</sup> Loades, *The Oxford Martyrs*, 219.

<sup>43</sup> CCCC MS 119, fol. 109.

<sup>44</sup> *Correspondence of Parker*, 72-4.

polemic.<sup>45</sup> Parker, disappointed that he had trusted Smyth so blindly, jotted a dour note in the margin of one of Smyth's letters: "Notwithstanding this earnest promise & bond, yet this good father fled into Paris. Such was his faith."<sup>46</sup>

Despite these early missteps, some members of the Elizabethan government were continually worried that the imprisoned bishops could be potentially used in a Catholic plot to overthrow the state. Such was the case in July 1562, when the Privy Council received an anonymous letter from a man who claimed to have delivered letters meant for the former Marian privy councillor Sir Francis Englefield. In conversation with one of Englefield's servants, the informant reported to have heard "many traitorous words": Englefield was plotting a return to England, after which "the old laws should up again." Furthermore, the servant had said that several "diverse good well learned men doth know it very well as Doctor Heath, late Bishop of York, Doctor Thirlby, Doctor Bonner, Doctor Feckenham late Abbot of Westminster, & that they all should take places again."<sup>47</sup> The Council's response was to immediately send word to Sir Edward Warner, the Lieutenant of the Tower, that "the late Bishops, now prisoners in the Tower, [are] to be more straightly shut up than they have been accustomed, so as they may not have such common conference as they have used to have, whereby much trouble and disquietness might (if their wishes and practices might take place) grow in the common wealth, to the great disturbance thereof."<sup>48</sup>

But for his part, Parker remained convinced that the deprived bishops were not dangerous. In 1563 he reassured Cecil that even if a foreign invasion were successful, his own prisoners, Boxall and Thirlby, would remain obedient: "...I judge by their words that they be true Englishmen, not wishing to be subject to the governance of such insolent conquerors."<sup>49</sup> Although Parker was confident that there was no real threat, many in the Puritan community were not convinced: in January 1563, for example, the Spanish ambassador observed that animosity against the deprived bishops was growing, especially as word spread of Catholic action against Huguenots in Paris. He nervously noted, "the preachers here in every sermon incite the people to behead the papists, and Cecil himself and his gang never say anything else. If they dared I believed they would behead every Catholic in the country."<sup>50</sup>

### III.

The first day of the 1563 Parliament began just as the 1559 Parliament had: with a call for the execution of the Marian persecutors. In the opening sermon the Dean of St. Paul's, Alexander Nowell, delivered a fiery attack on the deprived bishops. While Nowell's sermon acknowledged that "in this realm was never seen a change so quiet, or

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<sup>45</sup> On Smyth's lengthy career as a polemicist see: J. Andreas Löwe, *Richard Smyth and the Language of Orthodoxy: Re-Imagining Tudor Catholic Polemicism* (Leiden: Brill, 2003).

<sup>46</sup> CCCC MS 119, fol. 112.

<sup>47</sup> TNA SP 12/23, fol. 136r.

<sup>48</sup> TNA PC 2/9 f.42.

<sup>49</sup> Archbishop Parker to William Cecil, 6 February 1563, *Correspondence of Parker*, 203.

<sup>50</sup> *Calendar of Letters and State Papers Relating to English Affairs: preserved principally in the Archives of Simancas: Elizabeth (CSP Spanish), Volume 1, 1558-1603*, ed. Martin A. S. Hume (London: HMSO, 1892), 279.

so long time reigning without blood (God be praised for it),” and he complimented the Queen on her merciful nature, he still insisted that “those which hitherto will not be reformed, but obstinate, and can skill of no clemency or courtesy, ought otherwise to be used.”<sup>51</sup> Echoing Goodman’s call for revenge, Nowell argued that the time had come for a reckoning: “the goodness of the Queen's majesty's clemency may well and ought now therefore to be changed to justice...For clemency ought not to be given to the wolves to kill and devour, as they do the lambs. For which cause it ought to be foreseen; for that the prince shall answer for all that so perish, it lying in her power to redress it. For by the scriptures, murderers, breakers of the holy day, and maintainers of false religion ought to die by the sword.” Nowell admitted that his charge may seem cruel to some, but argued that this was a matter of divine justice: “But now will some say, oh bloody man! that calleth this the house of right, and now would have it made a house of blood. But the Scripture teacheth us that diverse faults ought to be punished by death: and therefore following God's precepts it cannot be accounted cruel. And it is not against this house, but the part thereof, to see justice ministered to them who will abuse clemency.”<sup>52</sup> Nowell’s address to Parliament, along with a complementary sermon that was reportedly delivered the same day to the crowds at St. Paul’s, were commonly recognized as demands for the execution of Bonner, Thirlby, Watson, and the other imprisoned churchmen. The Spanish ambassador de Quadra observed that these sermons were meant “principally to persuade them to ‘kill the caged wolves,’ by which they meant the Bishops.” Convinced these calls for execution were not idle threats, De Quadra fretfully confided to his servant that “really it looks as if they would do something of the sort.”<sup>53</sup>

Historians have traditionally understood the anti-Catholic legislation of the 1563 Parliament, and in particular the passage of the Treason Act, as an early attempt by Elizabeth’s government to preemptively defend against potential Catholic conspiracy. As one scholar has noted, the government “wanted stronger legal weapons to use against Roman Catholic intrigues, but not domestic crusade.”<sup>54</sup> Norman Jones, for instance, has focused on the government’s legislative agenda as an attempt to limit potential Catholic threats in light of the English alliance with Protestant forces in the French civil war. While Jones admitted that popular support for the legislation in part derived from the fact that “the Protestant public wanted revenge on the hated Catholics,” the government’s approach was a matter of shrewd foreign policy.<sup>55</sup> The Elizabethan government, it seems,

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<sup>51</sup> Alexander Nowell, “Mr. Noel’s Sermon at the Parliament House Before the Queen’s Majesty,” in *A catechism written in Latin by Alexander Nowell... Together with the same catechism translated into English by Thomas Norton. Appended is a sermon preached by Dean Nowell before Queen Elizabeth at the opening of Parliament which met January 11, 1563*, ed. G.E. Corrie (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1853), 225.

<sup>52</sup> Nowell, “Mr. Noel’s Sermon at the Parliament House,” 225-6.

<sup>53</sup> “Bishop Quadra to his servant in Brussels, 14 January 1563,” *CSP Spanish, Volume 1, 1558-1603*, 291.

<sup>54</sup> William Haugaard, *Elizabeth I and the English Reformation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968), 319; J.E. Neale, *Elizabeth I and Her Parliament, 1559-1581* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1958), 114-128; G.R. Elton, *The Parliament of England, 1559-1581* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 178-81.

<sup>55</sup> Norman Jones, *Faith by Statute*, 171-3.

had successfully harnessed the Protestant mood for its own purposes. The Treason Act was indeed a powerful weapon, as it made a first refusal of the oath *praemunire*. To refuse the oath a second time was high treason, and thus punishable by death.<sup>56</sup>

However, few were aware that the Queen and her Privy Council had decided that the measure would be enforced only rarely, if at all. In a secret letter to the Elizabethan bishops, ostensibly from Parker but likely written under the direction of the Privy Council, it was ordered that no one should be administered the oath a second time, unless approval was first given by Parker himself.<sup>57</sup> Parker was careful to emphasize that this approach should not be misinterpreted “as tending to show myself a patron for the easing of such evil-hearted subjects, which for diverse of them do bear a perverse stomach to the purity of Christ’s religion, and to the state of the realm this by God’s providence quietly reposed, and which also do envy the continuance of us all so placed by the Queen’s favour.” Rather, Parker claimed that this policy was driven “only in respect of a fatherly and pastoral care, which must appear in us which be heads of the flock, not to follow our own private affections and heats, but to provide *coram Deo et hominibus*, for saving and winning of others, if it may be so obtained.”<sup>58</sup>

While Parker and the Privy Council were reluctant to launch a full-scale persecution of dissenting Catholics, it was clear that Grindal, along with several other leading clergymen sympathetic to reform, desired that this new power of prosecution be used, with full force, against some of their deprived predecessors. Not surprisingly, their first choice for prosecution was Edmund Bonner, the deprived Bishop of London. Unquestionably the most notorious of the imprisoned Catholic bishops, Bonner was synonymous with the Marian persecution, especially after the first appearance of Foxe’s *Actes and Monuments* in 1563.<sup>59</sup> When Bonner was imprisoned in April 1560, many Protestants had rejoiced. John Jewel, for instance, relayed a report to Peter Martyr Vermigli that when Bonner was first brought into the Marshalsea he courteously greeted the other prisoners as his friends. But one of the inmates took umbrage and replied furiously, “Do you take me, you brute, for a companion of yours? Go to hell, as you deserve; you will find companions there. As for me, I only slew one individual, and that not without reason; while you have causelessly murdered vast numbers of holy men, martyrs of Christ, witnesses and maintainers of the truth. Besides, indeed I am sorry for what I did; while you are so hardened, that I know not whether you can be brought to repentance.” Interpreting the incident as proof of Bonner’s unpopularity, Jewel could scarcely contain his *schadenfreude*: “I write this, that you may know in what a state he must be, when even wicked and abandoned men reject and avoid him, and will not endure him in their society.”<sup>60</sup> This episode also suggests that while technically the

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<sup>56</sup> Leslie Ward, “The Treason Act of 1563: A Study of the Enforcement of anti-Catholic Legislation,” *Parliamentary History* 8, no. 2 (1989): 289-308.

<sup>57</sup> “Archbishop Parker to each of his Suffragan Bishops,” *Correspondence of Parker*, 174.

<sup>58</sup> *Correspondence of Parker*, 175.

<sup>59</sup> On Bonner’s actions during Mary’s reign, see: Alexander, “Bonner and the Marian Persecutions,” 157-175.

<sup>60</sup> John Jewel to Peter Martyr, 1 June 1560, *The Works of John Jewel*, IV, 1237.

deprived clergy stood vulnerable to be prosecuted for refusing royal authority, popular Protestant animus largely drew from lingering anger over the Marian persecution.

By prosecuting Bonner, therefore, the government could make a show of force against potential Catholic opposition while also satiating popular Protestant demands for vengeance. And so in 1564 official proceedings against Bonner began. The prosecution was led by Robert Horne, the Bishop of Winchester and a former Marian exile, who offered and administered the oath as appointed in the Act of Supremacy. As expected, Bonner again refused the oath, and was charged with treason. But Bonner was a trained lawyer, and launched an ingenious and effective self-defense when the case was brought before the King's Bench. Pleading not guilty, he disputed the admissibility of Horne's evidence out of hand by refusing to acknowledge that Horne was a legitimately consecrated bishop. Under English law, Bonner argued, the consecration of Matthew Parker as Archbishop of Canterbury in 1559 had been illegal, and therefore Horne's own consecration was legally dubious.<sup>61</sup> By tying his defense to the status of the entire Elizabethan episcopate, Bonner was essentially forcing the government to prove that Archbishop Parker's consecration was legally sound. As Bonner was well aware, this posed a dilemma for the government, because there been several technical flaws in Parker's consecration.<sup>62</sup> When the judges of King's Bench appeared receptive to this line of defense, and even allowed Bonner to appoint the star lawyers Edmund Plowden and Christopher Wray as his counsel, it became clear that convicting Bonner would prove difficult. As Leslie Ward has observed, "The case had obviously got out of hand; the last thing that the government wanted was a jury to decide upon the legal position of their bishops, and it was at this point that the government intervened."<sup>63</sup> The case was suspended, and Bonner was returned to prison. What had initially promised to be the trial of the century, and, for many Protestants, a chance for the public and legal execution of justice, would instead become yet another painful example of the establishment's failure to fulfill the obligations of godly governance.

IV.

While the aborted King's Bench trial effectively put an end to any formal plans to prosecute Bonner for treason, it appears to have only further stoked the ire of an already incensed Protestant community. Since the beginning of Elizabeth's reign, Protestant crowds had harangued the Marian prisoners whenever they ventured into the public, and this practice reached a fever pitch during Bonner's trial. Bonner accused Horne and the

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<sup>61</sup> Specifically, Bonner argued that the oath had been illegally tendered because the Act of Supremacy required that it be offered only by the bishop of the diocese. Horne was not a legally consecrated bishop, Bonner stipulated, because his consecrator, Archbishop Parker, had not been consecrated in accordance with a Henrician statute which required four consecrators (instead of the usual three) when none of them was an archbishop. The legal proceedings of the case are detailed in: Geoffrey de C. Parmiter, "Bishop Bonner and the Oath" in *Recusant History* 11, No. 5 (1972) 215-236; Leslie Ward, "The Treason Act of 1563: A Study of the Enforcement of anti-Catholic Legislation," *Parliamentary History* 8, no. 2 (1989): 289-308.

<sup>62</sup> On Parker's consecration, see: Kenneth Carleton, *Bishops and reform in the English church, 1520-1559* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2001), 179-80.

<sup>63</sup> Ward, "The Treason Act of 1563," 293.

other bishops of intentionally putting him in harm's way, by gathering and inciting unruly mobs to violently threaten him as he was openly transported from the Marshalsea to Westminster, and back again.<sup>64</sup> In April 1564, for instance, a Spanish ambassador observed that after Bonner refused the oath he was marched back to prison, "accompanied by a large crowd of heretics and boys who kept shouting out insults to him, of which he took no notice."<sup>65</sup>

With a cutting wit, an infamous temper, and an apparent willingness to play *provocateur*, Bonner did not always stay silent as he was repeatedly marched through the hostile mob, but often shouted back: for instance, when a man in the crowd shouted "The Lord confound thee or else turn thy heart!" Bonner replied "The Lord send thee to keep thy breath to cool thy porridge!" When another yelled "The Lord overthrow thee!" Bonner quipped, "The Lord make thee as wise as a woodcock."<sup>66</sup> On one occasion a man was said to have mockingly asked if he could have Bonner's tippet to line his coat. "No," Bonner replied, "but thou shalt have a fool's head, to line thy cap."<sup>67</sup> When another contemptuously greeted him with "Good morrow Bishop *quondam*," Bonner responded "Farewell, Knave *semper*." Sir John Harington claimed that during one such altercation an angry man in the crowd held up an image, ripped from the pages of the "Book of Martyrs," which depicted Bonner viciously beating one of his prisoners during Mary's reign. The man pushed the picture close to Bonner's face, but Bonner only laughed and sarcastically complimented the artist for accurately capturing his image: "A vengeance on the fool, how could he get my picture drawn so right?" When another in the crowd asked Bonner why he was not ashamed to have whipped a godly man, he laughed and remarked that it was "a good commutation of penance, to have thy bum beaten, to save thy body from burning."<sup>68</sup> Of course such repartee only served to cement Bonner's reputation among the godly as an intransigent persecutor.

Protestant authors also attacked him in print: Bonner was, by all accounts, an obese man, and polemicists ruthlessly played on this by caricaturing him as a wolfish persecutor who had glutted himself on the godly lambs of Christ. In "The Book of Martyrs," for example, Foxe printed a condemnatory epigram: "With belly blowen and head so swolne/ For I shall tell, you how: This cannibal in three years space/ Three hundred Martyrs slew: They were his food, he loved so blood/ He spared none he

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<sup>64</sup> BL Harleian MS 421, fol.4r.

<sup>65</sup> Luis Roman to Cardinal de Granvelle, 29 April 1564, *CSP Spanish, Vol. I, Elizabeth, 1558-1567*, 360.

<sup>66</sup> BL Harleian MS 421, fol.3r; while a contemporary account of the crowds suggests that they were mostly antagonistic, there is at least one example of a woman yelling out that Bonner should be restored to his bishopric.

<sup>67</sup> Sir John Harington, *A briefe view of the state of the Church of England as it stood in Q. Elizabeths and King James his reigne, to the yeere 1608 being a character and history of the bishops of those times* (1653), 16; Some scholars have dismissed Harington's reliability on 16th century events. However, even if Harington's account here is apocryphal, it still suggests lingering Protestant anger towards Bonner.

<sup>68</sup> Harington, *A briefe view of the state of the Church of England*, 17.



knew.”<sup>69</sup> John Bale dubbed him “bitesheep Bonner,” while the puritan Thomas Knell compared him to Polyphemus, the man-eating Cyclops of the *Odyssey*.<sup>70</sup> In the early 17th century Sir John Harington remembered that in his youth many Londoners had used Bonner’s name as a slur, as “every ill-favoured fat fellow that went in the street, they would say, that was Bonner.”<sup>71</sup> Calls for vengeance against Bonner and the other Marian persecutors also appear to have become a recognizable stereotype of popular puritanism: one satirical pamphlet, for instance, featured a scene in which common people discussed potential uses for a recently built gallows, with some declaring that “Bonner should be brought from his place among the prelates, and be whipped there for breeching of Bartlett Greene naked in his garden.”<sup>72</sup>

How did the government regard these intimations of extra-legal Protestant violence? As we have seen in the last chapter, an undercurrent of puritan critique had long focused on the Marian Nicodemism of the Queen and key members of her church and state. It must have made Elizabeth particularly uncomfortable that some Puritans were calling for the execution of the Marian perpetrators while they were simultaneously criticizing former Nicodemites as accomplices in the murder of the martyrs.<sup>73</sup> These tensions may partially explain a curious episode that occurred in the immediate aftermath of Bonner’s mistrial in King’s Bench: during the Queen’s visitation of Cambridge University in August 1564, a scandal ensued when one of the evening performances featured students impersonating the imprisoned Marian bishops. In what was immediately recognized as an obvious parody of Bonner, one student appeared “carrying a lamb in his hands as if he were eating it as he walked along.” Several of the other deprived bishops were also portrayed in the performance. One actor, for instance, was dressed “in the figure of a dog with the Host in his mouth.” While it is not clear whom in particular this student was impersonating, this was a reference to Proverbs 26:11 (“As a dog returns to his vomit, so a fool returns to his folly”), which was commonly used to denounce those who had returned to the Mass during Mary’s reign. The Queen was furious as soon as she realized the nature of the performance, and immediately stopped it. As one Spanish diplomat reported, “the Queen was so angry that she at once entered her

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<sup>69</sup> Foxe, 1563 ed., 1689; for a brief overview of Foxe’s portrayal of Bonner, see: David Loades, “Foxe and Queen Mary: Stephen Gardiner: Edmund Bonner” in *The Unabridged Acts and Monuments Online*.

<sup>70</sup> John Bale, *A declaration of Edmonde Bonners articles concerning the cleargye of Lo[n]don dyocese whereby that excerable [sic] Antychriste* (1561, STC 1289); Thomas Knell, *An epitaph, or rather a short discourse made vpon the life [and] death of D. Boner sometimes vnworthy Bisshop of London whiche dyed the v. of September in the Marshalsie*. (1569, STC 15033).

<sup>71</sup> Harington, *A briefe view of the state of the Church of England*, 16.

<sup>72</sup> Robert Armin(?), *Tarltons newes out of purgatorie* (1590, STC 23685), sig. D2v.

