

CATHOLIC  
AND REFORMED

*The Roman and Protestant Churches  
in English Protestant Thought  
1600–1640*

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## *Introduction: English Protestantism at the dawn of the seventeenth century*

The Church of England presents innumerable problems of definition for the historian. The first century of its existence, when it still aspired to be the inclusive church of the English people, witnessed the conflicts of a variety of different visions of what its identity should be. That such a range of different doctrinal and ecclesiological predilections were able to lay claim to the national church was a reflection of the flexible character of the reformation settlement itself. The First Edwardian Prayer Book has been described as ‘a masterpiece of compromise, even of studied ambiguity’, and the same phrase could justly be taken to describe the later Elizabethan settlement *in toto*.<sup>1</sup> While her doctrinal formulations were clearly of a Reformed character (although more reflective of mid-century Protestant thought rather than its later Calvinist elaborations) the English Church still retained a structure of worship and administration which had not broken as decisively with the Romanist past as had been the case in other Protestant countries. The question of where the Church of England stood *vis-à-vis* the Roman Church and the Reformed Churches of the continent was therefore an issue which remained unsettled and was subject to constant reinterpretation and sometimes bitter recrimination in the ensuing years.

It is in English Protestant divines’ perceptions of these foreign churches – Roman and Reformed – that their different images of the nature of the English Church come into clearer perspective, and it is these perceptions which will be the concern of this book. Before these views can be thoroughly analysed, however, it will be necessary to provide a picture of the state of English Protestantism around the year 1600, when our survey begins. The protean character of the Church of England at this time renders the application of the term ‘Anglican’ to any single group within it essentially meaningless, if not positively misleading. Nevertheless, it is still possible to chart some of the currents of religious thought prominent in the

<sup>1</sup> A.G. Dickens, *The English Reformation* (1964), p.302.

church at this time. To sharpen our focus, we will concentrate on a single minister who presented in the early years of the seventeenth century his own impressions of the nature of the changes taking place within his church, and attempted to play his own part in shaping its future.

The 1590s had been (*par excellence*) the period of crisis in the history of Tudor England, when old hands left the rudder of the ship of state, and old certainties and orthodoxies seemed to be shaken. The Elizabethan establishment waxed old, and was transformed as the decade began with the deaths following closely upon one another of Robert Dudley, earl of Leicester, Sir Walter Mildmay, Sir Francis Walsingham and Sir Christopher Hatton – a removal of the old guard which was symbolized by the final demise in 1598 of the venerable William Cecil, Lord Burghley, after a lifetime's service to the crown dating back to the time of Elizabeth's accession to the throne. An unmistakable air of *fin de siècle* hung over court and country as the war with Spain dragged on inconclusively and the country was afflicted by a series of harvest failures, combined with plague, inflation, unemployment, depression in overseas trade and increasing crime and vagrancy.<sup>2</sup>

The 1590s were also marked by the same sense of change, decay and ferment in religious affairs. The decade opened with the final crushing of the presbyterian movement. The activist political movement which had sought to bring into England a presbyterian form of church government in line with the Calvinist Churches of Western Europe, and whose efforts had dominated the religious politics of the previous two decades, finally met its end. In part the movement itself was falling apart as moderates and radicals moved nearer to a complete rift, hastened by the publication of the inflammatory Marprelate tracts against the bishops. At the same time, the cause of further reformation suffered with the deaths of the old guard of Elizabethan government, which removed some of its most faithful protectors from the court. The examinations of puritan ministers in the winter of 1589–90 brought the whole underground 'classis' organization out into the open, and puritan leaders such as Thomas Cartwright were hauled before the courts of Star Chamber and High Commission. The deranged antics of the would-be regicides Edmund Copinger and William Hacket led to a further surge of repression against sectaries in 1593, and the executions of the leading separatists Henry Barrow, John Greenwood and John Penry.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> I.W. Archer, *The Pursuit of Stability. Social Relations in Elizabethan London* (Cambridge, 1991), pp.8–9, 14; see also the remarks of George Abbot in 1595–6, published in his *An Exposition upon the Prophet Jonah* (1613), p.104 – quoted in John Strype, *The Life and Acts of John Whitgift* (3 vols., Oxford, 1822), II: 337.

