



Durham E-Theses

The rhetoric of religious polemic: a literary study of the church order debate in the reign of queen Elizabeth I.

Dickson, Wilma Ann

How to cite:

Dickson, Wilma Ann (1987) *The rhetoric of religious polemic: a literary study of the church order debate in the reign of queen Elizabeth I.*, Durham theses, Durham University. Available at Durham E-Theses Online: <http://etheses.dur.ac.uk/7068/>

Use policy

The full-text may be used and/or reproduced, and given to third parties in any format or medium, without prior permission or charge, for personal research or study, educational, or not-for-profit purposes provided that:

- a full bibliographic reference is made to the original source
- a [link](#) is made to the metadata record in Durham E-Theses
- the full-text is not changed in any way

The full-text must not be sold in any format or medium without the formal permission of the copyright holders.

Please consult the [full Durham E-Theses policy](#) for further details.

The copyright of this thesis rests with the author.
No quotation from it should be published without
his prior written consent and information derived
from it should be acknowledged.

THE RHETORIC OF RELIGIOUS POLEMIC.

A LITERARY STUDY OF THE CHURCH ORDER DEBATE IN THE REIGN OF QUEEN ELIZABETH I.

MRS WILMA ANN DICKSON

Submitted for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy,
University of Durham, 1987.



23.04.87

ABSTRACT

MRS WILMA ANN DICKSON - THE RHETORIC OF RELIGIOUS POLEMIC. A LITERARY STUDY OF THE CHURCH ORDER DEBATE IN THE REIGN OF QUEEN ELIZABETH I.

This thesis sets in their literary context polemical books and tracts arising from the debate on church order within the Church as established by law in the reign of Queen Elizabeth I.

The first two chapters set out the terms of the discussion and describe the historical context of the works considered. Chapter One looks at models of discourse appropriate for a study of polemic, concluding that the perspective of traditional rhetoric enables one to pose the right stylistic and ethical questions of works whose goal was effective persuasion. Chapter Two looks at the conditions under which these works were produced, analysing the extent and effectiveness of censorship.

The principal argument begins in Chapter Three, with an analysis of the main linguistic model for this literature - the formal disputation as practised in the universities - demonstrating its inability to cope with the fundamental nature of the disagreements between opponents and its tendency under pressure to become a trial in print. Chapter Four complements this analysis with a chronological survey of events from the Admonition controversy of 1572-3 to the mid-1580s. John Whitgift's appointment as Archbishop of Canterbury and his subsequent campaign against non-subscribers are identified as pivotal events which focused attention on the political and legal mechanisms for the enforcement of order in the church, and the literary responses of reformers to this shift of focus from the theological to the historic are analysed.

The first part of Chapter Five looks in more technical detail at the increasingly arbitrary use of literary language by reformers, examining the crucial influence of the dialectician Ramus on the tendency to treat as formal proof a rhetorically effective arrangement of propositions; the latter part of the chapter looks at the witty reductio ad absurdum of this tendency in the Marprelate tracts. Chapter Six considers the last ten to fifteen years of Elizabeth's reign, concentrating in particular on the polemic arising from or influenced by the Star Chamber cases against reformers in 1590-1.

The Conclusion summarises briefly the linguistic shortcuts used by the majority of polemicists to strengthen their case, and contrasts these with Hooker's emphasis on the need to respect the processes of language in the journey of theological discovery. Finally, I examine the implications of the obvious bankruptcy of traditional forms of exchange in a new situation, and the consequent decline of dialogue, for the English Church after 1603.

CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
1. THE MODEL OF RHETORIC	1
2. CENSORSHIP IN THEORY AND PRACTICE	27
Introduction	27
Part I: Introduction - From the Elizabethan Settlement to the Accession of Whitgift	44
Part I, Section I: Joint Action for Censorship?	48
Part I, Section II: The Legislative Position	78
Part II, Section I: Whitgift and the Star Chamber Decree of 1586	84
Part II, Section II: Radicals on Trial	101
3. DISPUTATION; DIALOGUE AND DRAMA	117
4. THE IMPACT OF WHITGIFT'S PRIMACY	163
5. THE DISTORTION OF DIALECTIC	215
Part I: Pragmatic Language: The Influence of Ramus	215
Part II: The Marprelate Tracts and After	234
6. THE TRIAL: FROM IMAGE TO HISTORY	286
Introduction	286
Part I: Evidence for the Prosecution; Bancroft and Cosin	289
Part II: Hooker	307
Part III: The Response of Reformers	319
CONCLUSION	336
BIBLIOGRAPHY	348

CHAPTER ONE

The Model of Rhetoric

The study of polemic crosses the boundaries of several disciplines. It is partly literary, partly historical, partly ethical, and as such it presents the student with the task of establishing a satisfactory methodology before he can begin to come to grips with the difficulties of the texts. This introductory chapter is an attempt to outline the personal synthesis I have formed from the range of critical options open to me; I trust that this will be seen as a fruitful liaison rather than uneasy cohabitation!

In the first place, polemic is more clearly rooted in the immediate historical context than most other literary modes. It is intended to form the literary link in a chain of cause and effect; indeed, it is so pragmatic that Western critical thought, still largely derived from the aestheticist tradition, finds it hard to accept it as 'literature' at all. Like Keats, we recoil at anything which has a 'palpable design' upon us¹. The first problem, then, facing the student of polemic is to find a model of literature capacious enough to include literary polemic with some credibility, that is, a model which takes into account the complex interaction between historical and literary events. One may think in terms of a kind of set theory in which every literary event is also historical, but not every historical event finds expression in literary - or even verbal - form.

The obvious place to look for the elements of such a model is in the voluminous and by no means univocal body of criticism which comes under the blanket heading of 'Marxist'. Here, at least, there is no divorce

1. Keats to John Hamilton Reynolds, Tuesday 3 February, 1818. In M.B. Forman (ed.), The Letters of John Keats (4th edition, Oxford, 1952), 95.



between word and action. As Trotsky put it, in his famous epigram summarising the difference between his position and that of the Russian Formalists of the early 1920s:

The Formalists show a fast ripening religiousness. They are followers of St. John. They believe that 'In the beginning was the Word'. But we believe that in the beginning was the deed. The word followed, as its phonetic shadow. 1

While, however, Marxists would generally agree that the relationship between word and deed is as close as Trotsky here suggests it to be, the simplicity of the sequence he quotes and the unquestioned primacy of the deed are by no means invariably echoed in Marxist criticism. The complexity of the historical process (which includes both deed and word) emerges clearly in such primary Marxist works as the later letters of Engels, in which he struggles against the reductive theory produced by his and Marx's earlier polemical stress on economic determinism:

According to the materialist conception of history, the ultimately determining element in history is the production and reproduction of real life. More than this neither Marx nor I have ever asserted. Hence if somebody twists this into saying that the economic element is the only determining one, he transforms that proposition into a meaningless, abstract, senseless phrase. The economic situation is the basis, but the various elements of the superstructure - political forms of the class struggle and its results, to wit: constitutions established by the victorious class after a successful battle, etc., juridical forms, and even the reflexes of all these actual struggles in the brains of the participant, political, juristic, philosophical theories, religious views and their further development into systems of dogmas - also exercise their influence upon the course of the historical struggles and in many cases preponderate in determining their form ... Otherwise the application of the theory to any period of history would be easier than the solution of a simple equation of the first degree. 2

One may roughly divide Marxist criticism into that which does indeed suggest to the reader that the application of general theory to particular

-
1. Leon Trotsky, Literature and Revolution (Ann Arbor, 1960) quoted in David Craig (ed.), Marxists on Literature: An Anthology (London, 1977), 379.
 2. Engels to J. Bloch 21 September, 1890, in Karl Marx and Frederick Engels: Selected Works (New York, Moscow and London, 1968), 682.

literary events has been as simple and mechanical as 'the solution of a simple equation of the first degree' ¹ and that which makes a creative attempt to spell out the complex relationship between the two. The effect of this latter type of criticism is to focus one's attention on the human beings whose wills form the bridge between impulse and act, conception and creation; as Engels puts it:

So it is not, as people try here and there conveniently to imagine, that the economic situation produces an automatic effect. No. Men make their history themselves, only they do so in a given environment, which conditions it, and on the basis of actual relations already existing, among which the economic relations, however much they may be influenced by the other - the political and ideological relations, are still ultimately the decisive ones, forming the keynote which runs through them and alone leads to understanding. ²

There is tension at the heart of the best Marxist criticism. On the one hand it is unwilling to allow the individual more than a representative role; on the other it constantly finds itself talking of him as if he were more than the mere mouthpiece of history. To take just one interesting example; in his great work, The Historical Novel, Georg Lukacs prefaces his account of 'changes in the conception of history after the revolution of 1848' with the following caveat:

If individual historians or philosophers achieved a notable influence on these questions, this influence is not a primary cause, but itself a consequence of the new ideological tendencies among both writers and readers, produced by the social-historical development. If then in the following, we cite a number of leading ideologists of this new attitude to history, we regard them as representatives of general social currents which they have simply formulated in the most effective literary manner. ³

He is covering himself against the possible charge of taking genius too seriously as an autonomous historical fact, and as we read the subsequent

-
1. See, for instance, Christopher Caudwell's essay 'English Poets: the Period of Primitive Accumulation' in Illusion and Reality (London, 1946), 73-87.
 2. Engels to W. Borgius, 25 January, 1894, in Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, 694.
 3. Georg Lukacs, The Historical Novel (London, 1976), 204-5.

appraisals of philosophers such as Nietzsche it becomes clear that such apprehension is not without reason ¹.

The solution of the more orthodox to this tension is that outlined in the first of the two quotations above from Engels's letters; form is arbitrarily separated from content, and 'the various elements of the superstructure' including the mental struggle of history's leading participants, is assigned a certain responsibility for the form taken by the economically determined content. This, it seems to me, dissociates elements which in the creative process are always fused together. The alternative is a more adventurous formula like the following:

What is a creator? Whether we consider music, poetry, the novel, drama, the cinema, architecture, painting, or sculpture, the creator is not just a manufacturer of products whose elements are given in advance, he is not a mere arranger. In every work of art, there is a part which is not reducible to a set of given data, and this part is the creative artist himself. A particular work of art could only have been produced by a particular writer, a particular artist. ²

This is drawn from an official resolution of the French Communist Party. It has the merit of considering the work as an organic unity rather than as a particular arrangement of given elements which could easily be dismantled and re-assembled. Reinstating the author, it reduces historical determinism to an odd species of optimism:

Once mankind has got rid of the restrictions and the fetters imposed by 'egotistical calculation' it should be able to find this treasure [literary creation] and grasp it in its totality. ³

One possible dialectical synthesis of these extremes may be found

-
1. For example, 'Nietzsche's extraordinary influence rests not least on the seriousness with which he took the agnosticism and subjectivism of his time and the extreme boldness with which he came to grips with them'. (Lukacs, The Historical Novel, 212.)
 2. Resolution adopted by the French Communist Party after a three day session devoted to ideological and cultural issues, March 1966. In 'Les Cahiers du Communisme' (Paris, 1966) quoted in Craig, Marxists on Literature, 527.
 3. Ibid.

in the work of Terry Eagleton, whose essay Categories for a Materialist Criticism¹ sets out and explains what Eagleton considers to be the major constituents of a Marxist theory of literature - the General Mode of Production current at the time, the Literary Mode of Production, General Ideology, Authorial Ideology, Aesthetic Ideology and (last but not least) the text. I would agree that all of these are important; indeed, the next chapter of this thesis is in practice a study of the ideology of censorship held by the dominant group in Elizabethan ecclesiastical politics as it was expressed in control of the literary means of production, and the reflection of this control in the 'Authorial Ideology' of both sides. Again, however, it is when Eagleton discusses the individual contribution of the author that I begin to feel uneasy. He makes the fair point that authorial ideology is not a completely original creation - it reflects the ideology of the day 'as that ideology is itself worked and "produced" by an overdetermination of authorial-biographical factors'. He then continues:

There is no question here of 'centring' the literary text on the individual subject who produces it; but neither is it a matter of liquidating that subject into 'general' aesthetic and ideological forms. It is a question of specifying the ideological determinations of the text - determinations which include the effect of the author's mode of insertion into GI [General Ideology].²

By defining ideology to include all human perceptions at any given point, Eagleton is able to say that everything can be explained in terms of an interaction between general and authorial ideology. The image of the human individual which is projected is a cybernetic one - the individual subject simply houses the complex interaction between general ideology and 'authorial - biographical factors'. The missing link here seems to me the recognition of individual consciousness - that hypothesis

1. T. Eagleton, 'Categories for a Materialist Criticism' in Criticism and Ideology. A Study in Marxist Literary Theory (London, 1976).

2. Ibid., 59-60.

which we can neither prove nor do without. Marxist criticism such as that of Eagleton demands that we take men seriously as mediators rather than simply tools of the historical process. If, however, men are merely the sum of their experiences shaped by the ideology of their society, the apparent gain in human significance of Eagleton's criticism is largely illusory.

The two theses which orthodox Marxism cannot comfortably accommodate together are the freedom of the individual in a liberating socialist society and the historical inevitability which renders that freedom just another bourgeois illusion. The problem is not peculiar to Marxism; in the specifically theological form which saw divine will as the determining historical factor it was the focus of debate within the early Protestant church, and the implications of that debate for the interpretation of Scripture will be touched on later in this thesis. In terms of the critical options available to a twentieth century literary student, however, it is the diverse Marxist formulations of the problem which have to be taken into account.

I would suggest that a viable critical theory which could encompass the kind of politico-literary debates to be discussed in this thesis might most usefully stress not historical determinism, which taken simply reduces the relationship between history and literature till the latter is only the 'phonetic shadow' of the former, but the more elusive but more interesting references to the complex exchange between the individual will of the worker and the means of production to which he is at first subordinated and over which he is determined to gain control -- the concept of history as modified by human 'praxis', which would include literature, and modifying the human response in its turn¹. I think it important,

1. As Engels wrote in another of his late letters on historical materialism, ~~'...once a historic element has been brought into the world by other,~~ ultimately economic causes it reacts, can react on its environment and even on the causes that have given rise to it'. Engels to Franz Mehring, 14 July, 1893, included in Marx and Engels: Basic Writings on Politics and Philosophy edited by Lewis S. Feuer (London, 1978), 448.

therefore, to try to map out the interactions between words and deeds without necessarily making any authoritative pronouncement about which of the two constitutes the secular equivalent of the First Cause. The observer of the dialectical process is himself part of that process and is changed by his own act of observing; logically, only a transcendent being could stand outside the historical flux and see it as a simple, purposeful whole, with an easily discernible beginning and end, and Marxism specifically denies transcendence. The paradox of classical Marxism is the dual role assigned to the theoretician, who is both participant in the dialectical process - and also the prophet who sees the end from the beginning and thereby stands over against the process in a kind of timeless detachment. It seems to me that the critic would do better to imitate the first by immersing himself in the confusing stream of events than to imitate the second in an attempt to make definitive pronouncements about ultimate cause and effect.

A simplified view may succeed in explaining away the sheer diversity of the human response - as when Engels blandly writes:

The further the particular sphere which we are investigating is removed from the economic sphere and approaches that of pure abstract ideology, the more shall we find it exhibiting accidents in its development, the more will its curve run zigzag. But if you plot the average axis of the curve, you find that this axis will run more and more nearly parallel to the axis of economic development the longer the period considered and the wider the field dealt with. 1

History, however, is a unique sequence of events to which the calculation of averages in this sense is entirely foreign; it cannot be replotted by the historian to suit his own ideology. Engels is in fact giving us a selective theory of history disguised as comprehensive observation, a theory which cannot even accommodate the enormous individual importance of its formulator:

1. Engels to W. Borgius, 25 January, 1894, in Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, 695.

While Marx discovered the materialist conception of history ... the discovery of the same conception by Morgan proves that the time was ripe for it and that it simply had to be discovered. 1

One cannot deny a great original thinker his individual role in the shaping of history as simply as that; and close examination of events from the point of view of 'praxis' brings one up against the irreducible datum of the individual actor - in the context of this thesis, the individual writer - who may be set in context but who resists treatment as a historically inevitable mouthpiece for events. The study of polemic as I see it, then, has two essential components: the recognition of elements derived from contemporary historical crises and the study of individual works in their own terms as examples of a series of authorial choices between a range of stylistic and interpretative possibilities - a series of choices which, in their turn, have a direct and often conscious influence on subsequent events. As a recent writer on the sociology of the novel put it:

... literature emerges as both an interrogation and a questioning of reality, the complex response of specific men, who live out their lives within specific social groups, to the dominating human, social and political problems of their time. 2

Literature, then, is intimately related to history; but to see it as no more than a compendium of useful sociological information is to ignore the individual creativity which has not merely rearranged pre-existent elements but rather metamorphosed them into a new reality of a different order - a literary artefact. In the thesis which follows I intend both to set the polemic under consideration in its historical context and to evaluate it by criteria proper to the study of language as a human activity.

Immediately this raises the further problem 'Which criteria?'

1. Ibid.

2. Alan Swingewood, The Novel and Revolution (London, 1975), 14.

To answer this question it is necessary to look a little more closely at the nature of the literature under consideration. If (as it seems to me) C.S. Lewis was right in saying that the first essential step when considering any artefact from a corkscrew to a cathedral was to ask oneself what it was for, in order to avoid the injustice of criticising it for failing to fulfil a purpose for which it was not intended, it would seem appropriate to look at the genre of religious polemic to see what questions one may fairly ask of the language in which it is couched and what conceptual tools are needed to ask them.

Without pre-empting later and more detailed discussion of the nature of debate, one may make one general point about sixteenth century religious prose in general. The very fact that the works in the church order debate deal with religious subjects imposes a purposeful restraint on the author's creativity; in the preface to a work dealing with the bestowing of children in marriage according to Scriptural precedent - hardly very controversial - the author explains '... what difference there is betweene a pleasant story (which wee may handle according to our humour) and a grave discourse (which must be penned according to the platfourme)' ¹. ~~'Penned according to the platfourme'~~ - in other words, a functional but accurate account of a standpoint. Purely aesthetic criteria, then, are tangential to this prose; instead we need some way of judging whether the writer is indeed faithful to the explanatory nature of his task or whether he departs from it for some reason of his own. To know this one first has to decide how language, as a human activity, is or can be given meaning on which there is public consensus and from which deviations can be noted. The later part of this thesis deals in some detail with the processes by which the frank exchange of real debate is evaded by the participants in this literary

1. Charles Gibbon, A Work Worth the Reading (London, 1591). Preface 'To the Indifferent Reader' quoted in R.F. Jones, The Triumph of the English Language (Stanford, 1966), 172.

battle; such a discussion would, however, be senseless - indeed, impossible - if we had no idea, however imperfect and provisional, of the mechanism by which words acquire a commonly agreed meaning.

Turning to the theories available to a twentieth century student which deal with the process by which language acquires meaning, it is impossible to avoid some discussion of what in modern terms has been described as the 'Homeric struggle' between 'theorists of communication intention' and 'theorists of formal semantics' ¹. The best known and most controversial of the latter type of theorists is probably Noam Chomsky; and the most convenient summary of the debate is to be found in his later books, Current Issues in Linguistic Theory and Reflections on Language ². Chomsky's own position owes much to the theories of the nineteenth century philologist Humboldt, and in the following quotation he sums up those elements of Humboldt's theories which he himself has adopted. The quotation answers the question 'What happens when someone is addressed?':

... a system of concepts is activated in the listener, and it is the place of a concept within this system (which may differ somewhat from speaker to speaker) that, in part, determines the way in which the hearer understands a linguistic expression. - Finally, the concepts so formed are systematically interrelated in an 'inner totality' with varying interconnections and structural relations ... This inner totality, formed by the use of language in thought, conception, and expression of feeling, functions as a conceptual world interposed through the constant activity of the mind between itself and the actual objects, and it is within this system that a word obtains its value ... Consequently, a language should not be regarded merely, or primarily, as a means of communication ... and the instrumental use of language (its use for achieving concrete aims) is derivative and subsidiary. ³

This position will be seen to come sharply into conflict with that of

-
1. P.F. Strawson, quoted in Noam Chomsky, Reflections on Language (London, 1976), 64.
 2. Noam Chomsky, Current Issues in Linguistic Theory (Mouton, The Hague/Paris, 1970); Reflections on Language.
 3. Noam Chomsky, Current Issues in Linguistic Theory, 21.

the 'theorists of communication intention' whose central tenet is that 'the purpose of language is communication in much the same sense that the purpose of the heart is to pump blood' ¹.

Chomsky sees the structures of language as biologically determined by 'universal grammar', a set of innate principles and conditions which are common to all human languages. Understanding is also internalised: 'meaning-determining' rules are built into the organism, and syntax may therefore be studied without reference to the total context in which it occurs. It should be stressed in fairness that this is a tentative, experimental approach: Chomsky regards it as a fruitful hypothesis, not a foregone conclusion ². However, Chomsky's idea of autonomous syntax is rejected as unacceptable linguistic atomism by his opponents. I quote from Ian Robinson's lively and polemical attack on Chomsky; Robinson sometimes seems to tilt at windmills but here he isolates the fundamental difference of opinion between Chomsky and (say) Wittgenstein:

... the sentence, to be a sentence, needs a home in language as well as in the rules of syntax; it needs a situation which will allow it to do what it does as a sentence. ³

This is reminiscent of Wittgenstein's own stress that a linguistic move is like a move in chess, and that:

... a move in chess doesn't consist simply in moving a piece in such-and-such a way on the board - nor yet in one's thoughts and feelings as one makes the move: but in the circumstances that we call 'playing a game of chess', 'solving a chess problem' and so on. ⁴

In other words, language can only be studied in motion, as a sequence

-
1. J.R. Searle, quoted in Chomsky, Reflections on Language, 55.
 2. See Noam Chomsky, Studies on Semantics in Generative Grammar. Quoted in Ian Robinson, The New Grammarian's Funeral: A Critique of Noam Chomsky's Linguistics (Cambridge, 1975), 57.
 3. Robinson, The New Grammarian's Funeral, 45.
 4. Ludwig Wittgenstein, Philosophical Investigations, trans. G.E.M. Anscombe (Oxford, 1976) (hereinafter cited as Wittgenstein, Philosophical Investigations), 17e, para.33.

of events which together define the boundaries of possible human communication. The difference may perhaps be clearer if we look for a moment at the negative correlatives of these rather vague definitions -- the criteria for meaninglessness. Chomsky is quite categorical.

Having acquired the system of language, the person can (in principle) choose to use it or not, as he can choose to keep to or disregard his judgements concerning the position of objects in space. He cannot choose to have sentences mean other than what they do, any more than he can choose to have objects distributed in perceptual space otherwise than the way they are. 1

For Wittgenstein, meaninglessness is contingent upon a human choice to draw a boundary between sense and nonsense for some purpose -- which might, for example, be to stimulate inventive players of the language game to leap over it and enlarge the field of 'sense'. In any case then:

When a sentence is called senseless, it is not as it were its sense that is senseless. But a combination of words is being excluded from the language, withdrawn from circulation. 2

Another way of clarifying the distinction is to consider the two men's attitude to grammar. Conceiving of grammar as biologically predetermined, Chomsky can conceive of a grammar which goes beyond the level of 'descriptive adequacy' to that of 'explanatory adequacy' ³; Wittgenstein, for whom language is contingent upon its whole human context, conceives no such elevated function for grammar:

Grammar does not tell us how language must be constructed in order to fulfil its purpose, in order to have such and such an effect on human beings. It only describes and in no way explains the use of signs. 4

In its precise terms this debate is modern; but, to borrow

1. Chomsky, Reflections on Language, 71.

2. Wittgenstein, Philosophical Investigations, 139e, para.500.

3. Chomsky, Current Issues in Linguistic Theory, 28.

4. Wittgenstein, Philosophical Investigations, 138e, para.496.

Wittgenstein's own terminology, it belongs to the same 'family' of debates as that over the 'fixing' of the language in the eighteenth century, a project whose failure is summed up magisterially by Johnson:

With this hope ... academies have been instituted, to guard the avenues of their languages, to retain fugitives, and repulse intruders; but their vigilance and activity have hitherto been vain; sounds are too volatile and subtle for legal restraints; to enchain syllables, and to lash the wind, are equally the undertakings of pride, unwilling to measure its desires by its strength. 1

Chomsky considers the restraints to be internal 'meaning-determining rules' rather than an external academy, but the aims are not dissimilar; to map out a correct, adequate language which determines usage rather than being determined by it.

It is far too soon to say categorically that the 'theorists of formal structure' are indulging in a pointless and erroneous exercise, though it is fair to point out that Chomsky's theories hang on a set of unproven assumptions about the nature of language-learning centres in the brain, while the consensus of history allots to **the** grammarian a more modest and less scientific task than that which Chomsky assumes. Johnson despaired not only of explanatory adequacy but even of descriptive adequacy:

... while our language is yet living, and variable by the caprice of every one that speaks it, these words are hourly shifting their relations, and can no more be ascertained in a dictionary, than a grove, in the agitation of a storm, can be accurately delineated from its picture in the water. 2

Whether or not any theory which considers formal semantics in isolation from their context turns out to have scientific foundation, however, is of secondary importance here. What is clear is that though such a theory may be a useful tool for a Narcissus elucidating his own

-
1. Samuel Johnson, Preface to A Dictionary of the English Language (London, 1755), included in The English Language: Essays by English and American Men of Letters, edited by W.F. Bolton (Cambridge, 1966), 152.
 2. Ibid., 141.

soliloquies it is inappropriate to the study of a debate. For a debater does not merely use language in a creative new way, leaving the reader or hearer to work out a personal meaning from the resonances it awakens in his mind. He uses it with the avowed intention of communicating a certain precise message to another mind. Such an exchange is dependent on the use of publicly accessible linguistic forms, which have acquired their meaning by the practical consensus of use. This would have been even clearer to a sixteenth century critic than it is now, for in the Renaissance the study of the mechanics of a commonly agreed literary language - in the form of grammar, logic and rhetoric - was considered to be a prior, basic requirement to adequate communication of any kind. As Wittgenstein put it:

An intention is embedded in its situation, in human customs and institutions. If the technique of the game of chess did not exist, I could not intend to play a game of chess. Insofar as I do intend the construction of a sentence in advance, that is made possible by the fact that I speak the language in question. 1

I take an example relevant to the subject matter of this thesis: the decision to state a position in such a way as to preclude the possibility that the opposite position may have any validity involves a decision to use a language in which 'A is not non-A' has a readily recognisable meaning. Intention, of course, is a hazardous word; Wittgenstein is at pains to make clear in the section quoted above and other analogous sections of his work that intention is not a prior mental state, but simply the clear direction of the utterance. Meaning, then, is not inherent in the utterance in itself, but in the purposeful use of it in the context of a whole language. In the context of debate language is clearly not an end in itself but a means to a further end - the creation of a new conviction in another mind. Accordingly, the

1. Wittgenstein, Philosophical Investigations, 108e, para.337.

evaluation of the personal aim of the speaker as demonstrated by his use of the common language is a vital part of the elucidation of meaning; and setting the works under consideration here firmly in the context of those who produce them and of their understanding of the permissible limits of language allows us to ask ethical questions of the 'speech-act' which would not be appropriately asked of the 'word on the page'.

Although in the modern context belief in a 'communication-intention' theory of language is only one of the possible polemical stances in an unresolved debate, in the critical context of the polemic which forms the subject of this thesis it would have been taken as a truism. One quotation selected at random from a popular contemporary handbook of literary theory makes the point clear:

Utterance also and language is given by nature to man for perswasion of others and aide of themselves, I meane the first abilitie to speake. For speech it selfe is artificiall and made by man, and the more pleasing it is, the more it prevaileth to such purpose as it is intended for: but speech by meeter is a kind of utterance, more cleanly couched and more delicate to the eare then prose is ... So as the Poets were also from the beginning the best perswaders and their eloquence the first Rethoricke [sic] of the world. 1

This quotation makes another interesting point. Within any general theory of language as a persuasive tool, there are subsets of language games each more self conscious and hence more 'artificial' and sophisticated than the last. Again, this point finds an echo in the writings of twentieth century 'communication-intention' theorists: H.P. Grice's fascinating essay on Meaning², for example, discusses the difference between meaning which is 'natural' to the language ('the spots mean measles') and meaning which is dependent on the speaker's use of an arbitrary convention which he is certain his particular audience will understand.

1. Puttenham, The Arte of English Poesie, edited by G.D. Willcock and A. Walker (Cambridge, 1936), 8.

2. H.P. Grice, Meaning, reprinted in Philosophical Logic (Oxford, 1967) edited by P.F. Strawson, 39ff.

The 'language game' under consideration in this thesis is highly structured; building on the ground of the formal processes of debate as refined by the medieval educational process of disputation, the contestants make use of every technique of rhetoric, conceived not as stylistic ornament but in the wider classical sense of a persuasive art closely allied to both logic and ethics, in order to generate conviction. And the title of this thesis indicates that I have chosen to work within the traditional framework of rhetoric, in the widest sense. This framework would have been understood by the protagonists, and it enables one to ask questions which are ethical as well as purely stylistic.

At the heart of this thesis are questions about rhetoric. Has rhetoric in the neutral sense of one traditional description of the mechanics of linguistic persuasion become rhetoric in the derogatory sense so often adopted by the polemicists themselves - 'Cogge not therefore, nor foiste it, neither bumbaste it with Rhetoricke, ...' ¹ - a conjuring trick in which the quickness of the author's pen deceives the reader's mind? In other words, is the writer playing the game according to the rules he publicly acknowledges, or is he twisting them to suit himself? To a twentieth century reader this moral perspective may seem odd ²; to a sixteenth century reader, however, it was entirely natural. As is well known, the age was one in which there was considerable optimism about the ability of the human mind to integrate what might today be seen as different kinds of truth into one interrelated whole; this seems to me an admirable attempt and I have chosen the framework

1. Anon., An exhortation to the Bishops and their Clergie (London ?, 1572), reprinted in W.H. Frere and C.E. Douglas (eds), Puritan Manifestoes (1907), 71.

2. For a brief but brilliant consideration of why the moral perspective on literature seems aberrant to the modern mind, see the analysis of the growth of aestheticism in M.H. Abrams' essay 'What's the Use of Theorizing about the Arts' in M.W. Bloomfield (ed.), In Search of Literary Theory (Cornell U.P., 1972), 39-49.

of rhetoric precisely in an attempt to find a criterion which, though primarily literary, does not rule out consideration of major issues which might be thought to belong to other disciplines - including philosophy and law. My encounter with fields not my own will, of necessity be brief and tangential, but it seems to me better to confront the source material as it is, in its indivisible complexity, than to separate out one strand and in so doing give a false impression of the whole. In the earlier part of this introduction I stressed the need to see polemic as a literary event in the context of other events; similarly, I think it essential to see it as a literary discipline in the context of allied disciplines.

For the clear distinctions between 'disciplines' with which we mark the limits of what a modern man in this age of greatly increased wisdom can reasonably be expected to know, were by no means as clear in the century which is being studied here; and this is to some extent attributable to the fact that a concern with precise language which conformed to traditional norms was a common feature of all disciplines. Works which for convenience sake we label 'religious pamphlets' or 'literary treatises' often refuse to fit neatly into the categories established by later critics. Browne's Treatise on the 23rd of Matthew¹ won contemporary fame, as we are told by Bacon, not as an exposition of a passage often used by Puritans to castigate the Establishment, but as a polemic which invited ridicule by using every device of rhetoric to denounce rhetoric itself. Writing of the Brownists, Bacon says scornfully:

Neither had they been much known at all, had not Browne their leader written a pamphlet, wherein, as it came into his head, he inveighed more against logic and rhetoric than against the state of the church;

1. Reprinted in A. Peel and L.H. Carlson (eds.), The Writings of Robert Harrison and Robert Browne (London, 1953), 171-220.

which writing was much read; ... ¹

Literary and religious considerations are, as we see, inseparable. As a counterpart to Browne's book, which purports to deal with religious matters and is largely concerned with literary ones, one might consider The Scholemaster (1570), written by the moderate Puritan Ascham, which far from restricting itself to its ostensible brief of basic teaching methods takes education in the widest possible sense of overall moral development, and includes comment on the favourite Elizabethan theme of order under threat: '... disobedience doth overflowe the bankes of good order' ², which in its turn is seen as divine punishment for lukewarm and insincere religious observance:

For, all thies misorders, be Goddes juste plages, ...
for our sinnes, ... but namelie for the greate abhominable
sin of unkindnesse: but what, unkindnesse? even such
unkindnesse as was in the Jewes, in contemninge Goddes
voice, in shrinking from his woorde, in wishing backe
againe for AEgypt, in committing advoultrie and hordom,
not with the women, but with the doctrine of Babylon,... ³

Imagery and tone recall innumerable pamphlets of Puritan polemic; but Ascham does not pursue this vein for long. Having recorded his protest at the general religious situation, he returns with no sense of incongruity to his own particular field - the training of youthful minds...

Thus, while sixteenth-century writers have a very strong and clearly defined sense of literary decorum, their criteria concern the internal relationship between subject-matter and style and not (as, perhaps, nowadays) the specialisation of subject-matter and the isolation of different areas of critical comment in compartments sealed off by technical vocabulary. Restless creative energy leads the author into fascinating digressions; even more important, it leads him outward

1. F. Bacon, 'Certain Observations made upon a libel ...' (1592) in J. Spedding (ed.), The Letters and the Life of Sir Francis Bacon, I (London, 1861), 165-6.