<sup>73</sup> The puritan Richard Proude, for instance, had argued that William Cecil’s attendance at Mass during Mary’s reign made him culpable for the deaths of the Protestant martyrs: see Chapter 5.

chamber using strong language, and the men who held the torches, it being night, left them in the dark, and so ended the thoughtless and scandalous representation.”<sup>74</sup>

Such events likely contributed to a growing sense among the godly community that the Elizabeth and her government were intentionally protecting the Marian clergy from lawful prosecution. For instance, in a report to the Queen in June 1565, the Archbishop of York, Thomas Young, warned in a postscript that there was “inconstancy & murmuring of the people in these parts touching the alteration of religion.” While noting that some were angry over the recent prosecution of “Mr. Sampson & others for uniformity of apparel to be had amongst the clergy,” Young claimed that popular Protestant dissatisfaction arose “chiefly through the trifling & late remiss dealings of the judges & lawyers of your majesty’s court called the King’s Bench (who make & wrest the laws at their pleasure) with Mr Bonner, late Bishop of London, and Doctor Palmes sent from thence.”<sup>75</sup> Doctor Palmes was in reference to George Palmes, the former Archdeacon of York.<sup>76</sup> Deprived by the ecclesiastical commission in 1559, Palmes had been imprisoned in York Castle in 1561.<sup>77</sup> Following the passage of the Treason Act in 1563, Archbishop Young took the unusual step of administering the oath to Palmes a second time, thereby making him prosecutable for treason, and sent him to face the charges in King’s Bench.<sup>78</sup> Although Palmes was convicted, the King’s Bench judges allowed him to be set free on bail.<sup>79</sup> Historians have not been able to ascertain why Archbishop Young specifically chose Palmes, and only him, for prosecution under the new legislation.<sup>80</sup> On its surface it appears a curious choice: Palmes was not a former bishop, and because he had been in prison since 1561, he was probably not an active force for Catholic resistance. The most likely explanation is that Palmes was targeted because, since the 1530s, he had been one of the leading prosecutors of heresy in the North. During Henry VIII’s reign, for instance, Palmes had led the attack on the prominent Yorkshire evangelical William Senes.<sup>81</sup> He had continued in this role during

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<sup>74</sup> Guzman de Silva to the Duchess of Parma, 19 August 1564, *CSP Spanish, Vol. I, Elizabeth 1558-1567*, 375; Unsurprisingly, this episode was not included in any of the official accounts of the Queen’s progress: John Nichols, *The progresses and public processions of Queen Elizabeth, Vol. I* (1823).

<sup>75</sup> Archbishop of York to the Queen, June 23 1565, TNA SP 15/12 f. 173r.

<sup>76</sup> “Georgii Palmes (CCEd Person ID: 119970),” *The Clergy of the Church of England Database 1540–1835* <<http://www.theclergydatabase.org.uk>>, accessed 23 Feb. 2012.

<sup>77</sup> Archbishop of York to the Queen, June 30 1564, TNA SP 59/8 f.135r-v; Dom Hugh Aveling, *Post Reformation Catholicism in East Yorkshire, 1558-1790* (York: East Yorkshire Local Historical Society, 1960), 10.

<sup>78</sup> Henry Gee, *The Elizabethan Clergy and the Settlement of Religion, 1558-1564*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1898), 197.

<sup>79</sup> Ward, “The Treason Act of 1563,” 293; Palmes died in 1568: “Executors’ statement concerning the will of George Palmes made in court in York in 1568,” in *York Clergy Wills, 1520-1600: I Minster Clergy, Borthwick Texts and Calendars 10*, ed. Claire Cross (York: University of York, 1984), 95.

<sup>80</sup> Ward, “The Treason Act of 1563,” 293.

<sup>81</sup> A.G. Dickens, *Lollards and Protestants in the Diocese of York, 1509-1558*, 43; On Senes, see Ethan Shagan, *Popular Politics and the English Reformation*, 242.

Mary's reign, overseeing the deprivation of married clergy and prosecuting Protestant nonconformists for heresy.<sup>82</sup> Palmes was also listed in Foxe's "Book of Martyrs" as one of the foremost enemies of the popular martyr Hugh Latimer.<sup>83</sup> Considering this reputation as a persecutor of the godly, it is not surprising that Palmes had become a focus of Protestant resentment within Young's province. Young claimed that the perception that Bonner and Palmes were being protected contributed to growing puritan distrust of the Elizabethan government. He warned the Queen that neither in York, "nor elsewhere (as I take it), there will be no good stay, until some good order be taken with them & such as they are. For experience now showeth, and so will daily more & more that they have been too long dallied withal." By failing to swiftly exact judgment, Young explained, "your people vainly persuaded themselves & so do continue that your majesty would have none of that sort so offending the laws punished."<sup>84</sup>

V.

By 1566 the "murmuring" that Archbishop Young had heard the previous summer was only getting louder. For some puritans engaged in the Vestiarian Controversy it did not go unnoticed that the government was hesitant to exact justice against the imprisoned bishops, even as they were willing to enact strict measures against the godly for reasons of clerical dress. Some puritans, such as the anonymous author of the *Fortress of Fathers*, argued that the vestments should be abolished because "Keeping of old rites maketh Bonner and the wicked hope well."<sup>85</sup> For others, the government's failure to prosecute the perpetrators of the Marian persecution was proof that policy was being prioritized over piety. The puritan leader Anthony Gilby reminded the establishment that God had clearly shown his disfavor against the Marian bishops: "that wolf Winchester [Stephen Gardiner] & bloody butcher Bonner fought once against many godly men for the ground of this gear, and they had all the power of the Realm serving their lusts, but behold how the Lord in short time overthrew them all, to give us courage to go forward." While this should have been taken as evidence that the Marian bishops had acted contrary to divine will, the Elizabethan government had failed to fully purge both Bonner and his vestments: "the Lord forgive us, we are too slack and negligent in heavenly things, this monster Bonner remaineth and is fed as papists say, for their sakes, & it must be granted, it is for some purpose, although he be a traitor and an enemy to the crown and realm, and both to God and man, which burned god's holy testament, murdered his saints and his servants. But what the Lord requireth to be done with false Prophets it is manifest." Not only was the government remiss in sparing Bonner, but the Elizabethan bishops were throwing salt in this wound by forcing the godly to wear the persecutor's attire. "We have

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<sup>82</sup> A.G. Dickens, *The Marian Reaction in the Diocese of York: Part II, The Laity*, 8; A.G. Dickens, *Reformation Studies* (London: The Hambledon Press, 1982), 128-136.

<sup>83</sup> Foxe, 1563 ed., 1307.

<sup>84</sup> Archbishop of York to the Queen, June 23 1565, TNA SP 15/12 f. 173r.

<sup>85</sup> I.B., *The fortresse of fathers earnestlie defending the puritie of religion, and ceremonies, by the trew expositio[n] of certaine places of Scripture: against such as wold bring in an abuse of idol stouff, and of thinges indifferent, and do appoinct th'authORITY of princes and prelates larger then the trueth is. Translated out of Latine into English for there sakes that vnderstand no Latine by I.B.* (1566, STC 1040), "The Same Rudolphus upon the 2 of Sainct Marcke."

both the law of god & man for us,” Gilby argued, “But we are answered nay, you yourselves shall be compelled to turn your coats and caps, and get you into [Bonner’s] liveries, and to be like him in your garments.”<sup>86</sup> For Gilby, the sheep should not be forced to wear the wolves’ clothing. Such demands also showed that the Elizabethan bishops, who were “neither hot nor cold,” and therefore “shall be vomited out unless their zeal increase,” were themselves turning into persecutors of the godly: “O beware you, that will be Lords over the flocks, that you be not sore punished for your pride, towards your brethren, and your cowardliness in god’s cause, that for Prince’s pleasures and pompous livings, do turn popery into policy, and to become our persecutors under the cloak of policy: it were better to lose your livings, than to displease god in persecuting of your brethren, & hinder the course of the word.”<sup>87</sup> A similar note was struck by William Turner, who republished his 1555 work *The Huntyng of the Romyshe Wolfe*, a strident attack on the Marian bishops as wicked persecutors. In its new iteration, however, Turner titled the work *The Hunting of the Fox and the Wolfe*, thereby equating the Elizabethan bishops with the Marian persecutors.<sup>88</sup> The title page featured an image of a wolf, clad in cope and surplice, biting the throat of a lamb, with the words of Matthew 7:15 printed below: “Take heed of false prophets, which come unto you in sheep’s clothing, but within are ravening wolves.”<sup>89</sup>

While the Vestiarian Controversy continued to fuel puritan dissent, some Protestants were still demanding that those who had been involved in the execution of the Marian martyrs should be deprived or compelled to recant their actions, even if they had conformed to the Elizabethan church. Several members of a clandestine puritan congregation discovered at Plumbers’ Hall, for instance, justified the necessity for separation by pointing to the “great company of papists” that were allowed to be ministers in the English church, even as members of the godly community were prosecuted. As one congregant explained to the ecclesiastical commission, “I know one that in Queen Mary’s time did persecute god’s saints, and brought them forth to Bishop Bonner, and now is minister allowed of you, and never made recantation.”<sup>90</sup> Likewise, returning exiles in Kent launched a campaign against John Day, the curate of Maidstone, who had a reputation as a persecutor of the godly. It was widely remembered that in 1557 Day had preached a sermon at the public burning of several protestants, in which he had reportedly said to the crowd: “Good people, ye ought in no wise to pray for these obstinate heretics, for look how ye shall see their bodies burn here with material fire, so

<sup>86</sup> Anthony Gilby, *To my louynge brethren that is troubyld abowt the popishe aparrell* (1566, STC 10390), sig. A4r-v.

<sup>87</sup> Gilby, *To my louynge brethren that is troubyld abowt the popishe aparrell*, sig. B3r.

<sup>88</sup> William Turner, *The huntyng of the romyshe vuolfe, made by Vuylliam Turner doctour of phisik* (1555, STC: 24356); William Turner, *The hunting of the fox and the wolfe because they make hauocke of the sheepe of Christ Iesus* (1565, STC: 24357); Collinson, *Elizabethan Puritan Movement*, 78.

<sup>89</sup> For the print history of this woodcut image, see: Malcolm Jones, “The Lambe Speaketh...An Addendum,” *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 63 (2000): 287–294.

<sup>90</sup> *The Remains of Edmund Grindal*, ed. William Nicholson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1843), 204.

shall their damnable souls burn in the unquenchable fire of hell everlasting.”<sup>91</sup> Nearly ten years later, Day was still curate, and several angry parishioners attempted to exhort “this priest to repent and recant his great blasphemies against the truth of God and his saints.” Day initially agreed to make public apology, but in his next sermon he instead chose to defend himself. “It is reported of me,” Day explained, “that in the time of Queen Mary, when certain people were burned in the King his Meadow, I should say that they were damned, but I think they do belie me that so say or report of me, but to say the truth I know not nor do not remember what I there said, no nor then at that present (by means of the flame of the fire and the great smoke that the wind brought so violently towards me) could I tell myself what I said or spoke.” Despite this convenient memory lapse, Day added that he was still certain that, even by the standards of the Elizabethan church, the Maidstone martyrs would still be considered heretics: “...this I know: that some of them did deny the humanity of Christ and the equality of the Trinity, and no man doubteth but such are heretics. Wherefore I may be bold to say even now again that unless by the great mercy of God and repentance, they are damned.”<sup>92</sup> When several men again confronted Day after this sermon, he was reported to have angrily dismissed them, saying: “Did you never lie in your lives? Are ye not men? Ye seem to be justifiers of yourselves and hypocrites.”<sup>93</sup> Left with no other recourse, the frustrated protestants delivered a “supplication” to Archbishop Parker, likely in the hope that Day would be deprived or even prosecuted.

This episode suggests that it was usually Parker, as the Archbishop of Canterbury, whom many saw as the person ultimately obligated to resolve the unfinished business of the Marian persecution. Parker was grimly reminded of this responsibility in December 1566, when he received a strange petition from two men, Thomas Wincle and John Wells, who had been bailiffs in Oxford during Mary’s reign. It seems that the bailiffs had personally carried out the imprisonment and executions of Thomas Cranmer, Hugh Latimer, and Nicholas Ridley, and in doing so had incurred a debt of £63, of which the Marian government had recompensed only £20. They now looked to Parker to settle the debt. In their petition the bailiffs included their expense accounts, which listed not only the martyrs’ meals, but also the cost of the chains, posts, and wood that had been used to burn them at the stake.<sup>94</sup> In an accompanying letter to Parker, the President of Magdalen College, Laurence Humphrey, bemoaned the suit even as he verified the sincerity of the petitioner: “The case is miserable, the debt is just, his charges in the suit have been great, his honesty, I assure your Grace, deserveth pitiful consideration.” Humphrey suggested that Parker, as a successor to Cranmer, was the most logical person to settle the martyrs’

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<sup>91</sup> BL Harleian 416, fols.123r-v; this manuscript has been transcribed in Thomas Freeman, “Notes on a Source for John Foxe’s Account of the Marian Persecution in Kent and Sussex” *Historical Research* 67 (1994), 203-11.

<sup>92</sup> BL Harleian 416, fols. 123v-124r; Patrick Collinson has suggested that Day’s assessment of the Kentish martyrs’ doctrinal unorthodoxy may have had some merit: Collinson, “Cranbrook and the Fletchers: Popular and Unpopular Religion in the Kentish Weald,” in *Godly People*, 404.

<sup>93</sup> BL Harleian 416, f. 124r.

<sup>94</sup> CCCC MS 128, fols. 365-404; MacCulloch, *Thomas Cranmer*, 584.

debts.<sup>95</sup> Despite the sincerity of the suit, many in the puritan community would undoubtedly have been horrified to learn that Parker had essentially paid for the burning of the Oxford martyrs.

## VI.

In August 1567 one of Cecil's spies reported that it was widely rumored in France that Queen Elizabeth had freed all of the deprived Marian bishops and ordered them to reinstitute the mass.<sup>96</sup> Such rumors appear to have contributed to Cecil's persistent demands that Archbishop Parker and the other keepers maintain a strict confinement of the deprived clergy. By October the Spanish ambassador de Silva heard that Cecil had "scolded the Archbishop of Canterbury roundly for allowing too much liberty to the good Bishop of Ely [Thomas Thirlby] and Secretary Boxall." Apparently Cecil had directed Parker to check his household staff for crypto-Catholics, and commanded that Thirlby and Boxall "should communicate with nobody and should be kept close." However, de Silva also reported that "three days after the Archbishop summoned the Bishop and Boxall, and after they had dined with them he took them aside and told them not to be distressed or alarmed at what had been done with them as he had been compelled to do it." Parker reassured his two prisoners that they would be safe, but then, with a line of questioning that anticipates the infamous "bloody questions," Parker asked them if they believed there was any scenario in which a subject could justify rising against his ruler.<sup>97</sup> Thirlby affirmed that resistance was never legitimate, to which Parker replied that "some authorities held to the contrary." However, Boxall dismissed this, and remarked that "only Calvinists and such like heretics" made arguments for resistance. After all, Boxall noted, "the apostles were always faithful to their Princes although they were pagans."<sup>98</sup>

Although Parker appears to have been satisfied that his prisoners posed no serious threat, Cecil's demands for stricter confinement were still taken seriously. When the plague returned to London in 1570 several of the prominent prisoners in the Tower, including the Duke of Norfolk, were removed to avoid infection.<sup>99</sup> This time, however, the imprisoned Marian bishops were left to their fate. While the Catholic historian G.E. Phillips argued that this was an attempt by the government, in their "murderous spirit," to intentionally expose the deprived bishops to the plague, it is more likely that the Privy Council was trying to avoid a repeat of the 1563 controversy, when the Puritan community had excoriated the government for moving the bishops out of plague-ridden London to the safety of the countryside.<sup>100</sup>

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<sup>95</sup> CCCC MS 128, fol. 367; Humphrey uncomfortably acknowledged the "sauciness" of the suit, but admitted "charity *operiens multitudinem peccatorum*, doth move me, and will persuade you to hear him." He suggested that Parker could settle the debt by collecting money from his fellow bishops.

<sup>96</sup> Captain Cockburn to Cecil, 6 August 1567, TNA SP 70/93 f.22r.

<sup>97</sup> On the "bloody question," see: Patrick McGrath, "The Bloody Questions Reconsidered," *Recusant History* 20 (1991): 305-319; Victor Houlston, *Catholic Resistance in Elizabethan England: Robert Persons's Jesuit Polemic, 1580-1610* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2007), 65.

<sup>98</sup> *CSP Spanish, Vol. I, Elizabeth 1558-1567*, 682.

<sup>99</sup> TNA SP 15/19 fol.1v.

<sup>100</sup> Phillips, *The Extinction of the Ancient Hierarchy*, 350.

When Bonner died in prison in September 1569, more than ten years after Elizabeth's accession, Grindal directed that he be buried secretly in the middle of the night. In a letter to Cecil, Grindal explained that this was necessary for two reasons. First of all, there was a rumor that "diverse [of Bonner's] popish cousins and friends in London assembled themselves, intending to honour his funeral so much as they could." For Grindal this was unacceptable, as "such a persecutor was not worthy" of an honored burial, "specially in these days." Secondly, Grindal "feared that the people of the city (to whom Bonner in his life was most odious) if they had seen flocking of papists about his coffin, the same being well decked and covered, & they would have been moved with indignation, and so some quarrelling or tumult might have ensued thereupon."<sup>101</sup> A secret burial, therefore, was Grindal's only way to ensure that Bonner's death did not precipitate open conflict between either Catholic or Protestant partisans eager to make a public show of force. The assumed volatility of the situation also suggests that, even more than a decade after the Marian persecution, there was still a real possibility of violent reprisal.

While Grindal's careful management of Bonner's burial meant that violent conflict was avoided, the weeks after Bonner's death witnessed a flood of puritan pamphlets celebrating the end of the most prominent of the Marian persecutors. The author of one such text posthumously indicted Bonner: "The best (that is the martyrs) have ye slain, the flock have you not nourished: but churlishly and cruelly have you ruled them. Therefore woe and vengeance be unto you, sayeth the lord God. All these places of holy writings, cryeth out against Bonner as much as to any false pastor, that ever hath made spoil like a Wolf in Christ's flock." For more than ten years the murder of the martyrs had gone unpunished, even as the godly had called for retribution: "the souls of the slain, whom he burned for the word of God, and for the testimony which they had: do still cry with a loud voice, saying: How long tarryest thou lord, holy and true, to judge and avenge our blood on them, that dwell on the earth?"<sup>102</sup> While in this matter divine judgment had not been swift, it was inevitable: one puritan polemicist, for instance, took consolation in the idea that this frustrating delay of justice had at least forced Bonner and "his wicked companions" to be confronted with the "great steadfastness" of the godly. It was only in hell that Bonner and the other persecutors would painfully recognize that their victims were counted "among the saints," and would be forced to admit that they had "erred from the way of truth, and the light of righteousness have not shined unto us."<sup>103</sup> In one popular broadside printed shortly after Bonner's death, Queen Elizabeth's excessive mercy was contrasted with Bonner's intransigence: "The mercy of Elizabeth, though it doth far exceed: / Could not reclaim his cureless heart, which errors still did feed. / But that he used unreverently, with scoffs in mocking wise: / Her grace's high Commissioners, both worthy, grave, and wise. / So when the people prayed for him, reproachful words he gave: / Most vile, not Christian-like, as one that had a soul to save."<sup>104</sup> The former exile and pamphleteer Thomas Knell also bemoaned the "full ten

<sup>101</sup> BL Lansdowne 11, fol. 144r.

<sup>102</sup> Lemeke Avale (pseud.), *A commemoration or dirige of bastarde Edmonde Boner, alias Sauage, vsurped Bisshoppe of London* (1569, STC 977), sig. A5v.

<sup>103</sup> Avale (pseud.), *A commemoration or dirige of bastarde Edmonde Boner*, sig. A6r.