<sup>3</sup> Collinson, *Puritan Movement*, pp.317–29, 385–431.

Radical puritanism was forced into hiding or fled abroad although, as events were to prove, it had far from disappeared.<sup>4</sup>

With its radical wing under pressure, what happened to puritanism? Recent historians have emphasized the extent to which beliefs and attitudes that have conventionally been regarded as puritan had in fact penetrated into the very centre of establishment thought during the Elizabethan period. Calvinist predestinarianism, Sabbatarianism, the belief that the pope was Antichrist, and many other doctrines that have been thought of in the past as typifying puritan piety, were held by Elizabethan bishops as intensely as puritan nonconformists. Presbyterianism, it has been argued, was merely a temporary programme, a passing expression of the reforming ideals of a group who constituted merely a zealous subset within the Church of England. Puritans were not inevitably committed to an oppositionist stance towards authority; rather, they sought to sanctify the existing social and political order by co-opting secular and spiritual leaders into the moral reform of community and nation. It was the internal religious experience which shaped puritan behaviour; external forms of government and ceremony could be accepted or discarded depending on whether they served to promote godly ideals. Puritanism has thus been defined as being founded essentially upon a sense of a common core of religious experience and values, which could transcend the formal outward issues of conformity and church government.<sup>5</sup> On this reading, the 1590s came as a blessing to the puritan movement in general. Forced to abandon their active political programme to remould the external structures of the national church, puritans were now free to accommodate themselves to political realities and to follow moderate puritan paths. Indeed, as issues of church government were removed from the agenda, many puritan writers may be seen to be moving away from a preoccupation with directly political issues towards an attempt to transform the church from within through works of practical divinity.<sup>6</sup>

The stage was thus apparently set for the reintegration of puritan values into English Protestantism, for puritans to take their place merely as an especially zealous subset within a Church of England of an unambiguously Reformed character. But it was not quite that simple. The dynamic essence of puritanism could not simply be whittled down to a pietistic tendency, and the reigns of James and Charles would demonstrate the lengths to

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.439–43; N. Tyacke, *The Fortunes of English Puritanism, 1603–1640* (1990).

<sup>5</sup> P. Collinson, *English Puritanism* (1983); Lake, *Moderate Puritans, passim*; *idem*, 'Puritan identities'; *idem*, *Anglicans and Puritans*, pp.1–6.

<sup>6</sup> Collinson, *Puritan Movement*, pp.432–7; C.M. Dent, *Protestant Reformers in Elizabethan Oxford* (Oxford, 1983), pp.150–1, and chs.8 and 9. For important qualifications, see Lake, *Anglicans and Puritans*, pp.240–4.

which the reforming zeal of puritanism could lead, even when not accompanied by a radical presbyterian or anti-ceremonial thrust. But the problem did not simply lie in the inherently dynamic and politically assertive nature of puritanism. The structure of English Protestantism was itself changing in the 1590s, and the Church of England to which the more moderate strain of puritanism sought to accommodate itself was nourishing new patterns of thought which were less than keen to welcome a rehabilitated puritanism back into the fold.

A clear illustration of the different forces at work in the Church of England in 1600 may be derived from a study of how they appeared to a single member of that church – the prolific anti-papal divine Dr Andrew Willet. Willet appears as a classic product of the Cambridge ‘moderate puritan tradition’ which has been so vividly delineated in the work of Dr Lake. He gained his MA at Cambridge in 1584, and a year before was made a fellow of Christ’s College – the home of the archetypal puritan William Perkins – where he operated within a network of godly-minded puritans which included the later bishop George Downname, as well as the conforming puritan lecturer Robert Hill, and the later separatist Francis Johnson. From 1599 until his death Willet was rector of Barley in Hertfordshire, fourteen miles from Cambridge, whence he produced a torrent of theological works throughout the Jacobean period. Willet was Calvinist in his theology, strongly anti-Roman Catholic, and was also to reveal himself as a strong advocate of further reformation in the English Church. Nevertheless, he continued a loyal member of the Church of England, and was therefore a classic moderate puritan.<sup>7</sup>