2. R. Ascham, The Scholemaster (London, 1570) (Scolar Press Facsimile, 1967), sig. F iii verso.

3. Ibid.

from the immediate particular issue under consideration to set the particular in the framework of that authority, human or divine, which ultimately sanctions or condemns it. The world 'model', of course, is that of a hierarchy whose final authority is vested in God, who is Truth itself; and no human faculty, particularly not the important one of persuasive eloquence, can be judged simply on the grounds of incidental effectiveness, but is to be traced back to its divine source for an elucidation of its purpose. Thus at the beginning of Wilson's Arte of Rhetorique, the author describes eloquence as a divine gift bestowed upon specially commissioned ministers to rescue humanity from inarticulate bestiality; the pursuit of true eloquence is part of man's reascent towards God. The 'reasonable, wittie and eloquent man' is, says Wilson:

... to be coumpted for halfe a God. For in seeking the excellencie hereof, the soner he draweth to perfection, the nyer he commeth to God, who is the cheefe wisdom, and therefore called God, because he is most wise, or rather wisdom it self. 1

The power to persuade is a divine gift, not lightly to be abused.

Elizabethan literary theorists set in a theological context the debate about the morality of persuasive style which had been an issue since classical times. In their detailed development of the question they relied heavily upon the Aristotelian tradition, which recognised clearly that persuasion is a morally neutral faculty which is rendered good or evil by the rectitude or cunning of the user:

And if it is urged that the unjust use of this rhetorical faculty would be exceedingly mischievous to the world, this is a charge which may be brought against all good things, save virtue only, ... 2

Judiciously employed, rhetoric is not simply an artistic arrangement of words; it is '... so to say, an offshoot of Dialectic on the one

-
1. Wilson, The Arte of rhetorique (London, 1560), reprinted 'Tudor and Stuart Library', ed. G.H. Mair (1909), Preface, sig. A [vii] verso.
 2. Aristotle, Rhetoric, trans. J.E.C. Welldon (London, 1886), 8.

hand, and on the other of the study of Ethics ...¹

There is little which is new in the sixteenth century reworking of this tradition, apart from the framework of myth which enhances its authority. Theorists reproduce the arguments and even the illustrations used by Aristotle in the Rhetoric. In his discussion of the admissibility of figurative language, Puttenham defines metaphor as 'an inversion of sence by transport' and comments:

... which thing made the grave judges Areopagites
(as I find written) to forbid all manner of figurative
speeches to be used before them in their consistorie of
Justice, as meere illusions to the minde, and wresters
of upright judgement, ... 2

And Puttenham finds himself obliged to make a special case for the poet's use of such language; he states that poets are pleaders rather than judges:

... and that of pleasant and lovely causes and nothing
perillous, such as be those for the triall of life,
limme or livelyhood; ... 3

The negative implication is clear; in any presentation of serious issues excessive coercion by literary means is an offence against justice. And the subject of this thesis is not 'pleasant and lovely causes' but rather those which in the sixteenth century were the most 'perillous' of all - issues of religious controversy, which did indeed put life, limb and livelihood at risk; these are, therefore, the areas in which the greatest moral caution in matters of style was deemed necessary.

Style cannot, however, be considered in isolation from the matter it expresses. Jonson's aphorism 'In all speech, words and sense are as the body and the soule'⁴ reflects the organic view of verbal

1. Ibid., 12.

2. Puttenham, The Arte of English Poesie, 154. The example of the 'grave judges Areopagites' comes from Aristotle, Rhetoric, 2.

3. Ibid.

4. B. Jonson, Timber; or Discoveries (before 1637); reprinted in Bolton (ed.), The English Language, 38.

communication typical of the period; 'We murder to dissect' ¹ seems to be a later development: Puttenham's classic definition of style:

... there be that have called stile, the image of man [mentis character] for man is but his minde, and as his minde is tempered and qualified, so are his speeches and language at large, and his inward conceits be the mettall of his minde, and his manner of utterance the very warp and woofe of his conceits. ²

shows us that style and matter are simply the two facets of a man's self revelation in words: the mind which produced them is a unity and the 'conceits' which form its very substance or 'mettall' are woven into a web of language which communicates an accurate image of that mind. Writing specifically of Latin and Greek religious controversial authors, Ascham states that style and matter are so fused together as to make it possible to judge of the validity of the latter by considering the nature of the former:

And contrariwise, in these two tonges, all writers, either in Religion, or any sect of Philosophie, whosoever be founde fonde in judgement of matter, be commonlie found as rude in uttering their mynde. For Stoickes, Anabaptistes and Friars: with Epicures, Libertines and Monkes, being most like in learning and life, are no fonder and pernicious in their opinions, than they be rude and barbarous in their writings. They be not wise, therefore that say, what care I for a mans wordes and utterance, if his matter and reasons be good ... For good and choice meates, be no more requisite for helthie bodies, then proper and apte wordes be for good matters, and also plaine and sensible utterance for the best and deepest reasons: in which two pointes standeth perfite eloquence one of the fairest and rarest giftes, that God doth geve to man. ³

As a justification of the study indicated by the title of this thesis, Ascham's statement could hardly be bettered! However naive may be its religious groupings, I have quoted it at length because it contains a quintessential expression of the sixteenth century idea of 'decorum'

-
1. Wordsworth, Poetical Works, edited by Hutchinson, revised Selincourt (Oxford, 1969), 377.
 2. Puttenham, The Arte of English Poesie, 148.
 3. Ascham, The Scholemaster, sig. O ii recto/verso.

- perfect harmony between style and subject-matter. This goes deeper than mere verbal propriety - Puttenham calls it 'This lovely conformitie, or proportion, or convenience betweene the sence and the sensible ...' ¹ Breach of decorum in style was taken seriously. Puttenham used the image of 'heresy' to describe it, indicating its moral overtones:

... such trespasses in speach ... as geve dolour and disliking to the eye and minde by any foule indecencie or disproportion of sound, situation or sence, they be called and not without cause the vicious partes or rather heresies of language: ... ²

The same overtones are heard in William Wilkinson's marginal comment, 'H.N. his Stile is hereticall', printed beside a paragraph in which he exposes the Familist's tendency to conceal paucity of matter with impressive but empty verbal flights:

... for let the diligent Reader pare and set aside his wrested and violent Allegories, his unusuall and insignificant phrases ... he shall finde small substaunce ... and sometyme he shal be so plunged in the wordes, and wander for matter, that he shall very hardly or not at all make sence of that he readeth. ³

The purpose of eloquence (returning to Ascham's simile) is to nourish and sustain the truth; eloquence devoid of content consists merely of 'unusuall and insignificant phrases'.

In the study of the literature of Elizabethan religious debate, where the most serious issues are ostensibly being discussed it is, I would submit, of primary importance to take into account the two contemporary principles outlined above. In the first place, individuals often have inter-disciplinary literary interests; classification of genre is flexible, so that 'religious' and 'literary' works may overlap; and judgements of literary creativity are invariably made in the light

1. Puttenham, The Arte of English Poesie, 262.

2. Ibid., 155.

3. William Wilkinson, A Confutation of Certaine Articles delivered Unto the Familye of Love, with the exposition of Theophilus, a supposed Elder in the sayd Familye upon the same (London, 1579), sig. K iiii verso.

of the use intended by the Creator for the faculties he gave to man. Secondly, style and matter cannot be considered in isolation from each other. 'Eloquence' cannot be abstracted out of particular contexts; it is an instrument of persuasion and for a just evaluation of its worth its immediate content as well as its form must be looked into. Literature, then, is not an end in itself but the means to a further end. As one part of the process of human change, it must be examined not only in itself, but also in relation to both the creative and the receptive mind.

For this reason contemporary criticism dealt with more than the felicitous or injudicious arrangement of words on the page; it saw the work in terms of its aim and sought to evaluate its impact on the moral consciousness of the reader. Religious literature in general and religious polemic in particular are merely overt forms of a persuasion which many writers saw as implicit in all literature, even that which purports only to entertain; as Ascham said: 'Mo Papistes be made, by your mery bookes of Italie, than by your earnest bookes of Lovain' ¹. To the Puritan, in particular, every form of literary expression reflected the religious pre-suppositions the author was trying to share - as Dering put it:

... we have multiplied for our selves so many newe delights, that we might justifie the idolatrous superstition of the elder world. To this purpose we have printed us many bawdy Songs (I am loth to use such a loathsome word, save that it is not fit enough for so vile endeavours) ... 2

The difference is not one of nature, but of degree. When the declared intention of the writer is to influence the reader's religious commitment he is, in sixteenth century terms, playing for the highest possible stakes - the human soul - and thus the rules of his language-game are

1. Ascham, The Scholemaster, sig. I ii verso.

2. Edward Dering, 'A brief and necessarie catechisme', preface To The Christian Reader, sig. A verso in M. Derings Workes (London, 1597).

correspondingly stricter than those of the poet's language-game. The two questions about literature which we see Sidney in his Apologie asking with specific reference to poetry - is it effective? Are its methods ethically defensible? - become all the more urgent and pointed when we consider that here the question is not simply one of ethical improvement, but of salvation itself. Not all critics would have conceded the extreme Puritan viewpoint (exemplified by Dering) which found doctrinal implications in every suggestive song; where, however, persuasion is overt the issues at stake are clear. To persuade a man to concur with the truth of the Gospel was, in effect, to save his soul; to lead him away from the true church was to court his damnation. Men uncertain of the truth, said one Protestant commentator on the Council of Trent, 'have not without great danger of their soules departed out of this life' ¹; to resolve such uncertainty by one's persuasive rhetoric is to render a service to God and man. Even in lesser matters such as those with which the church order debate concerned itself, the choice is still that between obedience or disobedience to God. When playing for high stakes one wishes to be sure that the game is absolutely fair; the controversialists analyse each other's works minutely in search of any equivocation or dishonesty which might be used to discredit the whole argument. The more seriously one takes a man's matter, the more closely one examines his use of language.

To sum up: the theoretical 'givens' with which I am working in this thesis are as follows. Firstly, though I do not believe that the literary expressions of polemic are totally determined by the events of history, the two cannot be considered in isolation from each other. Secondly, it is important to set any literature in relief against an appropriate theory of language; and the kind of criteria appropriate

1. Anon., A godly and necessarye admonition of the Decrees and Canons of the Counsell of Trent (London, 1564).

to polemic seem to me to be those which view language as a bridge between the creative and the receptive mind, rather than as a formal semantic entity considered in isolation. Finally, it seems to me that the traditional language system of rhetoric is a fruitful one within which to set the works under consideration here.

By thus defining the principles by which I hope to conduct the following discussion, however, I am determining not only how to deal with the facts, but what the significant facts are for the purpose of this strictly limited exercise. As one modern critic says of the critical process:

The theoretical principles, categories, distinctions, and manner of proceeding built into a critic's elected mode of discourse - his language-game - cooperate with whatever constitutes the 'données' of a work so as both to shape the facts and identify what are the significant facts, and also to foster the kinds of hypotheses the critic will bring to the interpretation of particular passages and of the work as a whole, as well as the kind of criteria which enable him both to discover and to assess the values in the work. 1

Given my view that language is a vehicle of communication rather than a repository of predetermined meanings, and a set of critical standards which focus on the moral rather than the purely aesthetic uses of language, the central 'fact' of this literary polemic which I go on to consider is its status as dialogue - dialogue, that is, not in the existential sense of Buber, for instance, but in the sense of a detailed and honest point-by-point consideration of an opponent's views and a response ad idem. Is it really what its earlier manifestations pretend to be - a self-contained literary exchange between two or more protagonists, each intent on exposing the logical fallacies of the other? What is the attitude of the writer to the uncommitted reader - is he more than an incidental, an unavoidable consequence of the reproduction of the debate in the widely disseminated form of print? How valid is the model of

1. M.H. Abrams, 'What's the Use of Theorizing about the Arts?', 33.

the schools' 'disputation', with its overtones of dispassionate academic endeavour, for the kind of literary activity under consideration here? How far is the dominance established by one party over the literary 'means of production' - the printing presses - a factor in decision-making on purely literary issues? This thesis looks at the factors distorting dialogue. The first main chapter deals with the physical constraints on the actual production of literature in a brief analysis of censorship as it developed over the period. Thereafter the thesis traces in approximate chronological order the relationship between the history and the literature of certain parties in the English church, in an attempt to illustrate and discuss ways in which the exigencies of history inevitably sharpen, colour and distort the form and content of any argument, even one which claims a timeless validity. The thesis ends with a brief survey of the polemic of the period through the eyes of a contemporary - Richard Hooker - whose critical acclaim as stylist rather than as theologian reflects his preoccupation with the predominantly linguistic issues on which this thesis focusses.

CHAPTER TWO

Censorship in Theory and Practice

INTRODUCTION

As we have already seen in the Introduction, serious study of polemical literature necessitates an unusually thorough study of the context in which that literature was produced. Controversial works are not literary fictions set in a self-sufficient imaginary world; although they form part of the sphere of literature they stand in a particularly close relation to the order of history. The student needs to be aware of the raw material of history as well as the finished product of polemic in order to trace the process by which the first has been edited and re-written to form the second.

The central theme of this thesis is the destruction of religious dialogue by a series of historical choices which put the safety of uniformity before the risk of diversity. This introductory chapter examines one of these choices - that of one side in the debate to exercise political pressure on the other - in some detail. By turning a difference of opinion into a trial of strength, political pressure destroys one of the necessary conditions for dialogue - the possibility of viewing the disagreement independently of the historical context in which it is stated. Repression forces the attention of both sides on the consequences of the disagreement rather than on its content; and the issues at stake are clouded by an accretion of real or fancied injustices; a difference in judgement becomes a gulf of bitter historical memories which no word has the power to bridge. In this chapter I wish to show how the imbalance of power which developed between the parties engaged in the church order debate censored dialogue out of existence.

To attempt a summary of the ecclesiastical history of the reign

would, however, be to recapitulate a great deal of excellent work which has recently been done by professional historians ¹. Since there appears to be little point in presenting a re-organised version of secondary sources, I have chosen to restrict myself in this chapter to an aspect of the historical context which provides a sufficient microcosm of wider trends and which has not been discussed so exhaustively as has the ecclesiastical history proper of the reign. This aspect is that which we might sum up as censorship, the framework of constraints in which men tried to make their disagreements public. Taken in the widest sense, of course, this includes the silencing of pulpits as well as the control of the press; I intend to concentrate on the press side of it, partly because no very detailed account of censorship under Queen Elizabeth I is extant, and partly because there is a great deal of incidental comment on the subject scattered throughout the primary printed material which I think might usefully be drawn together ².

Before, however, examining the historical development of censorship during the reign, it is desirable to clarify how the different parties viewed the nature and desirability of censorship: and this cannot be

-
1. See, in particular, Patrick Collinson, The Elizabethan Puritan Movement (London, 1967), Part 8, and the articles by the same author now collected in Godly People. Essays on English Protestantism and Puritanism (London, 1983).
 2. The one work which might be considered to fill the gap whose existence I assert is Leona Rostenberg's recent work The Minority Press and the English Crown 1558-1625 (Nieuwkoop, 1971). The last three chapters of this work deal with the Puritan press. Unfortunately they contain errors (on p.162, for example, the proclamation of 27 December 1558 (P.L. Hughes and J.F. Larkin (eds.), Tudor Royal Proclamations (New Haven and London, 1969), vol.II, 102, no.451) is dated 1588), and misunderstandings about the kind of categories appropriate to the discussion. On p.195 we read that the Pilgrim press printer William Brewster, who set up his press in 1617, enjoyed a close relationship with a number of named divines, the last of whom is Thomas Cartwright 'ejected from England, now having sought exile in Holland'. Cartwright had not been in Holland since 1585, and died in 1603. Just below Miss Rostenberg informs us that the Pilgrim press 'issued twenty books of the Separatists', among whom she includes Cartwright. Cartwright was never a Separatist; the book of his issued by the press was the much delayed Confutation of the Rhemists Translation (S.T.C. 4709), which Cartwright had tried to suppress and which is in no sense a Separatist work. I am not qualified to judge the accuracy of the portion of the work which deals with the Catholic press; that dealing with the Puritans seems to ignore the complex divisions that existed among radical Protestants.

done without clarifying for the purposes of this thesis how descriptive terms such as 'Puritan' or 'Establishment' are being used. The brief section which follows, therefore, seeks to clarify the scope of my enquiry and the groupings and terminology used hereafter in the thesis. In so doing it also seeks to locate the small, detailed area of censorship on the large conceptual map of Elizabethan ecclesiastical controversy.

Any attempt to clarify the terms in which one refers to the main protagonists in the church order debate, of course, leads unavoidably into the flourishing controversy over the nature and extent of Puritanism, which has recently been well summarised in Paul Christianson's article, 'Reformers and the Church of England under Elizabeth I and the Early Stuarts' ¹. The term 'Puritan' began life as a pejorative appellation: its roots lie not in deprecation of ostentatious piety (though it soon acquired this meaning), but in the fear of those seeking to establish the nascent Elizabethan church that, as in the early church, reformers seeking greater purity threatened the unity and fragile stability of that new settlement ². When reform became a desirable goal, the term

1. In Journal of Ecclesiastical History, vol.31, no.4 (October, 1980), 463-482.

2. As OED notes: 'The appellation appears to have been intended to suggest that of the καθαροί, Catharans, or Catharists, assumed by the Novatian heretics, and thus to convey an odious imputation'.

In the third century AD, Novatian, a bishop who had failed in his attempt to gain election to the Roman see, set up his own church, claiming it to be the only true one. Its main distinctive tenet was that those who had lapsed from faith could not be restored: God might forgive but the church could not. In particular, Novatian supported those who demanded that those who had apostasized during the recent Decian persecutions should not be received back into fellowship. Given the delicate task of early Elizabethan church leaders, who had to weld former exiles and former 'apostates' into a united national church, it is not surprising that any further threat to unity from apparent doctrinal intolerance seemed similar to that posed thirteen hundred years before by Novatian. Another early church heresy frequently quoted as a precedent for 'Puritanism' is the slightly later one of Donatus, which similarly condemned large parts of the Western church as apostate: in particular, we are told by a 16th century critic of Separatism, Donatus thought it 'unlawfull to seeke unto the magistrate for aide in the causes of church' (Richard Alison, A Plaine confutation of a treatise of Brownisme (London, 1590), sig. A3 v). Small wonder that those seeking reformation within the church sought strenuously to dissociate themselves from the suggestions of rebellion and Separatism which the terms 'Donatist' or 'Puritan' contained.

'Puritan' became one of approbation: Puritanism was (and sometimes still is) credited with providing the creative springboard not merely for the revolution of 1640 but for a complex of developments - the undermining of the concept of hierarchy, the importance of the individual and of the individual conscience - which, when laundered of their former taint of theological intolerance, laid the foundation of the modern democratic state.

More recently, however, attempts have been made to treat Puritanism simply as a description and to define what it describes. There appears to be fairly general consensus that to retain any descriptive usefulness at all the word should be confined to those who strove for reformation without abandoning 'the concept of one comprehensive church for all Englishmen in favour of exclusive assemblies of the elect' ¹ - in other words, that Separatists and Anabaptists should be separately classed and considered. Further refinements are more controversial: should 'Puritan' be narrowed to exclude 'all but those reformers who worked within the Established Church for ministerial parity and a severely attenuated liturgy' ² or should it continue to include all those who strove for greater purity, whether that purity was defined in specifically Genevan terms or not?

There is clearly no 'right' answer to such questions: and the usage adopted here claims no particular validity beyond these pages. Briefly, I have excluded Separatists from consideration: as my title suggests, my interest lies in the tensions of those still striving for unity, not in the position of those who have concluded unity to be impossible. Whenever the word 'Puritan' is used, therefore, it refers to reformers within the church.

-
1. Claire Cross, The Royal Supremacy in the Elizabethan Church (London and New York, 1969), Author's note, ix.
 2. Paul Christianson, 'Reformers and the Church of England under Elizabeth I and the Early Stuarts', 481.

On the further subdivision of 'Puritan', I have sought to define the word less in terms of the precise reforms sought than in terms of the underlying assumption about the mediation of divine authority in the church which the way in which reforms are pursued reveals. My concern is, of course, with matters of church order, not with doctrine as such (though it is difficult to separate the two: one cannot debate the necessity of preaching without some concept of the nature and operation of grace). In that restricted context, I use the term 'Puritan' to refer to anyone whose belief in the direct and absolute divine authority of the Word leads him to challenge what he sees as shortcomings in the polity of the church by law established. I refer to the 'Establishment' to denote those for whom God's authority on matters of order was vested in those (particularly the monarch) whom He had set to rule the church. The Puritan sets purity before peace: the representative of the Establishment considers that peace and conformity offer the best example of pure obedience. I accept that this dichotomy (like most simple antitheses) is an oversimplification. It might be better to say that in most Elizabethan churchmen the two contrasting principles struggled for allegiance, and that only the most radical reformers and the most politically sophisticated bishops adhered consistently to one or the other. Nonetheless, I think it helpful to use this schematic terminology and cluster of ideas to try to tease out the theoretical assumptions on which different justifications of censorship are based. Ecclesiastical censorship is, of course, a legislative activity, and particular differences of opinion over its implementation reflect a more fundamental disagreement over the right to draw up laws of any kind for the church. The extent and nature of Elizabeth's supremacy over the church is the real point at issue.

Executive authority, both sides agree, is in the hands of the king; nor do they differ on procedural matters, since constitutional

establishment of laws for the church by the action of Queen in Parliament is seen as the norm by all but the most radical supporters of direct action. Sharp divergence occurs, however, when the two sides attempt to explain how the divine authority which both regard as ultimately normative can be mediated in a sufficiently clear, adequate and detailed way to form a law for everyday life.

Ecclesiology was the focus of debate in the Elizabethan church because it was at this point that the hiatus left by rejection of the Roman system was most acutely felt. For centuries the Catholic hermeneutic had been largely unquestioned: the orthodox Protestant summary of Scriptural truth which replaced it had, by the mid sixteenth century, a core of doctrine on which there was wide consensus, but the Church of England was still striving to formulate a politically viable version of the visible church adapted to its own particular needs. A polemical pamphlet attacking the Council of Trent sums up the dominant fear; its author expresses the hope that kings and priests will take over the responsibility for guidance which the ungodly Council is not fit to bear:

lest there be brought into the church Anarchia, no less perilous than was the pontifical impiety and tyranny, by which meanes the pureness of doctrine should easily be corrupted and churches should be severed and drawn into sundry sects and opinions, which churches by a legitimate authority might be kept in due obedience'. 1

As the reign developed, however, it became clear that the problem was too complex to be solved by an appeal to the 'legitimate authority' of 'kings and priests', for Queen and clergy were by no means in unanimous agreement as to what was legitimate. In the area of ecclesiology the Elizabethan Settlement reserved to the Queen the right not only to oversee the church, but also to stipulate such further ceremonies and rites

1. Anon., A godly and Necessary admonition of the Decrees and Canons of the Counsel of Trent (London, 1564), sig. R iii verso - [sig. R iv recto] (last leaf, no signature)

'as may be most for the advancement of God's glory, the edifying of His Church, and the due reverence of Christ's holy mysteries and sacraments' ¹. No one could have quarrelled with the stated aims of this clause; but the right of interpretation and implementation is wholly left in royal hands. Thus the royal office carried with it a limited but still effective reflection of the divine right to legislate, as it were 'ex officio mero'. The Establishment frequently emphasised that a right to make laws for the church was inherent in the royal office: 'In that he is a Man, he ought to live and serve God, as one of his good Creatures; And in that he is a King, and so Gods special Creature, he ought to make Laws whereby God may be truly worshipped' ². The speaker is Richard Onslow, the Queen's solicitor and newly created Speaker to the House of Commons, seeking the royal assent to the bills of Elizabeth's third Parliament.

By the time of the Vestiarian Controversy both the limitations and the extent of this right had been worked out in detail by the Establishment. In his (signed) preface to the Advertisements Archbishop Parker tends to emphasise its limitations; the Queen, having regard to 'the advauncement of Goddes glory' ³ has prescribed orders enforcing uniformity:

not yet prescribing these rules as laws equivalent with the eternal word of God, and as of necessity to bind the consciences of her subjects in the nature of them considered in themselves: ... but as temporal orders, mere ecclesiastical, without any vaine superstition, and as rules in some part of discipline concerning decency, distinction and order for the time. ⁴

-
1. Act of Uniformity, I Elizabeth cap.2, in Documents Illustrative of English Church History, compiled by Henry Gee and William J. Hardy (London and New York, 1896), no.LXXX, 466.
 2. Sir Simonds D'Ewes, The Journals of all the Parliaments during the reign of Queen Elizabeth both of the House of Lords and House of Commons (London, 1682), 114.
 3. The Preface to the Advertisements, in Documents Illustrative of English Church History, no.LXXXI, 467.
 4. Ibid.

Note the deprecatory phrases 'mere ecclesiastical', 'some part of discipline', 'for the time'. In the anonymous Examination, however, which was probably also by Parker, the real implications of the theory are less evasively spelt out. Any profitable human ordinance 'ought not to be esteemed as a tradition or precept of man, though by man it be commanded, but as the tradition or precept of God' ¹.

In the context of a defence of the royal right to command uniformity the implication is clear. By law the Queen has the right to decide which ordinances are profitable, because the law recognises the inherent right of the bearer of royal office to legislate for the church. Because that right is delegated from God the sovereign's commands (in their limited, temporal sphere) are as binding as the eternal commands of God himself.

Thus the 'model' of legitimate authority as exercised in the church put forward by the Establishment is that of a hierarchy in which each office-bearer has a personal authority derived from the person above him, limited in scope but not without some area of freedom to legislate for those still further from the source of ultimate power - God himself.

The Puritan, on the other hand, introduced a restraint on this legislative right which had the effect of negating it altogether: '... the Prince is a spiritual Magistrate. It belongeth unto him to reforme religion: he is the highest Judge in the church of God, to establish that by law, which the law of God hath appoynted' ². This denial of the magistrate's right to go beyond the written word of God is a logical extension of the belief that in view of that Word's detailed adequacy,

1. As reprinted in An answere for the tyme, to the Examination put in print, pretending to mayntayne the apparrell prescribed against the declaration of the mynisters of London, Anon. (London?, 1566), 57.

2. Edward Dering, 'A Sermon preached before the Queenes Maiestie the 25th day of February, by Maister Edward Deringe' in M. Derings workes (London, 1597), fol.7.

human creativity was a dangerous impulse to be repressed. The same author (Dering) elsewhere wrote:

Let us then take heed while it is yet time, and in obedience of Gods worde banish farre from us our owne understanding, and if we will be taught of the Lorde, let us leade into captivity all our owne cogitations, and seeke no better estate for the gospel of God, then he himselfe hath appointed by his holy wisdom. 1

In ecclesiastical matters, then, the Puritan had a different model of authority from his Establishment counterpart. It is no accident that the very word 'hierarchy' came to be used as shorthand for all that Puritans felt about the shortcomings in the church², for the image of a descending scale of authorities cuts across their model of one absolute 'fiat' which is explicitly spelled out in the Word and to which all men are equally bound. As Dering put it, even kings '... must be subjects in the Church, and have Christ alone to be King over it'³.

-
1. 'A Sermon preached at the Tower of London, by M. Edward Dering the 11 of December 1569' in M. Derings workes, fol.32.
 2. See Anon., A Briefe and Plaine Declaration (London, 1584), marginal note, 77.
 3. 'Readings of M. Dering upon the Epistle to the Hebrews', sig. D3 verso in M. Derings workes.

This difference of opinion has interesting repercussions on the use of language. It sheds light on what seems at first sight a trivial point - the use of the title 'Head of the Church' for the Queen. In their literary debate of the 1570s John Whitgift and Thomas Cartwright debated this title at some length; Whitgift's defence of this particular use of analogical metaphor is impeccably Thomist: 'I grant that those names which be proper unto God can not be given to any other, in that respect that they are proper to God: but ... some names that be proper to God are also attributed unto man, but not in the same respect; for they belong unto God properly and per se to man per accidens and in respect that he is the minister of God, and such other like causes ...' (The Works of John Whitgift D.D., ed. J. Ayre (Parker Society, Cambridge, 1851-3), hereinafter W.W., vol.2, 82/3). Thus the Queen's authority is not 'per se' - i.e. inherent in her person, like God's - but 'per accidens', since it is part of her God-given office. Cartwright has a less sophisticated concept of the link between name and object; he quotes Aristotle as saying that: '... names are imitations or, as it were, express images of the things whereof they are names and do for the most part bring to him that heareth them knowledge of the things that are signified by them' (W.W., vol.2, 81). In other words, Cartwright rejects analogical metaphor; any name which does not provide a simple univocal mirror image of the object is a deception. I would like tentatively to suggest that this rejection of analogy reflects a rejection of the authority structure which is linked by analogy - that of the hierarchy in which a man is defined by his place, and his place defined by its analogical relationship

In short, while there was consensus on the King's de facto authority, his de jure authority was the focus of dissension: as Whitgift puts it to Cartwright:

Throughout your whole book you take from the civil magistrate his whole authority in ecclesiastical matters, and give unto him no more (as I have before declared) than the very papists do, that is, potestem facti, and not potestem juris. 1

The royal prerogative in matters of religion reserved for the Queen the right to protect the institution of the church in any way she considered appropriate (provided it did not actually contradict any provision of the Word) - including the right to enforce uniformity. Denying this right: -

The authoritie that princis have over the churchis, is a service to defend it, and to seke the profit thereof, rather then a prerogative to burthen it with superfluous and hurtfull Ceremonies at there pleasure. 2

- the Puritan demanded nothing more - and nothing less - than a total enforcement of the law of God.

Establishment ecclesiology was a pragmatic exercise in the control of the masses; it was confronted by a viewpoint which equated pragmatism ('pollicie') with compromising opportunism: 'For by the same authoritie that the Queen commaundeth one, she may commaunde any peece of Popery, so that she name it pollicie' ³. The Puritan view of the Word leaves

to those higher and lower in the order of things. To describe the Queen as Head of the Church would have suggested that her office included a degree of legislative control analogous to that exercised by Christ over his Body, the Church.

1. W.W., vol.1, 377.

2. An answer for the tyme, 26.

3. Close attention to any of the principal Puritan texts of the Vestiarian Controversy, for instance, shows that although great play is made with the phrase 'things indifferent', they cannot be said to be indifferent in any recognisable sense of the term. The former exile William Whittingham, in his letter to the Earl of Leicester, defines something as indifferent only if 'it tendeth to God's glory, consenteth with his word, edifieth his church, maintaineth Christian libertie'. Since his definition of conformity with the Word is that of Tertullian in 'De Corona Militis' - a passage he has just quoted as follows: 'Si idem dicerem coronari licere, quia non prohibeat

no real room for adiaphora.

As we turn to consider the theories of censorship generated by these different presuppositions we observe that pragmatism and totalitarian demands once again confront each other. The Government's criteria for censorship tend to be based on the estimated impact of a work on the public consciousness - form and style being as important as content in any evaluation of a work's subversive tendencies. The Puritan, on the other hand, would have eliminated any expression of opinion, however unpolemical its form, which diverged from or added to the normative Word.

Thus, when the Admonitioners protest at the injustice of the practices which condemn them to anonymity, it is not to be supposed that they consider freedom of expression an inalienable right of every citizen. On the contrary, they stress that in general censorship is far too lax. The epilogue addressed 'To the Christian Reader, ...' which is printed after 'A Viewe of Popishe Abuses' defends the use of anonymity in this particular work by asserting that it is a special case, whose conformity with the declared will of God precludes any need for human control; the writers do not wish to encourage less desirable productions by their example:

... we meane not by our example to allow such as might abuse you with lewde matter under any such cullour. For we do utterly mislike that ther is not in every cuntrie more straight loking to the printers in that respect, because our time is much corrupted with over much license there in. 1

Scriptura, retorquebitur, ideo coronari non licere, quia Scriptura non iubeat', it is clear that to be consistent his 'things indifferent' must be directly commanded in the Word, in which case obedience to them can in no sense be said to be a matter of indifference. Abbreviated version quoted in John Strype, The Life and Acts of Matthew Parker (Oxford, 1821), vol.III, 76-84 doc.XXVII.