<sup>104</sup> Thomas Broke the younger, *An epitaphe declaryng the lyfe and end of D. Edmund Boner &c.* (1569, STC 3817.4).

years space” between Bonner’s crimes and his death, but chose to gloss this as undeniable proof of Bonner’s obstinacy.<sup>105</sup>

While some Protestants were celebrating Bonner’s demise, Archbishop Parker, by contrast, continued to treat the prisoners imprisoned in his own household as old friends. When Thirlby was mortally ill with fever in August 1570, Parker petitioned the Queen to allow his release. But Parker privately admitted to Cecil that, for personal reasons, he wished Thirlby could remain his companion: “I thought by his presence (being both of us much of an age) to learn to forsake the world and die to God; and hereto I trust to incline myself, what length or shortness of life soever may follow.”<sup>106</sup> Parker would get his wish, as Thirlby died the next day. In sharp contrast to Grindal’s secret midnight burial of Bonner, Parker had Thirlby respectfully buried in the chapel of Lambeth Church.<sup>107</sup> Bishop Horne maintained a similar approach to some of his own prisoners, such as the former Bishop of Lincoln, Thomas Watson. While in 1564 it was Horne who had spearheaded the attempt to prosecute Bonner, his stance had apparently softened with time, and by 1578 Horne was suggesting to Cecil that Watson should be released on bond. Horne was clearly tired of the burden of keeping Watson prisoner, and expressed confidence that the old bishop could be safely released, as “he will not be a meddler with any in disorderly sort.” Horne also appears to have maintained a degree of fraternal respect for Watson, as both men had been at Cambridge in the 1530s. Horne confided to Cecil: “[Watson] is old, impotent, & was of mine old acquaintance in St. John’s College as your Honor knoweth. I wish well to his sort which is sore infected with an incurable disease: yet would I have his body to descend into the grave in peace, & so to leave him to god’s merciful judgment.”<sup>108</sup> Watson himself would speak favorably of Horne, as one “who hath dealt with me...as if I had been his natural brother.”<sup>109</sup> Like Parker and Thirlby, Horne and Watson had known each other for decades, and had even once been friends before they found themselves on oppositional sides of Reformation conflict. Such complicated relationships also explain, in part, why some of the Elizabethan bishops were reluctant to appease puritan interests by launching a violent prosecution of their deprived predecessors.

While some of the Elizabethan bishops treated their captives with a modicum of respect, there was a sense among many in the godly community that the deprived Marian clergy were still dangerous. The Rising of the North in 1569, followed by the Ridolfi Plot and the issuing of the papal bull *Regnans in Excelsis* in 1570, contributed to constant Protestant fear of Catholic conspiracy. These worries were fueled by rumors of unrepentant Catholics, whom wished to relaunch a new persecution of Protestants at the first opportunity; for example, the former Marian exile Thomas Wattes, who in 1570 was overseeing the imprisonment of Dr. John Story, complained to Cecil that Story “seemeth to take little thought for any matters, and is as perversed in mind concerning religion as

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<sup>105</sup> Knell, *An epitaph, or rather a short discourse made vpon the life [and] death of D. Boner*, sig, A10r.

<sup>106</sup> Archbishop Parker to Sir William Cecil, 25 August 1570, *Correspondence of Parker*, 369.

<sup>107</sup> On the death and burial of Thirlby, see: Shirley, *Thomas Thirlby*, 228-9.

<sup>108</sup> CP MS 161/69, fol. 69r.

<sup>109</sup> CP MS 161/68, fol. 68r.



heretofore he hath been.” Wattes was especially horrified that Story openly defended his involvement in the Marian persecution: not only did Story “plainly sayeth, that what he did in Queen Mary’s time he did it lawfully,” but he also claimed defiantly that if the “law were again, he might do the like.”<sup>110</sup> Whenever there were rumors of a Catholic threat, calls for the execution of the deprived Marian bishops would surely follow: in the immediate wake of the St. Bartholomew’s Day Massacre in August 1572, for instance, an informant reported a rumor to the Duke of Alba that some of the Elizabethan bishops now thought the deprived clerics were too much of a political liability: “When the news of the destruction in Paris was known, the bishops went to the Queen and represented to her that, to prevent disturbances in this country, the bishops and other clergy now imprisoned should be executed, which the Queen refused to order.”<sup>111</sup> The government, it seems, was intent on maintaining an image of tolerance, and after Cecil made a visit to the Tower it was even rumored that the Privy Council might soon order the release of all imprisoned Catholics.<sup>112</sup>

While such talk was likely little more than political smoke-screening by the Elizabethan government, these remarkably disparate rumors reflect a very real fissure between the Privy Council and some of the Elizabethan clergy. Bishop Cox, for instance, was increasingly resentful of his custody of the deprived Marian churchman John Feckenham. By 1578 Cox had been keeping Feckenham as a prisoner in his household for more than a year, and he complained to Cecil that he was growing impatient with the burden. After several failed attempts to conform Feckenham to the Church of England, Cox declared Feckenham to be “in popish religious *toto obdurate*,” and for this reason no longer permitted Feckenham to be present at his table. Cox’s complaints to Cecil suggest an underlying resentment that the government was unwilling to prosecute the deprived Marian clergy: “Whether it be meet, that the enemies of god and the Queen should be fostered in our houses, and not used according to the laws of the realm, I leave to the judgment of others: what my poor judgment is, I will express being commanded. I think my house the worse being pestered with such a guest. Yet for obedience sake I have tried him thus long.”<sup>113</sup> Cox’s hesitancy in accommodating Feckenham was not only due to his present adherence to the Roman Catholic faith, but also likely because of his past history: as the former Dean of St. Paul’s and the last Abbot of Westminster, Feckenham was one of the most prominent Catholic preachers during Mary’s reign. During the Marian persecution he had often examined imprisoned Protestants, and had famously tried to procure a recantation from Lady Jane Grey before attending her on the scaffold. In this sense Eamon Duffy’s assessment that Feckenham was “genuinely committed to converting rather than killing protestants, and was regularly employed to persuade prisoners to conformity,” appears accurate.<sup>114</sup> But regardless of what Feckenham’s intentions may have been, he was still recognized by many in the Protestant community as a persecutor of the martyrs, not least of all because he had routinely denounced

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<sup>110</sup> TNA SP 12/73 fol. 125r.

<sup>111</sup> *CSP Spanish, Vol. II, Elizabeth 1568-1579*, 412

<sup>112</sup> *CSP Spanish, Vol. II, Elizabeth 1568-1579*, 455.

<sup>113</sup> BL Lansdowne 27, fol. 28r.

<sup>114</sup> Duffy, *Fires of Faith*, 160.

imprisoned heretics from the pulpit of Paul's Cross.<sup>115</sup> Feckenham also appeared unfavorably throughout Foxe's *Actes and Monuments*, most notably in the descriptions of the respective examinations of martyrs John Hooper, Thomas Tomkins, and Bartlet Green. But while Cox apparently still felt, as he had at the opening of Parliament in 1559, that the Marian clergy should be prosecuted, he was also careful to emphasize that he did not want a Protestant version of the Marian persecution: "I would wish then, that he, and the rest of his company were examined and tried in open conference in the universities: but not as good Cranmer, good Latimer, good Ridley, and other more, from disputations to the fire."<sup>116</sup> This comparison to the 1554 Oxford disputations was particularly appropriate, because, as Cox knew, Feckenham had been one of the Catholic disputants against the three martyrs.<sup>117</sup>

Feckenham was also particularly irksome to the establishment because he had continued to publicly defend Catholic doctrine: during his imprisonment in the Tower in the early 1570s he was still disputing with Protestant preachers. For instance, when the popular puritan preacher John Gough delivered a sermon at the Tower in January 1570, the audience included Feckenham and the former Bishop of Lincoln, Thomas Watson. Shortly thereafter Feckenham printed a reply to Gough's sermon, which elicited further responses from both Gough and Laurence Tomson.<sup>118</sup> Likewise, in the late 1570s Edward Dering was still condemning the deprived Marian clergy. In one sermon, Dering exhorted his audience to regard these men as little more than pharisaical relics of an idolatrous past: "If you come in place, with those ancient worn creatures, who with a colour of gray hair, which is the wisest part in them, so long deceive our people, they or their disciples, if they reason against you: Hath God forsaken his Church a thousand year, and were all our fathers deceived before Luther was borne, such antiquity, unity, universality, was it all in error? These words taken up again in our days, and countenanced with the gray heads of our Pharisees, Watson, Feckenham, Cole, Heath, and other like, O Lorde! How many men do they deceive?"<sup>119</sup> That Dering felt the need to criticize them, even though it had been nearly twenty years since they had been deprived, conveys the extent to which they remained inescapable figures on the Elizabethan religious landscape and constant reminders of the Marian past.

## VII.

As we have seen, for some in the puritan community there was a longstanding perception that the Elizabethan bishops had been dangerously negligent by not punishing

<sup>115</sup>For example, Foxe printed a letter from thirteen imprisoned Protestants criticizing one of Feckenham's Paul's Cross sermons: Foxe, 1570 ed., 2097.

<sup>116</sup>BL Lansdowne 27, fol. 28r.

<sup>117</sup> Knighton, "Feckenham, John (c.1510–1584)," *ODNB*.

<sup>118</sup> Feckenham's text has not survived, and is known only from the replies: John Gough, *The aunswer of Iohn Gough preacher, to Maister Fecknams obiections against his sermon, lately preached in the Tower of London. 15. Ianurie. 1570* (1570, STC 12131), sig. A2; Laurence Tomson, *An ansvere to certein assertions of M. Fecknam, sometime abbot of Westminster which he made of late against a godly sermon of M. Iohn Goughes, preached in the Tower the xv. of Ianuarie. 1570* (1570, STC 24113).

<sup>119</sup> Edward Dering, *XXVII. lectures, or readings, vpon part of the Epistle written to the Hebrues* (1577, STC 6727), 160.

the Marian clergy with sufficient rigor. By the time of the Admonition Controversy, this history of leniency was increasingly viewed not only as a weakness borne from excessive mercy, but as evidence of the Elizabethan episcopate's complicity in the programmatic persecution of the godly. Some argued that the Elizabethan commissioners had become virtually indistinguishable from their Marian predecessors. For instance, in 1569 one puritan critic excoriated Cecil for allowing the godly to "be stifled & choked in smothering prisons, to please either the papists, or our second Bonner of London."<sup>120</sup> This "second Bonner of London" was likely a reference to Grindal, who had been the Bishop of London since Bonner's deprivation. That even Grindal, long seen as a promoter of puritan interests, was now being derided as the new Bonner, shows the extent to which the polemical temperature had intensified. This animus would reach its apotheosis with the 1572 work *A Second Admonition to Parliament*. Likely written by Christopher Goodman, the *Second Admonition* was published anonymously by the clandestine Puritan press associated with Thomas Cartwright.<sup>121</sup> While the work was in part an explication of the presbyterian model of church government that had been proposed in the first *Admonition*, it was also an unmitigated condemnation of the Elizabethan episcopate, and presented the government's recent actions against the Puritan press as only the latest chapter in a long history of persecution that stretched back nearly two decades.

Historians have largely ignored the *Second Admonition*. The principal reason for this is that while the first *Admonition to Parliament* had been relatively straightforward in its message, the *Second Admonition* was very much a work of insider religious politics, and is rife with recondite references and ambiguous allusions that have largely been lost to the modern reader. The historian M.M. Knappen admitted that all he could say with confidence about the work is that it contained "a somewhat detailed exposition of the Puritan ideal of church government." Aside from this general observation, he conceded, "it is so rambling and confused as to be almost unintelligible."<sup>122</sup> Patrick Collinson also thought that the meaning of the *Second Admonition* was opaque, describing it as "an obscure and diffuse essay which made little impact."<sup>123</sup> However, there is substantial evidence that the work was more widely read and discussed than historians have previously realized. For example, in November 1572 the puritan scion Sir Francis Hastings passed on his copy of the book to Laurence Tomson, who then commended it to Anthony Gilby.<sup>124</sup> When a number of prominent Puritans, including Goodman and

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<sup>120</sup> BL Lansdowne 11, fol. 202r.

<sup>121</sup> Some scholars still follow tradition in attributing the work to Cartwright, for example: Peter Milward, *Religious Controversies of the Elizabethan Age: A Survey of Printed Sources* (London: The Scholar Press, 1977), 30. However, A.F. Scott Pearson convincingly showed that Cartwright's authorship is not likely, and suggested Goodman as the probable author: Pearson, *Thomas Cartwright and Elizabethan Puritanism*, 74; Patrick Collinson also attributed the text to Goodman: Collinson, *Elizabethan Puritan Movement*, 239.

<sup>122</sup> Knappen, *Tudor Puritanism*, 235.

<sup>123</sup> Collinson, *The Elizabethan Puritan Movement*, 239.

<sup>124</sup> Tomson sent the *Second Admonition* to Gilby, and asked him to "return it, when you have done, unless upon further occasion, you will take some pains about the matter": Laurence Tomson to Anthony Gilby, 21 Nov. 1572, CUL MS Mm. I. 43, p. 448.

Edward Dering, were hauled before Star Chamber in the summer of 1573, the prevailing rumor in London was that the Privy Council was no longer concerned with the first *Admonition*, but rather demanded that answer be made for the *Second Admonition*.<sup>125</sup>

Dismissive assessments of the *Second Admonition* also derive from the fact that, unlike several of the other prominent works of the controversy, it never warranted an extended reply from Whitgift or the other apologists for the established church. However, as Whitgift explained in his *Answer*, a detailed response was not forthcoming not because the *Second Admonition*'s meaning had been vague, but rather because it was too specific and personal in its attack on the Elizabethan bishops. For Whitgift, the "opprobrious words" of the *Second Admonition* were not "worthy the answering," because it "very slanderously and unchristianly railleth on some bishops by name and the rest of the clergy, charging them most untruly with sundry things: but because it is done by way of libeling (a devilish kind of revenge) therefore, I trust godly and wise men will esteem of it accordingly."<sup>126</sup> Furthermore, Whitgift was horrified that "the Author boasteth, that he and many others will set themselves against us, as the professed enemies of the church of Christ."<sup>127</sup> From the very beginning of the *Second Admonition* Goodman acknowledged that it crossed normal lines of propriety by attacking specific churchmen, but he defended this as a necessary tactic: "Yet this much I say, if some suppose it to be too particular, & to touch the quick too near, let them think withal how necessary it is to be known, and further, that these deformities be the cause that we require reformation, and what an intolerable thing it is to suffer all these enormities against us. And if some doubt whether all the particulars be true that are here named, let them seek examination, and they shall find far worse matter, than is here alleged."<sup>128</sup>

An interpretive problem for historians, and one of the reasons that the text has been largely misunderstood, is that Goodman does not name his targets outright. While some of his subjects are easily identifiable (for example, the "Pope of Lambeth" was obviously Archbishop Parker), others would have only been known to those with a detailed knowledge of the religious controversies of the Marian and Elizabethan church. For example, Goodman's reference to "the politique Machevils of England" was instantly recognized by Whitgift, who remarked, "It would be known whom they mean by these politique Machevils: For they envy all men of great authority, wit and policy."<sup>129</sup> Whitgift clearly understood that Goodman meant the Queen's chief privy councilors, William Cecil and Nicholas Bacon, because only a few months before the popular Catholic pamphlet *A Treatise of Treasons* had scandalously dubbed Cecil and Bacon

<sup>125</sup> John Audley to Nathaniel Bacon, 21 May 1573, *The Papers of Nathaniel Bacon of Stiffkey, Volume I: 1556-1577*, eds. A. Hassell Smith, Gillian Baker, and R.W. Kenny (Norwich: Centre of East Anglian Studies and the Norfolk Record Society, 1979), 73-4.

<sup>126</sup> John Whitgift, *An answer to a certain libel intituled, An admonition to the Parliament, by Iohn Whitgifte, D. of Diuinitie*, (1572, STC: 25427), sig. Oo5v.

<sup>127</sup> Whitgift, *An answer to a certain libel*, sig. Pp1v.

<sup>128</sup> "A Second Admonition to the Parliament," reprinted in *Puritan Manifestoes: A Study of the Origin of the Puritan Revolt with a Reprint of the Admonition to the Parliament and Kindred Documents, 1572*, eds. W.H. Frere and C.E. Douglas (London: SPCK, 1954), 83.

<sup>129</sup> *Puritan Manifestoes*, 89; Whitgift, *An answer to a certain libel*, sig. Oo3v.

“those two English Machiavelles.”<sup>130</sup> Therefore if we assume, following Whitgift and Goodman’s own assessments, that the *Second Admonition* was intended not only as a minor addendum to the ecclesiological aspects of the first *Admonition*, but was largely an intra-Protestant “libel” that targeted specific members of the Elizabethan church and state, then we may be able to more fully understand the underlying prejudices and grievances of Puritan dissent that lay at the heart of the controversy.

Goodman opens the work by reminding the reader that the worst persecutors were always “false brethren”: Abel was murdered by Cain, Joseph was attacked by his own brothers, and Christ was betrayed by Judas.<sup>131</sup> The bishops’ recent imprisonment of the authors of the first *Admonition* proved that Puritan preachers were to be “slandered and persecuted...not only by the learned of the popish profession, but also by such as would seem pillars of the true religion.”<sup>132</sup> While the Elizabethan bishops feigned godliness, “they will rail upon, and revile their brethren, they will persecute and prison them, they will stir her majesty and all other against them, they will starve, stifle, and pine them to death.” For Goodman this pattern of persecution was not a recent phenomenon, but was evident from the beginning of Elizabeth’s reign: “How many good men’s deaths have they been the cause of, by an inward sorrow conceived of their doings? How suddenly died master Pullen after they began to rage? M. Horton? M. Carvell and many others? and how did they kill that good man’s heart, old good M. Coverdale?”<sup>133</sup> “Master Pullen” was the former Genevan exile John Pulleyne, who had been brought before the Privy Council for violating the preaching ban in the opening months of Elizabeth’s reign. Pulleyne was not only charged with condemning Protestants who had conformed under Mary, but he was also interrogated as a suspected resistance theorist. Likewise, Coverdale’s failure to receive favor upon his return from exile was probably due to his strong ties to John Knox. Horton was likely Thomas Horton, who had been a protégé of the reformer Martin Bucer in the 1540s, before going into exile during Mary’s reign.<sup>134</sup> His escape from the Catholic authorities was memorialized in Foxe, and upon return from exile he was listed as one of the London ministers who sought to rid the church of “Antichrist and all his Romish rags.”<sup>135</sup> Horton received minor preferment from Grindal

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<sup>130</sup> John Leslie, *A treatise of treasons against Q. Elizabeth, and the crowne of England diuided into two partes: whereof, the first parte answereth certaine treasons pretended, that neuer were intended: and the second, discovereth greater treasons committed, that are by few perceiued: as more largely appeareth in the page folowing* (1572: STC 7601), sig. 43r; On the context of this pamphlet see: Michael Questier, “Elizabeth and the Catholics,” in *Catholics and the ‘Protestant Nation’: Religious Politics and Identity in Early Modern England*, ed. Ethan Shagan (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2005), 76-84; Thomas M. McCoog, S.J., *The Society of Jesus in Ireland, Scotland, and England 1541-1588: ‘Our Way of Proceeding?’* (Leiden: EJ Brill, 1996), 88-9.

<sup>131</sup> “Second Admonition,” 87-8.

<sup>132</sup> “Second Admonition,” 88.

<sup>133</sup> “Second Admonition,” 104.

<sup>134</sup> H.C. Porter, *Reformation and Reaction in Tudor Cambridge* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1958), 54.

<sup>135</sup> Foxe, 1570 ed., 2326; Collinson, “Letters of Thomas Wood, Puritan: 1566-1577,” in *Godly People*, 66.

in 1560, but died during the 1563 plague.<sup>136</sup> “Carvell” was probably Nicholas Kervile, another former exile and nonconformist minister who died at the height of the Vestments controversy in 1566.<sup>137</sup> While none of these men had been executed or left to die in prison, Goodman still saw their blood on the bishops’ hands.