In 1600 Willet published the third edition of his celebrated *Synopsis Papismi*. This was a voluminous work which surveyed all the controversies between the Protestants and the Church of Rome. It had already expanded considerably from its modestly sized quarto first edition of 1592, and by its fifth edition in 1634 it had become a considerable folio volume of over 1,300 pages. The *Synopsis* was a famous and much-read guide to religious controversies: clearly laid out and easy to read, it yet commanded a scholarly reputation of sufficient importance to be cited in university determinations in England, and read in Latin translation abroad by respectful Calvinist and Lutheran divines alike. The royal patent issued for

<sup>7</sup> On Willet’s career, see the life in Andrew Willet, *Synopsis Papismi*, ed. J. Cumming (10 vols., 1852), I: 41–79, and *DNB*, s.n. ‘Andrew Willet’. The suggestion in *The Folger Library Edition of the Works of Richard Hooker*, ed. W.S. Hill (5 vols., Cambridge, Mass., 1977–91), IV: xxi, that Willet could not be a puritan *because* he conformed is arguably based on a misformulation of the categories of definition. For Willet’s ‘moderate puritan’ links, see his *Sacrorum Emblematum Centuria Una* (Cambridge, 1588), which includes verses addressed to (among others) Laurence Chaderton and his father-in-law Roger Goad (sigs.D4, D2).

its fifth edition noted that the *Synopsis* 'hath been seen and allowed by the Lords, the Reverend Bishops, and hath also ever since been in great esteem in both of our Universities, and also much desired by all the learned both of our clergy and laity throughout our Dominions'.<sup>8</sup>

The third edition of Willet's *Synopsis* is of particular interest, not merely because it was printed in the year that our survey begins, but also because in a new preface its author offered a review of developments within the Church of England over the previous decade, and suggested the means of rectifying the tensions that had grown up within the English Church. It is these tensions which will provide the essential framework for an analysis of the ways in which English Protestants understood the nature of their church and its relationship with the Roman and Reformed Churches of the continent.

Willet's new dedication in 1600 was addressed to the archbishop of Canterbury, John Whitgift, and to Richard Bancroft, bishop of London – the two men who had led the suppression of the presbyterian movement in England over the previous decade. Willet himself was a man who had close links, both personal and theological, with those godly ministers who had pushed for the further reform of the outward discipline of the English Church along presbyterian lines. But in his new dedication Willet, along with the more moderate wing of the puritan movement, accepted defeat. He applauded the fact that the bitter contentions and strife that had so afflicted the English Church were now at an end, and that the fires of dissension had now been smothered, and even praised the bishops' own actions in securing this happy conclusion. The puritan radicals 'were once troublesome, but have now become quiet, either won over by your humanity, or becalmed by your prudence, or confirmed by your sounder judgement'.\* It was now the duty of all the Church of England, Willet urged, to unite against the common enemy – the Church of Rome.

If the bishops would give the lead, then, the puritans would happily follow them in the anti-papal crusade. But this was no mere anti-papal rant. Willet was appealing to professional religious scholars to engage with the foremost Roman controversialists of the day, and the particular area in which he urged further academic research was patristics – a field which is

<sup>8</sup> John Prideaux, *Viginti-duae Lectiones de Totidem Religionis Capitibus* (3rd edn, Oxford, 1648), i. p.9; Johann Gerhard, *Locorum Theologicorum* (9 vols. in 4, Geneva, 1639), II: 359; BL, Add. MS 22961 fol.75: Festus Hommius to Sibrandus Lubbertus, 7 April 1609; W. Goode, *The Doctrine of the Church of England as to the Effects of Baptism in the Case of Infants* (1850), pp.372–3 n. +. The stationer who held the copyright was not prepared to reprint the work, and therefore the royal patent gave the licence for reprinting to Willet's son Paul, given that 'few or none at all of the said Books are to be had and gotten; and that also, by reason of the great price and value of the said Book, many of the clergy of this our kingdom are not able to purchase or procure the same'.