1. Puritan Manifestoes, 38.

Their objections to censorship as practised are twofold: its criteria seem to them mistaken and hence its priorities wrong. One may illustrate this point with a quotation from 'An Exhortation to the Byshops to Deale Brotherly with their Brethren':

Many leud light bokes and ballades flie abroad printed, not only without reprehension, but cum privilegio, the authors and printers whereof continue daily among us without controlment, and yet the Lord by his holy Scriptures forbiddeth all filthy communication, and therefore writing; but if any of our brethren put in Print any booke of a godly zeale, that tendeth to the furtherance of Goddes glory and sinceritie, and urgeth a reformation of things amisse, he is newe fangled, he is not frende to Cesar, he is to be removed from amongst the people. 1

The problem is seen in absolute terms; positive human laws enforcing uniformity are as nothing beside the categorical moral imperative of the Word. In contrast, one might cite Whitgift's explicit reversal of these priorities in the addition to An answere to a certen Libel in a passage which confutes the specific statement from the 'Exhortation' just quoted:

The same aunswere I make to your fifte reason: shall no booke be suppressed bycause some be not? It is a faulte (I confesse) to suffer leude ballets and bookes touching manners: But it were a greater fault to suffer bookes and libells disturbing the peace of the Church and defacing true religion. 2

In other words, Whitgift sees censorship as a tool designed primarily not to enforce the will of God as expressed in the Scriptures, but to protect the will of Queen and Parliament regarding the form of the church as expressed in positive law. Rather than being an instrument for the progressive moral and doctrinal purification of the nation, it safeguards the status quo in the interests of national security. The proclamation of 11 June, 1573 reflects this reasoning, proscribing the Admonition and associated tracts on the ground that such books '... do tend to

1. Puritan Manifestoes, 65.

2. S.T.C. 25429, John Whitgift, An answere to a certen Libel intituled, An admonition to the Parliament, Newly augmented by the Authoure, as by conference shall appeare (London, 1573), 33.

no other end but to make division and dissension in the opinions of men, and to breed talks and disputes against common order' ¹. In the second chapter of his work, The Pauline Renaissance in England ²

John S. Coolidge draws the contrast between the dynamic Puritan view of edification and the static Established church view; and a similar contrast is seen when one considers the respective rationales for censorship - hardly surprising, since censorship is the negative correlative of edification. A typical image of the Establishment view is that found in Sandys's sermon before the Parliament of 1571: 'Let conformity and unity in religion be provided for; and it shall be as a wall of defence unto this realm' ³. It is no accident that the pastoral epistles are so extensively used by the exponents of conformity, for they advocate the safeguard of a certain fixed deposit of truth; a quintessential summary of the conformist mentality can be found in the tract A Myrror for Martinists in which the author paraphrases I Tim. 6 v. 20 as follows:

'Keepe' (sayth he) 'that which is committed unto thee': not that which thy selfe hast found: which thou hast received, not which thou hast devised: a matter not of wit, but of doctrine: not of private usurpation, but of publique tradition: a matter brought and delivered unto thee, not set forth by thee: whereof thou oughtest not to be the author, but the keeper: not the institutor, but the follower. ⁴

Religion, he adds, 'will not suffer alteration, or innovation, no losse of propertie, nor anie varietie of definition' ⁵. Censorship guards an

1. Tudor Royal Proclamations, vol.II, 375, no.597.

2. Oxford, 1970.

3. Quoted by Sir John Neale, Elizabeth I and her Parliaments 1559-1581 (London, 1953), 186. The Sermon is a restatement of the 'cuius regio, eius religio' principle, in terms of political expediency which can hardly have commended it to the Lower House: 'This liberty, that men may openly profess diversity of religion, must needs be dangerous to the Commonwealth ... One God, one king, one faith, one profession, is fit for one Monarchy and Commonwealth. Division weakeneth, concord strengtheneth ...'

4. Anon., A Myrror for Martinists and all other Schismatiques, which in these dangerous daies doe breake the godlie unitie and disturbe the Christian peace of the church. Published by T.T. (London, 1590), 17.

5. Ibid., 19.

immutable given and inhibits any dynamic development, which is seen as a threat: '... for it can not bee, but that this freedom given unto men, ... to broche what opinions and doctrine they liste, muste in the ende burst out into some straunge and daungerous effecte' ¹.

The Puritans, on the other hand, claimed the 'lawfull libertie' to publish works intended to increase the dominance of their particular view of the Word over every aspect of private and public life. Whereas the Establishment was concerned to control the English people as a collective entity, the Puritans were concerned with society as a distributive notion: control was to be exercised on members of society as individuals ². The Establishment was concerned to establish boundaries within which personal choice could be exercised without danger to the state; the Puritans denied every such political boundary between the public and the private sphere. Accordingly, they would have censored any work which seemed to them an assertion of human creativity not directly under the control of the Word: '... there is no one thing more enemie to the word of God, then these vaine and sinful imaginations of our own unbrideled wits, which have nowe filled so many volumes.' ³ as Dering puts it in a preface which is a stinging piece of polemic in its own right. He is referring to the whole sweep of imaginative literature produced in '... these dayes in which there is so great licenciousness of printing Bookes ...' ⁴. It is seen and condemned in uncompromisingly

-
1. S.T.C. 25427, John Whitgift, An answere to a certen libel intituled, An admonition to the Parliament (London, 1572). Appendix entitled 'An exhortation to suche as bee in authoritie' (separately paginated in this edition), 7.
 2. For an illuminating discussion of the difference between collective and distributive notions, see Thomas Gilby, Barbara Celarent: A Description of Scholastic Dialectic (London, 1949), ch.IX, 'Community and Society'.
 3. Preface 'To the Christian Reader', sig. A2 recto, printed before 'A Briefe and necessarie Catechisme and Instruction very needfull to be known of all Householders', in M. Derings Workes (London, 1597).
 4. Ibid., sig. A verso.

moral terms; the image in which he sums up his reaction to it is very revealing: 'O that there were among us some zealous Ephesians, that bookes of so great vanitie might be burned up' ¹. The biblical reference is to the episode in Acts 19 in which Ephesian converts, shaken and sobered by an exhibition of the power of evil spirits over those whose commitment to Christ is incomplete, gather together and burn their books of magic arts. It is, then, an act of personal penitence. Dering's 'Ephesians', however, are clearly zealous Puritans burning the magic books of unrepentant Secularists. He assumes a right to control the consciences of others which is not justified by the Biblical analogy.

'Lawfull libertie' for the Puritan, then, is 'licenciousness' for anyone else. His conviction of the perfect conformity of his enterprise with the law of God made him interpret every restriction imposed on him not as an affront to basic human rights, but as a direct affront to God himself. Conversely, the censorship to be imposed on others is seen not as a political compromise but as a direct implementation of the divine will ². The Puritan criteria for censorship have an invidious capacity for almost infinite extension, while the Establishment exercised a more limited judgement on the basis of probable public impact.

1. Edward Dering, Preface, sig. A verso, to 'A Briefe and necessarie Catechisme', in M. Derings Workes. Compare Milton's interpretation of this story: 'As for the burning of those Ephesian books by St. Paul's converts, 'tis replied the books were magic, the Syriac so renders them. It was a private act, a voluntary act, and leaves us to a voluntary imitation: the men in remorse burnt those books which were their own; the Magistrate by this example is not appointed: these men practised the books, another might perhaps have read them in some sort usefully' (see John Milton, Areopagitica and Of Education, ed. K.M. Lea (Oxford, 1973), 14). As one of the few Biblical references which may in any sense be taken as relevant to the Christian evaluation of censorship, this text had clearly become an interpretative crux. Milton's interpretation seems to me more faithful to the text.

2. Sir George Paule, Whitgift's biographer, cites a Synod decree stating that 'no bookes should be put into print, but by consent of the Classes'. (The Life of the Most Reverend and Religious Prelate 'John Whitgift', Lord Archbishop of Canterbury (London, 1612), 49.)

As we move to a more detailed consideration of the way in which that conservative, politic attitude to censorship worked out in practice, we shall in fact discover that considerable casuistry is required to represent the Puritans as a real threat to public order. Although the deviousness of some Establishment tactics contrasts unfavourably with the simple, idealistic rationale of radical reformers, however, one must realise that had those reformers enjoyed political ascendancy they might have produced a regime as ruthless in its sincerity as that of Elizabeth's elder sister ¹.

Closer examination of Puritan statements on the freedom of the press, then, reveal that objections to the system as operated are not objections to censorship in itself, but to the erroneous priorities governing its operation (as discussed above) and to the personnel operating it. This important second point may be illustrated by citing a passage which if taken out of context seems to support the theory that the Puritans opposed coercion on matters of principle: '... a word will not be bound but with a woorde, the keyes of the kingdome of heaven must come forth the heere, or els the keys of Newgate will doe no good' ². The writer is in fact protesting at the usurpation by the bishops of

1. It seems to me, in contrast, that Elizabeth's policy on the censorship of Puritan works is part of her determined effort to secularise all attacks on the Establishment. It was not in her interest to give grounds for the development of a Catholic martyrology which could justifiably represent her as a persecutor on religious grounds alone, for Mary's counter-productive executions of those in doctrinal disagreement with her, immortalised by Foxe, constituted an impressive 'Mirror for Magistrates' showing what to avoid. Elizabeth went to considerable lengths to stress that her policy was different; a proclamation of 1586 explaining the execution of two seminary priests states that after one examination: 'They were stayed from their execution, her majesty minding nothing less than that any of her subjects, though disagreeing from her in religion die for the same' (T.R.P., no.680). When, however, it was discovered at a subsequent interrogation that their loyalty to the Crown was questionable they were executed. Cecil's pamphlet of 1583, The Execution of justice in England for maintenance of publique and Christian peace (S.T.C. 4902), makes the same point; dissidents are only pursued insofar as they constitute an actual threat to peace.

2. Puritan Manifestoes, 71.

a role normally played by the civil magistrate, and their corresponding neglect of the apologetic role traditionally theirs:

There is a better way for Bishops, and Bishops of Christ, to confute a schisme by, than prisons and chaines: those were and are Antichristes bishops arguments being taken a parte: as they are the just weapons of a lawfull and godly Majestrate, if the other goe before. 1

The appropriate division of labour in a Christian state is that which assigns coercion of dissenters to the Prince, while reserving to ecclesiastical leaders the task of persuading them to conformity. This is a conventional Protestant view; it is, for example, precisely that expressed by Dr. John Bridges in the preface to his huge work in defence of the Established church. Writing of the duty of various estates towards the church Government, Bridges says:

... we are all obliged (after the measure of each ones calling and habilitie) to maynteyne and defend it, and that not onely against the breakers of it, by the Magistrates execution of authoritie, but the Ministers no lesse in their vocation, when it is openly written against, are bound by their writing againe ... to lay open the whole state thereof, by detecting and confuting all the paralogismes and fallations of the gaynesayers, ... 2

In the Elizabethan church, however, the vocations of minister and magistrate were not so clearly differentiated as the above quotation suggests; and the account of the censorship of radical Puritan works which follows will focus on the way in which ecclesiastical control of this form of legislative activity grew and developed through the reign.

In the rest of this chapter, then, I shall parallel an account of historical developments with a commentary derived from primary printed sources of the time, showing the slow coalescing of the economic and political interests of the church, the civil magistrates and the Stationers'

1. Puritan Manifestoes, 71.

2. John Bridges, A Defence of the government established in the Church of Englande for Ecclesiastical Matters (London, 1587), Preface, sig. ✕ 4 recto.

Company which produced a united stand against Puritan dissidents.

PART I: INTRODUCTION - From the Elizabethan Settlement to the Accession of Whitgift.

As Dr. D.M. Loades points out in his article 'The Press under the Early Tudors. A Study in Censorship and Sedition'¹, the press in England developed freely until the emergence of Lutheranism led to legislation designed to protect the orthodoxy - and hence, the political alignment - of the English Church. He goes on to demonstrate that the religio-political motive which inspired the first gestures of control over the book trade continued to inform subsequent decisions to strengthen legislation over such matters as licensing and the import of books from abroad². Accordingly, one might expect that since by the reign of Mary England was more deeply divided over religious and political alignment than ever before, this reign might give evidence of an unusually harsh and determined attempt on the part of the government to protect the shaky orthodoxy which the Queen desired to re-impose. A study of the legislation of the reign indicates that this hypothesis is justified; the Queen and her consort made a number of increasingly drastic pronouncements, culminating in a proclamation of 6 June, 1558 which directed that anyone even possessing 'wycked and seditious bokes ... shall in that case be reputed and taken for a rebell and shall without delay be executed for that offence accordynge to th'order of marshall law'³. There was, however, an unusually wide gulf between intention

1. Trans. Cam. Bib. Soc., vol.IV, Part I (1964), 29-50.

2. See Loades, 'The Press under the Early Tudors'; also, by the same author 'The Theory and Practice of Censorship in 16th century England', Trans. Royal Hist. Soc., 5th series, vol.24 (1974), 141-157.

3. Edward Arber, A Transcript of the Registers of the Company of Stationers of London 1554-1640 AD (London, 1875) (hereinafter Arber, Transcript), vol.I, 92.

and execution ¹. It is in this context that we must see the terminus a quo proper of this brief study - the granting of a charter of incorporation to the Stationers' Company in 1557.

Certain early scholars took the preamble of this charter to indicate that it was a government initiative designed to supplement ineffective political strategy by stricter control on the ground ².

Indeed, a study of the wording seems to make this conclusion inescapable:

... we, considering and manifestly perceiving that certain seditious and heretical books rhymes and treatises are daily published and printed by divers scandalous malicious schismatical and heretical persons, ... and wishing to provide a suitable remedy in this behalf ... 3

Later writers, however, by paying closer attention to the legal process of granting a charter, have come to the conclusion that the form of the charter is in fact derived from a draft drawn up by a lawyer engaged by the company; summing up the evidence as presented in his article 'The Company of Stationers before 1557', Graham Pollard concludes: ' ... the evidence here set out does imply that the Charter, far from representing the ipsissima verba of the Crown, was really formulated by counsel for the Company; ' ⁴. The weight of evidence seems to be in favour of a company initiative, and to indicate that its members were alive to the advantages of presenting a monopolistic arrangement primarily sought for trade convenience as a loyal attempt to co-operate with the enforcers of orthodoxy. Since a number of leading Stationers had incurred the censure of the Council ⁵, John Day had been forced

1. See D.M. Loades, The Oxford Martyrs (London, 1970), ch.8, 'The Failure of Catholic England'; also H.S. Bennet, English Books and Readers, 1474-1557 (Cambridge, 1952).

2. For a summary of the evidence for this point of view, see A.W. Pollard, The Regulation of the English Book Trade in the 16th Century (Library 3rd Series, no.7 (1916)), 26-30.

3. Original Latin, tr. Arber. Arber, Transcript, vol.I, Introduction, xxviii.

4. Library 4th Series, vol.18 (1938), 35.

5. See Loades, 'The Theory and Practice of Censorship'.

to flee the country three years earlier ¹, and William Seres had been 'deprived' ², it was clearly imperative to appear as orthodox as possible in the face of growing if ineffectual government paranoia about illicit tracts - from Mary's point of view, the record of the Stationers was far from clear, and here was an ideal opportunity to counter-balance past misdemeanours with a resoundingly pious statement of intent. This politic awareness on the part of the Company of the practical advantages to be gained from presenting one's own desire to consolidate a privileged position as a desire to strengthen the royal prerogative continues to be a factor in the alliances later formed between Elizabethan stationers and the ecclesiastical authorities.

In the legislation concerning censorship which forms part of the Elizabethan Settlement, however, the potential of the considerable executive powers vested in the Company by the Charter - the right to search out and destroy all illegal works, for instance - is not harnessed to the service of the church now established. The Injunction of 1559 directed that new books must be licensed either by the Queen, or by six members of the Council, or by a minimum of two (of whom the Ordinary of the place had to be one) from a list which included the Archbishops, the Bishops, and the Chancellors of the Universities. The fact that the Ordinary of the place had to be one of the ecclesiastical licensers explains the emergence of the Bishop of London as a key figure in the implementation of censorship, for until 1583 printing was carried out in London alone. The only mention of the Stationers' Company, however, is contained in a strict command to obedience; no active co-operation between the two sides is envisaged in the Injunction. The Ecclesiastical Commissioners are as yet minor figures, entrusted only with the licensing

1. Loades, 'The Theory and Practice of Censorship'.

2. Arber, Transcript, vol.II, 60/61.

of ephemera like ballads and pamphlets and with the consideration of books already printed. In short, no machinery adequate to the enforcement of strict licensing and control is set up; there is no provision for regular searches and as it stands the Injunction was dependent on public co-operation to become effective ¹.

The Injunctions, however, were only one facet of the official attempt to enforce uniformity. The Act of Uniformity itself contains important provisions which, though primarily designed to prevent Catholic dissidence from being openly expressed, were later used against radical reformers who expressed their disquiet in print. Anyone who 'shall in any interludes, plays, songs, rhymes, or by other open words, declare or speak anything in the derogation of the said book (i.e. the Book of Common Prayer)' was to be liable for the first offence to a penalty of 100 marks, or the alternative of six months imprisonment; for the second offence the fine was 400 marks, and the alternative imprisonment for a year, while a third offence carried a penalty of forfeiture of goods and chattels and life imprisonment ².

And as, in the first part of this chapter, we study the development of censorship during the early years of Queen Elizabeth's reign, we can without difficulty trace the development of these two approaches to literary control - an attempt to control production and increasingly severe penalties for those, whether authors or printers, whose products offend ³. This part is further subdivided into two sections roughly

1. See Gee and Hardy, Documents Illustrative of English Church History, 436/7.

2. Ibid., 461-462.

3. The tension between the two views of censorship, and the reasoning which led the ecclesiastical establishment increasingly to favour preventive rather than post hoc controls is well set out in the following statement by Dr. Johnson: 'If nothing may be published but what civil authority shall have previously approved, power must always be the standard of truth: if every dreamer of innovations may propagate his projects, there can be no settlement; ... The remedy against these evils is to punish the authors; for it is yet allowed that every society may punish, though not prevent, the publication of opinions which the society shall think pernicious; but

corresponding to the two approaches. In the first, we shall examine the major controversies of the time in an attempt to assess how far in practice co-operation between the civil and ecclesiastical enforcement authorities in the control of the production and dissemination of tracts was achieved during this part of the reign. In the second, we shall study briefly attempts made during the earlier part of the reign to persuade Parliament to pass more stringent legislation which might be used against those viewed by the Establishment as libellers.

PART I: SECTION I - Joint Action for Censorship?

The first major attempt to strengthen control of the press which is to be considered here is the Star Chamber Decree of 1566. In his article reprinting an early black letter version of this decree, Cyprian Blagden surprisingly states that there is no obvious reason for the precise date of the ordinance¹; in 1910 the distinguished bibliographer R.B. McKerrow linked it to the Vestiarian Controversy², and this link has been taken for granted by ecclesiastical historians from Strype³ to V.J. Brook⁴. Here I wish to explore the causal connections between the events of the Vestiarian Controversy and the impulse reflected in the Decree for greater control of literary productions.

The Vestiarian Controversy has been well documented by ecclesiastical

this punishment, though it may crush the author, promotes the book and it seems not more unreasonable to leave right of printing unrestrained, because writers may be afterward censured, than it would be to sleep with doors unbolted, because our laws can hang a thief'(quoted in Areopagitica and On Education, ed. Lea, Introduction, xxii).

1. Cyprian Blagden, 'Book Trade Control in 1566', Library 5th Series, vol.XIII (1958), 287-292.
2. R.B. McKerrow, A Dictionary of Printers and Booksellers in England, Scotland and Ireland, and of Foreign Printers of English Books 1557-1640 (London, 1910), Introduction, xii.
3. Strype, Parker, vol.I, 442.
4. V.J.K. Brook, A Life of Archbishop Parker (Oxford, 1962), 199.

historians ¹, and I do not intend to discuss it in any detail here. Briefly, however, it may be traced back to January 1565 when the Queen, concerned at increasing non-conformity regarding dress, rites and ceremonies in the church, wrote a sharp letter to her Archbishop, Matthew Parker, urging more rigorous enforcement of conformity. Parker (who may have sought the letter himself to strengthen his hand) immediately directed the bishops of his province to investigate all disorders and to proceed against offenders. He also drew up a new set of articles to enforce uniform discipline, though he was disappointed in his hopes of obtaining direct royal warranty for them and was obliged in the end to publish them under his own hand with the lame title of Advertisements. There was some action against non-conformers in the provinces, but controversy focussed in London, where many of the most able clergymen and lecturers scorned to conform in matters of ceremony. The Bishop of London, Edmund Grindal, sought to avoid open conflict, but eventually in March 1566 he summoned all the London clergy to a meeting at Lambeth at which their immediate subscription to the prescribed dress was demanded. The 37 who declined to subscribe were suspended, and some were later deprived.

It appears that the most militant non-subscribers defied their suspensions, preaching sermons publicly attacking those in authority. One of them, the printer, clergyman and lecturer Robert Crowley, compiled a tract, the Briefe Discourse against the outwarde apparel, which was secretly printed and then distributed to sympathisers (according to one contemporary account, Crowley and others simply handed their tracts out at the end of their illicit services ²). An official Examination of the Discourse, probably by Parker himself, provoked an Answer from

1. See, in particular, V.J.K. Brook, A Life of Archbishop Parker, chs. 11 and 12; Patrick Collinson, The Elizabethan Puritan Movement, Part 2, ch.2.

2. See John Stowe, Three Fifteenth Century Chronicles, ed. J. Gairdner (London, 1880), 139.

Crowley. The dissenters also produced a number of other short tracts, including some semi-public epistles urging those in favour of reformation not to be blinded by the claim that the matters in question were merely 'things indifferent' ¹. Some of these tracts bore an Emden imprint, though for reasons set out in the footnote below I think it likely that reference to Emden may be a blind to cover illicit printing activity nearer home ². Even though I would suggest that at this stage the

-
1. See the tracts To my faythfull Brethren now afflycted, and to all those that unfaynedly love the Lord Jesus and To my lovyng brethren that is troublid about the popishe aparell, two short and comfortable Epistels (n.p. (bound in Bodley copy with Emden imprint tract and in same typeface), 1566). The first of these is William Whittingham's letter to the Earl of Leicester, which achieved wide currency (see p. 36 above); the two latter, by Anthony Gilby and James Pilkington respectively, were later reprinted in A parte of a register.
 2. Emden had been the centre of the illicit Marian trade in Protestant books; the presses of Egidius van der Erve, among others, had printed works by Cranmer, Becon and Ponet (see Loades, 'The Press under the Early Tudors'). The location is not, then, inherently improbable. A study of the nature and means of distribution of the tracts in question, however, suggests to me that they form a defensive ad hoc response to unexpectedly harsh disciplinary measures, rather than a coordinated offensive against the Establishment. To have tracts printed abroad would surely have required advance planning and expense of time; and the period of time under consideration here is a very brief one, extending from the end of March 1566 to the summer of the same year, by which time most had compromised and resistance was weak and fragmentary (see P. Collinson, The Elizabethan Puritan Movement, 82). It seems to me, then, the nature of this campaign suggests hasty clandestine printing in London rather than printing abroad. To take one example: the tract The mynd and exposition of that excellent learned man Martyn Bucer uppon these wordes of S. Mathew: woo be to the wordle (sic) because of offences Math XVIII bears the imprint 'Printed at Emden 1566'. This work, which introduces tendentious marginal references wresting Bucer's general comments to apply to the specific issues of the Vestiarian Controversy, is clearly a response to the appendix to A briefe examination for the tyme, which is described on the title page of that work as follows: 'In the ende is reported, the judgement of two notable learned fathers M. doctour Bucer and M. doctour Martir ... translated out of the originals, written by theyr owne handes, purposely debatyg this controversye'. This is confirmed by John Abel's letter to Bullinger of early June: 'Another book was afterwards published by order of the commissioners, wherein is declared the judgment of master doctor Peter Martyr and master Bucer, viz. that every preacher and minister ecclesiastical may wear a surplice, cap and the other habits, without committing any sin, as you and master Gualter have also written. The opposite party are much dissatisfied with this, and, as far as they dare, write secretly against it;' (Zurich Letters (Second Series), ed. Hastings Robinson, Parker Society (Cambridge, 1845), 120; Letter XLIX, John Abel to Henry Bullinger, 6 June, 1566). By this time, as Abel also tells us, a number of leading preachers and the printers responsible for Crowley's initial tract had been imprisoned. (The only printer whose association with the tract can definitely be

co-ordination of Puritan dissent was probably not so sophisticated as the supposition of tracts printed abroad would indicate, the tracts of 1566 remain a significant new departure in internal dissent. Study of Parker's correspondence reveals his fear that the exercise of purely ecclesiastical censures against non-conformers may well make the situation worse, not better: '... many will forsake their livings, and live at printing, teaching children, or otherwise as they can' ¹. Parker's fear is that dissent among the clergy will by the subscription campaign be driven underground. To counteract this threat more than the censures which may be exercised by the Ordinary will be required. It is not surprising, then, that the Vestiarian Controversy prompted Parker to seek a more effective alliance between the more powerful Ecclesiastical Commissioners and the Stationers' Company.

Probably as a result of Parker's pressure the Commissioners drew up a decree to control printing which was endorsed by the Council in Star Chamber ². In some ways this appears to be a public underwriting of the privileges granted to the company in the Charter - it re-iterates, for example, the right of the Master and Wardens to search all premises of printers. Whereas, however, the Charter mentions as forbidden 'all and several those books ... which are ... printed contrary to the form of any statute, act or proclamation made or to be made', the Decree adds the categories of works forbidden by injunction or letters patent,

identified is Henry Denham; an entry in the Stationers' Company Register for 1565/66 records a fine of ten shillings imposed on Denham 'for yat he prented a boke intituled the utter apparrell of mynisters' (Arber, Transcript, vol.I, 316). I would suggest that the Emden imprint was perhaps introduced after the first 'printers' were imprisoned to give the impression that local printing resources were exhausted and thus dissuade Parker from any further pursuit.

1. The Correspondence of Matthew Parker (London, 1853), ed. J. Bruce and T.T. Perowne, 268. no.CCV (hereinafter Parker, Correspondence).
2. Printed by Arber from a broadsheet in the library of the Society of Antiquaries of London (Transcript, vol.I, 322) (quotes from Arber version). Black letter version printed by Cyprian Blagden in 'Book Trade Control in 1566'.

thus underlining both the status of the Elizabethan injunction on which censorship was based and also the status of the privileges granted to certain printers by Elizabeth at the beginning of her reign. The decree laid strong stress on the search for imported books, authorising the Wardens or any two of the company to '.... open and view all packs, drifats, maunds and other things, wherein bookes or papers shall be conteined' in any ports or other suspect places and to carry away all illicit works found. As suggested in the footnote, this may reflect a reaction both to the Emden imprint on Puritan tracts and to the increasing import of seditious Catholic works ¹. Most strikingly, however, the Warden and his deputies were now obliged not only to impound all forbidden books, but also to 'leade and present before the Queenes Majesties hir Commissioners in causes Ecclesiasticall' all offenders.

It is generally agreed that this Decree made little immediate impact. I have found no direct references to it in Puritan literature of the time; the sharp contrast of this silence with the plethora of comments on the two significant measures of the 1580s, the Act 23 Eliz. cap. 2 and Whitgift's article on printing as translated into the Decree

1. Evidence from other sources makes it clear that even before the Vestiarian Controversy aroused fear of Puritan dissent in print there was already concern about the import of seditious Catholic works. A memorandum from the Queen to Lord Treasurer Winchester dated 24 January, 1565/66 gives the Bishop of London the responsibility of appointing searchers to supplement the normal customs procedures by looking specifically for Catholic works, which were then to be handed over to the Bishop himself for perusal and judgement. Searches were, however, to be carried out on a random basis 'fro tyme to tyme'; the system proposed would have been very haphazard (see W.W. Greg, A Companion to Arber (Oxford, 1967), 114-5). As we have seen, the Decree passed six months later explicitly gives the Wardens or two of the company power to search for and impound illicit books, and in this respect it may reflect an attempt on the part of the ecclesiastical hierarchy to ensure effective surveillance by the use of an already constituted disciplinary body rather than by over-stretching the limited resources of church personnel proper. The transfer of responsibility for assessment of works impounded from the Bishop of London to the High Commission may also reflect Parker's feeling that left to himself Grindal would be unlikely to take effective action on any disciplinary front.

of 1586, suggests that it was a legislative experiment whose importance resides in what it shows us of the intention of its authors, rather than in the pressure it brought to bear on its intended victims. The aim is clear: inefficient censorship is to be improved by cementing an alliance between two already constituted disciplinary bodies, the Ecclesiastical Commission based in London and the hierarchy of the Stationers' Company. The Commissioners, minor figures in the Injunction, are here assigned the vital task of examining all dissident printers and writers. The scope of their jurisdiction was further extended a few years later in a letter from the Council to the Stationers' Company which reflects an awareness of the unworkability of the complex licensing arrangements made in the Injunction, and a desire to simplify them until they become practicable. Calling in an anti-Catholic ballad which apparently disparaged certain honourable personages by name, the Council advises the company that in future no works of any nature should be printed without the allowance of the Council itself or of the Commissioners ¹. Here the scope of the Commission's right to license is extended to include all kinds of printed matter.

In short, the significant trend of the late 1560s is that towards placing licensing very much in the hands of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners. At the time the Commission was closely supervised by the Council, and showed little independent initiative ²; the move is probably one of politic convenience, allowing the Council to delegate much tedious business. By placing executive power in the hands of the Commissioners, however, the Council effectively set up a system which could be manipulated by churchmen of a determined and independent mind to their own advantage. The Bishop of London, as we have seen, was already a key figure in the

1. Arber, Transcript, vol.V, lxxvi. Order of 8 Sept., 1570, signed by Leicester, Cecil and two others.

2. See R.G. Usher, The Rise and Fall of the High Commission (Oxford, 1913), ch.II, especially 46-7.

implementation of censorship according to the provisions of the Injunction; as time went on, his position as member (generally, presiding member) of the London Commission as well as his role as Ordinary of London dictated his continued importance ¹.

In practice, however, censorship in the 1560s was lax, probably because Grindal, Bishop of London until 1570, was notoriously unwilling to impose uniformity of any kind. Unfortunately the register for most of Sandys's episcopate has been lost, and it is therefore impossible to check whether he was overall a more stringent licenser than his predecessor. This loss is all the more unfortunate in that within this period falls the second major crisis of the reign in which Puritan disaffection was expressed in the form of illicit print.

The story of the publication of An Admonition to the Parliament is too well known to require detailed repetition here ². Accordingly,

-
1. This dual role emerges in the memorandum referred to above (Greg, Companion, doc.2, 115) which describes the Bishop of London as 'one of our commission's for mattsrs [sic] ecclesiasticall ... a person for sondry respectes most fit to see and consider suche bookes as from tyme to tyme shalbe brought in from the said partes of beyond the sees and therupon to Juge what bookes ar to be [used and which not] published and uttered'.
 2. Briefly, the Admonition appeared in May - June 1572, following the decisive annihilation by the Queen of a bill designed to allow diversity in the conduct of public worship and to restrict the penalties of the Act of Uniformity to Papists. On 7 July two clergymen, John Field and Thomas Wilcox were sent to Newgate on charges (which they admitted) of being its authors. In October they were charged before the Lord Mayor and Aldermen with offences against the Act of Uniformity, and condemned to a year's imprisonment. Only six months were actually served in Newgate - following the intervention of the Council, they were transferred at the end of March the following year to house arrest in the home of Archdeacon Mullins. Meantime their tract had made an immediate impression: by August it had been reprinted twice, with some alterations, and two additional 'Exhortations' (the preface to the first dated 30 September) soon followed.

The first riposte of the bishops appears to have been a collection of Articles culled from the text of the Admonition which was designed to show how profoundly the tract struck at the state of the church as established. A response to these Articles (which are no longer extant) was issued with a Second Admonition towards the end of 1572. The official reply to the original pamphlet, however, which had been confided to the then Dr. Whitgift, Master of Trinity College, Cambridge, did not appear until February 1572/73. It went through at least two initial printings, and an expanded version containing brief comments on the more recent pamphlets was issued later the same year. By May 1573 Thomas Cartwright had already published his Replie to Whitgift's Answer and Whitgift was soon at work on a further massive

I wish to concentrate on certain issues which emerged for the first time during this controversy, and to trace their working out over the next ten years.

In the first place, one may note that the use of print and censorship now emerge as theoretical issues in themselves; the form of dissent becomes as important as its content. There is an interesting passage in the preamble to the Second Admonition which highlights the division caused among advocates of reform by the Admonitioners' use of print. The author opposes the praise of Beza to the criticism of two 'declamers' against the Admonition. One of these is reported to have said: '... the authors were to rashe in setting it forth without a councell, and I wot not what allowance before it wer defined' ¹. To this the present author retorts:

And what I pray you have they done amisse, but the declamer also offended in it, if it be an offence? They have published in Print that the ministerie of England is out of square, and he hath published at Paules crosse, that the bishops of England have bene uncircumspect in making of ministers, and that hathe he published before any council in England had determined it. ²

Defence of his original tract.

Despite a strong royal proclamation in June 1573 calling in the Admonition no copies were handed in. In late August of that year, however, the Bishop of London's pursuivant caught up with the press which had been responsible for the tracts and arrested the chief printer, one Lacy, John Strowd or Stroud, a deprived minister from Somerset, and the young assistant Asplyn. Lacy's fate is not clear; Asplyn was released almost immediately (see p. 66 below) and Stroud was examined before the Ecclesiastical Commissioners in November, and apparently released following a deliberately vague and noncommittal offer of subscription (see 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. William's Library London, ed. A. Peel (Cambridge, 1915), vol.i, 112-114; hereinafter, The Seconde Parte).

1. Puritan Manifestoes, 82.
2. Ibid., 82/83.

It is difficult to be certain who this 'declamer' is ¹; the point, however, is clear. Many who might comment on the deficiencies of the church in the pulpit or circulate their private opinions on the matter baulked at the defiantly illegal attack which the series of radical publications of 1572/73 constituted. Precedents cited by the author of the Second Admonition include: '... Roderike Mors, the way to Common wealthe, the Complaint of the beggers, and such like' ². To take up only the last of these precedents here, one can see how far the Admonitioners have moved from the kind of internal criticism favoured by moderates. Fish's tract is a swingeing attack in the name of the abused and neglected majority on the corrupt oligarchy which stands over against the beggars it has created ³. There is a similar self-conscious defiance in the Admonitioners regarding not only the matter, but also the manner of their tracts; these anonymous publications represent a deliberate attempt to flout those who claimed such a large measure

-
1. The sermon against the Admonition preached by Thomas Cooper, Bishop of Lincoln on 27 June, 1572, certainly admitted faults in the ministry, and it is just possible that he is the objector meant (see M. Maclure, The Paul's Cross Sermons 1534-1642 (Toronto, 1958), 208). The 'declamer' seems to dissociate himself from the bishops, however, and it seems more likely that he is a man who might have been expected to ally himself to the Admonitioners' cause but who had failed to do so - the tone of the passage is one of irritation against those who lack the courage of their own past principles. On this interpretation a likely candidate would be Laurence Humphrey, a former radical known to have visited Field and Wilcox in Newgate and to have been critical of their open publication of the Admonition (see Collinson, The Elizabethan Puritan Movement, 120). Humphrey had preached at Paul's Cross in 1565 and had then criticised the church. Following this sermon, he had been threatened by Parker with deprivation (see the letters from Parker to Cecil in Parker, Correspondence, 239-241 (nos. CLXXXI and CLXXXII), and Maclure, The Paul's Cross Sermons, 205).
 2. Puritan Manifestoes, 88.
 3. I am assuming that since the author is obviously citing well-known precedents the tract meant is more likely to be Simon Fish's famous Supplication for the beggars, which was singled out for reply by More, than a lesser known work with the word 'complaint' in its title. See A supplicacyon for the beggers. Written about 1529 by S. Fish New re-ed. by F.J. Furnivall, E.E.T.S. extra series, no.13 (London, 1871).

of control over public life - the bishops. Defending their use of anonymity, Field and Wilcox wrote:

Furthermore, because without previledge also to have sette too our handes, had not been so much material, and it was not possible for us to have that, because the bishops have that matter in their hands, and therefore have hindred books which came nothing neare to displease them, lyke as these of oures: ... 1

Accordingly, the implication is, they have been forced to work outside the recognised framework. It is hardly surprising that certain earlier radicals, confronted with such a developed rationale for illegality, felt it incumbent upon them to dissociate themselves from it.