He contrasted this early history of persecution with the Elizabethan government’s treatment of known Roman Catholics: “Contrariwise, what encouragement and favor have they showed to papists? How have they opened their ears to their complaints against the ministers, and shut their ears when Papists have been complained upon, or slightly overpassed it. Yea some of them have said, that conformable Papists were more tolerable than these precisians and godly men that seek for Reformation?” As early as 1559 Goodman had forcefully demanded that the Elizabethan government execute the Marian bishops, and this was not forgotten as he chastised Archbishop Parker for the leniency he had shown the deprived Marian clergy: “What friendship found Thirlby in his house? May poor preachers be half so well used, or such other poor men, which led by the word of God, do freely utter their consciences against the abuses in our Reformation?”

Goodman was especially incensed that more extreme measures were not taken against one “Hanson of Oxford, which amongst other articles was charged justly, and is yet to be proved that the said Storie was an honest man, & was put to death wrongfully, and had friends alive would revenge his death one day, how slightly did the Bishop of Canterbury use him?”<sup>138</sup> “Hanson” was likely John Hanson, a former archdeacon of Richmond who had been deprived of his livings early in Elizabeth’s reign before fleeing overseas around 1561.<sup>139</sup> This begs the question: why did Goodman choose to single out this obscure recusant, who had been out of the country for more than ten years, as an example of the bishops’ failure to exact justice? The answer lies in the Marian persecution. A native and long-time resident of Chester, Goodman would have been painfully aware that there was only a single martyr killed in his home diocese: the popular preacher George Marsh. Goodman would have also known that it was Hanson, then the chaplain to the Bishop of Chester, who had attempted to force Marsh’s recantation before he was sent to the stake in 1555.<sup>140</sup> That Parker had failed to fully prosecute Marsh’s Marian persecutor, especially when Hanson was known to have continued as an obstinate and dangerous papist, was therefore inexcusable in Goodman’s eyes. The godly, Goodman complained, were continually faced with “harder dealing than

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<sup>136</sup> Horton was also associated with Coverdale, who signed his death certificate: “Thomas Horton (CCEd Person ID: 81231),” *The Clergy of the Church of England Database 1540–1835* <<http://www.theclergydatabase.org.uk>>, accessed 28 Feb. 2012; Collinson, *Archbishop Grindal*, 117.

<sup>137</sup> Brett Usher, “Kervile, Nicholas (1527/8–1566),” *ODNB*.

<sup>138</sup> “Storie” is clearly John Story, the Marian prosecutor of heresy who was executed for treason in 1571; on Story’s notoriety in Elizabethan England, see: Ronald Pollitt, “The Abduction of Doctor John Story and the Evolution of Elizabethan Intelligence Operations,” *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 14, no. 2 (1983): 131–156.

<sup>139</sup> The details of Hanson’s escape are lost, but in a 1561 list of recusants Grindal named Hanson as one who “fled, as is reported, over the seas”: TNA SP 15/11, fol. 77r.

<sup>140</sup> Foxe refers to Hanson as “Henshem”: 1563 ed., 1119.

Hanson did,” and he suspected that the bishops would “take on more against the author of this book and such like, than against Hanson.”<sup>141</sup>

Even those members of the Elizabethan episcopate who had once been promoters of the godly were now called into question. For Goodman, the promise of the Marian exile had been betrayed, as one-time brethren had turned false and become popish persecutors. He asks indignantly, “What talk they of their being beyond the seas in Queen Mary’s days because of the persecution, when they in Queen Elizabeth’s days, are come home to raise a persecution?”<sup>142</sup> Furthermore, Goodman complained that the bishops were exploiting the memory of the Marian martyrs by invoking them in contemporary debates. Even those martyrs who had defended the Edwardian liturgy, Goodman argued, would have eventually changed this position had they only been able to visit the best continental reformed churches. That some of the Elizabethan episcopate had witnessed truly reformed services while in exile, and yet still chose to enforce the English order, showed that they prioritized policy over the word of God.

While ostensibly this is an indictment of the entire Elizabethan church, there are several clues that this line of critique was targeted at specific persons, even though they are not explicitly named. For Goodman, one man in particular had egregiously broken promises made during the exile: “Diverse of those martyrs, would not in those days of King Edward, abide all the orders in that book, but if they had such a time beyond the seas in the reformed churches, to have profited and increased in knowledge of a right reformation as these men had, it is not to be doubted, *but that they would have done better than he promised, that had rather all England were on a fishpole, than he would be brought to matters far less, than now of his own accord he willfully thrusteth himself upon.*”<sup>143</sup> Although this is a seemingly ambiguous reference, this last line was an unmistakable allusion to Alexander Nowell. Aside from being the Dean of St. Paul’s, Nowell was perhaps most widely known in Elizabethan London as the fishing minister. As Izaak Walton would report confidently in *The Compleat Angler*, Nowell “was as dear a lover, and constant practicer of angling, as any age can produce.” His devotion to fishing was such that he spent “a tenth part of his time in angling,” and would “bestow a tenth part of his revenue, and all his fish, amongst the poor that inhabited near to those rivers in which it was caught, saying often, *That Charity gave life to Religion*: and at his return would praise God he had spent that day free from worldly trouble, both harmlessly and in a recreation that became a churchman.”<sup>144</sup> Nowell’s passion for fishing had even played a part in the popular mythology of the Marian persecution: the story went that during Mary’s reign Bonner was walking along the Thames when he happened to spot Nowell fishing along the riverbank. As Thomas Fuller would describe the encounter, “But whilst Nowell was catching of fishes, Bonner was catching of Nowell, and understanding who he was, designed him to the Shambles, whither he had certainly been

<sup>141</sup> “Second Admonition,” 105.

<sup>142</sup> “Second Admonition,” 112.

<sup>143</sup> “Second Admonition,” 122, emphasis mine.

<sup>144</sup> Walton insisted on the veracity of his account of Nowell, as he had “conversed with those which have conversed with him”: Izaak Walton, *The Compleat Angler or, the contemplative man's recreation: Being a discourse of fish and fishing, not unworthy the perusal of most anglers* (1653), 30-2.

sent, had not Mr. Francis Bowyer then merchant, afterwards Sheriff of London, safely conveyed him beyond the seas.”<sup>145</sup> In this portrayal Bonner was cast as the antitype of the good Christian: by fishing for heretics to persecute instead of souls to save, Bonner had perverted the scriptural injunction of Matthew 4:19, “Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.” Nowell appears to have embraced this episode, using it to cultivate his godly reputation for many years. When Nowell took a position in Brasenose College, Oxford, for example, he sat for his portrait while holding a fishhook in his right hand, and his fishing rod in view on the wall behind him.<sup>146</sup>

That Nowell was now being admonished as a false brethren raises several questions: how is it that Nowell, a former Marian exile, could be thusly criticized by the puritan press as a promise breaker? And more specifically, how is it that Nowell, the same minister who in 1563 had most publicly called for the execution of the imprisoned Marian clergy, was himself being derided as a Popish persecutor in 1572? One of the clear points of contention was Nowell’s authorship of the most popular catechism of the English church.<sup>147</sup> Even though Nowell had modeled much of his catechism on John Calvin’s own writings, by 1572 the book was being attacked by John Field and Thomas Wilcox as an attempt to substitute yet another “Mass book” for the word of God.<sup>148</sup> The very need for a catechism, the authors of the first *Admonition to Parliament* had claimed, was nothing more than an admission that the Elizabethan church was comprised of “men for all seasons” who had been priests during Queen Mary’s reign, and therefore had no true knowledge of godly learning. While in the primitive church the earliest Christians had been knowledgeable enough to teach and proselytize, the current churchmen “must be instructed themselves, and therefore like young children they must learn catechisms.”<sup>149</sup> In the *Second Admonition* the catechism would be similarly attacked as a book meant to be learned “by rote, rather than by reason,” and condemned as part of a secret Elizabethan plan to return to the Latin Mass.<sup>150</sup> Goodman suspected that soon the bishops would “translate the Book of Common Prayer into Latin, and their pontifical, and use the Latin of the popish portuise, manual, and pontifical.”<sup>151</sup> Through such changes, the English church was becoming indistinguishable from the Church of Rome. Soon,

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<sup>145</sup> Fuller, *The history of the worthies of England*, 115.

<sup>146</sup> R. Lane Poole, *Catalogue of Portraits in the possession of the University, Colleges, City, and County of Oxford*, II (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1925), 249-50.

<sup>147</sup> Nowell’s Catechism was first published in 1570 as *Catechismus, sive, Prima institutio disciplinae pietatis Christianae* (STC 18701), and the more widely used English edition appeared in the same year: Kenneth Parker, *The English Sabbath: A Study of Doctrine and Discipline from the Reformation to the Civil War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 46-7.

<sup>148</sup> On Nowell’s debt to Calvinist catechisms, see: William Haugaard, “John Calvin and the Catechism of Alexander Nowell,” *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte/Archive for Reformation History* 61 (1970), 50-65.

<sup>149</sup> “An Admonition to the Parliament,” 9.

<sup>150</sup> “A Second Admonition,” 110.

<sup>151</sup> “Second Admonition,” 112.



Goodman argued, “his Lordship shall be a Pope, and his confederates the Pope’s underlings.”<sup>152</sup>

However, the main reason that Nowell had increasingly become *persona non grata* to some in the puritan community was because since 1563 he had served on the ecclesiastical commission tasked with enforcing conformity.<sup>153</sup> This reputation as an antagonist to English presbyterianism would be cemented in December 1573, when Nowell authorized the arrest of Thomas Cartwright.<sup>154</sup> Within this context Goodman’s gibe that Nowell wished “all England were on a fishpole,” was a subtle subversion of Nowell’s godly reputation. Not only was Goodman churlishly hinting that Nowell cared more about fishing than godly reform, but it is likely he was also alluding to Nowell’s recent prosecution of puritans as an ecclesiastical commissioner: while in 1555 it had been Bonner trying to catch Nowell, now Nowell was catching the godly. For Goodman this was all part of a long-standing, and often secret, persecution of the godly at the hands of the leading officers of the Elizabethan church. While “there is no persecution now, they say,” they were merely feigning innocence in order to deceive: in fact, there were many “poor men, already beggared by them, and which have many ways been molested and imprisoned, some in the Marshalsea, some in the White Lion, some in the Gatehouse at Westminster, others in the Counter, or in the Clink, or in the Fleet, or in Bridewell, or in Newgate.”<sup>155</sup> The Elizabethan bishops, therefore, must be recognized for their true nature: “...they are none other, but a remnant of Antichrist’s brood, and God amend them, and forgive them, for else they bid did [sic] battle to Christ and his church, and it must bid the defiance to them, til they yield. And I protest before the eternal God I take them so, and thereafter will I use myself in my vocation, and many more to no doubt which be careful of God his glory, and the churches liberty, will use themselves against them, as the professed enemies of the church of Christ, if they proceed in this course, and thus persecute as they do.”<sup>156</sup> For Goodman, the evidence against the Elizabethan episcopate was damning: they were false brethren, who had had left papists unpunished, popish ceremonies in place, and had long engaged in the secret persecution of the godly. Taken together, this smacked of conspiracy, and exposed an entire ecclesiological structure that was too corrupt to salvage.

#### VIII.

For some Elizabethan Catholics the deprived bishops continued to serve as godly models to be emulated: they not only represented an unwillingness to accept the religious program of a Protestant queen, but they were also cited as authorities in defense of the Marian Counter-Reformation. For instance, in 1582 the Yorkshire recusant John Hamerton was arrested after it was reported that he had uttered “certain traitorous words” by claiming that the Queen and her government were all heretics, while also defending the execution of Protestants during Mary’s reign.<sup>157</sup> They had been “proved heretics,”

<sup>152</sup> “Second Admonition,” 111.

<sup>153</sup> Stanford Lehmborg, “Nowell, Alexander (c.1516/17–1602),” *ODNB*.

<sup>154</sup> Nowell’s signature clearly appears on the arrest warrant: TNA SP 12/93/1 fol. 9; Pearson, *Thomas Cartwright and Elizabethan Puritanism*, 433.

<sup>155</sup> “Second Admonition,” 113.

<sup>156</sup> “Second Admonition,” 111-2.

<sup>157</sup> TNA SP 15/27/1 fol. 141r.

Hamerton argued, “by the worthiest learned clerks that ever was, that is to say Feckenham, Bonner, Story, Cole, and such other like as condemned them to burn.” During Mary’s reign Hamerton had been actively involved in the restoration of Catholicism in Northern England, reporting to Cardinal Pole on the damages sustained by churches and abbeys in Yorkshire.<sup>158</sup> Nearly thirty years later, Hamerton still proudly defended his own history of prosecuting Protestants by boasting that he had been “Bonner’s man, and helped to set fire & faggot to the most that were burned in Smithfield, for the which he said he yet rejoiceth to think how they fried in the flames, and what good service he had done God in furthering their death.”<sup>159</sup> While such unabashed arguments in support of the Marian persecution were rare, they likely intensified perceptions among the godly community that Catholics were potentially dangerous, and therefore deserving of intense governmental prosecution. This also suggests there may be an older, domestic, dimension to the “practical antipapistry” that Michael Questier has found in northern Protestants’ fears of foreign (particularly Scottish) Catholic influence.<sup>160</sup>

For some in the godly community the perception that the government had failed to adequately address internal and external Catholic threats, even while some puritans were prosecuted for treason, suggested that the Elizabethan establishment was not to be trusted. Such resentments and distrust even led some to an increasingly antagonistic relationship with the Elizabethan state and church. For example, the key witness in the case against Hamerton was one Henry Ardington, a Yorkshire gentlemen who was a self-proclaimed “detector of seminaries, old massing priests, and Jesuits.”<sup>161</sup> While in Hamerton’s case Ardington had been certified by the ecclesiastical commission as “a most faithful Protestant,” and one who “will utter the truth,” within a few years Ardington’s fervent anti-Catholicism led him to reject the English state and church as illegitimate, because he had come to the belief that Elizabeth’s government was dominated by crypto-Catholic councilors. A staunch presbyterian, Ardington also began to view the government as popish persecutors, especially after several leading puritans were prosecuted for sedition in the late 1580s.<sup>162</sup> By 1590 he had become a disciple of the self-professed messiah William Hacket, who proclaimed Ardington to be his “prophet of justice,” sent to call the sinful to repentance. In 1591 Ardington, along with Hacket and

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<sup>158</sup> In a 1556 letter to Cardinal Pole, Hamerton beseeched him to “...have compassion of the great misery that this said town of Pontefract is fallen into, both bodily and ghostly, since the godly foundations aforesaid hath been so misordered, and misused, and the whole sanctuaries of God so exactfully defiled and spoiled”: TNA SP 15/7, fol. 133r.

<sup>159</sup> TNA SP 15/27/1 fol. 141r.

<sup>160</sup> Michael Questier, “Practical antipapistry during the reign of Elizabeth I,” *The Journal of British Studies* 36, no. 4 (1997): 371-396.

<sup>161</sup> His name was spelled interchangeably as Ardington or Arthington: Henry Arthington, *The seduction of Arthington by Hacket especially with some tokens of his vnfaigned repentance and submission. Written by the said Henrie Arthington, the third person, in that wofull tragedie* (1592, STC 799), 42; TNA SP 12/239, fols.123r-124r.

<sup>162</sup> Michael P. Winship, “Puritans, Politics, and Lunacy: The Copinger-Hacket Conspiracy as the Apotheosis of Elizabethan Puritanism,” *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 38, no. 2 (2007): 345-369.

his friend Edmund Coppinger, were arrested and charged with treason after they publicly condemned the Queen and her church to a riotous crowd in Cheapside.<sup>163</sup> While Ardington's radicalization was, of course, unusual, he serves as a reminder of the ways in which virulent anti-Catholicism could often work in coordination with governmental policy (as in the case against Hamerton), even while at other times it could metastasize into a contentious point of division between militant puritanism and the Elizabethan church.

This unfavorable comparison of the Elizabethan bishops to the Marian persecutors became a common feature of separatist puritan polemic. Writing from the Marshalsea in 1581, the puritan John Nash suggested the Elizabethan bishops were even worse than their predecessors: "Was bloody Bonner a more cruel tyrant in his generation...than you now be in your profession? No, no, you show yourselves in these your doings more wicked than he, for Bonner would never persecute any for being zealous in the Pope's religion, which he professed, nor keep them 9 or 10 years in prison." While Bonner had been honest in his brutality, the current bishops were religious fratricides. Nash condemned them as "shameless hypocrites, professing Christ's religion...and yet contrary to all Christianity, you play the Scribes and Pharisees, you persecute Christ in his members."<sup>164</sup> For Nash this treachery should not have surprised the godly, as the bishops had long shown themselves to be "timeservers" and "dumb dogs" who willingly "turned to their own vomit again in turning to the filthy mire of popish ceremonies and men's traditions from which they were once freed." They had feigned godliness in King Edward's time, only to turn back to the idolatrous mass in Mary's reign.<sup>165</sup> Just as they had been hypocrites then, they were hypocrites now.

The separatist John Penry also unfavorably compared the Elizabethan commissioners to the perpetrators of the Marian persecution, boldly claiming that the Protestant martyrs had been better treated during Mary's reign than the godly were by Elizabeth's regime. By executing their prisoners, the Catholic persecutors had at least allowed the godly to accept the gift of martyrdom: "Bishop Bonner, Story, Weston, dealt not after this sort: for those whom they committed close, they would also either feed, or permit to be fed by others; and they brought them in short space openly into Smithfield to end their misery, and to begin their never ending joy."<sup>166</sup> By contrast, the Elizabethan commissioners, "that persecuting and bloodthirsty faculty," treated the godly worse than murderers and traitors. A similar argument was made by the separatist minister Thomas Settle, who chastised Archbishop Parker as "a very enemy to the church and a Tyrant and

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<sup>163</sup> On Ardington's involvement in the Hacket conspiracy: Alexandra Walsham, "'Frantick Hacket': Prophecy, Sorcery, Insanity, and the Elizabethan Puritan Movement," *The Historical Journal* 41, no. 1 (1998): 27–66; Michael P. Winship, "Puritans, Politics, and Lunacy," 345–369.

<sup>164</sup> "Articles sent to the Bishops and Cleargye in the convocation house...From the Marshalsea by John Nasse the Lordes prisoner 1580 Januarye," *Seconde Parte of a Register*, I, 149.

<sup>165</sup> *Seconde Parte of a Register*, I, 150.

<sup>166</sup> John Penry, *Elizabethan Non-Conformist Texts, Vol. VI: The writings of John Greenwood and Henry Barrow, 1591-1593*, ed. Leland H. Carlson (London: Routledge, 2003), 302.

worse than ever Bonner was.”<sup>167</sup> While in one sense such comparisons can be dismissed as facile similes that were mere commonplaces of puritan polemic, in another sense they held a much darker valence, particularly when it is recognized that puritans had long called for the execution of the Marian bishops.

IX.