too often assumed to have been the sole property of more 'high church' divines such as Lancelot Andrewes. A full exposition of patristic bible commentaries, Willet opined, would be highly efficacious in ensuring the ultimate downfall of popery, as well as serving towards a more general Protestant edification.<sup>9</sup>

Willet's own *Synopsis* exemplified this exhortation to scholarly controversy with Rome. If his general opponent in this work was the Church of Rome, Willet's particular adversary was Cardinal Bellarmine, Rome's most impressive champion, who had published his voluminous *Disputationes* during the 1590s. These continued to represent the most important single defence of Roman Catholic doctrine throughout the early Stuart period, and all subsequent controversies were indebted to Bellarmine's works for laying out the structure of their argument. It was a frequent jibe of later Protestant polemicists that their Romanist opponents were merely copying Bellarmine's arguments.<sup>10</sup> Willet's *Synopsis* was just the most widely circulated of a whole series of treatises that were published by Protestant scholars in England and abroad and which were dedicated to the task of refuting Bellarmine's works. Throughout Europe, attacks on Bellarmine were regarded by Protestants as a way of demonstrating their confessional orthodoxy, or as a means of reasserting Protestant unity against the threat of inter-Protestant tensions.<sup>11</sup> In England, active scholars included esteemed university professors such as William Whitaker and John Rainolds (the latter as holder of the anti-papal lectureship in Oxford, founded by Sir Francis Walsingham), as well as dedicated anti-puritan pamphleteers such as Matthew Sutcliffe.<sup>12</sup>

In appealing for English Protestants to concentrate on opposing Rome, Willet emphasized the disproportionate threats levelled by the radical puritans on the one side, and the Jesuits on the other. Radical Protestants 'bark somewhat . . . like complaining dogs for a time, but these [Romanists] bite and tear like devouring wolves, and still do not rest; these [puritans] break off tiny branches and twigs, but these [Romanists] strive to tear out the very root'.\* Nevertheless, Willet here explicitly directed his words against some members of the Church of England who, he claimed, felt that domestic enemies (whom they called 'puritans') were more to be

<sup>9</sup> Willet, *Synopsis* (1600), sig.B3r-v.

<sup>10</sup> E.g. Robert Abbot, *The Second Part of the Defence of the Reformed Catholicke* (1611), sig.A2v, pp.4-5, 980, 1241.

<sup>11</sup> Both Arminius and Vorstius wrote against Bellarmine when they felt their Protestant orthodoxy to be in question. On the many refutations of Bellarmine published by continental Calvinist theologians, see F.G.M. Broeyer, *William Whitaker: leven en werk van een Anglocalvinistisch theoloog* (Utrecht, 1982), pp.88, 155, 319 n.531.

<sup>12</sup> Dent, *Reformers*, pp.148-9; P. Milward, *Religious Controversies of the Elizabethan Age* (1977), pp.152-6.

feared than the Romanists.<sup>13</sup> This was no imaginary opponent. English anti-puritanism was not a static entity. As a recent historian has noted, by the early 1590s a far more polemically aggressive position was being adopted by some conformist divines. Partly in response to the more vitriolic tone of the Marprelate tracts of the late 1580s, authors such as Matthew Sutcliffe, and especially Richard Bancroft and Adrianus Saravia, were prepared to parallel the threat from Rome and from presbyterianism, and (in Bancroft's case) to insist that the threat was equally grave from both sides. Bancroft had imputed the ideas of the more extreme puritan tracts to the activities of the native presbyterian movement, and had included sideswipes at Calvin's Geneva. Willet's epistle, dedicated to Bancroft himself as well as Whitgift, was clearly hoping to dissuade him, and other more recent defenders of the ecclesiastical establishment, from this unwelcome set of priorities.<sup>14</sup> Willet's concern at what he saw as an unbalanced approach towards the relative threat posed by radical puritans here echoed the sentiments expressed by the Calvinist Heads of Colleges in Cambridge in a letter sent to Lord Burghley in 1591, in which they had sought to remind the chancellor of the greater threat posed to the Church of England by the Romanists, and had complained that lovers of the gospel were being treated more severely than Roman opponents.<sup>15</sup>