Nor is it surprising that the ecclesiastical authorities should take the activities of Field and Wilcox seriously. Writers of later tracts may claim indemnity for the Admonitioners by describing their work as an appeal to Parliament, printed in Parliament time; as Whitgift pointed out, this defence is somewhat disingenuous ' ... bicause it was published in print before the Parlaiment was made privie unto it' ². In fact, of course, their work was an attack on educated opinion as a whole. The Second Admonition keeps up the polite fiction of an attempt to work through the accepted structures, though since Parliament had been prorogued and was not even in session the pretence did not carry much conviction. The address to the godly readers, however, makes explicit what the more astute Field and Wilcox were too careful to do more than imply:

The treatise ensuing (Christian Reader) being in dede purposely meant, as the tytle pretendeth, to be a seconde Admonition to the Parliament, as yet not being not [sic] dissolved, cannot chuse I am sure, but be read of divers, that are not of that honorable

-
1. Puritan Manifestoes, 38-39. This statement, obviously born of some experience, tends to confirm Greg's suggestion that episcopal licences were more frequently sought in the first years of Elizabeth's reign than is recorded. See W.W. Greg, Some Aspects and Problems of London Publishing between 1550 and 1650 (Oxford, 1956), 41-44.
 2. S.T.C. 25429, Whitgift, Answer (2nd edition, 1573), 333.

assembly at this time ... 1

In 1566 Parker had been alarmed at the weakening of church discipline which the printing of dissident tracts indicated, but he had underestimated the impact of print on a wider audience. His comment to Walter Haddon is typical:

The boldness of their book imprinted caused some examination to be set forth, which here I send you to expend. Indeed all things be not so answered as their writing deserved, but yet more was considered what became such which hath taken in hand to make answer, than what they deserved. And I am deceived if a little be not enough to satisfy wise and learned men in these controversies.

2

Parker was indeed deceived, not least in treating a controversy aired in print as if it remained a matter to be settled among 'wise and learned men' ³. The Examination (which from the quotation above would indeed appear to be by Parker, an Archbishop acutely conscious of his position ⁴) is deliberately patronising about Crowley's work, calling it: '... a treatise so solemlye advouched, so confidently affirmed, of very late so publiquely by print divulged and despersed' ⁵. So much trouble for something of so little consequence, the writer implies. The tone

1. Puritan Manifestoes, 81.

2. Parker, Correspondence, 285 (no. CCXIX).

3. For a further consideration of this point as it relates to the use of the disputation paradigm, see ch.3, p.

4. The publication of Parker's De Antiquitate Britannicae ecclesiae, et privilegiis ecclesiae Cantuariensis cum archiepiscopus eiusdem 70 (London, 1572-74 (various copies)), is a further indication of the way in which Parker's historiographical interests reinforced his sense of office. In The life off the 70 Archbischopp off Canterbury (no place (probably Heidelberg), 1574), the author comments on this title as follows: 'And yett havinge rolled awaye that glorious gravestone/ off that counterfaicte title / and sekinge further into it / appereth a very painted sepulchre / gorgeouslye decked withe that out ward onelie name / and within full off broken shankebones / and reliques of dead carcasses / yea nothings / but a very charnellhowse / off brainlesse unlearned skulles/ off suche men as wear wicked in their life / and not worthye any memorye beinge dead (sig. C v recto). The two views of the value of tradition could hardly be more sharply contrasted.

5. As reprinted in An Answere for the tyme, sig. A vi recto.

of the reaction to the Admonition controversy is very different. The campaign of tracts had been carefully planned, rather than remaining an ad hoc response to an unexpected contingency; and the widespread impact on general public opinion is noted in varying tones of alarm and despondency by the bishops. Writing of the failure of the June 1573 proclamation, Sandys comments to Burghley: 'Whearby [i.e. by the fact that not a single Admonition had been handed in] it may easily appeare what boldnesse and disobedience theis new writers have already wrought in the mynds of the people' ¹. Dissident tracts are no longer merely an irritant; they have become a real threat to the public standing of the bishops, undermining the legality of their offices and impugning the methods and motives with which they exercise their authority. It is now clear that the impact of a piece of print does not solely reside in the coherence of the arguments; daring abuse encourages the reader to liberate himself both from the verbal conventions of respect for those in authority and from the legal conventions which safeguard that authority from public attack. As Cox put it: '... they have lately broken down, by their abusive writings, the barriers of all the order of our church' ². The response to these writings is, then, to classify them not as documents putting forward a religious case, but as attacks on order morally - and, eventually, legally - equivalent to active rebellion. Even after sentence had been passed on other grounds the suggestion of rebellion was kept alive by that section of Whitgift's Answere which is entitled 'An Exhortation to suche as bee in authoritie and have the governement of the Church Committed unto them, whether they be Civile or Ecclesiastical Magistrates' ³. Study of Whitgift's

1. Puritan Manifestoes, 154.

2. Zurich Letters (1st ser.) ed. Hastings Robinson, Parker Society (Cambridge, 1842), 280, no.CVIII, Cox to Gualter Ely, 4 Feb., 1573.

3. For the seminal importance of this part of the Answere to the later development of historical polemic, see ch. 6, p. 292

clever little account of continental extremists reveals that the charge of rebellion is based not on what the Admonitioners actually say, but on the possible extension of some of their more extreme denunciations of ecclesiastical abuse, which seemed by implication to question the overall structure of the state in which bishops have an important political place ¹. Indeed, it is true that the assertions of confidence in the civil authorities of the realm are made with the air of repeating colourless formulae, while the emotional weight of the Admonition - and hence, what remains in the mind of the casual reader - lies behind the biblical phrases of denunciation and destruction meted out to the bishops. The Admonitioners and their opponents are trapped in a vicious circle of their own making. The injustice involved in the control of censorship by the bishops, judges in their own case, causes the dissidents to supplement their theological objections to the office with bitter attacks on the corporate integrity of the episcopate. In its turn, the episcopate protects itself by still harsher measures against the publication of 'libels' which threaten its public credibility and hence its ability to wield its office. The full effect of this self-defeating cycle of mistrust cannot yet be fully seen; but one can see how it took its origins.

At this stage, however, it was impossible for the ecclesiastical authorities to censure the Admonitioners as harshly as they might have wished. It is interesting to note that the eventual sentence passed by the Mayor and aldermen of London, that of one year's imprisonment for offences against the Act of Uniformity, is clearly lighter than

1. The defence against this charge varies little throughout the reign, and consists in an attempt to distinguish between the desire of the Queen and the execution of that desire by her bishops. As the Admonitioners say: 'Although our bookes should not seeme to be against the Queenes proceedynges, for shee seemth none otherwyse, but that she wolde have Gods matters to proceede' (Puritan Manifestoes, 39). This was, unfortunately, a defence very unlikely to recommend itself to Elizabeth, since it suggests that the bishops possess independent wills rather than being instruments of the Crown, and also implies that the Queen is easily duped!

some on the Establishment side might have hoped, and than many sympathisers with Field and Wilcox feared. A comparison of the main body of the Second Admonition with its preamble clearly shows that the first was written before the sentence, and the second added after the two men had 'had the law'. The first shows anxiety, masked by defiance, over the possible fate of Field and Wilcox:

The name that goeth of them, is no better then rebelles, and great woordes there are, that their daunger will yet prove greater: well, whatsoever is said, or done against them, or whosoever speake or worke against them, that is not the matter: but the equitie of their cause is the matter. 1

The note in the address 'To the Godly Readers' is one of some triumph; he records some of the more unpromising threats expressed by interested parties: '(and another likely prelate ² saide, if they were at his ordering, Newgate should / have beene their suretie, and fetters their bondes)' ³ and then adds pointedly: 'And yet now that they have had the law ... they are founde nether to have ben traitors nor rebels' ⁴. Parker had already expressed doubt as to the enthusiasm of the Mayor and aldermen for their duty of suppressing radicals ⁵, and this judgement cannot have reassured him.

For while it is true that the Elizabethan trend is for the implementation of censorship - one aspect of the protection of the royal prerogative in matters of state and religion - to pass into the hands of the Queen's ecclesiastical deputies, it is also true that Elizabeth's civil officers (in particular the Council, who as operating in the judicial

1. Puritan Manifestoes, 88.

2. Whitgift? It is probable that by this time the news that Whitgift was writing a reply to the Admonition would have leaked out; and in later years it was a standard gibe that he had only written against the Puritans in the hope of obtaining a bishopric.

3. Puritan Manifestoes, 82.

4. Ibid.

5. Parker, Correspondence, 397, no.CCCIII, Parker to Burghley, 25 August, 1572.

framework of Star Chamber also dealt with prerogative cases) had to be prepared to support the bishops in order to give censorship the necessary practical weight in the atmosphere of increasing mistrust which surrounded the operations of the ecclesiastical hierarchy. In other words, though the ecclesiastical authorities were responsible for tactics, strategy was a joint affair. Elizabethan England was a state which its ruler had chosen to control by an elaborate appearance of 'co-operating with the present system'¹ rather than by overt imposition of her own views on the population. Accordingly, the effective implementation of censorship depended on the creation of a climate of opinion throughout the legislature sufficiently hostile to offenders to permit punishment severe enough to form a real deterrent.

And a study of the events of 1572/73 indicates that at this time such a climate of opinion was difficult to create and impossible to sustain². The Council's directives to the Bishop of London concerning Field and Wilcox are illuminating in this respect. On 20 March, 1573 they wrote to him desiring him to bring Wilcox and Field to some conformity and to show them more favour³; on 30 March they record their satisfaction at the 'good conformitie' of the rebels, and direct that they should be consigned to Archdeacon Mullins '... till upon further triall and relation of his Lordship they might have more occasion to procure her Majesties Pardon'⁴. Thinking of the intransigence of Field and Wilcox one can only suppose that their Lordships' idea of 'good conformitie'

1. See Samuel Johnson, 'Rasselas' and Essays, ed. C. Peake (London, 1967), 48.

2. An interesting example of the tensions just before the Admonition controversy broke is furnished by the case of William Charke. Deprived of a Peterhouse fellowship in 1572 for a contentious sermon, his appeal to Burghley caused considerable annoyance to the Cambridge Heads who had disciplined him (see H.C. Porter, Reformation and Reaction in Tudor Cambridge (Cambridge, 1958), 179/80).

3. Acts of the Privy Council of England, New Series, vol.VII, ed. J.R. Dasent (London, 1894), 90.

4. Ibid., 93.

was somewhat less demanding than that thought desirable by the ecclesiastical authorities. Sandys's letters to Burghley show clear resentment of the fact that the Council seems to thrust the entire responsibility of Field's and Wilcox's imprisonment on him; at the end of April he writes:

Theis men that are with Mr Mullyns write unto me this day for more libertie and better rowme to walke in; charging me that the Counsell hath geven me authoritie to set them at libertie or at the least to be in ther owne houses. I shal pray your L. that I may be releved in that behalf and disburdined. The whole blame is layde on me for ther Imprisonment. 1

A few months later, writing to Burghley to tell him of the capture of the 'Hempsteade' press, he makes a still clearer appeal for obvious civil backing against the dissidents:

In my former letters I remembered unto your L. part of the disorders of this tyme and pray'd the ayde of authoritie for repressing of the same ... What further is to be done in this mattir I expect your pleasure. Civill authoritie must deale in this matter or it will not be well done. 2

Civil authority, however, does not seem to have heeded Sandys's plea for decisive intervention 'in this matter'. Three months later it is the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, not the Privy Council, who are to be found interviewing Stroud and releasing him in exchange for his subscription ³. And although the Council was finally goaded into some action (probably, as Collinson suggests, by a great deal of royal pressure openly expressed in the threats to lax magistrates contained in the stern proclamation of 20 October, 1573 ⁴) its period of intense co-operation with Parker was brief. Some colour of credibility was lent by Birchet's assassination attempt to Parker's theory of a Puritan conspiracy; but Parker's serious lapse of judgement over the Undertree

1. Puritan Manifestoes, 153.

2. Ibid., 155.

3. See note 2, p. 54 above.

4. Tudor Royal Proclamations, vol.II, 379, no.599, Greenwich, 20 October, 1573.

conspiracy cannot have helped his own case ¹. Well before final evidence had emerged that the whole thing was a hoax the Council wrote to the Commissioners on 2 May, 1574, prompted by a supplication from the Puritan ministers Bonham and Standon, saying pointedly that although they were willing to assist them in 'any lawfull cause' against those who threaten public unity: '... yet can not their Lordships like that men should be so long deteyned without having the cause examined, and therefore desire them to proceade in suche cases more spedelye hereafter ...' ². Accordingly, they were to examine the cases of these particular defendants and bail anyone too sick to remain in prison. Bonham and Standon had been imprisoned solely on the evidence of forged letters; when, in late June of 1574, examination of Needham conclusively proved the extent of the deception, Parker was defensive about his own motivation but the damage was irretrievable. Parker could see the probable impact of this confidence trick clearly; as he wrote to Burghley: 'Ye be not like hereafter to have some men careful as they have hitherto been. I send your honour my fond but plain cogitation' ³.

On the strategic level, then, the events of 1572/73 show the inadequacy of the co-operation between the civil and ecclesiastical magistrates which barred the way to effective censorship. The sense of mutual banding together against a common enemy might be awakened in moments of crisis, but it was neither strong nor permanent enough to provide a foundation for a long-term policy. On a tactical level, however, there is some evidence of more successful co-operation between

-
1. For a brief account of this fiasco, see Collinson, The Elizabethan Puritan Movement, 154-5; for a more detailed one, see A.F. Scott Pearson, Thomas Cartwright and Elizabethan Puritanism (Cambridge, 1925), 124-129.
 2. Acts of the Privy Council of England, New Series, vol.VIII,
 3. Parker, Correspondence, 464, no.CCCCLIX.

the enforcement authorities active on the ground - the bishops and Commissioners, on the one hand and the Stationers' Company officials, on the other. The Second Admonition speaks of the bishops as acting in conjunction with 'their doers which be certaine persecuting printers' ¹; this terse statement is expanded in the postscript to Certaine Articles , which lists faults escaped and adds bitterly:

... the cause of which faultes (good Christian reader) and some other things not published, which we meant and minde to publishe God willing, is the importunate search of Day the Printer, and Toy the Bokebinder, assisted with a pursivaunt, and some other officers at the appointment of the bishops, wherin they are very earnest of both sides, the one sorte belike, hath Demetrius the silver Smithes disease, they wold be loth to lose their owne profit, for the churches profit, and the other side would be lothe we had such a meane to publishe anything agains them or their answer. ²

This jaundiced view of a mutually profitable alliance provides illuminating contemporary corroboration for the developments I have been suggesting. One may also observe some interesting cross-references. Day and Toy were the wardens of the Stationers' Company for the year 1572-73; Toy's patron, however, was John Whitgift, whose contemporary he had been at Cambridge. Their collusion was evidently more than a formal business connection; in a letter of 21 September, 1572 Whitgift asks Parker to allow 'Mr toy (one to whom I am greatly bownde)' to print the Answer ³; a later letter thanks Parker 'most umbly' for acceding to this request ⁴. Toy also produced the Defence and Whitgift's sermon before the Queen of 1574. He thus had a dual interest in the vigorous pursuit of Puritan presses, an interest which was recognised by the Puritans; sixteen years later their resentment is expressed in a

1. Puritan Manifestoes, 85.

2. Ibid., 148.

3. See Scott Pearson, Thomas Cartwright and Elizabethan Puritanism, Appendix VIII, 429.

4. Strype, Parker, 1821, vol.III, Appendix, 207, doc.LXXI.

slandorous allusion linking Whitgift to 'Mistris Toye' the printer's widow ¹.

The other searcher, Day, was speedily to acquire powerful reasons for being highly suspicious of illicit Puritan printers. One of the assistants at the Puritan press discovered in 'Hempsteade' in August 1573 was one Asplyn. After examination he was allowed to go free and Day took him into his service ². The well-known sequel is recorded in a letter from Parker to Burghley:

Sir, this mornynge cam the warden of the printers, harrison, and told me that one asplyn a printer to CARTWRIGHTES boke, was after examination suffered agayn to go abrode, and taken in to service in to master Dayes house, and purposed to kyl hym and his wyf etc and beyng askd what he ment, he answered 'The Spryte moved hym ... 3

Day was a prominent Protestant, who had fled into exile under Mary and later enjoyed a long and fruitful association with the martyrologist Foxe ⁴. Foxe had decisively rejected the course adopted by the Admonitioners, though he remained desirous of further reform and never subscribed to the vestments. Professor Collinson quotes him as writing of the Admonitioners that 'They hate me because I prefer to follow moderation and public tranquillity' ⁵. This incident with Asplyn must have convinced Day, if further conviction were needed, that the radical alternative to 'moderation and public tranquillity' contained a real threat to public

-
1. 'Though in deed / I never said in my life / that there was ever any great familiaritie (though I know there was some acquaintaunce) betweene mistris Toye and John Whitgift' (Hay any worke for Cooper (no place or date [1584]), 48. All quotations from the Marprelate tracts in this thesis are taken from the facsimile edition produced by the Scolar Press (Menston, Yorkshire, 1967)).
 2. It is not clear whether this Asplyn is the Thomas Asplyn who had been apprenticed to Day for eight years from March 1567 (Arber, Transcript, vol.I, 327) or the Robert Asplyn who was made free of the Company in 1569 (Arber, Transcript, vol.I, 419).
 3. Arber, Transcript, vol.I, 466.
 4. See J.F. Mozley, John Foxe and his book (London, 1940), ch.IV.
 5. See Collinson, The Elizabethan Puritan Movement, 121.

safety.

Despite the lack of records for the few years immediately subsequent to this vigorous joint campaign, then, there are isolated incidents which suggest that the Stationers' Company as a body was prepared to co-operate actively with the ecclesiastical authorities, provided that this stand did not conflict in any way with their own interests. In February 1574, for instance, Thomas Wood wrote to Whittingham stressing the need for courageous action on the part of radicals; illustrating the fact that the opposition was fierce he cites (inter alia) the following incident:

There was lately burnt in the Stationers' Hall at London so many of Mr Beza's Confessions in English as could be found amongst the said stationers.... The Warden of that company in his protestacion then affirmed that the writings of Mr. Beza and his Master was almost in as great credit with many as the Bible. 1

Indeed, the fact that the use of foreign printers became normal rather than exceptional Puritan strategy in the early 1570s indicates that there was a certain tightening up on the home front ². The intervention of 1572/73 had been only partially successful; though impeded for a time ³ the press managed to leave London and resume production in the

-
1. The reason for this destruction is given in the sentence omitted from the above quotation: 'The cause is imputed to the translation, but as I heare credibly Fitz, the doer thereof, is well able to avouche that it is faithfully translated according to the French'. In a note on the passage Professor Collinson suggests that: 'The fault of the translation, the reason given for burning the tracts, may have involved some alteration in the section on the ministry of the Church, which as translated in the earlier editions (fol. 8 verso) contains an acknowledgement of the legitimacy of episcopacy'. This seems to me highly probable; it is noteworthy that one printer to venture a further edition of the work is Waldegrave (S.T.C. 2012) (see Patrick Collinson, Letters of Thomas Wood, Puritan, 1566-1577 (London, 1960), 8).
 2. See e.g. A.F. Johnson, 'Books printed at Heidelberg for Thomas Cartwright', Library 5th Series, vol.II (1948), 284/86. Study of the typeface (identical in form, capitals and spacing with that in which the main body of A brieff discours is printed) of the distinctive doubling of 'f's, particularly 'off' and 'iff', and of the style of printing the date in Roman numerals on the title page, suggests to me that the brief tract The life off the 70 Archbishopp off Canterbury is to be added to the list of books printed at Heidelberg at this time, though in S.T.C. it is ascribed to Froschauer of Zurich (S.T.C. 1929a).
 3. The paragraph at the end of Certaine Articles (see above, p. 65) suggests

provinces. This would suggest that the machinery of searches was somewhat cumbersome and the searchers as yet somewhat unpractised. Regular weekly searches were, however, instituted in 1576, making the company a much more efficient instrument of censorship.

It would, however, be a mistake to see uncritical co-operation with the ecclesiastical authorities as an invariable principle of Stationers' Company action after 1572/73. In 1578 Thomas Woodcock was arrested by the Bishop of London for selling off copies of the Admonition; the petition on his behalf to Burghley, signed (inter alia) by the Master and wardens of that year conveys strong objection to the Bishop's cavalier action ¹. As soon as the monopoly of printing ceased to be threatened the company began to re-assert its autonomy; but autonomy always came second to financial and legal security, and when internal control threatened to break down the hierarchy of the company was willing to sacrifice its own independence for an effective partnership with the legislative authorities.

In the late 1570s and early 1580s conflicting complaints against monopolistic patentees and book-pirates became common; and in their appeals for justice to be done the patentees played down the financial gain to be accrued from a patent and stressed that their primary concern is for the protection of the royal prerogative. John Day's bill of complaint against Roger Ward, to be heard in Star Chamber, illustrates this point; Day stresses the dependence of his case on the Decree of 1566:

... and the said doinges be in foule contempte and breache of the same order and Decree. And the want of punishment duly to be executed uppon persons offendinge in the lyke cases hath bene and is the cause whitheir Duties first to your majestie and your lawes is

that the printers, hearing of a coming search, had just enough time to bundle the press out of London.

1. Arber, Transcript, vol.I, 484.

neglected ... 1

The close parallels between religious dissidence - flouting the Queen's prerogative in matters of religion - and the defiance of patentees - another affront to royal privilege - are further brought out in the records of the private printer John Wolfe's encounters with the officials of his own company, which form an enclosure to a supplication to the Privy Council against the depredation of Wolfe and others. Certain of the 'notes or articles' of his behaviour are distinctly reminiscent of radical Puritan attitudes and activities, for example, no. 6: '(WOLFE gathered conventicles of people in his house, in ye Exchange, and in ye Church, called Sainct Thomas of Acres ...)' and no. 8: '(WOLFE denied obedience to her Majesties commandements further then in ye written or printed lawe were contained ...)' ². Indeed, it seems to me that Christopher Barker is deliberately trying to evoke the obvious parallel in his readers' minds, stressing (as the Stationers do throughout) that concern for the welfare of the state is uppermost in their minds. In contrast, the complaints of the 'poor artificers' of the hardship they suffered as a result of the privileges given to others are straightforwardly commercial in nature.

In response to these complaints the Council intervened by appointing two eminent lawyers - Dr. John Hammond, a civilian and High Commissioner, and Thomas Norton, Remembrancer of the City of London - to report on the grievances of both sides. It seems that the Council was not satisfied with this initial report (which is not extant) and in January 1583 it widened the terms of reference and appointed an enlarged

1. Arber, Transcript, vol.II, 770.

2. Arber, Transcript, vol.II, 781. For a full account of Wolfe's part in the debate, see Harry R. Hoppe, 'John Wolfe, Printer and Publisher 1579-1601' in Library 4th Series, vol.XIV (1933-34), 241-287.

Commission, headed by John Aylmer, Bishop of London, to provide a final report. This was presented to the Council in July 1583. Although this report is not in itself a legislative instrument, it repays careful study as an indication of the direction future legislation was to take. In addition, much can be learned from scrutiny of the documents in this case about increasing domination by the Bishop of London of press control and about a consequent emphasis on the control of Puritan presses. The brief analysis of events which follows, therefore, does not attempt to evaluate the full commercial significance of the Privilege Debate ¹; it considers the opportunity offered by this appeal to arbitration for increasing episcopal control of the internal affairs of the company.

In any discussion of the events of 1582/83 it is important not to forget one important change in dramatis personae from those who had been active in the Admonition affair ten years before. In 1577 Edmund Sandys had been translated to York; his replacement was John Aylmer, later to achieve unenviable notoriety through the malicious picture of the Marprelate tracts. Aylmer was a disciplinarian, who made severe and extensive use of the Commission; as early as December 1581 we find Burghley advising him to limit his use of its powers to matters directly related to religion ². One of the uses he evidently found for it was to direct the Stationers' Company in its searches for illicit books. A petition of 1582 complaining (mendaciously) of the poverty of the company states as one of the calls on its resources the search for popish

-
1. The dispute can be studied in detail by reference to documents printed by Arber (principally the series in Transcript, vol.II, 770-789) supplemented by the additional documents printed by Greg in his Companion. Greg's introduction to the documents provides a clear chronological outline of the controversy (Companion, 117-125). A brief account of the main grievances can be found in ch.4 of Cyprian Blagden's work, The Stationers' Company: a history, 1403-1959 (London, 1960), and a more detailed study by the same author in 'The English Stock of the Stationers' Company: An Account of its Origins', Library 5th Series, vol.X (1955), 163-185.
 2. Strype, Historical Collections of the Life and Acts of the Right Reverend Father in God, John Aylmer (Oxford, 1821), 61-62.

and seditious books commanded by the Commissioners. Aylmer's imprisonment of Woodcock, too, indicates that he was a man who took no chances on anything which might threaten uniformity. And a study of his role in the debate over privileges shows him to have been deeply concerned to maintain the traditional role of the Bishop of London as the one bearing primary responsibility for censorship. As he wrote to Burghley in 1583: '... the Diligent regard to this perill parteigneth to me in this place where printinge is chieflie used as Ordinarye and alsoe by vertue of the hie Commission ecclesiasticall ...' ¹. It was suggested above that the Council delegated much routine business to the Commissioners at a stage when the Commission was little more than the Council's instrument ². In the 1580s we can observe the growing unease of men like Burghley as this instrument acquires a will and a rationale of its own.

As Greg points out, it is impossible to be certain what the precise brief given to Hammond and Norton was, nor what their recommendations actually were. Taking into account the nature of the journeymen's complaints ³, the tone of the Council's brief to Aylmer and the rest of the enlarged Commission ⁴, and the somewhat self-conscious stress in the final report that '... we the Bishop, Deane, and Recorder do finde that Doctor Hamond and Thomas Norton the former Commissioners have threin done uprightly and with care to releve the poorer sort so farr as might be with justice and preserving the right of her majesties regal autoritie' ⁵, it would seem that they had appeared to be too much

1. See John Morris, 'Restrictive Practices in the Elizabethan Book Trade: the Stationers' Company v. Thomas Thomas 1583-88' (Trans. Cam. Bib. Soc., vol.IV, 1964-8, 276-90), 278.

2. See p. 53, above.

3. Arber, Transcript, vol.II, 770-1.

4. Greg, Companion, 123-5.

5. Ibid., 125.

on the side of the patentees for their report to be acceptable to the Council as impartial. It would also seem that their concern was with privileges alone; the sentence quoted above suggests that their brief had been to find an equilibrium between commercial equity and royal authority ¹.

Whatever the report contained it did not satisfy the Council; the letter of the Council to Aylmer and the rest of the enlarged Commission shows considerable unallayed mistrust of the patentees, who are suspected of various misdemeanours from interpreting their patents in an over-inclusive way to bad printing. Perhaps more interesting than the list of areas to be examined, however, is the significant omission. Though the Council does mandate its Commissioners to investigate ways of reducing the number of printers, the whole tone of the letter suggests that this is in the interests of commercial viability, not of efficient control. This is all the more interesting in that the part of the final report dealing with this clause pointedly says: 'This was a matter specially for the state and church commended to your Ltps by the former Commissioners' ². It would appear that Hammond and Norton exceeded their brief in recommending this to the attention of the Council ³. The Council's reluctance to express itself strongly on the matter is intriguing; they take Hammond and Norton's point about the excessive number of presses, but play down its political implications. Their one explicit suggestion for reform, a reduction in the number of apprentices, implies that their major concern is for the maintenance of an economic work force. It seems to me, therefore, that the initiative which added a religio-political dimension to a primarily

1. Greg (Companion) accepts the identification of the Remembrancer of London with the Thomas Norton who was retained as Council to the Company (see p. 125). If this is correct (and the evidence seems to me convincing) it is hardly surprising that the journeymen protested.

2. Ibid., 130.

3. See Greg, Companion, 120, n.1 for corroboration of this view.

commercial enquiry came not from the Council, but from the investigating Commissioners themselves, building upon the explicit links stressed by the patentees between flouting of the royal authority on privileges and non-conformity in matters of church order. Both Hammond and Norton were members of the High Commission in London, as were all the three new members added by the Council - Aylmer, Alexander Nowell, Dean of St Paul's and Recorder Fleetwood.

This hypothesis of a company/Commission alliance is borne out by a controversy which occurred between the issuing of the revised Commission in January 1583 and the submission of the final report in July. This was the famous clash - the first of several - between the Stationers' Company and the University of Cambridge over the latter's right by royal charter to appoint a printer ¹. The Grace appointing Thomas Thomas as University Printer passed Senate on 3 May, 1583; presumably he then went to London to buy printing material and a press. The subsequent fate of this press is described in a letter from Aylmer to Burghley of 1 June (quoted above, p. 71), a letter which when analysed with care is most revealing. Aylmer opens by recalling to Burghley his recent appointment to the Commission for Printing, singling out as the most important feature of his brief the clause dealing with a reduction in the number of presses ². It is commonly said that it was the Council who demanded the search for secret presses in London to which Aylmer next refers ³; this is the impression which Aylmer wishes to give, but scrutiny of his evasive syntax indicates that the search

1. A detailed discussion of the sequence of events can be found in John Morris, 'Restrictive Practices', from which the quotations of documents below are taken. Here I intend to pick out only those features of the debate which give evidence of close co-operation between the ecclesiastical authorities and the company in the interests of both.

2. Ibid., 278.

3. Ibid.

was carried out by the wardens of the Stationers' Company at Aylmer's own request, and that Aylmer was not obeying a direct command of the Council's; rather he chose to consider this action '... what in this case was requisite for satisfieng my charge (i.e. the Council's charge to the Commissioners) and your expectacons' ¹. Morris's statement (p. 277) that the Stationers' Company 'acted immediately' and seized the press, then, is misleading; the initiative did not lie with the company, who were carrying out a search at Aylmer's request. Aylmer continues that despite a letter from Vice-Chancellor Bell of Cambridge producing evidence of the Council's allowance of printing in Cambridge and seeking the release of the press, he intends to continue to hold it:

... till I understand your pleasure for good
Assuraunce to be had bothe of that prynter and
his mynisters for good and lafull usage and
workemanshippe of that presse and speciallie for
matters perillous to religion and state ...
[my underlining] ²

He clearly fears that the Cambridge printer may find a loophole through which to escape the 'carefull order' which is about to be taken for such matters in the City itself ³.

The law was on the side of Cambridge and after a further exchange of letters the press was eventually released. The timing of this particular contretemps, however, is important. Just over a month later the Commissioners presented their final report; in the covering letter they state that in dealing with the issues they have followed the order prescribed by the Council, but add that they hope the Council will not be offended if they add another point:

... in our opinions it shalbe very requisite for the

1. Morris, 'Restrictive Practices', 278.

2. Ibid., 279.

3. Clearly Aylmer envisages another Star Chamber Decree on the subject, as does the final report.

chirch and state, and for preservacon of her Majestie right and mens private interestes ... that wheresoever any printing shalbe used either in the universities or els where there be good foresight of assurance for like orders to be kept as in London. 1

The influence of Aylmer on this statement is clear; one skirmish might have been lost, but he had no intention of losing the war to gain uniformity in all areas.

The Report itself merits close attention. Throughout the opening section, which deals with the commercial and social aspects of patents, reference is made to the concurrence of the Commissioners as a whole with the earlier recommendations of Hammond and Norton, and it seems likely that this section is simply a reworking of old material. The next, new section is that dealing with the number of presses. Continuing the theme of 'good foresight of assurance' uppermost in Aylmer's mind, the recommendations of this section point to the development of a complex system of checks and licences designed to keep the whole process of production under constant surveillance. The Council is to limit the number of presses, and no printer is henceforth to set up in business without a licence from the Master and wardens, or (if the Master and wardens refuse unreasonably) the Ecclesiastical Commissioners. Numerous detailed provisions reinforce this legislation, including one designed to destroy an illicit printer's cloak of anonymity: a sample print-off of all a printer's devices and type was to be delivered to Stationers' Hall ².

The rest of the report consists of eminently sensible safeguards for the quality of printing and the financial security of 'the poorer sorte' ³. As a whole, then, the report is by no means a repressive

1. Greg, Companion, 125/26.

2. Ibid., 130/31. The recognition of books by a well-known type-face was an important part of the case built up against the printers of the Marprelate tracts. See the Document printed by Arber (Transcript, vol.II, 816/17) and headed by him 'Secret Report to Lord Burghley of the Authors of the Martin Marprelate tracts'.