Yet even while puritan polemicists were openly conflating Elizabethan officials with the perpetrators of the Marian persecution, the government was still intent on pointing to their imprisonment of the Marian bishops as proof of tolerant restraint. In William Cecil’s 1583 pamphlet *The Execution of Justice*, a masterpiece of royal propaganda that defended the execution of Jesuits for treason, he explicitly pointed to the treatment of the deprived Marian clergy as evidence of the government’s longstanding leniency towards Roman Catholics. The Marian bishops and other imprisoned churchmen, Cecil explained, were “never to this day burdened with capital pains, nor yet deprived of any their goods or proper livelihoods, but only removed from their ecclesiastical offices, which they would not exercise according to the laws. And most of them for a great time were retained in Bishops’ houses in very civil and courteous manner, without charge to themselves or their friends.”<sup>168</sup> It was only when “the Pope began by his Bulls and messages, to offer trouble to the realm by stirring of rebellion,” that the prisoners were kept in close confinement. For Cecil this proved that the English state did not prosecute for matters of conscience, but only for crimes against the state: “...without charging them in their consciences or otherwise, by any inquisition to bring them into danger of any capital law, so as no one was called to any capital or bloody question upon matters of religion, but have all enjoyed their life as the course of nature would: and such of them as yet remain, may, if they will not be authors or instruments of rebellion or sedition, enjoy the time that God and nature shall yield them without danger of life or member.” In this sense Elizabeth’s treatment of the Marian clergy, Cecil argued, was “an example of gentleness never matched in Queen Mary’s time.”<sup>169</sup> Some, and perhaps most, of the Protestant establishment accepted this line of reasoning. In the 1570s, for instance, the London merchant Richard Hilles could point to the government’s longstanding leniency shown towards the imprisoned Marian bishops: those still living “scarcely suffer any inconvenience, unless perhaps some regret for their want of liberty, and that they are prevented from the power of speaking or doing mischief.”<sup>170</sup> But while for Hilles this pattern of clemency was evidence of Queen Elizabeth’s “most serene” and merciful nature, for some Protestants, as we have seen, this was nothing less than a betrayal of justice.

<sup>167</sup> Quoted in Michael E. Moody, “Settle, Thomas (1555–1622),” *ODNB*.

<sup>168</sup> William Cecil, *The Execution of Justice in England for maintenaunce of publique and Christian peace, against certeine stirrers of sedition, and adherents to the traytors and enemies of the realme, without any persecution of them for questions of religion, as is falsely reported and published by the fautors and fosterers of their treasons* (1583, STC 4902), sig. B2r.

<sup>169</sup> Cecil, *Execution of Justice*, sig. B1v.

<sup>170</sup> Richard Hilles to Henry Bullinger, 8 March 1571, *Zurich Letters, Second Series*, 181–182.

Historians of late Elizabethan and early Stuart religion have often shown the ways in which the rhetoric of antipopery was rooted in Protestants fears of foreign and domestic Catholic threats to the Elizabethan state and church. As Peter Lake, Michael Questier, Anthony Milton, and others have shown, antipapal sentiments were at the core of protestant identity: English protestants of every ilk agreed that a willingness to combat Antichristian Rome was a sure characteristic of the truly elect.<sup>171</sup> Lake, in particular, has argued that this ideology was central to the collective consciousness of Elizabethan Protestantism. Through the deployment of antipapal polemic the “moderate puritan” could simultaneously signify solidarity to both precisian and conformist wings of the church.<sup>172</sup>

While I do not want to dispute that anti-Catholicism was an essential, and usually consensual, aspect of the English protestant world-view, I do want to suggest that post-Marian disagreements over the boundaries of anti-Catholic policy were central to early puritan disenchantment with the Elizabethan establishment. While the government viewed the imprisonment of the deprived clergy as a matter of national security and political utility (or, in Archbishop Parker’s case, of fraternal correction and rehabilitation), some members of the godly community had long expected, and occasionally even demanded, the execution of the perpetrators of the Marian persecution as a matter of retributive justice. In this sense, the complicated and often fraught relationship between the Elizabethan establishment and Elizabethan puritanism was defined not only by disagreements over the settlement of religious policy, but also the settling of religious scores.

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<sup>171</sup> Peter Lake, “Anti-popery: the Structure of a Prejudice,” in *Conflict in Early Stuart England: Studies in Religion and Politics, 1603-1642*, eds. Richard Cust and Ann Hughes (London: Longman, 1989), 72-106; Questier, “Practical antipapistry during the reign of Elizabeth I”; Anthony Milton, *Catholic and Reformed: The Roman and Protestant Churches in English Protestant Thought, 1600-1640* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 31-127; Carol Z. Wiener, “The Beleaguered Isle. A Study of Elizabethan and Early Jacobean Anti-Catholicism,” *Past & Present* 51 (1971): 27-62.

<sup>172</sup> Peter Lake, *Moderate Puritans and the Elizabethan Church* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 55-76.

## Chapter 7

### The Logic of Anti-Puritanism: Marian Sedition, the Elizabethan Settlement, and Late Tudor Conformity

By May 1591 the puritan scholar Thomas Cartwright had been imprisoned in the Fleet for more than six months.<sup>1</sup> His high-profile arrest had been the culmination of the Elizabethan government's attempt, spearheaded by Archbishop John Whitgift and his chaplain, Richard Bancroft, to forever neutralize the puritan leadership in the aftermath of the Martin Marprelate controversy. The stakes were high: only a few months before the pamphleteer John Udall had been sentenced to death for seditious writing, and the Court of High Commission had begun proceedings against nine of the most prominent puritan ministers.<sup>2</sup> When Cartwright finally faced the commission he was accused of breaking both "the peace of the land" by having participated in "unlawful meetings and making of laws," and the "the justice of the land" by refusing to take the oath *ex officio*.<sup>3</sup> To the commissioners' frustration, however, Cartwright's defense was unflappable, as he deftly evaded their questions while steadfastly refusing to take the oath.

But as the examination dragged on, Richard Bancroft decided he had heard enough. He, for one, would not be fooled by Cartwright's subterfuge: "Mr. Cartwright, think you thus to go away in the clouds, or to have to deal with men of no small judgment, as not to see what is your drift? Do not we know from whom you draw your discipline and Church-government? Do not we know their judgments and their practice?"<sup>4</sup> The truth of the matter, Bancroft claimed, was that Cartwright and his companions wished no less than "to bring in the further reformation against the Prince's will by force and arms." Bancroft even had proof of the plot: the book *How Superior Powers Ought to Be Obeyed*, written by Christopher Goodman more than three decades before.<sup>5</sup> "It is well known," explained Bancroft, "how one of the English Church at Geneva wrote a book to move to take arms against Queen Mary, and Mr Whittingham's preface before, and who knoweth not that the Church of Geneva allowed it." Furthermore, these had not just been idle arguments, but had been implemented in both John Knox's Scotland and John Calvin's Geneva. "Likewise it is written in the Scottish story," Bancroft continued, "how Mr Knox moved the nobility of Scotland to bring in the gospel with force against the Queen there, and likewise well known that Mr Calvin was

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<sup>1</sup> On the circumstances of Cartwright's arrest, see: Pearson, *Thomas Cartwright and Elizabethan Puritanism*, 315-321.

<sup>2</sup> Patrick Collinson, *Richard Bancroft and Elizabethan Anti-Puritanism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 104-7; on Bancroft and the functions of the Court of High Commission, see: Stuart Babbage, *Puritanism and Richard Bancroft* (London: William Clowes and Sons, 1962), 259-293.

<sup>3</sup> BL Lansdowne MS 63, fol. 114r-6r; On the government's use of *ex officio* oaths, see: Ethan Shagan, "The English Inquisition: Constitutional Conflict and Ecclesiastical Law in the 1590s," *The Historical Journal*, 47 (2004), 541-565.

<sup>4</sup> BL Lansdowne MS 63, fol. 116r.

<sup>5</sup> Goodman, *How superior powers ought to be obeyd*; Bancroft's personal copy of the book has survived in Lambeth Palace Library: LPL ZZ.1558.1.03.

banished [from] Geneva, for that he would have brought in the discipline against the will of the magistrate.”<sup>6</sup>

Cartwright replied that he had not intended to be dismissive, but he questioned the point of providing an oath at all, especially since Bancroft and the other commissioners could simply resort to claims “that they know our drift well enough.”<sup>7</sup> Not surprisingly, Cartwright was reluctant to respond directly to the association with resistance theory. As far as he had ever “read or knew,” he claimed, Reformed churches “never had either that judgment or practice.” While he admitted that he had read the “Scottish story,” he stated that he could not remember anything to which Bancroft could be referring. As to Goodman’s book, Cartwright made no direct acknowledgment of it, but instead protested that not everything that had been written in Geneva reflected the teachings of the Genevan church: “If some particular persons had written from Geneva some such thing as he spake of: yet that it was a hard judgment to charge the Church of Geneva with it, which by an Epistle set forth by Mr Beza a principal minister thereof had utterly disclaimed that judgment.”<sup>8</sup> As the examination ended, Bancroft hastened to remind everyone that the Queen was personally familiar with the details of the case, and had even read Cartwright’s answers. Bancroft’s point was clear- the charges against Cartwright had been made with full royal support.

Looking at this episode now, it is difficult to fathom that Bancroft could have believed his own words. How could he so boldly brandish the memory of Goodman’s resistance theory, now 35 years old, as though he had discovered a smoking gun? Such lines of attack are also difficult to reconcile with modern historical assessments of Elizabethan puritanism. The late Patrick Collinson, for example, deemphasized puritanism’s radical and subversive aspects, while highlighting the numerous connections between puritans and some of the chief figures of Elizabethan government, church, and court.<sup>9</sup> His view of puritanism as an amorphous movement, existing simultaneously inside and outside of the establishment, has also shaped how we view puritanism’s opponents: since puritanism had no teeth, there was no reason to be afraid of its bite. As one scholar has noted, “there was less grimness and danger in late-Elizabethan ‘puritanism’ than the late-Elizabethan authorities believed.” The anti-puritanism of Bancroft, therefore, was the result of “the paranoia of profound insecurity” that had come to typify late Tudor government.<sup>10</sup> Similarly, in Collinson’s final work, *Richard Bancroft and Elizabethan Anti-Puritanism*, he argued that the fears of Bancroft, Richard Cosin, and other conformist polemicists were largely unfounded. In his assessment, Bancroft

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<sup>6</sup> “The Scottish story” certainly refers to: John Knox, *The History of the Reformation of Religion within the Realm of Scotland* (1587, STC: 15071).

<sup>7</sup> BL Lansdowne MS 63, fol. 116v.

<sup>8</sup> BL Lansdowne MS 63, fol. 116v.

<sup>9</sup> Patrick Collinson, *The Elizabethan Puritan Movement*; Collinson, “Ecclesiastical vitriol: religious satire in the 1590s and the invention of puritanism,” in *The Reign of Elizabeth I: Court and Culture in the Last Decade*, ed. John Guy (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 150-170.

<sup>10</sup> Jenny Wormald, “Ecclesiastical vitriol: the kirk, the puritans, and the future king of England,” in *The Reign of Elizabeth I: Court and Culture in the Last Decade*, ed. John Guy (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 191.

was a paranoid Ahab, irrationally hell-bent on hunting down the white whale of puritanism.<sup>11</sup> While anti-popery “was not lacking in justification,” anti-puritanism was little more than a polemical mountain made from a molehill, the unfortunate result of an anti-Genevan “grand conspiracy” that Bancroft “never sought to explain.”<sup>12</sup>

While this chapter is also concerned with understanding the nature of anti-puritanism, it takes a different approach. In order to understand the framework through which late Elizabethan conformists understood the threat of puritanism, I argue, it is necessary to sidestep the question of anti-puritanism’s veracity. Simply put, this chapter does not ask whether or not Bancroft’s conspiracy theory was an accurate representation of reality; rather, it seeks to explain how and why Bancroft and other conformist authors came to believe that it was. While being careful not to accept the arguments of anti-puritanism at face value, this chapter attempts to follow Peter Lake’s prescription that “we should be integrating into our story the ways in which, and the purposes for which, the category at hand was variously constructed and applied by contemporaries.”<sup>13</sup>

This chapter, therefore, is an intellectual genealogy of late Elizabethan anti-puritanism. In particular, it examines how the long history of Marian conformity influenced the staunch conformist and anti-puritan arguments that were central to late Elizabethan and Stuart religious orthodoxy. In contrast to the view that anti-puritanism was largely a self-fabricated and paranoid misinterpretation of puritan political objectives, I show how it was crafted, in part, from the memory of the very real and very different approaches to the dilemma of political-theological obedience that had fractured the Protestant community during the Marian persecution. Furthermore, once we recognize that many of the spiritual and organizational leaders of late Elizabethan puritanism were still associated with a history of strict anti-Nicodemism and resistance theory, while some had even invoked the memory of the Queen’s Marian conformity, then it becomes clear how conformist authors such as Archbishop Matthew Parker, Whitgift, and Bancroft came to view puritanism as a serious political threat. At the heart of Bancroft’s anti-puritanism, in particular, was a recognition that the severe anti-Nicodemism that had been so central to Marian Protestant thought (and most obviously associated with the Genevan exiles) was predicated on the belief that the dictates of the civil authority could be justly ignored or resisted if they were perceived to be in violation of God’s word. As the historian Carlos Eire has observed, severe anti-Nicodemism could often be seen as “prelude to sedition,” since its inherent logic could be used to justify arguments for political resistance.<sup>14</sup> Following this line of thought, this chapter not only attempts to recover some of the logic of anti-puritanism, but it also allows us to understand the subtle yet central ways that the Marian problem of obedience continued to shape the nature of Elizabethan religious and political debate.

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<sup>11</sup> Collinson, *Richard Bancroft and Elizabethan Anti-Puritanism*, 7.

<sup>12</sup> Collinson, *Richard Bancroft and Elizabethan Anti-Puritanism*, 11.

<sup>13</sup> Peter Lake, “Anti-Puritanism: The Structure of a Prejudice,” in *Religious Politics in Post-Reformation England: Essays in Honour of Nicholas Tyacke*, eds. Kenneth Fincham and Peter Lake (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2006), 88.

<sup>14</sup> Eire, “Prelude to sedition?,” 120-45.



## I.

In March 1559 Matthew Parker was still reluctant to accept the Archbishopric of Canterbury. He did, however, feel obligated to offer Sir Nicholas Bacon a warning about the precarious state of religion in England. In particular, he feared the continuing influence of Marian resistance theory. “At my last being in London,” Parker reported, “I heard and saw books printed, which be spread abroad, whose authors be ministers of good estimation: the doctrine of the one is to prove, that a lady woman cannot be, by God’s word, a governor in a Christian realm. And in another book going abroad, is matter set out to prove, that is it lawful for every private subject to kill his sovereign, *ferro, veneno, quocumque modo*, if he think him to be a tyrant in his conscience, yea, and worthy to have a reward for his attempt: *exhorruui cum ista legerem*.”<sup>15</sup> John Knox, Christopher Goodman, and other authors had, in effect, dissolved requirements of obedience to the civil authority, and thereby allowed for individual subjects to arbitrarily judge their monarch to be a tyrant. “If such principles be spread into men’s heads,” Parker fretted, “as now they be framed and referred to the judgment of the subject, of the tenant, and of the servant, to discuss what is tyranny, and to discern whether his prince, his landlord, his master, is a tyrant, by his own fancy and collection supposed, what lord of the council shall ride quietly minded in the streets among desperate beasts? What master shall be sure in his bedchamber?”<sup>16</sup>

As Andrew Pettegree has shown, the resistance writings of the Marian exiles also complicated the relationship between the new Queen’s government and some of the leading figures of international Calvinism. Soon after Elizabeth’s coronation on 15 January 1559, John Calvin famously sent her a new edition of his commentary on Isaiah, complete with a prefatory letter in dedication.<sup>17</sup> He also sent a letter to William Cecil, dated 29 January, in which he encouraged him to pursue the path of reform. The gift and the letter, however, went unacknowledged. Feeling snubbed, Calvin wrote an exasperated follow-up letter to Cecil, in which he attempted to distance himself from the works of Goodman and Knox.<sup>18</sup> “I am exceedingly and undeservedly grieved,” Calvin protested, “in proportion to my surprise, that the ravings of others, as if on a studied pre-text, should be charged upon me, to prevent my book from being accepted.”<sup>19</sup> However, this was not the whole story, as Calvin had already, in fact, given Cecil and the Queen another reason to be upset with him: for when we closely examine Calvin’s initial letter to Cecil, it shows that the Genevan reformer had rather bluntly broached the subject of Cecil’s (and, by implication, Elizabeth’s) Marian Nicodemism. Although in this first letter Calvin had credited the Queen and Cecil for beginning the process of excluding “those Popish superstitions which for four years have prevailed throughout your country,” he had also

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<sup>15</sup> Dr. Matthew Parker to Sir Nicholas Bacon, 1 March 1559, *Correspondence of Parker*, 60-1.

<sup>16</sup> Dr. Matthew Parker to Sir Nicholas Bacon, 1 March 1559, *Correspondence of Parker*, 61.

<sup>17</sup> Wulfert de Greef, *The Writings of John Calvin: An Introductory Guide*, trans. Lyle Bierma (Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press, 2008), 86.

<sup>18</sup> Pettegree, *Marian Protestantism*, 143-4.

<sup>19</sup> John Calvin to Sir William Cecil, after 29 January 1559, printed in *The Zurich Letters, Second Series*, 36.

insisted that Cecil could no longer “shrink from any kind of labour” in defending God’s cause. Calvin then contrasted the deaths of the Marian martyrs with Cecil’s own actions during the persecution: “As long, indeed, as the slaughter-house was open for butchering the sons of God, even yourself, among others, was struck dumb.”<sup>20</sup> It was because of this shameful inaction in the previous reign, Calvin explains, that Cecil must now work to redeem himself. “Now, at least,” Calvin urges, “when by the fresh and incredible goodness of God, greater liberty is restored, it becomes you to take courage, and to compensate your timidity, if you may have hitherto manifested any, by the ardour of your zeal.”<sup>21</sup> The subtext here, of course, was that Elizabeth herself had also conformed. It seems likely, therefore, that when Calvin later protested his innocence by claiming that he did not know why Cecil and the Queen had so coldly ignored him, he was simply playing coy.

This point of contention is consistent with a later assessment by Calvin’s protégé, Theodore Beza. Writing to Heinrich Bullinger, Beza explained the source of Elizabeth’s disdain for Genevan reformers: “The reason of her dislike is two-fold: one, because we are accounted too severe and precise, which is very displeasing to those who fear reproof; the other is, because formerly, though without our knowledge, during the life-time of Queen Mary two books were published here in the English language, one by master Knox against the government of women, the other by master Goodman on the rights of the magistrate. As soon as we learned the contents of each, we were much displeased, and their sale was forbidden in consequence: but she notwithstanding cherishes the opinion she has taken into her head.”<sup>22</sup> The first part of Beza’s explanation- that “we are accounted too severe and precise, which is very displeasing to those who fear reproof” (*“quod nimium severi et rigidi habeamur, quod iis maxime displicet qui reprehendi metuunt”*)- has long been interpreted by scholars as a vague reference to the Queen’s conservative approach to Protestant theology.<sup>23</sup> However, it is more likely a veiled reference to her unrepented history of Marian Nicodemism, as the language parrots the phrasing stereotypically used by Nicodemites in self-defense against Reformed critics.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> John Calvin to Sir William Cecil, 29 January 1559, printed in *Gleanings of a few scattered ears during the period of the Reformation in England*, 408;

“Quamdiu mactandis Dei filiis aperta fuit carnificina, ipse quoque obmutueras cum aliis”: “Letter No. 3003, Calvinus Cicellio,” *Ioannis Calvinii Opera quae supersunt omnia*, Vol. 17, ed. Johann Wilhelm Baum (Brunsvigae: C.A. Schwetschke, 1877), col. 419; The most commonly cited English translation of this letter misleadingly softens much of the admonitory tone in the original: *Letters of John Calvin, Vol. 4*, ed. Jules Bonnet (Edinburgh: T. Constable, 1858), 16.

<sup>21</sup> Calvin to Cecil, 29 January 1559, *Gleanings*, 408.

<sup>22</sup> Theodore Beza to Henry Bullinger, 3 September 1566, *Zurich Letters, Second Series*, 131.

<sup>23</sup> See, for example: Peter White, *Predestination, Policy and Polemic: Conflict and Consensus in the English Church from the Reformation to the Civil War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 69.