Willet also directed his energies, in more oblique fashion, against a theory that was beginning to infiltrate the conformist position – namely, that government by bishops was not merely desirable and apostolic, but was also *iure divino*, by divine right. As he was trying to make his peace with Bancroft and Whitgift, Willet was keen to emphasize that he did not wish to attack the institution of episcopacy, and included within his *Synopsis* of 1600 a new section which argued, with citations from Bishop Bilson's *Perpetual Government*, 'that the calling of Bishops as it is received in the Church of England is not Antichristian'.<sup>16</sup> Nevertheless, in another new section, which was ostensibly aimed at Bellarmine, Willet argued against all claims that episcopacy was *iure divino*, and warned ominously that this doctrine could as a consequence unchurch the foreign non-episcopal Reformed Churches (which was not, of course, a consequence that would have worried the cardinal!).<sup>17</sup>

<sup>13</sup> Willet, *Synopsis* (1600), sig.B2v.      <sup>14</sup> Lake, *Anglicans and Puritans*, pp.111–13.

<sup>15</sup> J. Heywood and T. Wright (eds.), *Cambridge University Transactions during the Puritan Controversies* (2 vols., 1854), II: 30–2. The letter was signed by William Whitaker, Laurence Chaderton, Edmund Barwell and Roger Goad. Cf. Thomas Digges, *Humble Motives* (1601), p.25.

<sup>16</sup> Willet, *Synopsis* (1600), pp.726–9. Note also the careful removal of the reference to William Fulke (1594, p.298; 1600, p.230), who had initially been a supporter of presbyterianism.

<sup>17</sup> Willet, *Synopsis* (1600), pp.235–7, 240.

These were not the only new developments in conformist thought that threatened to undermine the integration of puritanism within the Church of England. Towards the end of his dedicatory epistle, Willet made it plain that his support for Whitgift and Bancroft was conditional upon their acting to curb new domestic controversies which threatened to undermine the integrity of English Protestantism itself. These revolved around what Willet saw as dangerous new crypto-popish doctrines which were beginning to spread within the church, and which he specified as being concerned with the doctrines of free will, hypothetical election and universal grace. Willet instructed the bishops directly: 'Suppress by your authority whosoever would propose dogmas which either savour of superstition, deviate from the common faith, or degenerate however slightly towards popery.\*' Willet clearly had in mind the anti-Calvinist doctrines of grace propounded by William Barrett, Peter Baro and John Overall during his own residence in Cambridge. These had excited considerable controversy, leading to the initially neutral intervention of Archbishop Whitgift and the drawing up of the uncompromisingly Calvinist Lambeth Articles of 1595.<sup>18</sup> Willet also doubtless had his eye on the new developments in English Protestant thought that had found expression in Richard Hooker's *Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity*, whose allegedly new perspective on doctrines of predestination, justification, salvation, the efficacy of the sacraments and the nature of the Church of Rome Willet would attack more clearly three years later. Hooker's doctrines had already drawn a concerned response in the form of the brief tract *A Christian Letter of Certain English Protestants*. The anonymous authors of this tract had claimed the personae of moderate ministers reconciled to the polity and ceremonies of the Church of England, who were appreciative of the works of Whitgift, but alarmed by the infusion of new and crypto-popish ideas in the works of Hooker, and also in the anonymous tract *Querimonia Ecclesiae* and Bancroft's anonymously published *Dangerous Positions*. The authors of *A Christian Letter* (who may well have included Willet himself) claimed that Hooker's works were frustrating their attempts to defend the integrity of the Church of England against 'foolish carpers'.<sup>19</sup> Many of the accusations of novelty made against Hooker by these authors were repeated by Willet in a series of tracts which he published in the years 1603–5.