3. Greg, Companion, 133.

document; the section on the number of presses, however, seems to me to represent a concerted attempt on the part of the ecclesiastical authorities and the office-holders of the Stationers' Company to make the imposition of uniformity easier ¹. In this they would appear to have been in some tension with the Council, whose chief aim was an equitable commercial solution to the problem of excessive manpower. It is noticeable that while immediate action was taken on the commercial recommendations of the report, the Council took no action on the provisions relative to censorship for several years ². And a study of subsequent events would suggest that the Commissioners themselves were not united on the issue of how stricter censorship should be administered and to whom it was intended to apply. The reader may already have been surprised to find Thomas Norton, 'Parliament man' of 1571, cast in the role of a potential oppressor of Puritans, determined to bring to the Council's attention the danger of illicit printing. The fact is that Norton's aim was almost certainly one of restraining recusants; a study of his literary and civic activities suggests that he had an intense hatred of Catholics in general and of Jesuits in particular. His fellow-Commissioner for printing, John Hammond and he had collaborated over at least one examination under torture of a Jesuit priest - that of Alexander Briant, in May 1581 ³. Since Aylmer names Hammond as an erratic member of High Commission, who at the time of writing had just absented himself from the trial of certain recalcitrant Puritans ⁴,

1. One notes that Christopher Barker's list of presses, which appears to have been commissioned by Aylmer, is specifically attached to this section of the report.

2. Reasons for the dating of the 1586 Decree will be suggested below.

3. See Dictionary of National Biography, vol.VIII, ed. L. Stephen and S. Lee (London, 1908), 1131; vol.XIV, ed. S. Lee (London, 1909), 666-670.

4. Strype, Aylmer, 60.

it seems likely that Hammond shared his colleague's bias against Catholics. Certainly most of the recorded facts about the lives of both men suggest an intense preoccupation with refuting and crushing the recusant threat. I would like to suggest that Hammond and Norton envisaged the new powers to be created as being controlled by the Council, rather than the bishops, and as being exercised against recusants rather than Puritans. This interpretation of their views is supported by the fact that when Whitgift's articles enforcing uniformity, including the concentration of power to license in his own and Aylmer's hands, were published, both Hammond and Norton circulated protests at the amount of power thereby conferred on the bishops ¹. Aylmer, on the other hand, seems to have seen the control of the press primarily as an instrument for enforcing uniformity within the church. Not unnaturally, the Stationers' Company primary aim was to inhibit printers who presented a threat to their exercise of monopolistic privilege, and a survey of such printers as constituted such a threat in the early 1580s reveals that insofar as they had an ideological bias it was towards radical reform ². It is not therefore surprising that the links between Aylmer and the Stationers' Company were close. Aylmer was not, however, able to act as decisively as he might have wished, partly because the Commission as a body was rather lethargic at the time ³ and partly because he was not sufficiently strong-minded to push through ruthless decisions in the absence of wholehearted support from the civil authorities. As Strype tells us, he was more given to hysterical threats to resign from the High Commission in protest at the lack of support from other parties ⁴.

1. These are identified and discussed below, pp.84-6.

2. The most obvious examples are Thomas (see Morris, 'Restrictive Practices') and of course Waldegrave (see below).

3. Strype tells us: 'It was still the Bishop that moved this body, the rest being ready to slip away from the work, had not he still appeared, and acted vigorously, and carried the Commissioners along with him' (Aylmer, 62).

4. Ibid., 68-69.

Although, therefore, the first twenty years of Elizabeth's reign saw responsibility for censorship being gradually consolidated in the hands of the ecclesiastical hierarchy, it was only when Whitgift came to power that the Establishment was able to transform formal responsibility into effective power. Before studying this transformation, however, I wish to look briefly at early attempts to legislate for more effective control of expressions of opinion critical of the church by law established - and, hence, of those with ultimate responsibility for that church.

PART I: SECTION II - The Legislative Position

The fatal weakness of the bishops' position for the first half of Elizabeth's reign was the lack of any clear statutory backing for their view of Puritan literature. For censorship to be generally acceptable and therefore effective, the idea that dissidence of any kind constituted a rebellious act had to find its way from the pages of the Establishment propagandist to those of the statute book. Other ways of enforcing uniformity (such as royal proclamations) had an ad hoc air of response to a passing crisis; proclamations in particular were of doubtful legal status and were therefore unusually dependent on vigorous public co-operation to be effective ¹.

Elizabeth's first proclamation against the Admonition took the form of a general exhortation to uniformity, coupled with a demand that the books concerned should be handed in within twenty days; as noted above (see note 2, pp.54-5) it was a total failure ². With some skill the radicals managed to combine unimpaired formal regard for the Queen's

1. See D'Ewes, Journal, 355, for an interesting debate of the 1576 Apparel Bill, in which Mildmay as Commons speaker objects to the proposed form of legislation on the grounds that it would give proclamations, albeit proclamations dealing with an insignificant area of public life, statutory status.

2. Puritan Manifestoes, 154.

authority with complete disregard for her expressed wishes; the reasoning behind this apparently paradoxical behaviour is stated succinctly by John Stroud in the defiant preface to the second edition of the Replye, which came out after the proclamation and in conscious defiance of it. He describes the proclamation in parentheses as:

(... our most gracious Princes late published proclamation, procured rather by the Byshops then willingly sought for by her majestie, whose mildnes is such / that she were easier led to yelde to the proclamation of the highest then drawne to proclaime any thing against hym, were it not for the subtil perswasions and wicked dealings of thys horned generation ...) 1

In the nature of things a proclamation is a personal statement; and one may discredit a personal statement by saying that it was obtained by deceit. A corporate decision of the body politic is less open to such evasion.

To understand the legislative developments relevant to censorship it is necessary to bear in mind that at no time in the reign could Parliament be persuaded to pass a bill which directly controlled the printing trade as such. On 21 November, 1566 a bill 'to avoid divers seditious Books' was read for the first and only time in the Commons ²; the failure of this bill was to set a precedent for other bills subsequently introduced, none of which achieved more than a first reading. Accordingly, the

-
1. Reprinted in The Seconde Parte, vol.I, 112. One observes, however, that Stroud declined to be so cavalier about royal proclamations during his examination by the Commissioners: indeed, he asserts that 'if they [i.e. the books] had bene to print after the proclamation was come out, he would not have printed them, but they were printed before, and herein he confessed himself to have offended the lawe' (The Seconde Parte, 113).
 2. See Cyprian Blagden, 'Book Trade Control in 1566'. According to Blagden a draft of 'An Act to restraine the printing, selling and uttering of unprofitable and hurtfull English bookes' is to be found in S.P. Dom. Eliz. vol.41, no.25. About eleven years later a copy was made of this draft bill, and the copy is to be found in B.M. Lansdowne, 43 fol. 187, endorsed 'restraint for printing bookes 1577'. Three years later still, Lambarde made a large number of verbal alterations and two important modifications in this bill, and signed the result 'W. Lambarde 1580'. (It is this document which Arber prints (Transcript, vol.II, 751-53.)) Blagden gives an account of the differences between drafts of this bill.

legislation aimed at dissident Puritan writers and printers developed from the concept of 'libel' as formulated by Whitgift¹ and others; tracts were classified with other forms of defamation of public figures and treated accordingly. Again, however, the House of Commons was unwilling to pass any bill imposing severe penalties for the slander of any specific civil or ecclesiastical dignitaries apart from the Queen herself. Thus, one important feature of the development of Elizabethan censorship is the widening of the concept of slander of the Queen - in itself an act of rebellion - to include not only direct slurs on her person but also attacks on any part of her body politic. In the brief section which follows I shall analyse the development of legislation concerning the slander of the Queen and her government up to and including the statute 23 Eliz. cap. 2.

The need for this famous statute was highlighted by the first use of the existing libel laws against an extreme Puritan writer in a trial which provoked considerable legal controversy. The author in question was John Stubbs, and his book - Gaping Gulph - primarily a political rather than a doctrinal tract. Stubbs was protesting at the gulf of godless chaos into which England might be swept were the projected marriage of Elizabeth and Anjou to take place. Elizabeth was not impressed by the allegedly impersonal location of the threat in the gulf of Roman chaos itself; she saw the tract as an attack on her personal motives. One of the strongest proclamations of her reign was issued in denunciation of the work:

... it doth manifestly appear that the only scope

1. The full title of Whitgift's Answere makes clear the line he intends to take; again, on p.333 of the second edition he states that the Admonition can claim no Parliamentary indemnity 'bycause it is a Libell'. When he elaborates his justification for this damning description, one notes that it seems to relate more to the style than to the content of the work (Answere, 1st edition, 233).

hereof was under plausible reprehensions to diminish her majesty's credit with her good people, and to set all at liberty for some monstrous, secret innovation ... 1

Elizabeth, at least, clearly ^{saw} some connection between this book and the radical Puritan threat. It and its author aroused considerable public sympathy; Camden tells us in his Historie of the princesse Elizabeth of the legal debates which surrounded Stubbs's trial for the dissemination of seditious literature. Sentence was given:

... according to an Act of Philip and Mary 'against the authors and sowers of seditious writings'; though some lawyers murmured that the sentence was erroneous and void by reason of a false noting of the time wherein the law was made, and that the Act was temporary and died with Queen Mary. Of whom Dalton, who often spake it openly, was committed to the Tower; and Monson, a judge in the Court of Common Pleas, was with sharp words so shaken up that he gave over his place, forasmuch as Wray, Lord Chief Justice of England, showed that there was no mistaking in the noting of the time and proved by the words of the Act that the Act was made against those which should violate the king by seditious writing and that the King of England never dieth; yea, that that Act was renewed anno primo Elizabethae during the life of her and the heirs of her body. 2

Wray was, of course, quite right: the Marian statute in question is 1 & 2, P & M, cap. 3. It is clear, however, that Marian statutes, however legally renewed, were unpopular. It would also seem probable that Elizabeth saw the need for still more drastic legislation to deter eager Puritans from indulging in harsh criticism of her government, however their plan 'to set all at liberty for some monstrous secret innovation' might be cloaked under protestations of loyalty to the Queen's person.

The link between the Stubbs case and 23 Eliz. cap.2, however,

-
1. Tudor Royal Proclamations, vol.II, no.642, Gidea Hall, Essex 27 September, 1579.
 2. As quoted in John Stubbs's 'Gaping Gulf' with Letters and Other Relevant Documents, ed. Lloyd E. Berry (Folger Shakespeare Library, Charlottesville, 1968). In his Annales (English translation (London, 1625), bk.iii, 16) Camden gives a slightly different version of events, in which Mounson is said to have resigned because he did not wish to be party to an unjust decision (see H.J. Byrom, 'Edmund Spenser's first Printer, Hugh Singleton', Library 4th Series, vol. XIV (1933-34), 140).

can be found made explicit in contemporary documents as well as deduced from the evidence. Throughout the trial of John Udall, for example, one of the judges drew attention to the close parallels between this case and that of Stubbs, parallels which cannot have been cheering to the defendant ¹.

The Act against seditious words and rumours uttered against the Queen's most excellent majesty appears to have been a government measure originating in the Lords ². It is officially described as an expansion of 1 Eliz. cap.6 (the formal renewal of the disputed Marian statute by which Stubbs was tried). In its final form it is a harsh piece of legislation; as Neale shows, however, its original form is even harsher. It is interesting to note that although in the bill as redrafted by the Commons the terms of imprisonment for oral slander are much reduced and the option of a fine in lieu of losing one's ears reintroduced, the penalty for writing and printing slanders remains felony, even for the first offence. The only qualifier introduced in this clause is the phrase 'with a malicious intent', words which (as will be seen) are too vague to offer protection to any defendant.

In the first instance this bill was of course designed to protect the Queen from attacks such as those of Stubbs. One of the strictly unanswerable questions about this bill is whether the breadth of interpretation later accorded to it, by which the Queen was taken not as an individual but as a representative of the whole body politic, was consciously foreseen at the time by the government legislators, or whether it was a result of the failure to persuade the Commons to pass more specific legislation on the subject of slandering bishops

1. For an example of contemporary perceptions of the link between the Stubbs case and the Act of 1581, see below, p. 112.

2. The account which follows is heavily dependent on Neale's Elizabeth I and her Parliaments 1559-1581, Part Seven, ch.III, 393 ff.

and civil magistrates. One of the Commons' triumphs in the passage of the bill had been the complete repeal of the Marian statute; the Lords had wished to retain its unaltered portions because they provided penalties for the slander of civil and ecclesiastical governors. Among notes in the hand of Attorney-General Popham for acts to be made during an (undated) Parliament we find the outline of a new bill imposing savage punishments for such offences; any written slander of the government as a whole was to be 'Felonye without Benyfyt off Clergy', any vernacular slander in writing of the established religion or the laws to be first praemunire and then treason, and any book or writing slandering the Privy Council life imprisonment and a fine at the Queen's discretion. This would appear to be a draft of a bill which is recorded as being rejected on the first reading by the Parliament of 1584/85 ¹. Did the government legislators of Elizabeth's seventh Parliament, then, foresee the possibility that 23 Eliz. cap.2 was the only statute on the subject of libel that they would ever persuade the Commons to accept, and did they therefore deliberately make the definition of offences as broad as possible? ² The answer must remain a matter of opinion; I think

-
1. See Greg, Companion, Section 9, 138; and Neale, Elizabeth I and her Parliaments 1584-1601 (London, 1957), 94-95. 1584/85 is Greg's conjectural dating of the document, to be found in S.P. Dom. Eliz. vol.176, art.34. It seems to me that in view of the complete repeal of the Marian statute in the previous Parliament, and of the records of a bill on slanderous books and libels in the 1584/85 Parliament, this opinion is certainly correct.
 2. In his work An Answer to a certaine Libel supplicatorie, or rather Diffamatory, and also to certaine Calumnious 'Articles' and Interrogatories, both printed and scattered in secret corners, to the slaunder of the Ecclesiasticall state, and put forth under the name and title of a Petition directed to her Majestie (London, 1592) (whose title forms an elegant summary of the Establishment case against reforming writers), Matthew Sutcliffe twice states that 23 Eliz. cap.2 was deliberately conceived as an anti-Puritan statute: 'It was the special meaning of the parliament that the malapartnesse both of papists and puritans should be repressed: as some there present in parliament do witnesse' (p.63); 'That the meaning of the parliament was to repress the malice of Puritanes is most certaine. For it was expressly mentioned at the time of making the act by divers of the house' (p.65).

that the evident alarm of the Commons at the bill indicates that they, at least, saw its potential scope. At the least, it had strategic possibilities which were later exploited to the full by Whitgift.

PART II, SECTION I: Whitgift and the Star Chamber Decree of 1586.

The decisive event which transformed this confused situation was the appointment of Whitgift to the see of Canterbury. In the context of this thesis, it must be regarded as the turning point of the reign both from a historical and from a literary point of view. Whitgift took firm hold of his ill-disciplined church, with the full support of the Queen. The Articles of 1583, his first declaration of policy, are chiefly notorious for their initiation of a rigorous subscription campaign; their main interest here is for an Article not found in the original twelve (as printed by Strype) but added after further consideration ¹. In the series of sixteen articles calendared in The Seconde Parte it forms number two ². This states that no book is to be printed without a licence from the Archbishop and from the Bishop of London, and that no printer is to issue translations, editions or annotations of the Scriptures other than those approved by the bishops.

Various reactions to this Article have been preserved, notably those contained in the three responses to the Articles calendared in The Seconde Parte ³ and in the tract The copie of a Letrer [sic] written by a gentleman in the Countrey, unto a Londoner, touching an answere to the Archb. articles which is printed in A parte of a register ⁴.

1. John Strype, The Life and Acts of John Whitgift D.D. (Oxford, 1822), vol.I, bk.III, ch.2, 229-232.

2. The Seconde Parte, vol.I, 172-74.

3. Ibid., 174-195.

4. Anon., A parte of a register, contayninge sundrie memorable matters, written by divers godly and learned in our time, which stande for, the reformation of our church [Middelburg, 1593?], 132 ff.

The first answer in The Seconde Parte, Certaine Points ..., stresses the affront to the injunction of 1559, in which the Queen's will was clearly set forth. If reform is indeed necessary, the writer suggests, it should be in the direction of more rigorous moral censorship exercised by four lawyers and four divines - a suggestion which marks him as a man of Puritan sympathies. He also makes the Admonitioners' point: 'Besides ... the Archb. and BB are knowen affectionate parties in some late differences touching the ordering of Church government and reformation of manifold abuses in the Church of God' and their desire for power springs from their desire to maintain their own estate ¹. Similar points are made in the document printed in A parte. This contrasts the spirit and letter of the Queen's injunction, with its wide and primarily moral scope and its comprehensive list of licensers, with this plan which 'translateth all power, wisdom, and discretion from these honorable persons, unto the absolute authoritie, judgement and sufficiency of one man ..., namelie, either the Archb. of Canturburie, or Bishop of London' ². Like the author of Certaine Points, 'the gentleman in the Countrey' is concerned for the royal prerogative ³. The author of the second answer in The Seconde Parte varies this concern by commenting on the right of the Lords of the Council to allow 'books of the state', a right infringed by the Archbishop's article ⁴.

The author of A Letrer is unknown, but the author of the third answer calendared in The Seconde Parte is identified in the MS as Norton, and Professor Collinson has identified the author of Certaine Points as Robert Some and the writer with a concern for the Council's prerogative

1. The Seconde Parte, 175.

2. A parte of a register, 144.

3. Ibid.

4. The Seconde Parte, 186.

as John Hammond ¹. None of these three men could be classified as radical in his sympathies. If in 1572 censorship exercised by the bishops was an issue which fuelled the grievances of the radicals, by 1583 the extent of episcopal control has aroused the ire of a much wider and more representative section of public opinion.

The concern of such men as Norton would doubtless have been even greater had they had access to a paper sent from Whitgift to Burghley defending the High Commission by pointing out its unique advantages ². Among the points in favour of the Commission are that it can impose penalties which command respect - fines and imprisonment - while purely 'ecclesiastical' censures imposed by the Ordinary, such as excommunication, carry little weight. He also mentions censorship as a prime concern of the Commission: 'The commission seeth that search be made for unlawful books; and examineth the writers, printers and sellers, upon their oaths; which the Ordinary cannot do' ³.

'The confession of the party' had always been adequate ground for sentence in the Ecclesiastical Commissions granted by Elizabeth, and the corporal oath an acceptable way of obtaining that confession; in that respect the Commission of 1583 is identical with that of 1559 ⁴.

-
1. See Collinson, The Elizabethan Puritan Movement, 488. With reference to what was suggested above about the probable attitude of Hammond and Norton to the reform of censorship, it is notable that both the MS ascribed to them stress the past failure of the bishops to deal with the recusants. Norton states that in this direction the High Commission has been underused, while Hammond writes: 'I allow Mr Whitakers opinion ... that neither making nor execution of lawes, not writing books of confutation, shall ever do good in our Churc, untill we maie have a lawfull mynistry, thatis, of sufficient abilitie to teach' (p.188).
 2. 'Reasons for the Necessity of the Commission for Causes Ecclesiastical', Strype, Whitgift, vol.I, bk.III, ch.IV, 266-67.
 3. Ibid.
 4. See Statutes and Constitutional Documents 1558-1625, ed. G.W. Prothero, 4th edition (Oxford, 1913), 230, for the reference to a 'corporal oath' in the Commission of 1559. Pierce's statement that the Commission of 1583 was 'distinctly the most tyrannical of the series' (W. Pierce, An Historical Introduction to the Marprelate Tracts (London, 1908), 76) is inaccurate; Whitgift simply exploited powers which had previously been legally accessible, but little used.

Whitgift, however, was to make use of 'the oath' on an unprecedented scale. As an instrument of censorship it had the advantage of avoiding the inconvenient need to prove the charge brought against a suspected author or printer. The Commission of 1583, like its predecessors, allowed its members to summon 'all such as by you ... shall seeme to be suspect persons in any of the premisses' ¹; once before the Commissioners, Whitgift envisaged a simple process of forcing the accused to condemn himself out of his own mouth ².

It is plain from Whitgift's article on printing and from the document quoted above that he was determined to make full use of the powers delegated to the High Commission over the years in order to keep censorship in his own hands. The weakness of this system, however, is evident. The Articles received direct royal assent, but lacked the approval of Parliament; and moderate as well as radical Puritans were already questioning the 'Popish Tyranny' ³ of the Commission and casting doubt on its legality. Whitgift's proceedings might all too easily seem like disreputable manoeuvres on the periphery of the Constitution, which did not command the assent of those who acknowledged only statutes made by the Queen in Parliament as binding.

Accordingly, it was imperative that stringent proceedings against dissidents should have the express backing of the civil authorities, preferably in statutory form. In the first few months of Whitgift's primacy two obstacles to this necessary co-operation became clear, one created by the Archbishop himself and one which he had inherited. In the first place, relationships between civil and ecclesiastical authorities

1. Statutes and Constitutional Documents. 472e.

2. See another paper from Whitgift to Burghley, 'Inconvenience of not proceeding ex officio mero' (Strype, Whitgift, vol.I, bk.III, ch.VIII, 321), which stresses the inconvenience and expense of a system requiring witnesses.

3. Strype, Whitgift, vol.I, bk.III, ch.XI, 390.

were strained by the injudicious harshness with which Whitgift at first pursued the Subscription campaign ¹; in the second place, there was inadequate statutory backing both for the use of company and Commission in censorship and for the view of Puritan literature which condemned it as seditious. The second of these problems was never satisfactorily solved: the subtle interpretation of 23 Eliz. cap.2 used to fill the gap was all too obviously wrested from its primary meaning. An interim solution, however, resulted from Whitgift's notable achievement of close co-operation between the ministers of the Crown. What Parliament could never be persuaded to pass, Star Chamber effected by the Decree of 1586.

In the first months of 1584, however, the reaction against the Subscription campaign was vehement; and one cannot fail to notice the number of eminent councillors who were in the vanguard of that reaction ². It is hardly surprising, then, that Whitgift made no decisive moves to consolidate his policy on censorship in those months, though he lost no opportunity to remind the Treasurer of the dangers inherent in the current situation. His letter to Burghley of 30 June, 1584 regarding the illicit reprinting in Cambridge of Cartwright's translation of Travers' 'Explicatio' is a good example of his gentle but sustained pressure. Urging that the books, 'being veri factius and full of untruthes', should be burned, and that sureties should be taken of the printer to enforce his respect for the licensing authorities, he adds pointedly: '... for yf restrante be made here, and libertie graunted there, what good can be done?' ³. The insecurity of his position is, however, seen in his

-
1. This tension is much exploited by Puritan propagandists. The author of The Unlawfull Practises of Prelates for example, describes the Puritan appeals to the Council, saying that although their Lordships' letters of favour to the Archbishop had no immediate effect: 'At the length such were the complaints, such were the proofes, that her Maiesties most honorable counsell dealt very feelingly in the cause. Hence became the subscription to be somewhat more tollerable ...' (A parte of a register, 296).
 2. See Collinson, The Elizabethan Puritan Movement, Part 5, ch.2.
 3. See Greg, Companion, Section 6, 135. It is not very clear where John Morris ('Restrictive Practices', 284) has found the date of 24 June which he assigns to this letter, since Whitgift ends 'Frome Croydon the last

request to Burghley to burn or otherwise destroy his letter; and Burghley's famous letter comparing Whitgift's Interrogatories to the instruments of the Spanish Inquisition was sent just two days later, on 2 July ¹. Clearly this was not the moment to press for civil recognition of the 'restrante' which had been established by the Article.

Towards the autumn, however, as the new Parliamentary session approached, an issue emerged in which Council and ecclesiastical hierarchy could make common cause. Drastic recent action against certain Jesuits, Campion and others, had provoked a considerable Catholic propaganda reaction attacking the injustice of the Elizabethan regime, in particular the activities of the Council. Various royal proclamations and pieces of official propaganda countered this charge ². The latest of these proclamations, that of 12 October, 1584, mentioned books which 'slander the present most happy and quiet government with cruelty and extraordinary manner of proceedings in the due execution of justice ...' ³. In a speech on the Queen's safety in the 1584 Parliament Mildmay found it necessary to reiterate that Campion and others had been prosecuted 'not for the superstitious ceremonies of Rome but for most high and capital offences and conspiracies' and to mention in particular Allen's Defence of English Catholics and Parsons' De Persecutione Anglicana as slanderous distortions of the truth ⁴. Accordingly, the failure of the bill designed

of June 1584' and Burghley's endorsement states that the letter was sent on 'Ultimo Junio 1584'. For identification of the books printed, see S.J. Knox, Walter Travers: Paragon of Elizabethan Puritanism (London, 1962), 65.

1. Reprinted by Strype, Whitgift, vol.III, doc.9, 104-7. The letter is actually dated 1 July; evidently it was written one day and sent the next.
2. See R. Simpson, Edmund Campion. A Biography (London, 1896) for a bibliography of Campion's own writings and of the tracts produced on both sides after his death. For Burghley's prominent part in the government campaign, see Conyers Read 'William Cecil and Elizabethan Public Relations' printed in Elizabethan Government and Society: Essays presented to Sir John Neale, ed. S.T. Bindoff, J. Hurstfield and C.H. Williams (London, 1961), especially p.37.
3. Tudor Royal Proclamations, vol.II, no.672, Hampton Court, 12 October, 1584, 26 Eliz. I.
4. Quoted in Neale, Elizabeth I and her Parliaments 1584-1601 (London, 1957), 29.

to provide penalties for the slander of civil and ecclesiastical magistrates (see p. 83 above) can hardly have been welcomed by the Council; and it is at least probable that Council and bishops drew together as they suffered the common fate of exaggerated and unavenged slander ¹.

The other bill of this Parliament relevant to the current argument also received only one reading. It appears to have been an attempt to confirm the privileges of the Stationers' Company by statute, and it shows the co-operation previously established between Aylmer and the Stationers' Company and developed by the regime of the new Archbishop. An item in the Stationers' Company accounts of 1584/85:

Item paid in fees to our learned Councell, to
[a or his] Clerke for Copying of Draughtes And
other Charges concerninge a bill preferred into
the parliament howse touchinge matters requisyte
for this Cumpanie, As by the particulers of the
same Charges Appereth, and to master GRAFTON
[the barrister] and his man for their paynes ... 2

suggests that the draft of this bill originated from the company itself. An extant series of notes for a speech on this bill informs us, however, that though '... the [meaning] "body" of ye bill stretcheth no further then to, preserve the privileges of the company of ye prynters and the prerogatyf of her majesties patenttes ...' ³ it had a preamble which indicated the use to which this apparently neutral piece of legislation was to be put. Reference was made to the suppression of books which disturb the church; the anonymous writer, whose concept of edification is clearly Puritan rather than Establishment, points out that 'that booke may be sayd a disturber of the churche which tended to the propagation of ye Churche' ⁴ and cites a biblical example to prove

1. See C.S.P. Dom. Eliz. vol.CLXXX, no.45 (24 July, 1585), Burghley to Herlle, and the rest of that correspondence, which illustrates Burghley's sense of victimisation.

2. Arber, Transcript, vol.I, 509.

3. Greg, Companion, 143.

4. Ibid., 141.

his point ¹. Some suspect that this law will join the other penal statutes 'which being made to cache crowes do often tymes take pigeons' ²; in other words , that Puritans will be punished rather than recusants. The author makes a show of dissociating himself from this opinion: 'for that we hard it testified that it was drawne [for] "to" a nother purpose and I understand was preferred, by a nother kind of person' ³; clearly, when challenged as to the real intent behind this bill, official sources had declared that it was drawn up to protect the Stationers, not to enforce censorship, and that it originated from the company rather than from government strategies. In fact, of course, this convenient explanation has only been half believed; in any case, even if the bill is as free from episcopal complicity as has been claimed, nothing will be able to stop those responsible for judging such cases from abusing it once it has been passed: 'wee se in experience that ... the bare letter, of a lawe, (is) enought for him that makes no Conscience, to, wrest a lawe, contrary to the meaning of the makers of that lawe'. The 'quareling head' of the bill, then, should be removed ⁴. In fact the 'quareling head' obviously gave the whole bill away, and the Commons rejected it in toto.

The message of the failure of these two bills is clear. No matter how it was disguised, and with what otherwise desirable legislation it was coupled, no bill capable of being interpreted as a measure to impose more stringent penalties on dissident Puritans printers or writers was likely to pass a House of Commons in the mid 1580s. The session of Parliament was prorogued on 29 March, 1585, though it was not finally

1. Greg, Companion, 141; the example is drawn from L. Kings, 18, v.17/18.

2. Ibid., 142-43.

3. Ibid., 143.

4. Ibid.

dissolved until 1586. The need for legislation, however, remained as great as ever, and the case of Robert Waldegrave must have heightened Whitgift's awareness of the fact. According to Hay any Worke for Cooper, Waldegrave was imprisoned several times, the longest imprisonment being one of 20 weeks in the White Lion 'for printing the Complaint of the comminaltie / the Practize of prelates / A lerned mans judgment / etc.' ¹ The account of Whitgift's unsuccessful attempt to persuade Waldegrave to confine himself to the printing of works authorised by Queen or Archbishop is interesting; Waldegrave affirms that he will be unable to observe the terms suggested:

For saide he / I being a poore workeman to my companie/ cannot possibly observe it. For many bookes heretofore printed / had cum privilegio, and yet were never authorized: and againe / that it were but a folly for him to sue to her Maiestie / the office were very base and unfit for her. And he might be wel assured that Caiaphas of Cant. would never authorize anything for his behoofe / and so it fell out. ²

Despite his defiance, Waldegrave was eventually released; Whitgift did not have the legal resources to keep him in prison indefinitely, or to stop him printing altogether. The frustration of this temporary check must have sharpened Whitgift's resolve to find some viable alternative to statutory power to impose restraint on the Puritan press. The obvious body to make an appropriate pronouncement was, of course, the Council. I would like to suggest that the date of the famous Star Chamber Decree - 23 June, 1586 - was not entirely unconnected with another move unprecedented in Elizabethan history. A few months prior to the Decree, Whitgift obtained a seat on the Council.

1. Hay any Worke for Cooper, 42. The tracts mentioned are S.T.C. 7739, S.T.C. 20201, and S.T.C. 2021 (a translation from Beza, dealt with in detail by Dr. John Bridges). For a fuller list of tracts produced by Waldegrave about this time, see Collinson, The Elizabethan Puritan Movement, 274.

2. Hay any Worke, 42/43.

There are varying contemporary or near-contemporary assessments of this move. Sir George Paule, Whitgift's biographer, presents it as a move intended to thwart the Earl of Leicester's attempts to interfere in ecclesiastical affairs ¹. Certainly it forms part of the general shift of power which can be observed in the Council in the late 1580s, away from those who sympathised with the Puritans and towards those determined to defend the status quo ². The growth of this faction is paralleled in extreme radical writing by disenchantment not only with the episcopal hierarchy, but also with the Council's exercise of authority, and a consequent focussing on Parliament as the last hope for reformation. Penry writes scornfully of that institution which had responded to Puritan appeals so gratifyingly just a few years before: 'undoubtedly they are frozen in their dregs' ³. Ten years earlier Whitgift had refused to accept the Admonitioners' denial of a minister's right to civil office, saying that: '... the office of a Byshop is as well to governe by discipline, as by preaching' ⁴. In the late 1580s he resolved the dilemma

-
1. Before Whitgift was on the Council, Paule tells us in his Life of Whitgift, certain 'honorable personages', frustrated of their desire to control ecclesiastical preferment: '... linked themselves against the Archbishop, and gave him (being yet no Counsellor of State) many thwarts at the Counsell-board, wherewith he was ... much perplexed and grieved ...' (p.31). Afterwards: 'His courses then at the Counsell-board were not so much crossed, nor impeached as heretofore; but by reason of his daily attendance and accesse, he then oftentimes gave impediment to the Earles designments in Clergie causes' (p.37).
 2. See Collinson, The Elizabethan Puritan Movement, 386-88.
 3. A treatise wherein is manifestlie proved, that Reformation and those that sincerely favor the same, are unjustly charged to be enemies, unto hir Majestie, and the state (hereinafter Reformation no enemye (the running title)). Preface 'To all those that sincerely love the Lord Jesus', sig. 3 verso. The fact that resentment against the Privy Council is a late development can be corroborated by the section in Bancroft's Dangerous Positions (bk.2, ch.VII), which lists abusive speeches aimed at the Council; virtually all are drawn from the section in the preface to this tract which deals with the Magistracy.
 4. Whitgift, An Answere (1st edition, S.T.C. 25427), 215.

of the tension between civil and ecclesiastical magistrates by holding the two kinds of offices together in his own person and maintaining by the impressive force of his own will a consensus of opinion on the Council in favour of the rigorous policies he intended to pursue in the church.