<sup>24</sup> “Causa hujus odii duplex est, una quod nimium severi et rigidi habeamur, quod iis maxime displicet qui reprehendi metuunt, altera, quod olim, inscientibus tamen nobis, vivente adhuc Maria, editi sint duo libelli anglicano sermone, unus adversus foeminarum

One of Calvin's most famous anti-Nicodemite tracts, for instance, was *Excuse de Jehan Calvin, à Messieurs les Nicodémistes, sur la complaincte qu'ilz font de sa trop grand' rigueur*.<sup>25</sup>

However, this may not have been Calvin's only misstep. When he later attempted to qualify his relationship with Knox, he acknowledged his belief that female rulers were a signifier of postlapsarian punishment, "a deviation from the original and proper order of nature." And yet, he noted, "that there were occasionally women so endowed, that the singular good qualities which shone forth in them, made it evident that they were raised up by divine authority."<sup>26</sup> Calvin had come to conclude, therefore "that since both by custom and public consent and long practice it has been established, that realms and principalities may descend to females by hereditary right, it did not appear to me necessary to move the question, not only because the thing would be invidious, but because in my opinion it would not be lawful to unsettle governments which are ordained by the peculiar providence of God."<sup>27</sup> At first glance, Calvin appears here to be in full support of Elizabeth's right to rule. However, it is telling that in Calvin's appraisal the Queen's legitimacy rested primarily on the "peculiar providence of God." As we shall see, some viewed this line of argument as an affront to Elizabeth's legal authority, especially since, at the same time, her recent history of Marian Nicodemism (and therefore, by extension, her godly status) was being called into question.

In the British Library, for example, survives a copy of a letter written by John Knox to Queen Elizabeth in April 1559. Interestingly, this particular manuscript copy was heavily annotated by an anonymous reader, who provided a line-by-line refutation of Knox's arguments. While the identity of the annotator is still unclear, the content of the annotations suggests that they were likely written by a Privy Councillor or someone else close to the situation, and were probably made soon after the letter was received in the spring of 1559.<sup>28</sup> Yet for all of its unanswered questions, this letter and its marginalia

imperium a D. Cnoxo, alter de jure Magistratus a D. Gudmanno scriptus":

*Correspondance de Théodore de Bèze, Tome VII 1566*, ed. A. Dufour (Geneva: Librairie Droz, 1973), 24.

<sup>25</sup> John Calvin, "Excuse de Jehan Calvin, à Messieurs les Nicodémistes, sur la complaincte qu'ilz font de sa trop grand' rigueur," in *Three French Treatises*, 131-53.

<sup>26</sup> John Calvin to Sir William Cecil, after 29 January 1559, printed in *The Zurich Letters, Second Series*, 35.

<sup>27</sup> John Calvin to Sir William Cecil, after 29 January 1559, printed in *The Zurich Letters, Second Series*, 35.

<sup>28</sup> BL Additional MS 32091, fols. 167r-169v; The primary line-by-line annotations of the letter are in a single hand, on 167r-168v. This is followed by a declaration of obedience to the Queen on fol. 169r. At least one scholar has attributed these annotations directly to Queen Elizabeth herself: McLaren, *Political Culture in the Reign of Elizabeth I*, 12. However, the content and circumstances of the annotations suggest that this attribution is incorrect. After the letter there also appears a second hand, which provides a brief summary of both Knox's letter and the first annotator's objections, and was likely written several years later. This second hand has been attributed to Thomas Norton: John Guy, "Elizabeth I: The Queen and Politics," in *The Shakespearean International Yearbook*, 2: *Where are we now in Shakespearean Studies?* eds. W.R. Elton and John M. Mucciolo

provide a rare and candid insight into the ways in which Knox and the Genevan exiles were perceived to be a political danger. It also suggests that, from the beginning of Elizabeth's reign, the anti-Genevan position was not simply a symptom of anti-puritan paranoia or the Queen's personal dislike of Knox's misogyny. It was, rather, the result of a real and profound dispute over the political-theological foundations of the English state and church.

Although scholars have often claimed that Knox attempted to disavow his *First Blast* once Elizabeth came to the throne, the letter shows that he did nothing of the sort. Knox begins by claiming that "your grace's displeasure against me" had been "unjustly conceived." In fact, Knox claims, Elizabeth should not have received the *First Blast* negatively: "For in God's presence my conscience beareth me record that, maliciously nor of purpose, I never offended your grace nor your realm." To this, however, the anonymous annotator sharply replies, "I think so, for you rashly wrote it in another prince's reign. Yet is there shrewd suspicion of ill meaning, or at least of vain pertinacity in persisting in it, and in your frivolous defense worse than the first offense."<sup>29</sup> Knox then boldly argued that his chief arguments in the *First Blast* were still sound. "I cannot deny the writing of a book against the usurped authority and regiment of women," Knox writes, "Neither yet am I minded to retract any principal point or proposition of the same, till truth and verity do further appear." For the annotator this showed that Knox was still actively defending his faults: "If the very scope and pretense of your book be a principal point, your not minding yet to retract showeth that ye are not well minded, nor intend to confess truth till it appear further to the world and break out more openly upon you."

Knox continues, "But why that either, your grace, either any such as unfainedly favor the Liberty of England, should be offended at the author of such a work, I perceive no such occasion." To this, the annotator responds: "Her grace is chiefly to mislike for offending her just right whereby all her subjects obey her, who are not otherwise informed of any her extraordinary calling without title. The liberty of England is offended in destroying the certainty of succession, and hazarding England's whole quiet upon uncertainty of God's extraordinary exalting, without ordinary due title of descent and law." By insisting that Elizabeth's accession had been justified only as an "extraordinary miracle," the annotator explained, Knox does "hurt our settled quiet, the ground of our Liberty, and endanger her person and her crown." By emphasizing that Elizabeth's legitimacy was based only on a divine exception, Knox had opened the door for sedition: anyone who disagreed with this exception, or who viewed Elizabeth as ungodly for any reason, could thereby dispute her right to rule.

Defending himself further, Knox reasserted "that nothing in my book contained is or can be prejudicial to your grace's just regiment, provided that you be not found ungrate unto God. Ungrate you shall be proved in presence of his throne, howsoever that flatterers justify your fact, if you, transfer glory of that honor in which you stand to any thing other than to the Dispensation of his mercy which only maketh that lawful to your grace, which Nature and Law denieth to all women."<sup>30</sup> To this claim, the annotator

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(Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002), 193; I would like to thank Jane Dawson for sharing her helpful thoughts on this manuscript.

<sup>29</sup> BL Additional MS 32091, fol. 167r.

<sup>30</sup> BL Additional MS 32091, fol. 167v.

furiously scribbled “Evil purgation, false, lewd, dangerous, and mischiefs thereof infinite! Is this to purge or to excuse? It is to put a firebrand to the state.” The annotator explains that Knox’s argument was essentially that Elizabeth was legitimate “provided that she sin not.” This was a dangerous caveat, and “a very large condition to the right of the crown.” Furthermore, it allowed for Knox or any other minister to arbitrarily decide which sins were grounds to dismiss royal legitimacy. “And why is her right to the crown more tied to the sin that you express than to all other?” the annotator asks, “For every is ungratefulness to God, and so our Queen upon every sin to forfeit her crown.” Yet while Knox began his letter with a defense, he ended it with an admonition, as he reminded Elizabeth that by having conformed to Roman Catholicism during Mary’s reign she was guilty of the sin of idolatry. “Forget your birth and all title which thereupon doth hang,” Knox writes, “and consider deeply how for fear of your life you did decline from God and bow to idolatry. Let it not appear a small offense in your eyes that you have declined from Christ Jesus on the day of the battle.” Elizabeth should recognize, Knox continues, “that God hath covered your former offense, hath preserved you when you were most unthankful, and in the end hath exalted and raised you up.”<sup>31</sup>

It is not difficult, therefore, to see how Knox’s position could be viewed as a political and religious threat: by insisting that Elizabeth was legitimate only by means of a divine exception (which could be swiftly revoked if she sinned, or if someone believed her to have sinned), and then proceeding to admonish for her recent idolatry, Knox had delineated both a theoretical motive and justification for her overthrow. At the end of the manuscript an annotator wrote a declaration of loyalty to the Queen, avowing that Elizabeth’s right to rule was legally unassailable: “Queen Elizabeth is and ought to be our Queen by concurrence of all just titles, & by the grace and blessing of God, by lawful birth and due descent, by the common laws of England, by the limitations and acts of Parliament, and by just recognition and consent of her whole realm and subjects. And none of these grounds of her right are to be taken from her or weakened.”<sup>32</sup> The annotator also promises that any threats to her legitimacy will be defended at all costs. “If any deny this, either in respect of any doubt of any of the premises, or of any opinion against the ability of women (to whom the crown descendeth) to be kings, or of any conceit that the politic or civil governance of the church, that is, of Christian Kingdoms and common weals, is to be reduced to the Presbyterion and form of policy of the primitive Church: that is to be revoked or repressed, or duty is not done.”<sup>33</sup> These annotations suggest that, from the very beginning of Elizabeth’s reign, the Genevan exiles were associated with a subversive mode of political theology, a willingness to admonish the Queen as an idolater, and a desire to transform the Elizabethan church along presbyterian lines.

## II.

The precarious relationship between the new government and the godly community was also complicated by the actions of some of the returning exiles. One of Knox’s fellow elders of the Genevan exile church, William Fuller, recounted how he initially returned to England with the intention of exhorting Queen Elizabeth to make repentance for her idolatry during Mary’s reign. He claimed to have been so disappointed

<sup>31</sup> BL Additional MS 32091, fol. 168v.

<sup>32</sup> BL Additional MS 32091, fol. 169r.

<sup>33</sup> BL Additional MS 32091, fol. 169r.

with Elizabeth's Marian conformity that he had initially planned on staying in Geneva permanently. John Calvin, however, personally encouraged him to "go into my native country, & do what little good I could, seeing the extreme persecution was ceased. By whose godly persuasions, I at length (after long tarrying) settled myself to return into England."<sup>34</sup> Armed with a French Bible, a copy of the Genevan church order, and a New Testament, Fuller planned to "to move [the Queen] to repentance."

When Fuller did finally return to England in late February 1559, he paid a visit to the privy counsellor Sir Walter Mildmay. Not only was Mildmay an old friend, but, Fuller notes, he was also one "whom of long time I had known to be so well affected to true Religion, that I had made him privy to my purpose of going to Geneva, and provoked him also to go, that said he fain would, but could not."<sup>35</sup> When Sir Thomas Parry, another of Fuller's old friends and the controller of the Queen's household, learned through Mildmay that Fuller had returned, he sent for him. On his first visit Parry received Fuller warmly, insisting that he would arrange for Fuller to have an audience with the Queen: "[He] very kindly welcomed me, and after long talk of beyond sea matters, offered me great friendship for old good will and Hatfield acquaintance. And would needs therefore and for thanks (which he said he was sure he should have of your Majesty), determine to present me to your highness."<sup>36</sup> When Parry asked him if he had brought any gifts for the Queen, Fuller showed him the French Bible and the Genevan New Testament. Parry thought the Queen would be pleased, and he even recommended that Fuller prepare them for presentation by adding "fair clasps of silver and gilt" and adorning it with the royal monogram.<sup>37</sup>

However, when Fuller next met with Parry, sometime in late April, the mood had drastically changed. Parry explained that there was an ongoing manhunt for Christopher Goodman. They believed Goodman to be in London, but the summons of the Privy Council had gone unheeded. Since Fuller knew Goodman well, Parry urged him to pass along a message: he was told "to signify to the said Mr Goodman, from him, that it was not his best way, to withdraw himself, but to come before the counsell, & Christianly, either to justify or correct, those points in his book, which were thought unsound. And also to signify to him, that your Majesty's privie counsell, would promise him liberty, safely to come & go, & to say what he could therein, without peril."<sup>38</sup> Yet while Fuller was conferring with Parry on the issue, a prisoner happened to be brought into the room. Fuller knew the man: he was John Pulleyne, another former exile recently returned from Geneva. Pulleyne had been arrested after delivering a sermon in which he had apparently denounced those (like the Queen) who had conformed to the Marian church, while also maintaining some of the others points in Goodman's book.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> CP MS 284/8, fol. 16r.

<sup>35</sup> CP MS 284/4, fol. 16v.

<sup>36</sup> CP MS 284/4, fol. 16v; Fuller notes that Parry was bed-ridden "for a hurt in his leg, had at St. George's feast."

<sup>37</sup> CP MS 284/4, fol. 16v-17r.

<sup>38</sup> CP MS 284/8, fol. 17r.

<sup>39</sup> TNA PC 2/8, fol. 272r; CP MS 284/8, fol. 18r; Andrew Pettegree, "Pulleyne, John (c.1517–1565)," *ODNB*.

But when Fuller attempted to find Goodman and deliver the Privy Council's message, some in the godly community accused him of being a spy. Fuller later reported that he was "cried out on, & falsely accused, by some of the flock, to have so complained of the said Mr Knox, Mr Goodman, & Mr Pulleyne, that neither could Mr Knox have leave to pass through England into Scotland, nor yet, Mr Goodman, Mr Pulleyne, & other heads of the flock, be able to live here, but in great danger."<sup>40</sup> Horrified that that his friends could suspect him of turning against them, Fuller returned to Parry, and told him he had not been able to find Goodman. Fuller also decided to abandon his original mission of admonishing the Queen for her Marian apostasy. As he explained to Parry, the situation had become "so miserable & dangerous, that if he should present me to your Majesty, it was likely that their wrong judgments, & the common brute thereof, would be the more, & forever confirmed."<sup>41</sup> In this light, it becomes easier to understand the origins of this growing rift between the returning Genevan exiles and the Elizabethan government, and in particular why, in Fuller's self-pitying words, "we the poor English flock of Geneva, (termed Gehennians & precisians) were rather odious to your Majesty," and why she had "counted but as curious & precise, both John Calvin, (one of the most singular men of God that hath been since the Apostles' time), yea also & Geneva itself, that best reformed & most blessed church & city of God, that then was, or as it is, in all the world."<sup>42</sup>

Facing this charged atmosphere on their return home, some of the recent exiles immediately began to disassociate themselves from those who had embraced resistance theory. Lest there be any question where their loyalties lay, one group, led by the returning exiles John Plough, George Hovy, and John Opynshaw, even made a formal profession of faith to the new queen.<sup>43</sup> Largely overlooked, this profession has survived amongst the Parker Library manuscripts, and is likely related to (and may even be a copy of) John Plough's *An Apology for Protestants*, a mysterious book which scholars have long believed to be lost.<sup>44</sup> The authors describe it as a "confession of that our faith and

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<sup>40</sup> CP MS 284/8, fol. 17v-18r.

<sup>41</sup> CP MS 284/8, fol. 18r.

<sup>42</sup> CP MS 284/8, fol. 18v.

<sup>43</sup> "A declaration of doctrine offred and exhibited by the protestantes to the queene at the first coming over of them, signed by George Hovy, John Ploughe, John Opynshaw," CCCC MS 121, pp. 139-162; Little is known about these men, and they were not included in Christina Garrett's *Marian Exiles*. The most notable was John Plough, an Edwardian rector of St. Peter's, Nottingham, and a reputed controversialist. He was also a client of the Genevan exile John Boggens (a companion of the puritan scion John Bodley), and would receive preferment from Grindal shortly after his return from exile: "Johannes Ploughe (CCEd Record ID: 88277)" *The Clergy of the Church of England Database 1540–1835* <<http://www.theclergydatabase.org.uk>>, accessed 23 June 2013; Brett Usher, "Plough, John (d. 1562)," *ODNB*.

<sup>44</sup> On this missing book, see: Edward J. Baskerville, "A Chronological Bibliography of Propaganda and Polemic: Published in English Between 1553 and 1558 from the Death of Edward VI to the Death of Mary I," *Memoirs of the American Philosophical Society* vol. 136 (1979), 82; Peter Marshall, "The Naming of Protestant England," *Past & Present* 214 (2012): 95; Usher, "Plough, John (d. 1562)," *ODNB*.

doctrine,” which “we have thought it good and necessary to publish and set forth to the world.”<sup>45</sup> As advertised, it was a collective declaration of belief, summarizing the exiles’ positions on key points of doctrine, such as predestination, free will, and original sin. In what is clearly a rearguard attempt to distance themselves from the works of Goodman and Knox, the authors also devoted a significant portion of the text professing their obedience to civil authority.<sup>46</sup> They claimed that although they “have been reported to be sowers of sedition and teachers of disobedience against Magistrates: how untruly we have been charged.” Even “a tyrant or evil Magistrate,” they argued, was a power ordained by God, and therefore it was “not for any private person or persons to kill or by any means to procure the death of a tyrant or evil person being their ordinary Magistrate. All conspiracies, seditions, and rebellions of private men against their Magistrates, man or woman, good governor or evil, are unlawful and against the will and word of God.”<sup>47</sup>

Recently returned to London, the exile Anthony Ashe reported in April 1559 that Goodman and Knox had so angered the Queen that officials had launched a door-to-door search for their books.<sup>48</sup> It was also said that John Scory “had been ordered in the Queen’s name to draw up a list of all the scholars who have been or are still abroad and to present their names to the Council.” Furthermore, Ashe added, it was rumored that Scory’s list also had something to do with the works of Goodman and Knox.<sup>49</sup> It seems likely that this was used as a blacklist, disqualifying those with questionable Genevan ties from consideration for ecclesiastical appointments.<sup>50</sup> Yet while those associated with resistance theory were being excluded, the new government and church consisted largely of Protestants who had conformed during Mary’s reign. As Andrew Pettegree has shrewdly observed, “To a very large extent the Elizabethan settlement was a Nicodemite Reformation.”<sup>51</sup> The creation of this Nicodemite settlement can be glimpsed in a remarkable document that has survived amongst the State Papers: titled “Spiritual men without promotion at this present,” this manuscript is the earliest in a collection of memoranda that have been meticulously reconstructed by Brett Usher.<sup>52</sup> Compiled during the spring of 1559 by the Queen’s leading adviser, William Cecil, it is a list of 31 initial candidates for major ecclesiastical office.<sup>53</sup> Although it can be said with confidence that many of the men on this list were noted preachers during Edward’s reign, and most, as

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<sup>45</sup> CCCC MS 121, p. 143.

<sup>46</sup> This opens up the possibility that another lost work of Plough’s, the suggestively titled *Sound of the Doleful Trumpet*, may have also been written against the resistance theories of Goodman and Knox: Anthony à Wood, *Athenae Oxonienses, Volume 1* (London: Thomas Bennet, 1691), col. 96.

<sup>47</sup> CCCC MS 121, p. 157-8.

<sup>48</sup> Pettegree, *Marian Protestantism*, 145, 197-9.

<sup>49</sup> Anthony Ashe to the Consistory of the Reformed Church in Emden, 28 April 1559, printed in Pettegree, *Marian Protestantism*, 197-8.

<sup>50</sup> Usher, *William Cecil and Episcopacy*, 19.

<sup>51</sup> Pettegree, *Marian Protestantism*, 106.

<sup>52</sup> Usher, *William Cecil and Episcopacy*, 7-23.

<sup>53</sup> TNA SP 12/4/38.