<sup>18</sup> On the background to the Lambeth Articles, see Lake, *Moderate Puritans*, pp.218–26; H.C. Porter, *Reformation and Reaction in Tudor Cambridge* (Cambridge, 1958), ch.16. See also Dent, *Protestant Reformers*, pp.103–25.

<sup>19</sup> Hooker, *Works*, IV: 9, 69, 72, 231 (for the circumstantial argument that Willet was involved in the authorship of *A Christian Letter*, see *ibid.*, pp.xix–xxv). On the novelty of Hooker's doctrines, see Lake, *Anglicans and Puritans*, ch.4. The *Querimonia* is an important tract which has been strangely neglected by historians. I hope to discuss it in more detail elsewhere.

Willet's epistle helps to illustrate the problems that moderate puritanism faced in reconciling itself to an English Protestantism which in some quarters was already beginning to change its doctrinal complexion. Willet could applaud the anti-papal polemics of an anti-presbyterian activist like Matthew Sutcliffe, who also shared the puritans' distaste for the new breed of anti-Calvinist divinity, and was prepared to recognize the overwhelming priority that the papal threat demanded. Yet Sutcliffe was at the same time an exponent of the more vigorous form of anti-puritan rhetoric, and was also a firm defender of the new orthodoxy that episcopacy was *iure divino*.<sup>20</sup> There would therefore be no simple doctrinal overlap between Calvinist conformist divines and moderate puritans.

Moreover, Willet was destined to find problems when he sought to eject the ideas of Hooker and his followers from the church. Although in a minority, Hooker's disciples resided at the centre of the church hierarchy, profiting from the more fixedly anti-puritan preoccupations of conformists in the 1590s. Crucially, too, these divines – whom Dr Lake has dubbed 'avant-garde conformists' – were precisely those churchmen who were most determined to prevent the attempts of Willet and other puritans to reintegrate themselves into the established church.

But Willet's compromise with the Church of England was even more problematical than this. He was not merely out of step with developments in Calvinist conformist thought, and hostile to the new breed of 'semi-popish' errors. For all his display of conforming credentials, Willet would still seem to have retained a latent dissatisfaction with the English liturgy. The second edition of his *Synopsis*, published in 1594, had contained a short treatise urging separatists to remain within the Church of England. This had included a decidedly unenthusiastic defence of the Book of Common Prayer which, as Willet admitted, contained some 'defects and imperfections', but which he excused as being the best order of worship that was realistically available for the time being. In 1600, seeking to build bridges with Bancroft, Willet obviously had to do something about this passage, but rather than insert a more committed defence of the Prayer Book he chose to remove the short treatise from the *Synopsis* altogether. Moreover, with considerable audacity, Willet pretended that he had never written this part of the *Synopsis*, and claimed that the brief treatise had still been only in a draft stage when the printer of the 1600 edition had demanded the final proofs. Willet suggested to the readers of this third edition that he might complete the brief treatise and publish it later elsewhere, but confessed that he felt little impulse to do so, as the separatists were less dangerous than the Roman Catholics, since they did not

<sup>20</sup> See Willet's praise of Sutcliffe in *Synopsis* (1600), sig.B3r.

dissent from the Church of England 'in the fundamentall poynts of faith'.<sup>21</sup> In fact, the promised treatise never appeared, as Willet was of course merely suppressing his earlier composition, and there was no half-drafted treatise to complete. This subterfuge was merely an attempt to disguise Willet's dissatisfaction with the status quo in the English Church – a fact which emerged most clearly three years later, when he and other puritan divines recognized a new opportunity to effect more wide-ranging ecclesiastical reform.