The Puritan objections to this policy are expressed in the retrospective satiric dialogue Diotrephes written by Udall and printed by Waldegrave to the great loss of both ¹. Here the representative of the bishops (Diotrephes) is taking advice from a Papist (Tertullus) on the best way to maintain the episcopal estate. Diotrephes says: '... how shall we doe to be sure at the Counsell Table, for they are wise and we have received many a foyle there?' ². There is, says Tertullus, only one sure method:

This is it, in King Edwardes dayes there wer(e) Bb. of the counsel: now if you could get (though it were but one) to be a counsellor, then might he very wel, whensoever any matters of complaynt came, tell the Lords it pertained to ecclesiasticall jurisdiction, and he and his brethren woulde heere it at large: so might he stop their mouthes quickly, and then he might for fashions sake, heare the cause, but sende the plaintifes away with a flea in their eare. And thus very quickly would all complaintes to the counsell cease. ³

This assessment of Whitgift's technique is undoubtedly biased: but a comparative examination of the Commissioners' Report of 1583 and the Decree shows that authority has been gently shifted from the Council as a whole to Whitgift in particular (with the Bishop of London and

-
1. For the account of the final destruction of Waldegrave's press consequent upon the discovery that he was printing this tract, see W. Greg and Boswell, Records of the Court of the Stationers' Company 1576-1602 (London, 1930), 27-8; see also W.J. Couper, Robert Waldegrave. King's Printer for Scotland (Glasgow, 1916), 13-14,
 2. John Udall (The State of the Church of England laid open in a conference between DIOTREPHES a Bishop, TERTULLUS a Papist, DEMETRIUS a usurer, PANDOCHUS an Inkeeper and PAUL a Preacher of the word of God), 1588, ed. E. Arber (English Scholar's Library no.5, London, 1895), 27.
 3. Ibid., 27-8.

the Ecclesiastical Commissioners almost as his personal aides)¹. The most significant difference is that while in 1583 the Commissioners for Printing had anticipated that the Council should regulate the number of presses, this crucial responsibility is given in 1586 to the Archbishop and Bishop of London. The administration of this particular responsibility in the Decree also involves a significant increase in the authority of the Commissioners. In 1583 they had been intended as a court of appeal, whose duty it was to over-rule the wardens of the Stationers' Company when the latter refused to give a licence to a new printer on unreasonable grounds. Now no printer could be elected save when the Archbishop and Bishop indicate it to be convenient, and the man of the Master and wardens' choice must be presented to the Commissioners and licensed by them, on pain of severe penalties including a year's imprisonment. One cannot fail to notice, however, how insistent is the emphasis that only if Archbishop or Bishop is present could the Commissioners be empowered to act. In general (for example, in the matter of licensing) Archbishop and Bishop are alternatives; but for the formal admittance of a new printer not even the Bishop of London could deputise for Whitgift. (For other business the Ecclesiastical Commission of 1583 was far more flexible, giving a list of 24 persons, one of whom was obliged to be present in order that a hearing might be valid².) The penalties of the Decree are harsh, which again represents a change in attitude from that of the 1583 report. Then the Commissioners stated: '... if any be obstinate your ll^{ps} authoritie and the decree of the Ster Chamber may suffise to rule them'³. In the preamble to the Decree, however, a much more rigorous line is taken; abuses have increased, it is said,

-
1. The Report is printed in Greg, Companion, 126-133; the Decree in Arber, Transcript, vol.II, 807-11.
 2. See Prothero, Statutes and Constitutional Documents, 472b.
 3. Greg, Companion, 130.

because:

... the paynes and penalties conteyned and sett
downe in the said ordynaues and decrees have
been to lighte and small for the correctyon and
punishment of soc greivous haynous offences,
and soe the offenders and malefactors in that
behalf have not been soe severlye punished as
the qualytye of their offences have deserved. 1

This statement bears the hallmark of Whitgift, whose reply to accusations of episcopal severity was that the trouble with the bishops was that they were far too lenient! ² For the time being, then, Whitgift had found a workable modus vivendi within the limits of the political possibilities of the late 1580s.

Contemporary reactions to the decree among reformers stress the element of personal vendetta which Whitgift's determined gathering of all the reins of censorship into his own hands seemed to indicate. In an incidental parenthesis Martin Marprelate sums up the general reading of the factual situation: '(all matters of printing being committed by the Ll of the Counsell to his grace)' ³. Elsewhere he discusses the reason behind this move, suggesting that the decree was obtained solely in order to give Whitgift weapons against Waldegrave and pointing out that popish printers like Orwin and Thackwell were either less severely punished or allowed to go scot-free ⁴. In the Admonition to the People of England, Thomas Cooper tried to counter this view by stressing the conciliar initiative and the allowance of the Stationers' Company: ⁵

1. Arber, Transcript, vol.II, 807.

2. See Greg, Companion, 135 (letter quoted above, p. 88)

3. Hay any Worke, 40.

4. The Epistle, 23-25.

5. The role of the Stationers' Company is indeed not to be neglected. The year 1585/86 was marked by a wave of privilege cases, mainly dealing with the indefatigable Roger Ward. Disappointed of Parliament, the company turned to the Council; Arber prints a document of 4 May, 1586 from the patentees to the Council in which they stress that restraint is needed primarily to protect the commonwealthe from 'heresies, treasons, and seditious Libelles' (vol.II, 805). It is clear from the Company accounts

The decree there mentioned, being first perused by the Queenes learned counsell, and allowed by the Lords of her Majesties most honorable privie Counsell, had his [i.e. Whitgift's] furtherance in deede, and should have, if it were to doe againe. It is but for the maintenance of good orders among the printers, approved and allowed by the most, the best, and the wisest of that company, and for the suppressing of inordinate persons, such as Waldegrave is. 1

Unfortunately Cooper destroyed the impression of impartiality he was trying to give by vilifying Waldegrave in such scurrilous terms as to invite the lengthy defence of him printed in Hay any Worke for Cooper (Waldegrave himself, of course, being the printer). Whatever the complex of reasons behind the decree, it was simplified in the minds of the radicals to a desire for personal revenge, and Cooper's clumsy handling of the charge can have done nothing to dispel that interpretation.

One may see the exercise of censorship after 1586 as analogous to the earlier Subscription campaign; in that it had the dual aim of imposing stricter controls on the exercise of printing and also of making an example of certain notable dissidents as a warning to a much larger but less extreme population. It is the second of these two aims which involved the use of the statute 23 Eliz. cap. 2. Before focussing on this latter aspect, however, I wish to evaluate briefly the success or failure of Whitgift's attempts at control of the literary means of production in general.

One of the objections to the possible domination of censorship by the Archbishop and Bishop had been that an already existing bottleneck in the licensing process would thereby be worsened. In 1584, writes the author of Certaine points, it is already true that the examination

that the Council interviewed the senior members of the company before granting the decree (see Arber, Transcript, vol.I, 514, Accounts 1585/86, for mention of '... a dynner at Westminster when the Companye attendid there at the Counsell's commandement'). Nonetheless, it seems evident that Whitgift's determined espousal of their cause made the difference between failure to gain a decree in 1583 and success in 1586.

1. An Admonition to the People of England, ed. E. Arber (Eng. Sch. Lib. no.15, London, 1882), 35.

of books is delegated to incapable inferiors ¹, and the concentration of power exclusively in the hands of Archbishop and Bishop will (he implies) make the inefficiency of the current system worse. It would seem that despite the appointment of official deputies ² licensing continued to be a slow, cumbersome business after the decree; in his Motive to Good Works of 1593 Philip Stubbes complains of the comparative ease with which lewd books were tolerated, and the contrasting difficulty and delay involved in getting serious religious works licensed by the authorities ³. It is hard to avoid the conclusion that such delays were not accidental, and that they sometimes functioned as unacknowledged censorship. Such, at least, was the conclusion which radicals came to at the time. Martin Marprelate cites one example:

There was the last semmer [sic] a little catechisme / made by M. Davison and printed by Walde-grave: but before he coulde print it / it must be authorized by the Bb. either Cante. or London / he went to Cant. to have it licensed / his grace committed it to doctor Neverbegood (Wood) he read it over in halfe a yeare / the booke is a great one of two sheets of paper. ⁴

Davidson's work was eventually printed, even if Wood had insisted on one emendation which in Martin's eyes created a 'horrible error' ⁵. Other treatises were less fortunate. Whitgift evidently insisted on scrutinising major works of well-known authors himself, and he was clearly a rigorous censor. One disgruntled printer wrote to the distinguished Puritan John Reynolds of Oxford lamenting the fact that Reynolds's literary agent (Richard Hooker) had insisted on submitting one of his former

1. The Seconde Parte, vol.I, 175.

2. Appointments were formally confirmed in 1588 (see Greg and Boswell, Records of the Court of the Stationers' Company, 28/9), but deputies had been functioning unofficially before this - indeed, the first mention of Crowley's name occurs as early as 1581 (Arber, Transcript, vol.II, 397).

3. Quoted by Greg, Some Aspects and Problems of London Publishing, 47.

4. The Epistle, 34.

5. Wood insisted that in one place of the pamphlet where salvation was ascribed to the word preached, the word 'preached' should be blotted out.

colleague's works to Whitgift, as a result of which it had been proscribed:

Mr Hoker wolde neds have it goe unto my L. of
Cant. otherwyse I was in mynde to doe it first,
which I wold I had done, that the world might
have Judged of it, there wold have bin no talk
further then, yf it had bin extant. 1

Although, however, Whitgift was able to suppress individual works,
he was unable to achieve the wider aim hinted at in the misgivings of
one answerer to the Articles, misgivings least:

... when painfull prechers mouthes be mousled and
their heeles fettered, thei will fetter allso their
handes for writing, that the world neither by word
nor writing shall once take knowledge of the right
or wrong of their cause. 2

To be successful official censorship must banish controversy so far
from the public gaze as to dispel any inconvenient doubt in the mind
of the populace regarding the innate superiority of the status quo.
In other words, censorship does not simply inhibit expression; it seeks
to atrophy the critical faculty of the people. As Dr. John Bridges
wrote: 'And if licence be permitted thus, to preach and print what
everie one please, in Discoursing upon the Ecclesiastical Government:
when will controversies cease, if not, increase dailie more and more?' ³.
He is writing in favour of censorship as an instrument of peace; by
implication, if sufficiently rigorous censorship is applied, controversies
will eventually die out.

It was never, however, possible for Whitgift to achieve that
total and retrospective control of the media necessary for the eradication
of an opinion. Too many works were extant which by implication - or,
indeed, explicitly - criticised the status quo; and many of them were
the standard commentaries, sermons and commonplaces of notable reformers,

-
1. Quoted by C.J. Sisson, The Judicious Marriage of Mr Hooker and the Birth of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity (London, 1940), 21.
 2. The Seconde Parte, vol.I, 175.
 3. Dr. John Bridges, Defence of the Government Established, 1143.

which it was impossible either to withdraw from circulation or to emend. The fact that so many of these works bore the imprimatur of the Establishment was taken up and used as an argument proving the irrationality of Whitgift's policy, which victimised the insignificant for opinions tolerated in the writings of Reformation leaders. The author of A Petition, directed to her most excellent Majestie, for example, cites a wide range of highly respected English authors who had criticised the bishops in the past (among them Langland, Chaucer, Tyndale, Barnes and Hooper) and ends by mentioning Latimer's Sermon of the Plough:

Thus Puritan-like wrote Father Latimer, the famous martyr, yet he was never esteemed a troubler of the state, a Marprince, and a diffamer of the King, though in deed he was a Mar-bishop and Marprelate. His Sermons containing this matter, are publiklie to bee solde with authoritie, testified in these wordes: seene and allowed according to the order of the Queenes injunctions. And Mathewe Sutcliffe saith, that bookes which passe with this approbation, doe containe nothing contrary to the state of this Realme. 1

Similarly, the author of An Humble Motion with Submission mentions (inter alia) Martyr's Commonplaces, Calvin's Institutes and Bullinger's Decades as being printed by authority and adds:

Here, I say, you are to consider whether it be equal and just, for you to do contrary to your doctrine: to punish others for seeking humbly, that reformation in Discipline, which by your meanes, they have learned to be according to Gods worde ... 2

One could, then, obtain both a persuasive and scholarly exposition of the Scriptural evidence for the Presbyterian polity in a work as

-
1. A Petition (?London, ?1590), 37-8. Mathew Sutcliffe replies in his Answere to a certaine Libel supplicatorie with a fair distinction 'that these bookes passe with this approbation seene and allowed, it followeth not, that all things therein contained are allowed: but that they are allowed to be printed, as having nothing in the opinion of him that allowed them contrarie to state' (p.69).
 2. Anon., An Humble Motion with Submission unto the right Honorable Ll of Hir Majesties Privie Counsell (London, 1590), 86.

authoritative as the Institutes, and a stinging critique of ecclesiastical abuse from the martyrs whose blood was claimed by the bishops as the seal of divine approval on the nascent English church. In these circumstances one is readily led to believe that the official view requires defence by censorship simply because its justification is weak. As Dr. John Bridges put it in his perceptive preface to the Defence:

... in all degrees of men and women, noble, worshipfull, and of the vulgar sort, many begin to doubt of our established government, and to suppose some great and invincible validitie in their assertions, if too manie be not alreadie carried too farre in this opinion, that the regiment and discipline which our Brethren desire, is suppressed onely by meere authoritie [my underlining] ... 1

In the long term, Whitgift's policy ensured a reaction against 'meere authoritie' in matters of faith among a far wider section of the population than that actively in favour of the censored Presbyterian polity.

PART II: SECTION II - Radicals on Trial.

Like Whitgift's campaign for overall control of the press, his campaign making an example of a few chosen radicals for their printed opinions was so conducted as to arouse the animus of many who did not share the extreme opinions of those singled out. The extent of popular feeling against these actions can be gauged from the way in which they are handled by Whitgift's biographer, Sir George Paule. Paule's style changes abruptly from the encomiastic prose in which he had celebrated Whitgift's earlier years to a forensic defence of his master's actions when he handles this issue:

Let the Reader now consider with what contagion, and leprosie, many poore soules had like to have beene infected through the divulging of their wicked Libels, and dangerous positions, tending to innovation and rebellion, had not the stroake of justice, and providence of the State, wisely prevented the same, selecting as

1. Dr. John Bridges, Defence, Preface, sig. 9 4 recto.



out of an hundred thousand seditious mutiners (for, so many they confessed were readie for that purpose) onely foure persons, as the chiefe ring-leaders, whose lot it was to be proceede withall, for the quenching of the fierie outrage of the rest, kindled alreadie to the like attempts ... 1

Paule continues with several pages of rhetorical question, all seeking to secure the agreement of the reader that the threat was a real one. This prolonged appeal to the audience contrasts oddly with his self-assured earlier style; clearly he felt that even in 1612 this was an issue not yet settled in the public mind.

The four 'whose lot it was to be proceeded withall' were John Penry, John Udall, Henry Barrow and John Greenwood. The last two, as Separatists, are outside the scope of this thesis. In the next section of this chapter, therefore, I wish to illustrate Whitgift's activities by considering certain aspects of the cases of the first two.

Penry has left a celebrated account of his first emergence from obscurity into the full glare of archepiscopal disapproval with the publication of his work, The Aequity of an Humble Supplication². The events described, which took place around the beginning of Lent 1587 (February - March) show Whitgift developing techniques for use against extremists, although interestingly he does not pursue them at this stage to their logical conclusion. A High Commission warrant was issued to call in the books and search out the author, and was duly implemented by the wardens of the company together with a pursuivant. Confronted with the infuriating Welshman, Whitgift charged him '... not onely to be a factious slaunderer of her Majesties government: but also to have published flat treason and heresie in my [his] treatise'³. We

1. Paule, Life of Whitgift, 45.

2. This account, from Th'Appellation of JOHN PENRI unto the Highe court of Parliament (?La Rochelle, 1589), is largely reprinted by Arber in his Introductory Sketch to the Marprelate Controversy (London, 1879), 68-74; the account of the interview with the Commissioners mentioned below is printed in the first Marprelate tract, The Epistle, 29-30.

3. John Penry, Th'Appellation, 4.

know from the account of this encounter given in The Epistle that the 'heresie' mentioned is that of holding preaching the only ordinary means of salvation - an opinion which contained an implicit challenge to the validity of the English church. Elsewhere in the Appellation Penry tells us that part of the Commission's procedure had been to enforce him to deny upon his oath the treason supposed contained on the fortieth page of his work ¹. This 'treason' is an excellent example of Penry's technique of appearing to deny indignantly that which he actually asserts. Talking of Elizabeth's failure to implement a preaching ministry in Wales, he asks rhetorically: 'Will not the enemies of Gods truth with uncleane mouthes avouch that shee had little regarde unto true or false religion anie further than it belonged unto hir profite?' ². Like Stubbs, Penry appears to defer to Elizabeth while actually castigating her; and perhaps Whitgift's fear was much like that expressed in the royal proclamation of 1579:

... the simpler sort and multitude ... might be abused with the fair title of the book and the hypocrisy of the author ... in interlacing of flattering glosses towards her majesty to cover the rest of the manifest depraving of her majesty and her actions to her people. ³

Clearly Whitgift considered extreme measures against Penry, measures which had not been at the disposal of Stubbs's judges, but which were enshrined in the act of 1581. After a brief imprisonment, however, the accused was released '... without anie examination, or anye mention of the crimes of heresie and treason wherewith I had bene charged' ⁴. It seems to me that Whitgift did not at this stage have the degree of support throughout the government which would have emboldened him to

1. Penry, Th'Appellation, 39-40.

2. The Aequity of an Humble Supplication, ed. A.J. Grieve (London, 1905), 34 (p.40 in original).

3. Tudor Royal Proclamations, vol.II, 447, no.642.

4. Th'Appellation, 39-40.

press for capital punishment for a literary offence alone, and that the events of 1588-90 mark the watershed beyond which ruthless pursuit of legislation to its conclusion became possible. To substantiate this point, one may refer to the account of the trial of the other notable radical under consideration here, John Udall.

Two features of Udall's treatment distinguish it from the less than determined censure of Penry three years before. In the first place, his arrest and the subsequent series of judicial hearings do not at all resemble the somewhat arbitrary and inconclusive treatment of Penry; they are part of a carefully planned campaign. This response corresponds to the much more serious official view of the Demonstration than of the Aequity. The latter had doubtless seemed at the time like an isolated if irritating incident, but the former was seen very much in the context of what followed. Puckering assured Udall:

... that your Book had been passed over, if there had not come forth presently after it such a number of slanderous Libels, as Martin Marprelate and other such-like; of which your Book was judged to be the ringleader. 1

Thus the Marprelate campaign, with its sheer defiant success, caused the authorities to re-appraise earlier literary efforts, which gained a certain retrospective importance from the more vigorous but less systematic adaptations of their dogma to popular taste ².

And the campaign against the Marprelate tracts is marked by a greater degree of co-operation between civil and ecclesiastical magistrates than has hitherto been observed. Proceedings against Martin were formally

1. State Trials, ed. W. Cobbett (London, 1809), vol.I, col.1294.

2. For an historical account of the Marprelate controversy, see the standard Introductory Sketch by Arber and Historical Introduction by Pierce already cited; for a recent summary of the evidence for Penry's authorship of the tracts, see Donald McGinn's John Penry and the Marprelate Controversy (New York, 1966); for a literary analysis of the place of the tracts in the breakdown of literary dialogue, see ch.5, below.

initiated by the letter from Burghley and Hatton to Whitgift, indicating the Queen's wish that the bishops should use 'all privy meanes, by force of your Commission ecclesiasticall or otherwise' to discover and apprehend the authors and printers of Marprelate, and then inform the Treasurer and Chancellor '... so as We and others of hir Majesties priv[i]e Counsell, as hir Majesty shall please may procede ageynst all the offenders in this case'¹. It is interesting that despite the clear division of labour enunciated here Whitgift still felt it necessary when commenting on the capture of the press some nine months later, to re-iterate a plea for civil punishment of the prisoners:

I could wish them de[a]lt with ac[c]ording to the[i]re Desertes, and the qualitie of the[i]re offens[e]: And that rather by your Lordships then by owre selves, that the world may know that wee are men not cast off on all sydes, as abjects of the world, but that Justice shal as well take place in owre causes, as yt Doth in all other mens. 2

His concern was superfluous. Knightley, Hales and Wigston were tried in Star Chamber³, and the printers sent by the Council to Bridewell, with the proviso that should they fail to confess torture was to be applied in the Tower⁴. Symmes was evidently released after torture; the charge ultimately brought against Thomlyn is not clear, but Hodgkins at least was 'arraigned uppon y^e stat. of 23 Eliz. for printing of thes matiname' [sic: i.e. Theses Martinianae]⁵. Whereas in 1573 it had been the Commissioners who issued a warrant for Cartwright's apprehension⁶,

1. Arber, Introductory Sketch, 108.

2. Ibid., 113.

3. See State Trials, vol.I, cols.1263-1272; Acts of the Privy Council of England, New Series, vol.XVIII (London, 1899), 225 (16 November, 1589).

4. Pierce, An Historical Introduction to the Marprelate Tracts, 197; Acts of the Privy Council of England, New Series, vol.XVIII, 62 (16 August, 1589).

5. Pierce, An Historical Introduction to the Marprelate Tracts, 204-5 and 333 (Appendix C). It would seem that Hodgkins, at least, was pardoned - see Mathew Sutcliffe, An Answere unto a certaine calumnious letter published by M. Job Throkmorton (London, 1595), 72 recto.

6. See Scott Pearson, Thomas Cartwright and Elizabethan Puritanism, Appendix XI, 433.

it was the Council who in 1590 issued a warrant for the suspected author, Penry¹. The Council was still reluctant to proceed to execution; as late as 16 May, 1591 we find an entry in the Privy Council records urging Whitgift to make one further attempt to persuade Hodgkins, Newman and Udall to make a submission and thereby save their lives, since the time of their execution for felony is drawing near. Nonetheless, there is a new determination evident in the wording of this entry, which recommends that if obstinate and wilful the accused should be executed '...therbie to prevent such farther mischeefes as are like to growe in this commonwealth by too much lenitie shewed to such a seditious and dangerous sort'².

The scandal of the Marprelate tracts alone, however, might not have been enough to secure this new note of concurrence with old propaganda accusations metamorphosed into legal facts. Another factor has to be taken into account, whose importance emerges, once again, from a careful study of the sequence of events in Udall's trial.

In the account printed in State Trials, the first examination mentioned is one before the Commissioners in January 1590. The oath was proffered and Udall refused it, saying: '... if I were the author, I think that by law I need not answer'³. Lord Chief Justice Anderson pointed out that this only held good in cases where the prisoner ran the risk of the death penalty, and continued: 'I tell you, by law you ought to answer in this case'⁴. The clear implication is that the charges against Udall at this stage are not capital; indeed, the Commission's brief did not include such charges. Six months later, at Croydon Assizes,

1. See Reformation no Enemie, sig. 4 recto.

2. Acts of the Privy Council of England, New Series, vol.XXI (London, 1891), 130.

3. State Trials, vol.I, col.1274.

4. Ibid.

we find Udall on trial for his life by the statute of 1581. Udall himself questions this shift, citing Anderson's comments above and adding:

' .. whereby it is manifest, that then my case was not esteemed felony'.

The judge's reply is most revealing:

Though the Judges had not then concluded it, yet it was law before, or else it could not be so determined after; the violent course of others since, hath caused your case to be more narrowly sifted. 1

What 'violent course' has caused the judges to re-examine the latent possibilities of the statute? The first six months of 1590 were marked by the preliminary examinations, arrests and depositions associated with the 1591 Star Chamber cases against Cartwright and other ministers, accusing them of seeking to introduce their discipline covertly. The sentences in the Demonstration which formed the basis for judicial proceedings are precisely those which seem to hint at just such a determination not to tarry for the magistrate - including the famous statement: ' ... If it come in by that meanes, which wil make all your heartes to ake, blame your selves' ², The combination of the verbal violence of the Marprelate tracts (and other contemporary productions) and the uncovering of the network of secret meetings whose very clear household privacy lent them the insidious label conventicles, led to an interpretation which made use of hyperbolic statements like Udall's to give a sinister gloss to events in themselves politically innocent. Whitgift's case against the Warwickshire ministers is constructed out of such statements; one version of it is to be found in the document printed by Strype under the heading The Doctrine, with some practices of sundry troublesome Ministers in England, which reviews the literary evidence and comes to the following conclusion:

1. State Trials, vol.I, col.1289.

2. Udall, A Demonstration of the trueth of that Discipline which Christe hath prescribed, ed. E. Arber (London, 1880), 7.

Seing then that it (i.e. the Discipline) must (as they say) prevayle, malgre all withstanders
 (i); mg. subscription to Bk of Discipline
 (i) and they mention other meanes to advance it;
 besides sute to the Quenes Majesty, the Council, and
 Parlement: and in one booke it is wished (k) that
 k mg. Epitome of Martin
 the Parlement would bring it in, though it were by
 withstanding her Majesty: what can those meanes be,
 but the prosecution (by force and rebellion) of that
 plott, which men of the same humour have described
 and followed in the like case? 1

In view of the general policy on the part of radicals of refusal to take the oath, a policy which in the case of Cartwright and his associates produced judicial stalemate, a piece of writing with an adequate amount of circumstantial evidence attaching it to the name of a particular individual was a particularly valuable piece of evidence, enabling the authorities to go beyond imprisonment for contempt of the Commission's authority and commit the accused for criminal trial on charges of felony. Hence the most dangerous charge which could be brought was one of seditious writing. It is interesting that when Cartwright was finally summoned to appear before the Commission in October 1591, he wrote an anxious letter to Burghley in which he says that although he does not yet know what matters are to be objected against him

... this I well know that from the writing of my last book which was thirteen years agoe I never wrote nor procured any thing to be printed which might be in any sort offensive to her majestie or the state: much lesse had anie hand or so much as a finger in the bookes under martins name. 2

In a later letter to Burghley which describes his first encounter with the Commissioners, he mentions that he had made exception to his general rule of not taking the oath for only two classes of charges - those dealing with such things as were 'truelie criminall' and those concerned with the making of libels. With reference to a libel charge, Cartwright

1. Strype, Whitgift, vol.III, bk.IV, no.111, 239-40.

2. Scott Pearson, Thomas Cartwright, Appendix XXI, 451.

writes that he is aware that 'by my answer upon oath in this case, otheres might be praejudiced which should refuse to answer upon theirs' ¹, and states that his justification for jeopardising others is an anxiety lest Burghley should think his previous letter (quoted above) contained an untruth! Otherwise, he says: 'I would never be drawn upon oath to answer' ². It seems to me almost certain that Udall was in his mind as the party most likely to be 'praejudiced', since Udall had obstinately refused to swear that he was not the author of the Demonstration; the fact that by some nice casuistry Cartwright still managed to justify what might have been seen as a betrayal indicates that he was well aware how dangerous a charge of libellous writing or printing could be. At this point Hatton was Lord Chancellor; as Paule tells us, he was Whitgift's staunchest ally ³. Bancroft was the intermediary between the two friends, and by means of his chaplain's access to Hatton, and Hatton's position as royal favourite, Whitgift could count on royal support ⁴. When one considers that Bancroft was also Whitgift's chief instrument in the work of exposing the classical movement, one can see the concentration both of power and of information in the hands of the 'little faction', a concentration which enabled its members both to build up a plausible case proving polemic to be seditious and to enforce that case in the courts of law. The statutory basis for the proceedings against Udall was, as we have noted, 23 Eliz. cap. 2. The saving clause inserted by an anxious Commons, which provided that only attacks on the Queen 'with a malicious intent' could be judged felony, proved no defence. When Udall denied any malicious intent on the part of the author of

1. Scott Pearson, Thomas Cartwright, Appendix XXIII, 455/56, Cartwright to Burghley, from the Fleet, 4 November, 1590.

2. Ibid., 455.

3. Paule, Life of Whitgift, 36-7.

4. Ibid.

the Demonstration, Judge Clarke responded:

This Book hath made you to come within the compass of the Statute, though your intent were not so: for I am sure there was Mr Stubbs, well known to divers here to be a good subject and an honest man; yet taking upon him to write a Book against her majesty touching Mounseir, he thereby came within the compass of the Law, which he intended not in making of the Book ... So you, though you intended not to come within the compass of the Statute, yet the law reacheth to your fact, as that did to his. 1

The law regarding intent still operates on the premise stated here; that intent is proved not by evaluating a private mental state but by assessing the results which a sane man might reasonably expect to obtain by his public behaviour and regarding those results as intentional. As Hodgkins' examiners said when he denied printing the Marprelate tracts with a malicious intent:

... not the intent which might be secret, but the fact of the p(ar)tie must shewe his minde, and because the matters in the booke are sedicious turbulent and rebellious, and the deviser thereof by the lawe to be within compasse of fellonie, the printer also by express wordes, and judged by the same lawe to be in the same degree of fellonie as the deviser ... 2

As we shall see later in Chapter 6, however, problems of both ethics and language arise over the definition of what constitutes a felonious fact in an essentially literary debate. In the trials of Udall and Penry, the demonstrability of one fact - that a book has been written - is, in effect, taken as proof that rebellion has also been translated from thought into action. In vain, therefore, Udall glosses the rash but vague statement quoted above (see p. 107) as a prophecy of inevitable divine intervention³; his gloss is peremptorily dismissed: 'No, no; your meaning was, that it should be brought in by force and violence'⁴.

1. State Trials, vol.I, col.1286.

2. Pierce, An Historical Introduction to the Marprelate Tracts, Appendix C, 334.

3. State Trials, vol.I, col.1293.

4. Ibid., col.1294.

This exchange illustrates the process by which literary statements become the legal equivalent of rebellious acts. The prophetic role claimed by the writer is denied ¹ and hence every future event mentioned is taken to imply a human plan, dependent on armed force, rather than an account of a divine initiative ².

This tendency to foreclose on an unresolved debate is also in evidence in the treatment of any criticism of the ecclesiastical regime as necessarily slanderous. As the author of A Petition writes:

Unlesse the Justices and Jurours can disprove all that hath bene written ... they cannot justly sentence their writings to be false and slaunderous. The certificat of the Bb in this case is traversable, and not to be admitted. They stande at the barre as parties. ³

The argument of the Admonition emerges yet again, but to no effect.

There is, however, another obvious line of defence against the application of the statute to slander of the bishops, which is also developed by this author; the second part of the title of his work reads: '2) A prooffe that they who write for Reformation, do not offend against the stat. of 23 Eliz c. 2 and therefore till matters be compounded, deserve more favour', and this section is of particular interest as giving a

1. See Sutcliffe, An Answer to a certaine Libel supplicatorie, 52/3.

2. Though the extension of projected Puritan action to the use of violence seems to me an unwarranted step on the part of the judges, it does seem to me that Udall's summary of 'repentance and prayers patience and tears' (col.1294) as the Puritans' only weapons is perhaps a little too passive. While statements which reached print were always carefully ambiguous, using the passive voice to avoid being too precise about the instrument, or making the cause itself the active subject, there are some less guarded statements in such documents as drafts of petitions which suggest that radicals could at times be as disingenuous as their judges. In one draft of a petition to Burghley, for example, Penry wrote: 'And it standeth you in hand to look unto the dealing and to see it amended, except you wold have every man, to embolden him self to do what his hand hath power to effect in this land' (The Notebook of John Penry 1593, ed. A. Peel (Camden 3rd series (London, 1944), vol.LXVII, 55). Wisely, he inserted marginal cancellation of this threat and it never reached the Treasurer.

3. Anon., A Petition, directed to her most excellent Majestie, 26.

contemporary reaction to Udall's trial. He writes that: 'Every penall lawe concerning life, is to be expounded strictly according to the literall and grammatical sence, not by inference or equity ...' ¹. Like Judge Clarke he cites the example of Stubbs's trial, which he takes to be the occasion for the making of this particular statute (see p. 82). Rather than paralleling this case with those of later radicals, however, he stresses the difference between that direct defamation of the Queen and later writers' denunciation of ecclesiastical abuse ². The statute, he writes, refers to the Queen's natural person, not to her body politic ³. Udall makes the same point, substantiating it with the observation that:

... the whole statute doth determine and end with her majesty's life. And we may not think their wisdoms that made the law to be so unadvised, as to make a law for the preservation of the prince's government, which is continual, to last no longer than the life of one prince, which is temporary. 4

The legal response to this is interesting, for it underlines that although the theory of episcopacy by divine right might be reappearing in the English church, for the purposes of the execution of justice episcopacy remained an institution whose sole authority was that delegated from the Queen:

But I will prove this Book to be against her majesty's person; for her majesty being the supreme governor of all persons and causes in these her dominions, hath established this kind of government in the hands of the Bishops, which thou and thy fellows so strive against; and they being set in authority for the exercising of this government by her majesty, thou does not strive against them, but her majesty's person, seeing they cannot alter the government which the queen hath laid upon them. 5

1. A Petition, 29.

2. Ibid., 33.

3. Ibid., 27/8.

4. State Trials, vol.I, col.1285.

5. Ibid., col.1286-7.

The official riposte to this petition, Mathew Sutcliffe's Answer to a certaine Libel supplicatorie, amplifies the points made at Udall's trial. Whereas the petitioner had claimed that bishops were unlawful interlopers into the rightful government of the traditional three estates (Prince, Lords and Commoners) in Parliament, Sutcliffe pointed out correctly that the traditional third estate in Parliament was not the Prince himself, but the Clergy. An attack on the bishops is therefore an attack on the Prince's lawful governors in Parliament, and comes within the scope of the statute.

After the judgement on Udall, Sutcliffe added an 'Advertisement' to the reader which was clearly written and incorporated just before binding, since it does not follow the main pagination. In it he justifies both the court's findings and his continued attack on a man who is now defenceless. Summing up the weight of evidence against Udall, and adducing the verdict against him, he asks rhetorically:

Seeing then all this notwithstanding the mans
innocencie is in a booke (publiklie divulged)
defended against such notorious evidence, and upright
proceedings; who doeth not see, that I have reason
to detest the notorious presumptions of such censors? 1

This word-shift - 'notorious' is just beginning to move towards its modern meaning - illustrates neatly the Establishment rationale for censorship from the beginning to the end of the reign.

With an account of these trials this study of censorship exercised in Elizabeth's reign against writings demonstrating a desire for further reform in the church is almost at an end. Though intermittently very harsh and overall increasingly efficient, the control exercised did not silence dissenting voices completely. As Sutcliffe pointed out:

To excuse his fellowes silence, the Libeller pretendeth
want of ... Printers; which cannot justly be alledged:
for how can they want printers, having Waldegrave in

1. Sig. Ff 3 verso.

Scotland, and others at Geneva, Middelburg and Leyden at commaundement, beside their private presses? 1

Dependence on foreign printers, however, clearly increased the expense and difficulty of responding to attacks, and there is little evidence that in the later 1590s there were any 'private presses' capable of turning out more than crude broadsheets or pamphlets. Very little was in fact produced (for an analysis of its nature, see Chapter 6, pp. 326-335). The later 1590s were uneventful years, in which any new issues which emerged were marginal ².