Winthrop Hudson observed, had Cambridge ties, Cecil's criteria for consideration is still a matter of historical speculation.<sup>54</sup>

Yet some patterns emerge when we look at what these men were doing during Mary's reign. Of the twenty-four on the list whose activity can be accounted for, fourteen had remained in England. Of this number, at least seven had maintained an active position in the Marian church. The other twelve men on the list had spent at least part of Mary's reign on the continent: two of these, Scory and William Barlow, were known to have recanted before fleeing into exile, while eight others were associated with the faction, led by Richard Cox, which had openly denounced Knox for the seditious nature of his anti-Marian writings.<sup>55</sup> Significantly, the only two men from Cecil's list who were later disqualified were John Pedder and Miles Coverdale. Cecil likely knew Pedder from Cambridge, but while in exile he had sided with the Knoxians in the Frankfurt disputes.<sup>56</sup> Coverdale was also eventually ruled out, probably because the government had learned that he had been living in Knox's household while in exile, and had even become godfather to Knox's son Eleazar.<sup>57</sup> We can say with confidence, therefore, that more than half of Cecil's candidates had survived Mary's reign by either conforming outright or keeping their heads down, just as he and Elizabeth had done. While the rest had gone into exile, all were known to have maintained at least a modicum of obedience to the Marian state through their open disavowal of resistance theory, their conciliatory approach to recanters and Nicodemites, and their adherence to the Edwardian liturgy.

These were all the type of men who, though they were known as reliable Protestants during Edward's reign, would have been thought to have no qualms about serving a Queen who had only recently conformed to the Roman Catholic Church. In his recent biography of Cecil, Stephen Alford has posited that, rather than being a political disadvantage, Cecil's own history of Marian Nicodemism may have endeared him to Elizabeth: "Perhaps his loyalty to Mary stood in his favour. This sounds like a paradox, but of course people are rarely straightforward. Elizabeth had accepted the Mass after 1553, yet she was never trusted by Mary. Cecil too had gone to Mass, though in Mary's last illness the Count of Feria called him a heretic."<sup>58</sup> While we will likely never know the full motivations behind these early choices, it is certainly plausible that a history of conformity may have even been viewed as an asset. In the least, it was not a liability.

Early in Elizabeth's reign, for example, the cleric Richard Cheyney had worried that his strong ties to the Marian church would inhibit his religious career. He admitted to Parker, for instance, that he was afraid "that I only shall be a loser in these days," since he was one who "had more conference with the learned men of the contrary side in

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<sup>54</sup> Usher, *William Cecil and Episcopacy*, 23; Hudson, *The Cambridge Connection and the Elizabethan Settlement of 1559*, 108.

<sup>55</sup> My assessment of the Marian activity of the men on this list has been compiled from various sources, including: Usher, *William Cecil and Episcopacy*; Garrett, *Marian Exiles*; ODNB; CCEd; Thomas Wood (?), *A Brief Discourse of the Troubles at Frankfort, 1554-1558*.

<sup>56</sup> Pedder would go on to become, in Christina Garrett's assessment, "an intransigent puritan": Garrett, *Marian Exiles*, 246.

<sup>57</sup> Usher, *William Cecil and Episcopacy*, 50.

<sup>58</sup> Alford, *Burghley*, 86.

Queen Mary's time than many other had."<sup>59</sup> Yet his past proved to be no hindrance, and Parker later consecrated him Bishop of Gloucester.<sup>60</sup> Like many officers of the Elizabethan church, Cheyney never expressed shame or regret for his actions during Mary's reign. Rather, he seemed to defend his conformist past, and, much to the chagrin of the godly, he did it publicly. During a sermon at Bristol in 1568, for instance, he explicitly defended arguments for Nicodemism. Invoking the biblical example of Naaman the Syrian, Cheyney asked whether "a godly man may be at idol service with his body, his heart being with god without offense or sin?" He then responded affirmatively, stating: "I say you may without offense or sin. And because you shall not think that I am of this opinion only I will bring you Peter Martyr, a learned man, and as famous as ever was in our time, being their own doctor, who sayeth a man may be present without offence."<sup>61</sup> While some godly listeners may have had grounds to protest Cheyney's interpretation of Martyr, they could not claim that Cheyney was the first to make such arguments. We know, for example, that Marian Protestants must have regularly employed the example of Naaman when justifying conformity, simply because anti-Nicodemite authors routinely attacked them for doing so. As one 1554 text had warned, "As for Naaman the Assyrian, it is nothing for your wicked purpose, this his doing is neither praised, neither commanded to be followed, but rather dispraised, and disallowed, and his own conscience did accuse him." To use scripture in this way was to allow the Word of God to be "wrested for an evil and wicked purpose." Those who did cite Naaman in this fashion were dismissed as "mongrels in religion, which being double minded men, serve 2 masters: God and the devil, Christ and Antichrist."<sup>62</sup> Some amongst the godly community in Bristol apparently did not appreciate the fact that Cheyney was still openly defending his conformist past. They collected excerpts of his sermons to be used as evidence against him, and even invited the Reformed preacher James Calhhill to refute his arguments.<sup>63</sup>

III.

In 1568, the same year that Cheyney can be found defending old arguments for conformity, Christopher Goodman returned to England, and once again became active in the godly community in Chester. His reappearance did not go unnoticed. In April 1571 he was summoned before Archbishop Parker and several other bishops at Lambeth, and made to write a formal protestation of obedience to the Queen. In an addendum, Goodman was also compelled to note, "I do also conclude, that a woman may of God's appointment have and enjoy lawfully the government of a realm or nation, and so to be of all men obeyed and honored by the word of God."<sup>64</sup> In June, Goodman was once again brought in, as Parker informed Cecil that the commission was going to spend a week "in examination of Masters Goodman, Lever, Sampson, Walker, Whiborne, Gouff, and such

<sup>59</sup> CCCC MS 114, p. 105.

<sup>60</sup> Jane Reedy Ladley, "Cheyney, Richard (d. 1579)," *ODNB*.

<sup>61</sup> TNA SP MS 12/48, fol. 48v.

<sup>62</sup> Oxford Bodl., Bodley MS 53, fol. 40r.

<sup>63</sup> Caroline Litzenberger, "Richard Cheyney, Bishop of Gloucester: An Infidel in Religion?" *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 25, no. 3 (January 1994): 567.

<sup>64</sup> BL Cotton Vespasian C/XIV/2, fol. 243r; TNA SP 12/77, fol. 146r.

others.”<sup>65</sup> On July 25, Goodman would write to his sometime patron, Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, expressing his bewilderment as to why the present government was still preoccupied with his actions during Mary’s reign. “The cause is far sought,” Goodman complained, “the occasion strange, the law not constraining, to call matter in question of 15 years past, and done in another realm and concerning another regiment.”<sup>66</sup> Although he had already made a formal oath of obedience to Queen Elizabeth, and had made answer to “certain articles collected forth of my book,” he was still being hounded. “But what shall I say?” Goodman writes, “They have beaten me already with three rods, and yet not satisfied. They have deprived me of my living, they have stayed me from preaching, and retained me here as a prisoner until Michaelmas.” And yet, complained Goodman, he was still “slandered as an underminer of her Majesty’s estate, whom I reverence, love, and obey, as becometh a most true and faithful subject.” Goodman had also heard rumors that Leicester’s recent attempt to intercede on his behalf had been met with “not so good success,” and that, “for my sake, your Lord should grow in suspicion to be a maintainer of such as go about the undermining of the estate, as I am credibly informed.”<sup>67</sup>

A letter from Edmund Grindal to Parker, written a few weeks later, confirms that Goodman, and in particular his 1558 book, were still believed to be a threat. After addressing Parker’s concerns over the nonconformity of William Whittingham and Anthony Gilby, Grindal writes: “I would gladly see Mr Goodman’s book. I never saw it but once, beyond seas; and then I thought, when I read it, that his arguments were never concludent, but I always found more in the conclusion than in the premises.” However, Grindal admits, “These articles that your grace hath gathered out if it are very dangerous, and tend to sedition.”<sup>68</sup> And so on 22 October 1571, Goodman was summoned once again, this time to face a commission that included not only Parker and the Dean of Westminster, but also former exiles such as Grindal and Thomas Watts. At this meeting Goodman was compelled to formally retract specific arguments taken directly from *How Superior Powers Ought to Be Obeyed*. According to Goodman, “the extremity” of Mary’s reign, which had “brought forth alteration of religion, setting up of Idolatry, banishment of good men, murdering of saints, and violation of all promises made to the godly,” had driven him to “write many things therein which may be, and be offensively taken, and which also I do mislike, and would wish had not been written.”<sup>69</sup> One copy of the recantation form states that he had once maintained that “women ought not by the word of god govern whole realms & nations,” using this argument as justification for Queen Mary’s overthrow: “...Queen Mary being a traitor to god, and promise breaker to her dearest friends, who helping her to their power to her unlawful reign, were promised to enjoy that religion which was preached under king Edward: which notwithstanding in a

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<sup>65</sup> “Archbishop Parker to Lord Burghley, 4 June 1571,” *Correspondence of Matthew Parker*, 381-2.

<sup>66</sup> BL Additional MS 32091, fol. 246v.

<sup>67</sup> BL Additional MS 32091, fol. 246r.

<sup>68</sup> “Edmund Grindal to Archbishop Parker, 28 August 1571,” *Remains of Edmund Grindal*, 327; It is possible that these “articles that your grace hath gathered” may be the same found in BL Additional MS 29546, fols. 31r-v.

<sup>69</sup> BL Additional MS 29546, fol. 29r.

short space after, she most falsely overthrew & abolished. So that now both by god's Laws and man's she ought to be punished with death, as an open Idolatress in the sight of god, and a carnal murderer of his Saints before men and merciless traitors to her own native country." Furthermore, he had argued that the power to punish the sovereign was given to the people, for "when the magistrates and other officers cease to do their duties, they are as it were without offices, yea worse than if they had none at all, and then god giveth the sword into the people's hand, and he himself is become immediately their head (if they will seek the accomplishment of his laws) and hath promised to defend them and bless them."<sup>70</sup> Goodman now attempted to distance himself from his Marian arguments:

Neither did I ever mean to affirm that any person or persons of their own private authority, ought or might lawfully have punished Queen Marie with death. Nor that the people of their own authority may lawfully punish their magistrates transgressing the Lord's precept. Nor that ordinarily god is become head of the people, & giveth the sword into their hands, though they do seek the accomplishment of his Laws. Wherefore as many of these assertions as may be rightly collected out of my said book, then I do utterly renounce and revoke as none of mine: promising never to write, teach, nor preach any such offensive doctrine hereafter.

Significantly, Goodman was also made to acknowledge that Elizabeth's legitimacy was based not only on a divine exception, as his friend Knox had insisted, but was also legitimate by virtue of legal succession: "And I also protest that the Queen's Majesty is most lawful Queen and Governor, not only by God's providence, permission, dispensation, or appointment. But also by natural birth and due descent, as lawful daughter and heir to king Henry the eight her father, and so also by the Laws of the realm perfectly established, and that her issue being male or female, young or old, ought to be received, as by a just right, whereunto by god, and by the established policy of the realm we are all bound." Goodman was then released, but he would still be regarded with suspicion. This was partially his own doing, as he continued to involve himself in puritan controversies.

Archbishop Parker, in particular, continued to view all threats to the Elizabethan church through the lens of Marian resistance theory. Writing to Cecil in November 1573, he portended dark things to come: "The truth is, though we be quite driven out of regard, ye had need look well to yourself. The devil will rage, and his imps will rail and be furious. He can transform himself into *angelum lucis*."<sup>71</sup> In particular, Parker recalled how, fourteen years before, he had warned Nicholas Bacon that the books of Goodman and Knox had opened the door to popular resistance: "I saw before I first came to Lambeth, and so wrote my fancies to some one of the noble personages of this realm, my contemplation that I then did see and read, and now is practised, and will every day, I fear

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<sup>70</sup> BL Additional MS 29546, fol. 30r.

<sup>71</sup> Archbishop Parker to Lord Burghley, 3 November 1573, *Correspondence of Parker*, 445.

increase.”<sup>72</sup> His thoughts also returned, just as they had in 1559, to the writings of the classical satirist Lucian. “When Lucian in his declamation *Pro tyrannicida*, shall speak for his reward in destroying a tyrant, howsoever Erasmus and More play in their answering to it, and then consciences of men shall be persuaded (and that under the colour of God’s word) that this act is meritorious, what will come of it, think you?”<sup>73</sup>

For Parker, the potential danger of these arguments was further increased because they could also be used by Roman Catholics. Alluding to John Felton, the man who had been executed for treason after nailing a copy of *Regnans in Excelsis* (Pope Pius V’s bull of excommunication and deposition against Elizabeth) to the door of the Bishop of London’s palace, Parker notes, “I doubt not ye call to remembrance of a word once uttered by a Scottish gentlewomen (as I am informed), that though Fenton be dead, yet there be more Fentons remaining.”<sup>74</sup> Ten days later Parker would again write to Cecil, this time after receiving a report that the Protestant printer John Day and his wife had been randomly attacked by an apprentice named Asplyn. Parker was aghast: not only did he believe Asplyn to be a printer of Thomas Cartwright’s works, but he had learned that the attacker had defended his actions by claiming “The spirit moved him.” Once again, Parker blamed Goodman’s resistance theory: “I cannot yet learn that the book is new printed since Queen Mary’s days, but I have set this Harrison and other awork to search out more.”<sup>75</sup> For Parker, it seems, Goodman’s book would always be the urtext of puritanism.

IV.

While these opinions had, for the most part, gone unprinted by Protestant authors, they would finally be formalized in 1593, as Richard Bancroft produced his masterpiece of anti-puritanism: *Dangerous Positions and Proceedings, published and practised within this Land of Britain, under pretence of Reformation, and for the Presbiteriall Discipline*.<sup>76</sup> This text has long been interpreted as a brash and immodest work of mudslinging partisanship- the conservative counterpart of the Martin Marprelate tracts. This was partly Bancroft’s own doing, as he had made the conscious decision, according to John Whitgift, to have the puritans “answered after their own vein in writing.”<sup>77</sup> Yet for all the “vitriolic violence of this polemic,” it is still important to remember that Bancroft did not view his work in such simple terms.<sup>78</sup> For him it was, first and foremost,

<sup>72</sup> The letter Parker is referring to is Dr. Matthew Parker to Sir Nicholas Bacon, 1 March 1559, *Correspondence of Parker*, 57-63.

<sup>73</sup> On Desiderius Erasmus and Thomas More’s use of Lucian, see: Gerard Wegemer, *Young Thomas More and the Arts of Liberty* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 57-69.

<sup>74</sup> Archbishop Parker to Lord Burghley, 3 November 1573, *Correspondence of Parker*, 445.

<sup>75</sup> Archbishop Parker to Lord Burghley, 13 November 1573, *Correspondence of Parker*, 449.

<sup>76</sup> Richard Bancroft, *Dangerous Positions and Proceedings, published and practised within this Land of Britain, under pretence of Reformation, and for the Presbiteriall Discipline* (1593, STC 1344).

<sup>77</sup> CUL MS Mm. I. 47 (Baker 36), p. 334.

<sup>78</sup> Quotation in Collinson, *Richard Bancroft and Elizabethan Anti-Puritanism*, 12.

“an historical narration,” meticulously documented and substantiated by “manifold quotations” that he had collected directly from puritan texts.<sup>79</sup> While scholars have viewed Bancroft’s account of puritanism as the conspiratorial imaginings of a ruthless polemicist, the narrative I have sketched so far in this chapter suggests that the work can also be viewed as the apotheosis of a much longer history.

For the purposes of this chapter, it is important to recognize that Bancroft’s narrative of puritan sedition began during the reign of Queen Mary. This history played a central role in his interpretive framework, in no small part because he believed that many of the most prominent leaders of the Elizabethan puritan movement, including Christopher Goodman, William Whittingham, Anthony Gilby, and Thomas Wood, had been the chief proponents of strict anti-Nicodemism in the 1550s. During Queen Mary’s days, Bancroft explains, Goodman and his companions had urged English subjects to actively seek out civil persecution in the hopes of attaining martyrdom. Although by defying Queen Mary they would be “cast in prison with Joseph, to wild beasts with Daniel, into the seas with Jonas, into the dungeon with Jeremy, into the fiery furnace with Sidrach, Misach, & Abdenago,” Goodman had promised that this was all to the good. Bancroft, however, views this martyrological message as containing within it a dangerous political core. Although Goodman’s arguments on this score were typical of the stringent anti-Nicodemism that had come to typify Reformed thought, Bancroft still seized on its subversive implications. Worst still, Bancroft thought, was the way in which the Genevan authors had condemned those who had shied away from religious persecution. They had threatened religious conformists, claiming that by trying to “to save their lives, they shall lose them; they shall be cast of the favor of God, their consciences shall be wounded with hell-like torments, they shall despair & seek to hang themselves with Judas, to murder themselves with Francis Spira; drown themselves with Judge Hales, or else fall mad with Justice Morgan at Geneva.”<sup>80</sup> In Bancroft’s eyes, Marian anti-Nicodemism was simply resistance theory by other means, because it used the threat of hellfire to compel English subjects to disobey their rightful sovereign.

This dangerous anti-conformity, Bancroft notes, had not only been sanctioned by “Calvin and the rest of the Genevans,” but it had also been espoused in England by Goodman, William Whittingham, Anthony Gilby, and Miles Coverdale, amongst others. Bancroft viewed these men as religious pied pipers, playing the tune of Genevan anti-Nicodemism to lure English subjects away from true obedience. Bancroft thankfully reports, however, that this doctrine had been opposed by “the rest of the learned men, that fled in Queen Mary’s time,” including John Scory, William Barlow, Richard Cox, Thomas Becon, John Bale, John Parkhurst, Edmund Grindal, Edwin Sandys, Alexander Nowell, Robert Wisdom, and John Jewel.<sup>81</sup> Although these men had also gone into exile, they “utterly misliked & condemned the foresaid propositions, as very seditious & rebellious.” Most importantly, they had maintained their obedience to Queen Mary, even though she was Roman Catholic. Bancroft explains, “...notwithstanding their grief, that they were constrained to leave their country for their conscience: yet in the midst of all their afflictions, they retained such dutiful hearts unto Queen Mary, (imitating therein the

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<sup>79</sup> Bancroft, *Dangerous Positions*, sig. A2r.

<sup>80</sup> Bancroft, *Dangerous Positions*, sig. F3v.

<sup>81</sup> Bancroft, *Dangerous Positions*, sig. F4r.

Apostles and Disciples of their Master) as that they could not endure to hear her so traduced into all hatred and obloquy, as she was by the other sort.”<sup>82</sup>

Bancroft knew this history well, and had likely heard it first-hand, since he had begun his ecclesiastical career as a chaplain to Richard Cox, the Bishop of Ely.<sup>83</sup> This connection is important: during the Marian exile it was Cox who had famously led the faction opposed to John Knox. As Bancroft would later recount in the *Dangerous Positions*, in 1555 the Coxians had not only been offended by the Knoxians’ refusal to allow those who had recanted into the Frankfurt congregation, but they had also taken umbrage with Knox’s arguments for resistance against Queen Mary. In Bancroft’s estimation, therefore, the so-called “Troubles at Frankfort” had not really been about questions of liturgy, as the puritans (and, following them, historians ever since) had long claimed, but had actually been a dispute over the limits of Marian obedience.