The apparent puritan quietism of the 1590s had been pre-eminently tactical in nature. The accession of King James VI of Scotland to the English throne in 1603 was greeted by a revival of the puritan political lobbying that had characterized the 1580s in England, as temporary reconciliations with the establishment were abandoned by puritan divines who hoped once more to effect some change in the Church of England's structure of worship. A new flood of petitions made the familiar criticisms of aspects of the liturgy and of the ecclesiastical establishment but (with a few exceptions) deliberately avoided raising the issue of episcopacy directly.<sup>22</sup> The complaints of doctrinal innovations emergent during the 1590s were repeated. They focused on anti-Calvinism in Cambridge, but also complained of anti-Sabbatarianism and crypto-popish doctrines of absolution and auricular confession, apparently referring (among others) to the sermons of the new breed of avant-garde conformists, such as John Howson and Lancelot Andrewes.<sup>23</sup> Conformists rallied in the face of this threat, with divines from Oxford University drawing up a reply to the Millenary Petition, and writers such as William Covell complaining that the argument over church government had been needlessly reopened, after it had already been 'appeased with discretion'. There was thereby renewed 'an unnaturall contention, that was almost buried, & especially at that time, when all proceedings in the Church wer without rigor'.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>21</sup> Willet, *Synopsis* (1594), pp.697–704 (esp. pp.702–3); *ibid.* (1600), p.621.

<sup>22</sup> Collinson, *Puritan Movement*, pp.448–54; Tyacke, *Fortunes*, pp.3–4; S.B. Babbage, *Puritanism and Richard Bancroft* (1962), pp.44–57, 62–4.

<sup>23</sup> Doctrinal innovations are only briefly alluded to in the Millenary Petition, but are discussed at greater length in the reply to Oxford University's *Answer*: Bodl., Bodley MS 124 pp.58–63. See also *An Abridgment of that Booke which the Ministers of Lincoln Diocess Delivered to his Maiestie* (1605), pp.25–6. On the scandal caused by Lancelot Andrewes' court sermon of 1600 on confession, see Andrewes, *Two Answers to Cardinal Perron and Other Miscellaneous Works* (Oxford, 1854), p.lxii. Another target may have been John Buckeridge's 1602 sermon at the Temple Church on the same subject: *The Diary of John Manningham*, ed. R.P. Sorlien (Hanover, N.H., 1976), p.73. For Howson's inflammatory sermons on feast-days and preaching, see Dent, *Protestant Reformers*, pp.208–18. On 'avant-garde conformity', see Lake, 'Lancelot Andrewes'.

<sup>24</sup> William Covell, *A Modest and Reasonable Examination* (1604), p.27.

Andrew Willet's response to James' accession was swift. He immediately dispatched a copy of the 1600 edition of his *Synopsis* to James, pointedly removing his conciliatory epistle to Whitgift and Bancroft, and inserting instead a new dedicatory epistle to the king, in which he declared that 'God hath a greate worke to be perfected by your hands: what David begun, Solomon must finish.'<sup>25</sup> Willet elaborated on his intentions in a series of tracts published in the next two years in which he exhorted James towards a further reformation of certain features of England's ecclesiastical discipline. In *An Antilogie* (1603), Willet suggested to the king that some things still remained to be amended, and applauded James' resolution to restore church revenues, to promote preaching and to oppose non-residence, pluralism and non-preaching ministers. But Willet also suggested that in the case of the indifferent ceremonies which had provoked controversy, the king might remove 'the iust occasions of offence; or so indifferently moderate them, that they breede no strife'. In his *Ecclesia Triumphans*, written to celebrate the king's coronation, Willet again emphasized God's ordinance to kings to reform religion and ecclesiastical abuses. Appealing to the separatists to return to the church, Willet suggested that James might now be in a position to remove some of the abuses in outward discipline, although he himself emphasized that he believed discipline to pertain merely to the well being (*bene esse*) of a church, rather than to its very existence (*esse*). The Church of England's discipline was sufficient to make it a church, he explained, although it could be much improved. She was a famous and beautiful sister of the Reformed Churches abroad, although she did have some blemishes in external matters.<sup>26</sup> Willet thus constructed a 'via media' for himself, by which he condemned not only those conformists who saw no need for any reform, but also distanced himself from the die-hard presbyterians who 'would have all purged, not the superfluous humours onely, but some profitable parts; as the very calling itselife of reverend Pastors and Bishops: who while they attend the sincere preaching of the word, and the uncorrupt administration of discipline, may (no doubt) do the Church much good'.<sup>27</sup>

At the same time, Willet also delivered more detailed and pointed warnings regarding the spread of crypto-popish doctrines, in which he clearly alluded at length to the work of Richard Hooker as well as the Cambridge anti-Calvinists, and implored the king to impose doctrinal orthodoxy and thus unify his kingdom. These dangerous new books 'maintaining offensive doctrine, too much declining to poperie' should be

<sup>25</sup> Willet, *Synopsis* (1600/1603: BL shelfmark C.46.k.4 – STC 25698.3), sig.A4v.