And the use of the 1581 statute forms an appropriate bridge to the more specifically literary considerations to which the rest of this thesis is devoted. It marks the end of respect for the integrity of the texts produced by the opposition. Rather than engaging with an extensive body of reasoned objections the Establishment selects elements which it considers dramatically effective and highlights them by the judicial process. The judges in Udall's case are careful to stress that he is not on trial for his support of the discipline considered as a coherent body of doctrine:

I tell you, you are not called in question for the Cause {as you call it) nor for the body of the Book; but only for slanderous things in the Preface, against

-
1. Sutcliffe, An Answer to a certaine Libel supplicatorie, 62.
 2. One might cite the destruction of a sensational treatise by the fraudulent exorcist John Darrell. The Records of the Court of the Stationers' Company for 29 October, 1600 (p.79) mention among the books to be burned: 'mr Darrell book lately printed concerning the casting out of Deville'. This would appear to be S.T.C. 6288, A True narrative of the vexation by the Devil of 7 persons in Lancashire and W. Somers, which was entered to Jackson in 1597 but printed anonymously in 1600. An official treatise against Darrell had appeared in 1599 (S.T.C. 12883) and presumably Jackson had refrained from printing in view of the opposition of the ecclesiastical authorities. It is not clear who actually printed the book in the end, though Jackson seems unlikely to have been involved in any way. Darrell was a crank and deceiver, whose claims to the miraculous exercise of the gifts of the Spirit were apparently quite fraudulent.

her majesty's government, and therefore you may
let the Cause alone. 1

The literary technique of isolating a few statements from the body of the text may be compared with the political process of isolating a few extremists for censure; both are more concerned with disciplinary effect than with strict justice or veracity.

To isolate the statement from its context in this way is to deny the importance of literary level and of metaphor. By treating every sentence as appropriate evidence for a court of law a simple, univocal and reductionist interpretation is imposed on theological statements - and of all statements theological statements are those which depend most for accurate understanding on an acute awareness of the operation of analogy and hence on an appreciation of metaphor. The author of A Petition devotes a brief section to the consideration of such statements as seem to threaten violence, and shows that in every case that which the bishops have taken to be a literal threat is in fact a hyperbolic metaphor². Nor is this misinterpretation any accident; there seems little doubt that it is deliberate. Martin senior exposes the abuses of language which constitute 'bishops english'; addressing his younger brother he says with some irony:

A wonderfull thing in thy conceit I knowe it will bee;
to thinke ... that to seeke the remooving of unlawfull
callings out of the church should be to threaten, that
the lawfull magistrate should bee thrust out of the
commonwealth; but, simple boy, such English must thou
studie to understand, or else thou shalt never be able
to Pistle thine uncle Canturburie so learnedlie as
my father and I can doe. 3

-
1. State Trials, vol.I, col.1304. Hence, of course, the Petitioner's attack on the presumption that the preface and main text were by the same author, and Sutcliffe's rebuttal of that attack (see Answer to a certaine Libel supplicatorie), sig. Ff 3 recto).
 2. A Petition, 44-8.
 3. Anon., The reproofe of Martin Junior (?Wolston, 1589), sig. C iv verso - D i recto.

At least, he adds slyly, one could never accuse the bishops of the literary fault of over-literal translation 'e verbo ad verbum' ¹.

And having thus isolated a statement from its original, literary context, the bishops replace it in an historical context of their own making; that is, it is given a causal function in an historical continuum composed of an oversimplified summary of the past, a relatively accurate account of the present, and a vision of the future entirely dependent on a tendentious interpretation of that statement itself. Timing is more important than content. This has already been noted from Udall's trial, in that his work is seen as important not for what it says, but for its supposed causal influence on later events (see p. 104).

The sixth chapter of this thesis analyses in some detail the impact of the public trial of Puritans on the kind of Establishment polemic produced in the 1590s; here one may simply note that there are close connections between the judicial procedures adopted against radical self-expression and the literary procedures by which the sentences of the courts are justified publicly. The artificial isolation of words from context in order to extract a simple meaning which forms no part of the author's intent is both one of the abuses to which censorship is subject, and one of the lines of retreat from literary dialogue; this thesis concerns itself primarily with the decay of dialogue, but in the context of Elizabeth's reign it would be idle to see the literary phenomenon in isolation from the legal one.

1. Anon., The reproofe of Martin Junior, sig. D i verso.

CHAPTER THREE

Disputation; dialogue and drama

When considering the development of religious debate within the Elizabethan church, it is necessary to have clear in one's mind the real aim of such an exchange of views, which may be much less idealistic than the avowed intention. Considerable confusion can be avoided if one first considers the uses of public disputation; this oral paradigm for printed debate played an important part both in medieval education and in the early Reformation, and in its origins, uses and abuses we can see a clear image of the kinds of impact later achieved by the more diffuse but ultimately more effective medium of print.

The disputation, a method of elucidating and concluding upon a controversial point by a public exchange of views observing strict logical conventions, first became a central part of the process of higher education in the twelfth century. That century, during which for the first time the whole of Aristotle's Organon was known in Christian Europe, saw a widespread change in the methods and goals of theological learning. This change, first seen in the Parisian schools, has been well summarised by a recent French writer:

L'étude n'était plus seulement propédeutique a une lecture intelligente de l'Ecriture sainte; avec la dialectique on pouvait maintenant dégager, de la masse des textes, un certain nombre de problèmes (quaestiones) philosophiques et scientifiques, dans lequel l'homme s'interrogeait sur lui-même, le monde, Dieu. Pour réunir sur chaque probleme le dossier des references textuelles necessaires, pour les confronter et essayer d'en dégager une solution, le recours à la discussion dialectique était de règle, ou toutes les audaces étaient permises, pourvu que fussent

respectés les principes logiques du
raisonnement juste. 1

Just as in the twelfth century the Normans moved in their
architecture to:

the tentative use of a revolutionary constructional
system based on equilibrium, on the balanced
thrust of masses, thus entirely departing from
the Roman method which depended on the principle
of inert stability, 2

so in their elucidation of belief they moved from studying an inert
body of received truth to constructing new synthetic formulations
out of the arguments and counter arguments of logic.

Even in its heyday, however, the disputation was seen as a
mixed blessing. Its educational value in terms of training the
mind was not in dispute: even John of Salisbury, a stern critic
of its frequent superficiality, conceded that:

Those who are made accustomed to frequent
disputations on all sorts of topics, provided
this training is kept within bounds, may thus
obtain a well-stocked vocabulary, fluent speech,
and retentive memory, in addition to mental
subtlety. 3

But did the conclusions of those thousands of disputations held
advance men's knowledge or understanding of the theological
matters debated? What (if anything) did disputations actually
achieve? On these broader questions there was widespread
disagreement, then as now.

For if in its structure the disputation may be compared to
contemporary architecture, its goal has been less flatteringly
compared to that of a tournament. In a brilliant, perceptive article
Johan Huizinga stresses the public nature of the disputation, and

-
1. Jacques Verger, Les Universités au Moyen Age (Paris, 1973), 25.
 2. E. Smith, O. Cook and G. Hutton, English Parish Churches
(London, 1976), 37.
 3. John of Salisbury, The Metalogicon of John of Salisbury. A
Twelfth-Century Defense of the Verbal and Logical Arts of the
Trivium, tr. D. McGarry (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1955), Bk.II,
ch.8, 90.

the felt need of a contest before an audience which it demonstrates. Huizinga cites the mercurial figure of Abelard as a prime example of a jouster with words:

In his youth he had, in his own words, traded the arms of warfare for those of the mind, giving preference to 'the armor of dialectical reasonings and to disputations above the trophies of war' ... He set up 'the army camp of his school' on the Montagne Sainte Genevieve in order 'to besiege' the competitor who occupied his place in Paris. 1

The public disputation form, then, tended to encourage participants to seek victory over an opponent at the expense of more elevated goals. Words may be used as weapons or traps, the 'snares of words' and 'nets of syllables' about which John of Salisbury protested ². In turn, a concentration on words as tools for victory encourages a superficial quibbling over matters of vocabulary and a foreshortening of the perspective of debate so that words become both means and end. Rather than being a means of intellectual liberation, then, public disputation and the logical forms in which it is couched can become nothing more than a sophisticated and sophistical game with words.

The ambivalent nature of the disputation was well summed up by a great early humanist:

He said also that such disputations greatly profited as were exercised with a peaceable mind to the ensearching of the truth in secret company without great audience. But he said that those disputations did great hurt that were held openly to the ostentation of learning and to win the favor of the common people and the commendation of fools. 3

1. Johan Huizinga, 'Abelard' in Men and Ideas; history, the Middle Ages, the Renaissance (London, 1960), 189-90.

2. Ibid., 190.

3. Thomas More, The Life of John Picus Earl of Mirandola, quoted in T. Gilby, Barbara Celarent: A Description of Scholastic Dialectic, Part 6, 280.

The key factor determining the usefulness or otherwise of a disputation, on this reading, is the nature and expectations of the audience.

Turning to consider the use of the public disputation in the early Reformation, we can see this ambivalence re-echoed. At the dawn of the Reformation, the form had been used to great effect in Germany as a formal and academic externalisation of the great inner debates between the ideas of law and grace, condign merit and free justification, which occupied the minds of men in an age of transition. In his preface to the licentiate examination of Heinrich Schmedenstede in 1542, Luther declared:

Our doctrine and especially that article concerning justification is always assailed, not only from without, but even from within and in our hearts, which happens for our own great benefit. We ought to thank God, therefore, because we do not teach and live so listlessly. If we were not attacked, we could easily become languid and decadent. On account of the adversaries it is necessary for us to be energetic and lively so that we may defend the wisdom of God against them to his glory and for the salvation of mankind, since the wisdom of God is more powerful than all. Hence this custom has arisen that we often debate and battle among our own selves, the one eluding the other, as it were. These propositions have been written so that we may offend. It is proper to entice the devil in order that the wisdom of God may become clear and begin to shine, as Paul says, in our folly, yes, in our warfare (I Cor. I, v.21). 1

Luther refers here to the adaptation to the controversial sphere of the traditional use of the disputation as a teaching aid, and as a means of assessing a student's grasp of any given issue. He used it to give intellectual formulation to a truth already held by faith. Orthodox theses were set for the respondent to

1. Martin Luther, Works, General ed., H.T. Lehmann, vol.34 (Career of the Reformer), ed. Lewis W. Spitz (Philadelphia, 1960), 307.

defend, and those who challenged him did so as conscious devil's advocates, attempting not to undermine the thesis but to sharpen the respondent's ability to defend it. The outcome was predetermined, for the aim was not to establish the truth among a number of probabilities, but to defend a truth already established by faith rather than reasoning. Luther taught firmly that to use dialectic to determine articles of truth was to imitate the medieval church in exalting the human intellect above the Word of God:

(Thesis 40) We would act more correctly if we left dialectic and philosophy in their own area and learned to speak a new language in the realm of faith apart from every sphere.

(Thesis 41) Otherwise, it will turn out that, if we put the new wine into old wineskins, both of them will perish; this is what the Sorbonne did. 1

The controversial nature of the disputation used educationally was, then, formal rather than actual; it was the instrument of a single dominant voice.

The public disputation between clear opponents, however, may use the same formal structure, but to very different ends. As an instrument for the persuasion of one's opponent it is obsolete: its clarity heightens the differences between the two sides, rather than minimising them. Disillusioned by his experiences with Eck², inter alia, Luther wrote sombrely to the Landgrave of Hesse when the latter was attempting to organise the Colloquy of Marburg:

Therefore, if your Grace is willing to do it, I should be glad if your Grace ... would inquire of the other side whether they are inclined to

1. Ibid., vol.38, ed. Martin E. Lehmann, 242; the disputation concerning the passage 'The Word was made flesh'.

2. See Roland H. Bainton, Here I Stand (Nashville, 1950), ch.VI, 'The Saxon Hus'.

yield their opinion, so that the trouble may not become worse than ever. For your Grace can readily understand that all conferences are wasted and all meetings are in vain if both parties come to them with no intention of yielding anything. It has been my past experience that they will insist on their own ideas after our arguments have been fairly presented; that I cannot yield after their arguments have been presented, I know as certainly as I know they are in error. 1

The outcome which the Landgrave sought, however, was not the vindication of truth but a much-needed political alliance against the common enemy, and the Colloquy went ahead despite Luther's qualms. Public disputation in the sixteenth century, then, was an instrument for political rather than intellectual ends. Its aim was not the persuasion of the opponent, but the creation of a desired impression in the minds of those who witnessed or read of it - in this case, an impression of unity in matters of substance despite minor doctrinal disagreements. This assessment is confirmed when one turns to examine the use of public debate in the early stages of the English Reformation, which is often described by scholars in terms of its inescapably political nature. At best they were gestures asserting the intellectual ascendancy of the party then in power; at worst, they were trials at which the respondent was answering not for his academic reputation but for his life. As an example of the former, one might cite the first Cambridge Disputations of 1549, held before the King's Visitors; here the impersonal politeness of academic debate is maintained:

Worshipful mayster (Madew), although you have learnedly and clarkely defended these your conclusions this day: yet seeing that I am now placed to impugne them in place of a better,

1. Luther, Works, vol.38, 8; quoted from Correspondence (2 vols.), ed. P. Smith and G.M. Johnson (Philadelphia, 1913-18), vol.2, 484.

I do begin thus to you ... 1

Very different in tone are the debates of 1554 between the prisoners Cranmer, Latimer and Ridley and the doctors of Oxford and Cambridge, held in the Divinity School at Oxford; here the manipulation of the audience is much more obvious:

For when he (Cranmer) went about to declare to the people how the Prolocutor did not well english the words of Chrysostome ... Then the Prolocutor stretching forth his hand, set on the rude people to cry out at him, filling all the schoole with hissing, clappyng of hands, and noyse, calling him 'indoctum, imperitum, impudentum' i. unlearned, unskilful, impudent. Which impudent and reprochfull wordes this reverend man most paciently and meekly did abyde, as one that hath bene inured with the suffryng of such lyke reproches ... 2

Weston's conclusion to the disputation with Ridley, as rendered in English by Foxe, is illuminating:

Here you see, the stubbourne, the gloriouse, the crafty, the unconstant minde of this man. Here you see this day, that the strength of the truth is without foyle. Therefore I beseech you all most earnestly to blow the note, and he beganne and they followed, Verity hath the victory: veritye hath the victory! 3

Although he exploits the traditional association of the disputation with academic objectivity, the victory is not that of truth, but rather that of forensic oratory. The adjectives used to describe Ridley all have moral connotations; the aim of the exercise is not to refute his opinions, but to discredit them by an attack on his character.

Similarly, the only public disputation associated with the Elizabethan Settlement - the Westminster Disputation - was planned

-
1. John Foxe, The Ecclesiasticall Historie, conteining the Acts and Monuments of Martyrs (London, 1583), vol.II, 1381 (actually misnumbered as 1389) (S.T.C. 11225).
 2. Ibid., 1434.
 3. Ibid., 1454.

as a public trial for the Roman bishops rather than as a serious attempt to convince them of the truth. Its original projected form - a scholarly written debate in Latin - was altered to that of a spoken English debate to be held in Westminster Abbey and attended by Lords, Commons, Privy Councillors and numerous other members of the public. This was done not in the interests of veracity, but in order that the bishops might compromise themselves publicly on the vital issue of the Royal Supremacy - a trap which they were in fact astute enough to avoid ¹.

There is, then, an immense difference between the educational and the political use of debate. The first trains educated minds to express truths already accepted by faith and (in the authoritarian 16th century context at least) ratified by official approval: as an intellectual exercise it is technically complete without an audience. The second demands an audience, for it is a battle not for truth in the abstract, but for the victory of a persuasive viewpoint in the largest possible number of minds. To achieve this political and personal considerations are introduced which may not be strictly relevant to the issue at stake, but which make an immediate impact on the mind incapable of understanding the technicalities of the disputation form. The dramatic nature of any public debate inevitably focusses attention on the persons involved rather than their opinions: very little manipulation is required to turn the drama into that of a trial.

And if there is one issue more than any other which when raised in the context of any 16th century church was liable to provoke a debate tinged from the beginning with political

1. See W.P. Haugaard, Elizabeth and the English Reformation (Cambridge, 1968), 96-104.

overtones, that issue is the nature and exercise of authority in the church. The very existence of debate on such a subject was a challenge to the ruling hierarchy of the church. Decisions on theological issues in Elizabethan England were made by politicians; part of the Puritan distaste for the mingling of civil and ecclesiastical offices in the persons of the bishops stemmed from their awareness that the ecclesiastics wielded effective power in their political rather than their pastoral capacity. Anxious to maintain that church and state were co-extensive, ruled by one sovereign under God: '... it cannot yet sink into my head that he should be a member of a christian commonwealth, that is not also a member of the church of Christ, concerning the outward society'¹, representatives of the established hierarchy came to see that the challenge could not be contained in the area proper to academic theology, but touched on the whole political estate of the church. This and this alone prompted them to reply to the challenge. Debate on purely academic issues was viewed as a frivolous intrusion into the serious business of public life. Sir Nicholas Bacon, addressing a Parliament whose main task was to effect the settlement of religion, urged the delegates to:

... fly from all manner of Contentions,
Reasonings and Disputations, and all
Sophistical, Captious and frivolous
Arguments and Quiddities, meeter for
ostentation of Wit, than Consultation of
weighty Matters, comelier for Scholars
than Counsellors; more beseeeming for
Schools than for Parliament Houses. 2

The Puritan cavils in themselves may have seemed just such 'Sophistical, Captious and frivolous Arguments and Quiddities'; yet because they brought into question the location of authority

1. W.W., vol.1, 388.

2. D'Ewes, Journals, 12.

in a Christian commonwealth they had to be taken seriously and met with a reasoned response.

The two aspects of this reaction may easily be studied in the works of Whitgift. His sermon before the Queen at Greenwich, delivered in 1574, draws a parallel between the current dissidents who ask such questions as: 'Whether the magistrate may prescribe any kind of apparell to the Minister, without doing unto him some injurie' ¹, and the Schoolmen: '... who have pestered their volumes, and troubled the church, partly with vaine and frivolous, partly with wicked and impious questions' ². They are, however, guilty of more than unrestrained speculation; in a brief passage at the beginning of the sermon, which purports to be an aside prompted by study of the commentators: '... I may not stand upon this poynte, onely I note it being thereunto moved by the writings of such learned interpreters as expounde this place' ³, he prefers the principal charge against them: that this 'fonde affection' tends to produce 'disobedience towards the magistrate, and flat Anar☉chie' ⁴. Two years earlier Whitgift had engaged in a correspondence with Thomas Norton, who attempted to dissuade him from answering the Admonition: 'It is good to contain controversies within schools, and not to carry them to Paul's cross and elsewhere abroad' ⁵. Whitgift's response was that this had never been a purely academic controversy; to leave unanswered a work which questioned the principles by which religion had been

1. John Whitgift, A godlie sermon preched before the Queenes Maiestie at Grenewich the 26 of March last past ... (London, 1574), sig. B iv recto.

2. Ibid., sig. B ii verso.

3. Ibid., sig. A viii verso.

4. Ibid.

5. Strype, Whitgift, vol.I, 58.

established would admit defeat not only to the dissident within but also to the enemy without - the Papist ¹.

Thus the hierarchy treated debate as a political challenge. Replying as they did with coercion and censorship as well as reasoned self-defence ², they undermined any residual belief that the protagonists in this literary debate were brethren in Christ striving together to find a common solution to their misunderstandings. When the anonymous Examiner of Crowley's Discourse against the wearing of vestments piously states the problem in the terms of I. Cor. ch. 8, declaring that the Establishment is: ' .. charitably beeryng with the weaknes of such whose consciences are entangled with fearfull scrupulositie towards the same' (i.e. towards vestments) ³, the Answerer understandably protests at the emptiness of the impressive phraseology: 'As for the charitable bearing which you speake of, it doth litill appere in these sayings, subscribe or be deprived, wear or preach not' ⁴. Using the same Pauline vocabulary, one Puritan protester made it clear that legal intervention had brought to an end the brief period of suspended judgement which the reforming party had conceded to 'the weake' - in this case, of course, the Conformists: 'Thogh thinges may be born with for Christian libertie sake for a tyme, in hope to wynne the weake: yet, whan libertie is turned to necessitie, it is evil, and no longer libertie ...' ⁵.

With a certain irony the protagonists continue to acknowledge

1. Strype, Whitgift, vol.I, 61-65.

2. See Ch. 2, passim.

3. Anon, An Answere for the tyme, sig. A iii verso.

4. Ibid., sig. A v recto.

5. Strype, Parker, vol.III, 73 (document no.XXV).

that they are 'brethren in the Lorde'; but the acknowledgement usually occurs in the prefaces to works which hardly cement the avowed relationship. The tone of much of Cartwright's Replie, for instance, suggests that he was not wholly sincere in affirming in the Epistle that: '... the name of a brother slaketh that courage and abateth that carefulness which should be bestowed in defence of the truth' ¹.

From the beginning the forensic pressure of the trial begins to distort the formal impersonality of debate. The rights and duties of the participants, rather than the truth considered as an independent entity, form the subject of discussion. The exchange is that of plaintiff and defendant, and each side in turn presents the other as the plaintiff upon whom the onus of proof rests, while disclaiming any personal intention beyond that of self-defence. On the basis of the persecution to which their party had been subjected, the Admonitioners cast themselves in the role of beleagured defenders, commenting mordantly on the dishonesty of men who enforced an Article - that declaring the Book of Common Prayer to be 'not repugnante to the Worde of God' - for which they had failed to provide satisfactory proof:

And by the way, we cannot but much marvel at the craftie wylnesse of those men whose partes it had ben fyrst to have proved eche and every content therein, to be agreable to the worde of God, seing that they enforce men by subscription to consent unto it, or else send them packing from their callings. ²

In his Answer Whitgift turns the tables on them; they, he says, are the plaintiffs seeking to undermine by their innovations a tradition

1. W.W., vol.1, 14.

2. Puritan Manifestoes, 21.

ratified by law and public consent, no defendant is by the rules of classical reasoning bound to answer a bare allegation, and it is their duty to prove the wrong they allege ¹.

Considerable space, then, is devoted to the attempt to establish a morally authoritative stance which immediately sets the opponent at a disadvantage in the mind of the reader. On the one hand the defenders of the hierarchy stressed their right to be considered the divinely appointed guardians of the church. The image of Puritan activity which they wished their audience to accept is that formulated in the anonymous contribution to the Admonition debate, A Defense of the Ecclesiasticall Regiment in Englande, defaced by T.C. in his replie agayst [sic] D. Whitgift:

... even so in the perilous waves of this
unstable world, they whiche only bend
themselves to make shipwrack of the Church
of Christe ... strike down the maste of all
authoritie, from whence the Byshops ...
discover a far off the fleete of Sathan our
professed enimie. 2

Replies to challenges were undertaken not as intellectual exercises but as attempts to maintain the public credibility of the hierarchy; no literary exchange was initiated by a defender of the Establishment. The official policy relating to the political repression of religious dissidents is clearly stated in Elizabeth's famous letter to Parker:

... we intend to have no dissension or variety
grow by suffering of persons which maintain
dissension to remain in authority; for so the
sovereign authority which we have under Almighty
God should be violate and made frustrate, and
we might be well thought to bear the sword in
vain. 3

1. An Answer to a certen Libel (London, 1572), 150.

2. London, 1574, 4.

3. Parker, Correspondence, 227, no.CLXX, 25 January, 1565.

By analogy, it was intolerable that Puritan writings should be popularly regarded as the authoritative last word on the subject of the church; if the Establishment remained silent when attacked it, too, 'might be thought to bear the sword in vain'. When the Admonition controversy broke, the bishops found it expedient to reply to the Puritan taunt that to imprison one's adversaries without effectively refuting their opinions is ineffective:

They are fast inough ye will say. It is true, but their tales are not: they flee as fire brands from place to place, and set all the country on fire. It is requisite also that they be prisoned: but that wil not otherwise be, they with the like reason must captivate reason, a worde will not be bound but with a woorde, the keyes of the kingdome of heaven must come forthe heere, or els the keyes of Newgate will doe no good. 1

In the brief euphoric period between the first publication of the Admonition and the stern Royal proclamation of 10 October, 1573, the Puritans enjoyed wide public esteem, a fact evinced by the daring of their public actions² and by the despairing tone of the episcopal correspondence of the period³. In that atmosphere the taunt '... is it not a great discredite to your Lordships, that such a scalde trifeling boke can not be answered in this season?'⁴ had a real impact on public opinion: however impolitic the admission of internal strife to interested Catholic readers might be - as Whitgift rather piously put it in the dedication to An Answere to a certen Libel: 'I feared gretly least some slander might redounde to the Gospell by this open contention, seeing that God is not the author of contention or confusion, but

1. Puritan Manifestoes, 71.

2. See e.g. letter from Sandys to Burghley and Leicester, 5 August, 1573, quoted in Puritan Manifestoes, Introduction, XVIII-XIX.

3. e.g. Parker, Correspondence, no.CCCXIII.

4. Puritan Manifestoes, 72.

of peace' ¹ - it was on balance less dangerous than to let the Puritans triumph unchecked.

A study of the tone of such replies, however, reveals not so much a passionate commitment to the position defended as contempt for the Puritans and sheer irritation at their persistence. In 1566 the Examiner writes of: '... the provocation of a treatise so solemnly advouched, so confidently affirmed, of very late so publicly by print divulged and dispersed' ². These inappropriate - and, indeed, inaccurate ³ - Latinate polysyllables indicate with some irony his assessment of the gulf between the self-assurance of the Puritans and the true value of their insignificant work. The only justification for replying, he says, is to be found in the words of Solomon: 'Responde stulto iuxta stultitiam suam, ne videatur sibi sapiens' ⁴. In the Answer Whitgift comments sardonically on the Puritan objections to homilies: '... I perceyve you are enimies to reading, bycause you love so well to heare your selves talking. I will say no worse' ⁵. There is no sense of the intellectual excitement generated by genuine debate; to reply was a political duty, and a tedious one at that. The attitude they wished their readers to adopt to the controversy can be gauged by a study of the title-page texts they used - always an invaluable guide to the author's aim. That quoted by the Examiner is:

I beseech you brethren marke them which cause

-
1. An Answer to a certen Libel, 2.
 2. An Answer for the tyme, sig. A vi recto.
 3. Ibid., sig. A vi recto/verso: Answerer's famous comment on inaccurate use of 'divulged'.
 4. Ibid., sig. A iiii verso.
 5. An Answer to a certen Libel, 63.

division and geve occasion of evyll:
 contrary to the doctrine which ye have
 learned, and avoyde them. For they that are
 such serve not the Lord Jesus Christ, but
 their owne bellyes. And with sweete and
 flattering wordes deceyve the hartes of
 the Innocentes. 1

Rather than encouraging confrontation the writer urges the reader to take evasive action whenever controversy raises its head, and to assume that anyone who presumes to question the status quo does so from ignoble motives. The texts cited by Whitgift on the title-page of the Answer decry arrogant self-assurance and uphold the uniformity of historical tradition. They are as follows:

I Cor. 8, v.2: If any man thinke that he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know.

I Cor. 11, v.16: If any man seeme to be contentious, we have no suche custome, neyther the churches of God.

Gal. 5, v.26: Let us not be desirous of vayne glory, provoking one another, envying one another. 2

Explicit statements of the positions implicit in these printed replies can be found in the response of the Established church to the frequent Puritan appeals for 'conference'. When, for example, Thomas Cartwright sought spoken disputation on the issues raised by his lectures:

... he was required to obteyne license of the Q. Ma^{tie} or the Counsell, because his assertions be repugnante to the state of the Commonwealth, which maye not be called into question by publique disputation without license of the Prince or her Highness Councell. 3

This condition effectively vetoed the request; religion 'as by law established' was considered to be a constitutional fact, and one

-
1. An Answer for the tyme, sig. A ii recto. N.B. The Answerer challenges the citation as Romans XVI, claiming that it is Romans XIII; but the Examiner is correct.
 2. Texts as quoted by Whitgift.
 3. Quoted by A.F. Scott Pearson, Thomas Cartwright and Elizabethan Puritanism (1925), 46.

could not question the form of the religion without threatening the validity of the law. The Established church could - and did - claim divine sanction by the very fact of its existence and its place in a purified but unbroken historical tradition. In the trial of debate its stance was that of the defendant warding off destructive aggression; the a priori assumption that 'whatever is, is right' was a constant source of irritation to the Puritans: 'It is an easie matter for a Rhetorician or sophister having authoritie on his side to florrish and flaunt, as though he hadd gotten the victorie, when in deed he dare not ons Joine the battel ...' ¹.

Controversial questions of epistemology are to be referred not to the bar of open debate, but to the judgement of the powers ordained by God. God commands obedience to the public law, rather than the private conscience. This is very clearly stated by Hooker in his preface to the Laws:

Neither wish we that men should do anything which in their hearts they are persuaded they ought not to do, but this persuasion ought (we say) to be settled in their hearts; that in litigious and controverted causes of such quality, the will of God is to have them do, whatsoever the sentence of judicial and final decision shall determine, yea, though it seem in their private opinion to swerve utterly from that which is right. 2

As we shall see in the next chapter, debate which is merely a temporary expedient to shore up a weak hierarchy becomes obsolete as soon as that hierarchy has sufficient centralised power to impose its claims without paying too much attention to the delicate balance of public opinion. Without digressing here to a study of the circumstances which brought about the change, one may note that this consequent follows naturally on the fact that replies, even when

1. An Answere for the tyme, sig. A iii verso.

2. The Works of Mr. Richard Hooker, ed. John Keble. Seventh edn., revised by R.W. Church and F. Paget (Oxford, 1888), vol.I, 168.

conceded, are responses to a particular climate of opinion rather than to a challenge considered to be consistent and weighty in itself.

The Puritan view of eristic debate is less overtly political and more complex. In order to understand it it will be helpful to recall the distinction drawn earlier between Luther's endorsement of disputation as a way of endorsing truth and his doubts about it as a means of establishing truth. Luther was realistic about the 'baggage' of conviction which each protagonist must bring to the latter kind of disputation, and the nature of the exercise as a reinforcement and entrenchment of differences. By contrast, as we study the Puritan view of the value of debate, we see that its foremost advocates saw it in all circumstances as a means of liberating the truth (whether that truth was already received or not). Such confidence in the translucence of language may seem odd in those who so distrusted human reason; but those who profess to trust only the direct Word of God are always compelled to treat contingent facts (such as linguistic structures) as part of the immutable divine dowry in order to be able to produce infallible applications of that Word to the human condition.

Puritans, then, took disputation seriously both in the essentially oral context of the academic world and in the medium of print. It was those academic Puritans who were seen as a reference point by their more openly contentious brethren ¹ who maintained a tradition of serious debate in the universities, at a time when the disputation had in general become little more than an excuse for ingenuity: '... meeter for ostentation of wit than for consultation

1. See e.g. M. Some laid open in his coulers (no date or author, circa 1589), 115.

of weighty matters' as Sir Nicholas Bacon had put it ¹. A letter from Gabriel Harvey to the Master of his college, Dr. John Young, gives us a picture of the situation in Cambridge in the mid 1570s, which is confirmed by incidental comments elsewhere ². Harvey had been refused his 'grace' for the degree of M.A.; among other complaints of a more personal nature, his opponents accused him of being 'a great and continual patron of paradoxis' ³. He retorted vigorously:

Unless we wil onli admit of that to be done witch we our selves onli have dun, in philosophical disputations to give popular and plausible theams, de nobilitate, de amore, de gloria, de liberalitate, and a few the like, more fit for schollars declamations to discurs uppon then semli for masters problems to dispute uppon; and more gudli and famus for the show then ether convenient for the time, or meet for the place, or profitable for the persons ... I cannot tel, but me thinks it were more fruteful for us and commodius for our auditors to handle sum sad and witti controversi ... But thai fare [sic] that this singulariti in philosophi is like to grow to a shrode matter if I onc convert mi studdi to divinitati. Belike thai are aferd les I shuld proove sum noble heretick like Arrius or Pelagius: and so disturb and disquiet the Church as I now do the Chappel. 4

It would seem that Harvey's intransigent habit of thinking for himself - his 'singulariti' - was bad enough in philosophical debate, but would have been a positive public danger in theological controversy. Truth, by this view, is exceedingly vulnerable, and needs to be removed from the sphere of common debate to preserve it from distortion. Small wonder that 'popular and plausible theams' carried the day; they satisfied the formal conventions without raising

1. See above, p. 125. See also A parte of a register, 378. The author of A Friendly Caveat seeks a colloquium on the German pattern which is: '... for conscience sake, and zeale of religion, and not for vaine glory, or desire of fame, as most part of our Universities disputations bee'.

2. Gabriel Harvey, Letterbook of Gabriel Harvey, ed. E.J.L. Scott (Camden Society New Series, XXXIII, London, 1884), 1-20.

3. Ibid., 10.

4. Ibid., 11.

questions in the minds of the hearers.