Furthermore, Bancroft explains, the Genevan exiles’ arguments for uncompromising anti-Nicodemism and resistance theory would have been readily used to justify the overthrow of the Marian state, if only they would have had means to do so: “Whereby it is apparent, that if our said English Genevians, had found as ready assistance at that time in England, as Knox and his complices (about, or soon after the same time) did in Scotland, they would not have failed, to have put the said positions as well in practice here with us, as some Scottish ministers did in that country.”<sup>84</sup> In Bancroft’s account, therefore, Goodman, Knox, and their associates had wished to overthrow the Marian state and church, replacing them *tout court* with a Genevan style and form of church government. In this respect, Calvin’s Geneva was imagined to be a foreign usurper, virtually no different than Papal Rome. For Bancroft, therefore, “papism” was not defined by any theological content; rather, it was characterized by the belief that magistrates have “no ecclesiastical authority at all, but only as other Christians.”<sup>85</sup> In this sense puritans were guilty of papism whenever they made arguments that the church alone should have control over church government, or that “magistrates are to come under the censure of the church, and do penance.”<sup>86</sup> Following this line of logic, it not only sheds light on Bancroft’s belief that the puritans desired nothing less than the “erecting up in England of the Geneva new Papacy,” but it also becomes easier to see how and why Bancroft’s understanding of Queen Mary’s reign shaped his view of the Elizabethan puritan movement.<sup>87</sup>

Bancroft’s argument here is also consistent with an episode that was said to have been particularly influential on his religious outlook.<sup>88</sup> During a visit to Bury St Edmonds

<sup>82</sup> Bancroft, *Dangerous Positions*, sig. F4r-v.

<sup>83</sup> Collinson, *Richard Bancroft and Elizabethan Anti-Puritanism*, 30.

<sup>84</sup> Bancroft, *Dangerous Positions*, sig. F4v.

<sup>85</sup> Richard Bancroft, “The most principall and chiefe heresies in R: Brownes booke,” in *Tracts ascribed to Richard Bancroft: Edited from a Manuscript in the Library of St. John’s College, Cambridge*, ed. Albert Peel (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1953), 3.

<sup>86</sup> Bancroft, “The most principall and chiefe heresies in R: Brownes booke,” in *Tracts ascribed to Richard Bancroft*, 4.

<sup>87</sup> Bancroft, *Dangerous Positions*, sig. G1r.

<sup>88</sup> CUL MS Mm. I. 47 (Baker 36), pp. 333-335.

in 1582, Bancroft had been horrified to discover puritan graffiti that publicly cast Queen Elizabeth as one of the lukewarm believers of the Church of Laodicea. After it was painted over, the artist struck again, this time with a passage from scripture that condemned “the woman Jezebel.”<sup>89</sup> In 1555 it was Bancroft’s former mentor, Richard Cox, who had charged John Knox with sedition for comparing Queen Mary to Jezebel; now, during Elizabeth’s reign, Bancroft would also view the comparison of the Queen to Jezebel as a treasonous threat. As Bancroft would explain in *Dangerous Positions*, there was a puritan tendency to compare Elizabeth’s actions to those perpetrated by her Catholic sister. For example, in one chapter, titled “How they charge the present government with persecution,” Bancroft excerpted various puritan texts that had unfavorably compared Elizabeth and her episcopate to Mary and her Catholic persecutors. “Ministers are in worse sort suppressed now,” they had claimed, “than they were by the Papists in Queen Mary’s time.”<sup>90</sup> Taking them at their word, Bancroft believed that this opened the door for resistance theory to reappear. He writes, “Queen Mary was of nature & disposition, very mild and pitiful; and yet, because she suffered such cruelty & superstition to be practiced & maintained in her days, you have heard by the consistorian propositions (before mentioned) what was resolved by Goodman, Whittingham, Gilby, & the rest of the Genevians against her, concerning her deposition.”<sup>91</sup> Once this Marian history is remembered, Bancroft explains, it becomes clear how dangerous these men still were: “Considering that these our home-bred sycophants, men of the Geneva mould, as proud and presumptuous as any that ever lived, do charge the present state, under her Majesty, (as before it is noted) with such great impiety, corruption, idolatry, superstition, and barbarous persecution: which may touch her highness, as nearly (by their doctrine) for maintaining the present state, as Queen Mary was, for defending of Popery.”<sup>92</sup>

V.

This chapter has explored a particularly influential strain of anti-puritanism.<sup>93</sup> It has shown how, in the eyes of conformist divines such as Parker and Bancroft, the reign of Mary had been a testing ground of political obedience. By breaking the bonds of loyalty to their legal sovereign and justifying resistance to Queen Mary, the Genevan exiles and their associates had unwittingly guaranteed that their later involvement in puritan religious controversies would be regarded with suspicion and disdain: they had supplied their opponents with the tar with which they were later brushed. Although modern historians of puritanism, with a few notable exceptions, have tended to push controversial figures such as Goodman and Knox to the periphery of their analysis, this approach only renders the internal logic of anti-puritanism into an incomprehensible tangle of unfounded prejudices and tired polemical tropes. Hence the willingness to view Bancroft and other conformist polemicists as paranoid conspiracy theorists who were all

<sup>89</sup> On this episode, see: Shagan, *The Rule of Moderation*, 149.

<sup>90</sup> Bancroft, *Dangerous Positions*, sig. I1r.

<sup>91</sup> Bancroft, *Dangerous Positions*, sig. I4r-v.

<sup>92</sup> Bancroft, *Dangerous Positions*, sig. I4v.

<sup>93</sup> I want to emphasize that this was only one variation of anti-puritanism. For a different iteration of anti-puritanism, for example, see: Christopher Haigh, “The Character of an Antipuritan Author,” *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 35, no. 3 (2004): 671–688.



too ready to imagine puritan cutthroats hiding under every bishop's bed, and behind every monarch's throne.

Recovering the logic of anti-puritanism allows us to make a series of wider observations about the contours of Tudor and Stuart religious controversy. First of all, it shows that we cannot ignore the influence of the exile experience on the history of Elizabethan religious controversy, in no small part because Archbishop Parker, Bancroft, and other key proponents of orthodoxy believed that the Genevan exiles and their companions represented the vanguard of puritanism. Furthermore, this connection was not simply imagined, as many of the key movers and shakers in the Vestiarian Controversy of the 1560s and of the Admonition Controversy in the 1570s, had been heavily influenced by their time in Geneva during the reign of Mary. As Jane Dawson has recently argued, the escalation of the Elizabethan puritan movement can be in part attributed to the "sense of alienation" experienced by the returning Genevan exiles in the early years of Elizabeth's reign.<sup>94</sup>

Secondly, this history also helps explain why Roman Catholic polemicists were often so quick to invoke the specter of Marian resistance theory in their own descriptions of English Protestantism. It now appears that they may not have been aimlessly slinging mud, but were strategically exploiting a weakness in the facade of a unified Protestant front. This was a tactic that was employed in the earliest days of Elizabeth's reign: at the funeral of Queen Mary, for instance, Bishop John White of Winchester had warned that "the wolves be coming out of Geneva, and other places of Germany, and have sent their books before them, full of pestilent doctrines, blasphemy, and heresy, to infect the people."<sup>95</sup> In his ongoing dispute with John Jewel in the 1560s, the Catholic controversialist Thomas Harding claimed that Knox's arguments for resistance had been collectively devised "when ye laid your heads together, being at Geneva in Queen Mary's days."<sup>96</sup> This line of attack would only grow stronger in the 1580s. Contrasting the obedient nature of the Roman Catholic Church with the inherent seditiousness of Protestant belief, for example, the Jesuit Robert Parsons explicitly named Christopher Goodman and Anthony Gilby as the latest descendents in an intellectual genealogy of rebellion that had begun with Wycliffe and then continued through Luther and Calvin.<sup>97</sup>

Finally, this narrative is, in one sense, the pre-history of the anti-puritanism that would become central to late Tudor and Stuart religious politics. While I am neither attempting to resurrect anything approximating an Anglican-Puritan binary, nor disputing

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<sup>94</sup> Jane Dawson, "John Knox, Christopher Goodman, and the 'Example of Geneva'," in *The Reception of Continental Reformation in Britain*, eds. Patrick Collinson and Polly Ha (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 111.

<sup>95</sup> John Strype, *Ecclesiastical Memorials, relating chiefly to Religion and the Reformation of it, and the Emergencies of the Church of England, under King Henry VIII, King Edward VI, and Queen Mary I, Vol. III, Part II* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1822), 542.

<sup>96</sup> John Jewel, *A defence of the Apologie of the Church of Englande conteininge an answere to a certaine booke lately set foorth by M. Hardinge, and entituled, A confutation of &c.* (1567, STC 14600.5), 388.

<sup>97</sup> Robert Parsons, *A brief discours contayning certayne reasons why Catholiques refuse to goe to church* (1580, STC 19394), "The Epistle Dedicatory," sig. 8r.

the general validity of the doctrinal “Calvinist consensus,” this history does reveal a profound political-theological rift in the decades before “avant-garde” conformist divines such as Richard Hooker and Lancelot Andrewes began to give shape to a conscientiously anti-Calvinist style of English theology.<sup>98</sup> Furthermore, as Lori Anne Ferrell has shown, James I proved willing to employ “the Bancroftian line,” equating presbyterianism with nonconformity and a subversive political agenda.<sup>99</sup> When he uttered his famous maxim, “No bishop, no king,” at the Hampton Court Conference in 1604, it was specifically to illustrate the deleterious effects that John Knox had once had on the powers of the Scottish monarchy. James explained, “After that the Religion restored by King Edward the sixth was soon overthrown by the succession of Queen Mary, here in England, we in Scotland felt the effect of it.”<sup>100</sup> After his mother, Mary Stuart, had acquiesced to Knox’s demands to repress the bishops, then Knox “himself, and his adherents were brought in, and well settled, and by these means, made strong enough, to undertake the matters of Reformation themselves.” Yet because Mary had been hectored into giving a religious inch, Knox and his companions proceeded to take a political mile. “Then, lo,” James continued, “they began to make small account of her Supremacy, nor would longer rest upon her authority, but took the cause into their own hand, & according to that more light, wherewith they were illuminated, made a further reformation of Religion. How they used that poor Lady my mother, is not unknown, and with grief I may remember it.”<sup>101</sup> James’ determination was drawn from a deeply personal history, yet this was a narrative that was largely congruent with an older history of anti-puritanism, one that—though forged in the Marian crisis of obedience—would continue to hold sway into the late seventeenth century.<sup>102</sup>

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<sup>98</sup> Nicholas Tyacke, *Anti-Calvinists: The Rise of English Arminianism, c. 1590-1640* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987); Peter Lake, *Anglicans and Puritans? Presbyterianism and English conformist thought from Whitgift to Hooker* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1988); Peter Lake, “The Anglican Moment? Richard Hooker and the ideological watershed of the 1590s,” in *Anglicanism and the Western Christian Tradition*, ed. Stephen Platten (Norwich: Canterbury Press, 2003); Peter Lake, “Lancelot Andrewes, John Buckeridge, and *Avante-Garde* Conformity at the Jacobean Court,” in *The Mental World of the Jacobean Court*, ed. Linda Levy Peck (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991).

<sup>99</sup> Lori Anne Ferrell, *Government by Polemic: James I, the King's Preachers, and the Rhetorics of Conformity, 1603-1625* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998), 48.

<sup>100</sup> William Barlow, *The summe and substance of the conference which, it pleased his excellent Maiestie to haue with the lords, bishops, and other of his clergie, (at vvhich the most of the lordes of the councill were present) in his Maiesties priuy-chamber, at Hampton Court. Ianuary 14. 1603* (London, 1604, STC 1456.5), 80.

<sup>101</sup> Barlow, *The summe and substance of the conference*, 81; For Knox’s complicated views on the royal supremacy more generally, see: Roger A. Mason, “Knox, Resistance, and the Royal Supremacy,” in *John Knox and the British Reformations*, ed. Roger A. Mason (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1998), 154-175.

<sup>102</sup> See, for example: Milton, *Catholic and Reformed*, 518; Peter Heylyn, *Aerius redivivus, or, The history of the Presbyterians containing the beginnings, progress and successes of that active sect* (1670).

## Conclusion

In the conclusion to *Tudor Church Militant*, Diarmaid MacCulloch's masterful survey of the reign of Edward VI, he observed that despite commonalities of ecclesiology, liturgy, and theology, the Edwardian reformation and the Elizabethan Settlement proceeded in fundamentally different ways. The reason for this difference, MacCulloch argued, was the transformative influence of Mary's reign on English religious culture: "The trauma of the Marian experience cast a long shadow over the Elizabethan Church, and within that Church, there sounded an uncertain note which had not been heard in Edward's reign."<sup>1</sup> Expanding upon this line of thought, this study has been a history of traumas and shadows, examining both the Marian persecution and its lasting legacies in Elizabethan England. Not only did the effects of the Marian experience extend far beyond the fires of Smithfield, but they also came to fundamentally shape and define the configuration and characteristics of England's religious and political culture.

This study has shown that in order to understand the dynamics of the persecution we must place religious and political conformity at the fulcrum of our analysis. If we are to comprehend the actions and beliefs of early modern people who were caught between competing obligations of religious and political obedience, we must recognize that the decisions to accommodate, dissimulate, or modify one's own beliefs were usually justified or rationalized. We have also shown that these rationalizations of obedience could be culturally generative, as individuals were compelled to fundamentally reassess their relationship with the English church and state. Conformity, therefore, could dramatically effect political and religious change.

Yet conformity is, by its very nature, a historically elusive subject, and we are often left with little more than tea leaves. And so while we have been able to uncover the decision-making strategies and rationalizations of some early modern people, others remain inscrutable. How, for example, can we understand the Marian actions of the scholar and political theorist Sir Thomas Smith? Although he was associated with the Edwardian reformation and would become a key player in the early formation of the Elizabethan Settlement, Smith spent Mary's reign as a client of Stephen Gardiner- a man many Protestants blamed for the burnings.<sup>2</sup> In 1555, Smith's name was even included on a papal indulgence.<sup>3</sup> Unfortunately, we cannot know for certain how Smith rationalized this temporary religious volte-face, although there may be at least one intriguing yet enigmatic clue: Smith's personal seal. For while it had originally featured an eagle with pen in claw, after Mary's reign he changed it to a salamander, thriving amidst the flames.<sup>4</sup> Was this new emblem meant to symbolize his own survival? Perhaps. Or perhaps he simply had a fondness for salamanders, and by supposing anything further we are only finding faces in the clouds.

What we can definitively determine is that the Marian experience had a lasting influence on England's religious and political culture. In 1573, for instance, the puritan

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<sup>1</sup> MacCulloch, *Tudor Church Militant*, 191.

<sup>2</sup> Ian W. Archer, "Smith, Sir Thomas (1513–1577)," *ODNB*.

<sup>3</sup> Strype, *The Life of the Learned Sir Thomas Smith*, 48.

<sup>4</sup> "Seal matrix: Sir Thomas Smith." Museum number 1982,0701.2. British Museum; Strype, *The Life of the Learned Sir Thomas Smith*, 47.

divine William Fulke could note that it was almost unnecessary to remind readers of the persecution: "...should I here rehearse the murders, burnings, & torments, of the holy martyrs of God, which the Roman beast like a butcher slew, that the continual thirsty harlot might not want drink even to make her drunken. What a miserable slaughter of the servants of Christ hath our country of England seen in the five years persecution of Queen Mary?"<sup>5</sup> For Fulke it was imperative for *selective* memories of Mary's reign to maintain a central place in English Protestant identity. And yet, as Andy Wood has argued, collective memory "can also be contested, producing alternative readings of history."<sup>6</sup> An example of this can be found in 1592, when the Catholic controversialist Richard Verstegan boldly reminded English readers of William Cecil's conformist past.<sup>7</sup> During Mary's reign, Verstegan recounted, Cecil had "bestirred himself to get credit with the Catholics, frequented Masses, said the Litanies with the priest, laboured a pair of great beads, which he continually carried, preached to his parishioners in Stamford, and asked pardon of his errours in king Edward's time." Verstegan also claimed that Cecil had lobbied Cardinal Pole and Sir Francis Englefield for a position in the government, but Queen Mary could not be convinced of his loyalty. Yet Verstegan's text was not simply an *ad hominem* hatchet-job on Cecil, but was also a brilliant attempt to use the memory of Marian Nicodemism to discredit the entire Elizabethan Settlement. As Verstegan proposed in a shocking counter-factual: if only Cecil had "been admitted secretary in Queen Mary's time, he had never sought the change of Religion in this Queen's days."<sup>8</sup> Even to the end of the sixteenth century, conflicting memories of Marian conformity were still at the heart of England's religious politics.

At the beginning of this study I proposed that in order to fully understand the actions of early modern people, scholars must be willing to investigate hypocrisy and inconsistency of belief without resorting to rhetorical binaries of heroism and cowardice, martyrdom and apostasy. It is perhaps fitting, therefore, to conclude by examining that longstanding symbol of English mutability: the Vicar of Bray. Although it would be appropriated in various ways by balladeers, satirists, and religious polemicists for the next three hundred years, the tale of the vicar was first recorded by the seventeenth

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<sup>5</sup> William Fulke, *Praelections vpon the sacred and holy Reuelation of S. Iohn, written in latine by William Fulke Doctor of Diuinitie, and translated into English by George Gyffard* (1573, STC 11443), sig. 112v-113r.

<sup>6</sup> Andy Wood, *The Memory of the People: Custom and Popular Senses of the Past in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 25

<sup>7</sup> On this text, see: Houliston, *Catholic Resistance in Elizabethan England*, 54.

<sup>8</sup> Richard Verstegan, *An aduertisement written to a secretarie of my L. Treasurers of Ingland, by an Inglishe intelligencer as he passed throughe Germanie towards Italie Concerninge an other booke newly written in Latin, and published in diuerse languages and countreyes, against her Maiesties late proclamation, for searche and apprehension of seminary priestes, and their receauers, also of a letter vwritten by the L. Treasurer in defence of his gentry, and nobility, intercepted, published, and answered by the papistes* (1592, STC 19885), 16; Verstegan's charges appear to have directly influenced the anonymous biography of Cecil that was written shortly after his death: Sir Michael Hikes(?), *The 'Anonymous Life' of William Cecil, Lord Burghley*, ed. Alan G. R. Smith (Lewiston, New York: E. Mellen Press, 1990), 51-3.

century historian and churchman Thomas Fuller as he explained a cryptic Berkshire proverb: “The Vicar of Bray, will be Vicar of Bray still.” Taken alone, its meaning was ambiguous, but Fuller believed the aphorism had its roots in the religious upheavals of the sixteenth century. Specifically, he claimed it referred to a “vivacious” vicar who, “living under King Henry the 8, King Edward the 6, Queen Mary, and Queen Elizabeth, was first a Papist, then a Protestant, then a Papist, then a Protestant again.” The vicar was said to have witnessed martyrs being burned during Mary’s reign, but he “found this fire too hot for his tender temper.” Yet when someone later denounced him as a “Turn-coat, and an unconstant Changeling,” he defiantly denied the charges. “For I always kept my principle,” the vicar explained, “which is this: to live and die the vicar of Bray.”<sup>9</sup>

For later authors this line of argument was dismissed as self-serving worldliness, but in Fuller’s original account the vicar is neither a lecherous opportunist nor a shameless Judas. This should not be surprising, considering that Fuller himself had struggled with his own dilemmas of obedience during the Civil War, Protectorate, and Restoration, and had been accused by several parties of being a time-server. As one contemporary commentator softly put it, Fuller’s “particular temper and management” allowed him to have “weather’d the late great Storm with more success than many other great men.”<sup>10</sup> What Fuller recognized was that the Vicar of Bray’s actions were not only (at least in some sense) prudent, but they were also reflective of patterns of thought and action that were still commonplace in his own century, when the conditions were different yet the religious and political dilemmas still very much the same. “Such many now adayes,” Fuller concluded, “who though they cannot turn the wind, will turn their mills, and set them so, that wheresoever it bloweth, their grist shall certainly be grinded.” As Fuller knew all too well, the winds will always change.

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<sup>9</sup> Fuller, *The history of the worthies of England*, 82-3.

<sup>10</sup> John Eglington Bailey, *The Life of Thomas Fuller, D. D.: With Notices of His Books, His Kinsmen, and His Friends* (London: Basil Montagu Pickering, 1874), 693.

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