<sup>26</sup> Willet, *An Antilogie* (1603), preface to King James (unfoliated); *idem*, *Ecclesia Triumphans* (1603), pp.60–6.

<sup>27</sup> Willet, *Antilogie*, preface to King James (unfoliated).

suppressed by the king, Willet urged. He also insisted that James should ensure 'that they receive some answer by publike allowance, or sufficient satisfaction from the authors, lest the infection spread further'.<sup>28</sup> The next year (1604) saw Willet make a similar address to parliament. Praising its endeavours to establish and improve both church and religion, Willet urged that 'whereas men have of late daies taken unto themselves great libertie, in Sermons, Lectures, writings, to set abroad [*sic*] strange & uncouth doctrines, exorbitant from the current doctrine among Protestants', parliament should take this problem in hand and enforce a uniformity of doctrine, either by authorizing an augmentation to the Thirty-Nine Articles in order to counter the new 'unsound doctrines', or by suppressing such doctrines altogether.<sup>29</sup>

Puritan hopes for major structural reform were dashed once more at the Hampton Court Conference, followed by the suspension and subsequent deprivation of between seventy-three and eighty-three beneficed non-conformist ministers.<sup>30</sup> A number of moderate puritan divines, and even bishops sympathetic to puritanism such as Anthony Rudd of St David's, made appeals for clemency. Willet was especially active, and with this aim inserted a dedicatory epistle to his *Hexapla in Genesin* of 1605 addressed to the newly enthroned Archbishop Bancroft and Bishop Vaughan of London. Recognizing the failure of his appeals for further reform, Willet's epistle was reminiscent in tone of the more conciliatory one which he had addressed to Bancroft and Whitgift in his *Synopsis* of 1600, although this time he was more urgent in his appeals for clemency and tolerance of puritan dissenters. Moreover, Willet no longer considered it wise to appeal for the expulsion of 'unsound doctrines' from the church.<sup>31</sup>

Despite the pleas of Willet and others, the expulsion of non-subscribing ministers was not reversed. Radical puritanism survived among unbeneficed ministers, or in the backwaters of the Netherlands or the New World, a weakened force though still lingering on.<sup>32</sup> Moderate puritans returned once again to the political quietism of the 1590s, and concentrated their attention on the spiritual transformation of the English Church from

<sup>28</sup> Willet, *Ecclesia Triumphans*, sig.¶¶1r, 35–6, 90–3; cf. *idem*, *Antilogie*, preface to King James (unfoliated), 'Preface to the Christian Reader', sig.A3r–v, p.57.

<sup>29</sup> Andrew Willet, *Limbo-Mastix* (1604), sig.A4r. This section is clumsily expressed in the original, or perhaps wrongly transcribed at the press, as it seems to contradict itself.

<sup>30</sup> K. Fincham, *Prelate as Pastor* (Oxford, 1990), pp.323–6; on Hampton Court, see P. Collinson, 'The Jacobean religious settlement: the Hampton Court Conference', in H. Tomlinson (ed.), *Before the Civil War* (1983), pp.27–51; F. Shriver, 'Hampton Court revisited: James I and the puritans', *JEH* 33 (1982); K. Fincham and P. Lake, 'The ecclesiastical policy of King James I', *Journal of British Studies* 24 (1985), pp.171–6.

<sup>31</sup> Willet, *Hexapla in Genesin* (Cambridge, 1605), 'Ad Reverendiss. Archiepis. Cantuariens.' (unfoliated).

<sup>32</sup> Tyacke, *Fortunes, passim*.