In contrast, the Puritan academics had a robust faith in the ability of the truth to stand out clearly from the incidental verbal trivia of debate:

For as golde, being digged out of the veines of the earth, is severed from earthy substance (mixt therewith) by the mettall-workemen knocking it together, and as husbandmen are wont to sift wheat from the chaffe by winowing, that it may be fit to nourish the body: so the golden treasure of truth by striking reasons as it were together is parted from the dregs, which it hath not gotten from the holy veines whence it is digged, but from mens vessels wherein it is received; and the corne that is sown for the foode of the soule, is winowed (with the winde that bloweth from the Holy Ghost) by the husbandmen of heaven, that it may be cleaner from the chaffe of errours. 1

The optimism of this writer stems from the theological perspective in which he sets the human activity of debate. In their task of winnowing wheat from chaff the fallible human 'husbandmen of heaven' are aided by the free and sovereign action of the Holy Spirit. The quotation is taken from the preamble of a disputation held on 3 November, 1579, in the Divinity School, Oxford, at which John Rainolds of Corpus defended the last three of his 'Six Conclusions touching the Holie Scripture and the Church'. Rainolds' theses were first published in Latin in 1580; four years later, in response to popular request, he translated them into English and had them printed again as an appendix to a longer controversial work. Clearly there were many who were impressed by Rainolds' passionate conviction, a conviction which set not only debating but also listening on the level of a spiritual duty which demanded a purified will as well

1. John Rainolds, The Summe of the Conference Betwene John Rainoldes and John Hart: touching the Head and the Faith of the Church ... Whereto is annexed a Treatise intituled 'SIX CONCLUSIONS TOUCHING THE HOLIE SCRIPTURE AND THE CHURCH' written by John Rainoldes (London, 1584), 706.

as a critical mind:

And because we handle the matters of the Lord,
I pray him to sanctifie with his holy spirit
our tongues, and your eares, and the mindes of
all: that neither we dispute to any other
end then to bring foorth the truth into light
by conference of reasons; neither you in
hearing have any other minde then to beleieve
the truth when it shalbe brought foorth, and
proved. 1

Given this sanctified goodwill, agreement with the conclusions reached by the disputer was inevitable. The Puritan asserted somewhat naively that no matter how devious and subtle the adversary the outcome of the syllogistic disputation could never be other than clearly in his favour. As a good example of this belief, one might cite the difference of opinion between the government and another distinguished Puritan academic - William Whitaker - on the subject of public disputation with the Jesuits. The government resolutely ignored requests from the Jesuits for confrontation, fearing the inability of its own disputers to counter their persuasive casuistry. In the Epistle Dedicatory (addressed to Burghley) of his Disputatio de sacra Scriptura; contra huius temporis Papistas - a work discussing Jesuit sophistry as epitomised in the lectures of Bellarmine - Whitaker asserts that there is in fact nothing to fear:

... since the sacred laws of such conferences secure to each man just so much advantage, and no more, as he can win by reason and argument, and whatever is said must be reduced to the rules of Syllogism; there remains no ground to fear that painted falsehood will prevail more than simple and naked truth. 2

This shows an extraordinary confidence in the ability of content to dominate form, and an optimistic disregard for the fact that language -

-
1. Rainolds, The Summe of the Conference, 683.
 2. William Whitaker, A Disputation on Holy Scripture against the Papists (Cambridge, 1588), tr. and ed. W. Fitzgerald (Cambridge, 1849), 10.

even language organised in the disciplined structures of logic - is at best a deceptive and opaque medium by which to communicate truth.

Confidence in the power of the truth to engage in and emerge unscathed from public debate was a basic feature of the Puritan consciousness in all contexts, not merely a politic attitude adopted by those engaged in the church order debate to strengthen the claims of the truth to be heard. Nonetheless, confronting those who insisted that the Elizabethan Settlement drawn up by God's instrument, the Queen in Parliament, had direct divine authority, it was a major factor in their counter-assertion of an authority - that of the Word of Truth himself - which by its very nature was prior and superior to all delegated authority and which was accessible in a precise verbal form ideally suited to debate - if only it might be heard. As we have already noted, much of controversial literature is taken up with an attempt to strike an authoritative pose which sets the opponent at an immediate moral disadvantage. The Puritans achieved this by accusing their opponents of paying lip-service to the Word while denying its power, and of exercising their secondary authority to silence the source of all authority - Christ himself. The reluctance of the Establishment to meet them publicly and the grudging and heavily political responses accorded to literary challenges were taken as proof that the bishops were afraid to allow truth free course lest it destroy them. Commenting on Whitgift's refusal to allow public confrontation ¹, Cartwright assesses the motives of the two sides thus:

But the godlie mynisters/ assured of a good cawse/

1. See p. 132 above.

provoked to most solemn disputations: where all seying their vanities/ might learne to deteste them and themselves (made to understand their folies) might be stricken with shame/ which might bringe repentance. This they did by example off the Godlie learned in times past/ and off Augustine namely: who provoketh the Donatistes and Manichies to Disputation/ in the hearing off all his church. This cause therfore if yt should not prevaile/ by force off truthe yt must gaine/ throwghe the indirecte meanes/ and cowardly fright off the Answerer; so far from procuring that trial that he accuseth me as desirous of popular praise: because refusing his privat conference (as he somewhere hath affirmed) I onely put him in minde of a disputacion. 1

As a contrast to these users of 'indirecte meanes' the Puritans present themselves as plaintiffs demanding that in common justice the case of the Word should be heard. Controversy is seen not as a threat to stability but as the means by which the dynamic of the truth is set free to do its work in men's hearts. The gulf between this attitude and the caution of the Established church can be seen very clearly in an exchange between Whitgift and Cartwright on the subject of 'contention'. To Whitgift's insistence on 'peace at any price' Cartwright retorts:

... the peace which is without truth is more execrable than a thousand contentions. For as by striking of two flints together there cometh out fire, so it may be that sometimes by contention the truth which is hidden in a dark peace may come to light, which by a peace in naughtiness and wickedness, being as it were buried under the ground, doth not appear. 2

The imagery reminds one of the passage from Rainolds quoted above (see p. 136); here, however, truth is not merely buried in ignorant confusion, but rather wilfully banished from the public view. Whitgift reacts strongly; to him, fire is primarily a

-
1. The second replie of Thomas Cartwright: agaynst Maister Doctor Whitgiftes second answer touching the Churche Discipline (no place, 1575), Epistel to the churche off England, sig. iiii verso.
 2. W.W., vol.2, 238.

destroyer:

And 'the two flintstones' may be in such time
and place 'stricken together', that the sparks
of fire which cometh from them may consume and
burn the whole city and country too. 1

Both are much concerned with public impact: whereas,
however, Cartwright sees it in terms of a spiritual revelation,
Whitgift considers that the violence of the struggle to be heard,
which is expressed in the imagery, indicates violent political
designs on the public consciousness. To counter such charges
of deliberate manipulation to dubious ends, the Puritan presents
himself in the prophetic role, a mere instrument burdened with a
direct message from the Lord. The first text quoted by Cartwright
on the title-page of the Replie and again on that of The second
replie and of The reste of the second replie deliberately parallels
his own dialectical struggle with the prophet's attempt to bring
the light of truth into the spiritual darkness of the people of
God:

Isay 62 ver. I. For Syons sake/ I will not
holde my tonge/ and for Jerusalems sake/ I
will not rest/ untill the righteousness
thereof/ breake forthe as the lighte and
the salvation thereof/ be as a burning
lampe. 2

Confronting an Establishment in which the right to make
authoritative statements had been arrogated by the administrative
hierarchy, it was vital to stress the right of the individual
called by God to speak. In the detailed plea for conference made by

1. W.W., vol.1, 244.

2. See W.W., vol.1, 13; Cartwright also quotes vv. 6-7. Richard Bancroft devotes the first chapter of his Survey to an examination of all the groups making prophetic claims (including the Family of Love and the Barrowists as well as Cartwright and his followers) who have taken this verse as their watchword; the chapter is entitled 'How under pretence of the Prophets love to Syon: some men would gladly set up their owne fancies'.

Field ¹ in his preface to the Learned Discourse we note that the youth and apparent insignificance of the Puritan ministers is turned to advantage by citing the biblical precedents of Elihu, youngest of Job's comforters, who lost patience with his sententious elders:

(I said, Dayes should speake, and multitude
of yeeres should teach wisdom.
But there is a spirit in man: and the
spirite of the Almighty giveth them
understanding.
Great men are not alwayes wise: neither
doe the aged understand judgement) ²

and of Paul's identification of himself in Galatians 1, v.1 as:
'Paul an Apostle, not of men, neither by men, but by Jesus Christ,
and God the Father, who raised him from the dead' ³. The reader
is invited to adopt the divine perspective on the protagonists,
rather than being misled by the trappings of public authority; the
demand is a large one but made with subtlety in a concatenation of
marginal references. By implication and analogy, rather than by
direct claim, the Puritans sought to build up in the reader's mind
deference to the innate authority of those led by the Spirit.

To those who cast themselves in this prophetic role, public
disputation was a chance to produce persuasive conclusions directly
from the indisputable Scriptural evidence. The doctrinal principles
on which the Established church was based had, however, been moulded
by political pragmatism into a workable form, and a disputation on

-
1. Field's authorship is generally accepted and seems a reasonable conclusion in view of his known position as editor-in-chief of documents accumulated over the years. See 'John Field and Elizabethan Puritanism' in Elizabethan Government and Society: Essays presented to Sir John Neale (London, 1961), 145.
 2. See A briefe and plaine declaration, concerning the desires of all those faithfull Ministers, that have and do seeke for the Discipline and reformation of the Church of Englande (1584), sig. 4 recto. The actual text from Job 32 (vv.7-19) is cited from the 1611 Authorised Version.
 3. Ibid.

the Puritan plan, setting the Scriptural polity in timeless and absolute opposition to all other forms of church order, would in itself have been a criticism of the official policy of adapting to the historical context. The most they could hope for was the reaction which King James I, at the Hampton Court Conference, described as that appropriate to trivial queries: '... to take knowledge of them, thereby to cast a sop into Cerberus his mouth, that hee may never barke againe'¹. And there is no parallel in the reign of Elizabeth for even the minor concession which that Conference represented: the private and inconclusive debate between Travers and Sparke on the one hand and Whitgift and Cooper on the other left the Puritans trying to counteract rumours of their intellectual defeat rather than triumphing at the public proclamation of the truth².

Paradoxically, however, the very refusal of the government to grant free debate gave the Puritans a considerable moral advantage; they could continue to make extravagant claims for the force of the Word which could not be controverted by publicly accessible experience. The aim of appeals for 'conference' is not so much to enter into dialogue with the opposition but rather to impress the reader with a certitude which feared no public test, since: 'no authoritie, pregnancie of wit, plausible perswasion of mans wisdom shall turne the truth aside, but al shal stand in the evident demonstration of Gods Spirit' (Margin: I Cor. 2, v.4)³. The impact on the reader of a challenge like that of Udall: '... venture

-
1. W. Barlow, The summe and substance of the conference, which, it pleased his Excellent Majestie to have with the Lord Bishops and others of his Clergie ... (London, 1604), 5-6.
 2. See The Elizabethan Puritan Movement, 269; and the Puritan record of the conference summarised in The Seconde Parte, vol.I, 275-286, doc.173.
 3. A briefe and plaine declaration, Preface, sig. 3 recto.

your bishoppricke upon a disputation, and we will venture our lives, take the challenge if you dare ...' ¹ derives from the illogical but profound conviction in the human mind that force of commitment somehow authenticates the principle held. Udall has already dismissed the arguments of his opponents as 'infinite most monstrous absurdities, and blasphemous assertions' ².

In the matter of 'conference', then, that which poses as objective fact - 'the evident demonstration of Gods Spirit' - can only be accepted as self-evident if one has already accepted all the statements made by the Puritans about the divine credentials of their hermeneutic. Again we see that forensic pressure which turns the attention of the reader to the persons rather than the matter of debate.

The importance of the self-image presented is equally great in printed controversy. The printer's note which John Stroud added to the title-page of the second edition of Cartwright's Replie, defying the bishops and the Royal proclamation against the Admonition literature, captures exactly the desired note of dauntless aggression fuelled not by personal animosity but by 'the force of God's Spirit':

Some perhaps will marvel at the newe impression of thys boke ... But cease to muse, good Christian reader, whosoever thou art: and learne to know that no lawes, were they never so hard and severe, can put out the force of Gods spirite in hys children, nor any cruelty ... can discharge the sayntes and servauntes of the Lord from going forward in that which is good. For the profite therefore of the godly and their instruction have we hazarded our selves, and as it were cast our selves into such daungers and troubles as shalbe layed upon us if we come into the hands of the persecuting Bishops'. ³

1. John Udall, A Demonstration of Discipline, 6.

2. Ibid., 3.

3. The Seconde Parte, vol.I, 112, doc.66.

Accusations of self-interest were easily countered by pointing to the clear historical evidence for the sacrifices which the stand for one's belief involved. Thus the response of the Answerer to the text quoted by the Examiner (see p. 127 above) is to compare it clause by clause with the facts, asking pertinently (for example) how those who have lost their livings for conscience' sake can be said to 'serve their own bellies'? ¹ The fact that one seeks no material benefit from a course pursued, however, sets one free to advocate it with passionate force, dismissing scornfully the cynical inquiries of any opponent as to motivation. Until the subscription debate of the 1580s the Puritans made no serious public moral compromise of their position; individual defections and waverings caused internal tension, but they were generally unobtrusive and gradual ². The literature of the Vestiarian and Admonition debates, then, is concerned less with self-justification than with aggressive application of the moral pressure generated by a certainty as yet untarnished by historical compromise. Formal protestations of inadequacy, the rhetorical captatio benevolentiae, are made ³; at the same time, the authors claim authoritative status by virtue of the cause whose unworthy representatives they are.

The claims made for the status of the 'cause' are not subject to historical verification, and must be left to the theologians to discuss. When, however, one studies the extravagant

1. An Answer for the tyme, sig. A ii verso.

2. See e.g. letter of Thomas Wood to William Whittingham, February, 1574, reprinted by Patrick Collinson as illustrative material in his article 'The Authorship of "A Brief Discours off the troubles Begonne at Franckford"', Journal of Ecclesiastical History, vol.9 (1958), 206-8; and in his Letters of Thomas Wood, Puritan 1566-1577, Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research, Special Supplement 5 (1966).

3. See e.g. Preamble to 'An Exhortation to the Byshops to deale brotherly with theyr Brethren', Puritan Manifestoes, 62.

claims that conviction would inevitably result from an encounter with the dynamic Word of God, one notes a growing gulf between theory and reality. Whitaker and Rainolds might remain unshaken in their confidence in debate, for the appropriate political action against their Roman adversaries had been taken at the Elizabethan Settlement, and they were re-enacting a battle which, for all practical purposes, had already been won. Those who sought not to reinforce the existing settlement, but to purify and even radically alter it, found that the fire of truth which they espoused failed to kindle either the public at large or, more specifically, the administrative hierarchy. Its impact, where recognised, was attributed to the manipulation of political schemers rather than to its own inherent authority, as the writers of 'An Exhortation to the Bishops and their Clergie' record:

There may be a foule glose made upon a good matter, an evill favoured cloke put uppon a faire body: The truthe may be accused of sedition, of trouble, of breaking of states, if it be so, it is no newe thing ... for that Christ called his truth a sword, a fire, and he himselfe long agoe was spited at for that, and accused to'. 1

The sincerity of the accusations may be doubted; more disturbing to the Puritan is the ease with which 'truth' can be re-interpreted with 'a foule glose' and cast aside. The response is interesting; as it becomes evident that the public impact of the truth per se is negligible, so increasingly extravagant claims are made for it, with all the rhetorical force that can be mustered. One example must suffice to illustrate this point.

By 1577 the exiled Cartwright was already seeking a politic modus vivendi with the Church of England: his apparent retreat from earlier radicalism provoked sharp criticism from the London ministers.

1. Puritan Manifestoes, 74-5.

Writing from Heidelberg, he advised them not to leave the church for the sake of ceremonies alone; replying, they rebuked his change of heart:

And therefore in our minds it were a great [deal] better not to write any whit at all touching this point than in your writings to set your selfe against your selfe, and against the Church and brethren also ... 1

Yet it is in the same year that The rest of the Seconde Replie was published, with a preface which professed a certainty which is hardly reflected in Cartwright's less public dealings:

But, considering the great enmytie against the cause, with some displeasure against my self; some wil (peradventure) say, that I have rather need to seek excuse why I set yt forth at al, then so late. To whome I would yt were answered, that for the cause yt self: I never fear, least yt should come to often, into the field. For althowgh through the povertie of the defenders thereof, she come never so naked and unarmed: yet the lord hath set such a majestie in her countenance, that as with one of her eyes, she ravisheth into her love, those which are desirous of the trwth in this behalf: so with the other, she so astonisheth her enemyes, as if they were cast into a dead sleap^{5, 6}: in such sort, that the stowtest of them, when they come to the fight, can not finde their handes. 2

The point is resoundingly made; unfortunately, it conflicts with historical fact. One could hardly view Whitgift's vigorous anti-Puritan campaign of the 1580s as the activity of a man in a 'dead sleap'. Much Puritan rhetoric of this type makes use of the forceful Biblical imagery concerning the rule of Christ, disregarding, however, the fact that much of it refers not to the public reception of the Word in the present, but to a mysterious spiritual battle for the souls of men whose outcome will only become publicly apparent at the end of time. The victory which in the present is a personal and

-
1. The Seconde Parte, vol.I, 138, no.93.
 2. The rest of the Seconde Replie of Thomas Cartwrihgt [sic] agaynst Master Doctor Whitgifts second answer, touching the Church discipline ([Basle], 1577), sig.X2 recto.

partial experience is externalised to become a public achievement brought about by the activity of God's servants:

God of his gracious goodnesse, blesse them that take this his cause into their handes, and so directe them in the using of his spiritual weapons, that they being mightie thorowe him, to caste downe holdes, maye overthrowe the imaginations, and everye high thing that is exalted againste the knowledge of God, and bring into bondage everye thoughte, to the obedience of Christe, that he therby may be glorified, his church comforted and continued unto eternall glory. Amen. 1.

'Everye high thing that is exalted againste the knowledge of God' denotes, in the original, the attempt of human knowledge to assert its autonomous self-sufficiency ²; here it is clearly a veiled reference to the episcopal hierarchy. By giving this imagery a precise contemporary reference the Puritans devalue it theologically; the authority of Christ becomes a controversial pawn:

Let yt be enough for them, to have stumbled at the truth, least if they run them selves against yt, in sted of thinking that they have to doe with men and with wordes, they meet with Chryst him self: at whom (as at a rok) they shall wrake themselves myserably, upon whome also, yf any come proudly, the same stone wil fal, and break them al to fitters: to their boeth deepest, and most remediles condemnation. 3

The gulf between this simplistic image of Christ crushing his adversaries to powder and the complex and inconclusive evidence of the impact of 'the cause' on contemporary history reveals that the rhetoric of inevitable triumph is an attempt to impose a single interpretation of the facts rather than an appropriate statement of the obvious. As it stands, this rhetoric is an example of the paradox which classical Marxism ⁴ also illustrates: if the truth is

1. Puritan Manifestoes, 39.

2. See C.K. Barrett, A commentary on the Second Epistle to the Corinthians (London, 1973), 250-253.

3. The rest of the Seconde Replie, sig. 2 verso.

4. See e.g. R.N. Carew Hunt, The Theory and Practice of Communism (London, 1963), 75-80.

inescapable, why labour so hard to bring about its triumph? If the fire of the Word is sufficient in itself, why must it be fed with the fuel of aggressive controversy and sustained by exposures of the abuses in the church? Very often a statement which seems to proclaim the inevitable victory of the truth - as when the prefatory epistle of the first Admonition characterises the bishops as: ' ... that proude generation, whose kingdome must downe, holde they never so hard: bicause their tyrannous Lordshippe can not stande wyth Christes kingdome ...' ¹ contains a lurking ambiguity in the verb; it is not entirely clear whether 'must' refers to the sovereign activity of Christ, or whether it is a moral imperative addressed to the reader.

Thus it would be naive to see the Puritan challenge as concerned only with the liberation of objective truth to do its own work. Rhetoricians concur that in the exercise of forensic oratory passionate conviction is in itself convincing, and forms a necessary addition to proof:

Neither can any good bee done at all, when wee have sayd all that ever we can, except we bring the same affections in our own harte, the which we could the Judges should beare towards our owne matter. ²

Many of the assertions made concerning the invincibility of truth are forensic devices designed to persuade the audience to put their confidence in an author so sure of his case that he takes the risk of standing back and presenting it as an entity with sufficient dynamism to achieve its own ends without the help of his oratory. In The Pilgrim's Progress Bunyan describes how the Interpreter showed Christian a fire which burned constantly brighter despite the water poured on it. Taken behind the scenes, Christian perceived that the

1. Puritan Manifestoes, 5.

2. Thomas Wilson, The Arte of Rhetorique, 133.

fire was secretly fed by a constant stream of oil ¹. The fire of the Word, similarly, is presented as being sustained by its own unquenchable force, whereas in fact all the available devices of forensic oratory are called to its aid. As the plaintiffs confronting a show of civil authority, the Puritans had to give their case an equal weight of authority to gain serious consideration. The claim of direct Scriptural warrant for every statement made conceals the prior claim for unquestioning assent to their own hermeneutic. This latter claim was substantiated by rhetoric asserting their own disinterested and entirely objective view of the evidence, as opposed to the politic distortion indulged in by the opponents. The very nature of the controversy forces it to become a public trial; the political context is inescapable, and it forces the interchange into its own mould.

The debate is, then, distorted by pressures from without; one might also say that it disintegrates under the strain of the incompatibility between the strict disputation forms of argument used and the nature of the disagreement with which they are trying to cope. The problem is admirably elucidated in a short section of Gerhard Ebeling's book Introduction to a Theological Theory of Language, in which the writer is discussing the relevance of the medieval trivium to modern theories of theological language. He describes the concept of dialectic as being based on the disputation, and characterises a successful disputation as follows:

One word leads to another, but not like the exchange of blows in a fight. Rather, the partners in a dialogue approach each other and go forward together ... Although antithesis is negative in appearance, it is not purely negative, but is a new statement with its own content. And it must correspond to the thesis in the sense that it

1. John Bunyan, The Pilgrim's Progress from this world to that which is to come, ed. J.B. Wharey (Oxford, 1928), 34-5.

opens the way for the dialogue to reach a higher level. And this leads to a synthesis, which in its turn may perhaps represent no more than a transitional stage, and be the thesis which sets the process of dialectic on its course again. 1

Asking, however, ' ... whether this pattern of a fruitful argument which advances knowledge can fairly claim to be the basic model of all dialogue' ² he introduces an important distinction:

Dialogue as a continuous process of thought is concerned with clarifying an issue which does not directly concern those taking part in the dialogue. But when dialogue consists of personal utterance it involves the partners in the dialogue in the subject they have to discuss. Accordingly, in each case the understanding of truth has a different emphasis. In the first case it is truth as the object of knowledge, while in the second case it is truth as the basis of faith. 3

Whereas the disputation involves recognition of the limitations of human expression, and is a process by which necessary qualifications and conditions are introduced which add up to a step forward in the precision of knowledge:

The situation is quite different ... in the kind of dialogue which was originally excluded from the province of dialectic, and which is concerned with the logos by which a person can live. Here there is in fact the possibility of a statement which is final, which does not need to be complemented by dialectic and which is in fact incompatible with it, a statement which says exhaustively all that is necessary ... 4

Disputation, then, represents a dialogue between two rational beings; this latter form of 'dialogue' is an encounter between two authoritative and mutually exclusive claims. Applying these abstract principles to the church order debate, it is necessary to decide what kind of confrontation we are dealing with here. Looking first at a

1. Gerhard Ebeling, Introduction to a Theological Theory of Language, tr. R.A. Wilson (London, 1973), 145-6.

2. Ibid., 146.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid., 149.

representative Puritan statement, we see that the exercise of human reason is virtually excluded by the demands of the theological virtue of obedience:

Let us then take heed while it is yet time, and in obedience of Gods worde banish farre from us our owne understanding, and if we wil be taught of the Lorde, let us leade into captivity all our owne cogitations, and seeke no better estate for the gospel of God, then he himselfe hath appointed by his holy wisdom. 1

Turning to consider the viewpoint of the Establishment, we see the same stress on allegiance rather than autonomous reason. In the debate between Whitgift and Cartwright, Cartwright at one point stigmatises the authorities of men as 'uncunning proofs' - Aristotle's ἀνέχρας πεισεις, more commonly known as 'inartistic proofs' ². In reply Whitgift takes up the medieval paradox of the relationship between 'ratio' and 'auctoritas' and comes down firmly on the side of 'auctoritas' as the deciding factor in theological controversy:

Aristotle spake as a heathenish philosopher of such profane sciences as be grounded, not upon authority, but upon natural and human reason; but that [science] that we profess is of another nature, for it is grounded upon authority, and for the authority' sake to be believed, what reason soever there is to the contrary ... Therefore, to answer you briefly in this matter, I think 'authority' in divine matters to be the best reason, whether it be of the scriptures themselves, or of such learned men as do rightly interpret the same. 3

The major difference is that Whitgift acknowledges the importance of interpretation, whereas his adversaries are reluctant to admit that they make use of it. The demand that authority should control the exercise of reason is, however, clearly made by both sides: and in the area of church discipline there is disagreement over which authority

1. Edward Dering, 'A Sermon preached at the Tower of London, by M. Edward Dering, the 11 of December 1569' in M. Derings Workes (London, 1597), 32.

2. W.W., vol.1, 427.

3. Ibid., 435.

has the prior claim to be heard. The problem is not one of theory, to be debated at leisure; as the author of the Second Admonition pointed out, one's decision had immediate political consequences:

The lawes of the lande, the booke of common prayer, the Queenes Injunctions, the Commissioners advertisements, the bishops late Canons, Lindwoodes Provincials, every bishops Articles in his diocesse, my Lord of Canterburies sober caveates, in his licences to preachers, and his highe Courte of prerogative or grave fatherly faculties ... may not be broken or offended against, but with more daunger than to offende against the Bible. 1

Clearly, then, this is not a debate concerned with clarification; it deals with 'the logos by which a person can live' in an even more immediate and practical sense than that intended by Ebeling. While admitting that it falls into this category, however, one might question the further assertion that a statement made in this kind of debate: ' ... does not need to be complemented with dialectic and ... is in fact incompatible with it' ².

This query can be answered by defining the minimum basic requirements for a dialogue in which dialectic can fruitfully be used. Logic can expose false contradictions, but it can do nothing to reconcile contradictory definitions of the terms of the argument. Constructive disputation, then, can only take place when the participants disagree not about their basic premisses but about the interpretation and application of their common assumptions. When, as here, the disagreement is over such a fundamental issue as the authority from which a priori assumptions are derived, debate reaches an intellectual impasse and can only reiterate its differences in the form of assertion and counter-assertion. Viewing church order as a matter on which the Scripture gives few explicit directives, the Established church stressed

1. Puritan Manifestoes, 91.

2. See p.150 above.

the authoritative claims of a tradition which was based on the historical development of the church and ratified by the Fathers. As Whitgift said to the ministers of Chichester: '... I make more reckoning of the auncient fathers a great deal than I do of these later writers' ¹. Believing, on the other hand, that as Christ may not be supposed to be less faithful than Moses a clear prescriptive statement on every matter of discipline must be found in Scripture, the Puritan referred constantly to the text itself - that is to say, the text as recently clarified by 'these later writers', notably Calvin. Both paid lip-service to the Scripture; each sought to impose his own authoritative definitions of its meaning on the other; neither was willing to suspend judgement in order that reason might discover sufficient common ground to make constructive dialogue possible. Disputation is best suited to discussions about the status of language; the early Reformation transubstantiation debates, for example, focussed on the possibility that the demonstrative sentence of Christ's words of institution contained a trope ². Where both sides have decided in advance which interpretation has authoritative status disputation can never be more than an exhibition piece, whether it be spoken or written. As Wittgenstein put it in one of his few references to 'judgement' in

Philosophical Investigations:

If language is to be a means of communication there must be agreement not only in definitions but also (queer as this may sound) in judgments. This seems to abolish logic, but does not do so. ³

Behind the apparently trivial theological disagreements of the early years of Elizabeth's reign lies a fundamental disagreement on one

-
1. The Seconde Parte, no.135, 'A Briefe and true report of the proceedings against some of the ministers and preachers of the dioces of Chichester for refusinge to subscribe to certaine articles'.
 2. See e.g. the account of Peter Martyr's Oxford disputation before the King's Visitors in Foxe, Acts and Monuments, vol.II, 1374 ff.
 3. Wittgenstein, Philosophical Investigations, 88e, para.242.

vital judgement - the judgement as to the origins of authority in the church. In an age of consensus on authority superficial disputes over terminology are possible, but such disputes are often mere quibbles, concealing a fundamental agreement on judgements. As John of Salisbury put it:

Of a truth, on points where they seem to be in profound disagreement, such [professors of logic] admit one another's interpretations, even though they may maintain that the latter are inadequate. They are mutually condemning, not the meaning, but the words of one another's statements'. 1

In an age in which consensus has been lost, there may indeed be a common theological vocabulary, but its use is subverted by the variety of meanings attached to it and undermined by disagreement as to the authority which can validate its use.

Thus as early as the Admonition controversy we see two opposing parties with different presuppositions about the admissible use of the Scriptural raw material. Constant accusations and counter-accusations of petitio principii - begging the question - show us that the a priori assumptions made are irreconcilably different. Each author assumes all his own inter-dependent definitions of the issues at stake, ridiculing the opponent because his terms and categories are incorrect. There is, then, no possibility that the opponents may 'approach each other and go forth together'. The basic division over authority means that what seems to one a rational premiss is to the other a logical fallacy, and this hampers debate from the very beginning. For example, Whitgift opens the section of his Answer which confutes the text of the Admonition with the declaration: 'I will not aunswere words, but matter, nor bare affirmations or negations, but reasons: and therefore in as few words as I can, I will comprehende

1. John of Salisbury, Metalogicon, Bk.II, ch.18, 117.

many lines' ¹. He then proceeds to discuss .. and dismiss ~ the ab
authoritate negative argument which he claims to be the basis of the
Admonition. On the Puritan view of the Word of God as active and
directive, not merely permissive, argument from negative authority
was perfectly logical ². Whitgift, however, saw Scripture otherwise
and thus dismissed the argument out of hand as a fallacy - as 'words'
in fact, rather than matter.

Given this fundamental barrier to real progress, it is inevitable
that the protagonists will focus on the verbal surface of debate.
Question-begging assertion meets with analysis which rarely penetrates
below the verbal surface. At the beginning of his Defense of the Answer
Whitgift states: 'Now my meaning is to answer words with words, although
in no such deriding and opprobrious manner' ³. This is not quite so
obvious as it sounds; he is referring to the need to clear the
terminological ground and to deal with his opponent's verbal slips
before attacking the matter of the debate. Finding a mistaken quotation,
he comments slyly:

I might here again trip you for alleging Josias
instead of Ezechias ... and so dally with you as
you use to do with others; but I will leave such
kind of gibes to brabbling sophisters in the schools,
and think that it was some light oversight. ⁴

In fact, of course, his technique is exactly that of the 'brabbling
sophisters in the schools', though it irritates him when his opponent

1. Whitgift, An Answer to a certain Libel, 20.

2. The prescript of the Word is viewed as analogous with the orthodox Calvinist view of God's will as active and directive, never merely permissive by inaction. See Institutes, tr. H. Beveridge (London, 1963), vol.I, ch.XVIII, 200: '... it is the merest trifling to substitute a bare permission for the providence of God, as if he sat in a watchtower waiting for fortuitous events, his judgments meanwhile depending on the will of man'.

3. W.W., vol.1, 19.

4. Ibid., 34.

also makes use of it. As they debate whether reading is preaching, Cartwright declares that Stephen's oration in Acts, ch.7 was not preaching, in order to accommodate his view that deacons had no right to preach. Whitgift comments (justifiably!): 'You imagine (as I think) that you are in the logic and philosophy schools where you may feign what distinctions you list' ¹. 'Ex quolibet, quodlibet'; the impression of the debate with which one is left is that of a series of inventive verbal skirmishes in which evidence and arguments are deployed as weapons against the adversary, rather than as instruments for the discovery of the truth. The mentality is clearly shown in Cartwright's gleeful piling of text upon text:

I will add only one place, which if it be more bitter than the rest, and cut the quick more near, you shall not be angry with me, but first with those that were the authors of it, and then with him that wrote it. ²

Whitgift is unimpressed; his marginal comment: 'Parturiunt montes etc.', taken from Horace's Ars Poetica, dismisses his opponent's threats as so much inappropriate rhetoric ³. The dramatic element is very marked. Cartwright comments scathingly on a list of 'authorities' cited by Whitgift:

Here are brought in Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, Tertullian, Cyprian, and councils, as dumb persons in the stage, only to make a shew, and so they go out of the stage without saying anything. ⁴

Whitgift retorts: 'Well, I will deceive your expectation, and make them speak' ⁵. The debate easily becomes a masque played to dazzle

1. W.W., vol.1, 62.

2. Ibid., 452.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid., 213.

5. Ibid., 215.

and sway the audience, in which the appearance of truth is more important than the substance of truth. Cartwright elsewhere describes Whitgift's bewildering array of authors as: ' ... this visard and shew of truth ...' ¹.

In the light of this concern with audience reaction, it is illuminating to study the nature of the response that the authors seek to evoke. In his first Replie Cartwright excuses himself for flouting the best dialogue convention and failing to print his opponent's previous work along with his own response to it. The reasons he gives are economic and practical - the lack of time, space and resources to print Whitgift's book: ' ... swelling in that sort which it doth' ². The subsequent work in the debate - Whitgift's Defense of the Answere - reprints the Replie and comments sardonically on the passage quoted above:

... you are loth they should be compared together,
lest your frivolous replies, your childish
collections, your wilful depraving, your
fraudulent dismembering of my book, should
manifestly appear. ³

It seems that the reader is being invited to consider the exchange solely in terms of internal criteria such as relevance, coherence and valid or invalid interpretation. The aim of controversial literature is not, however, to sharpen the reader's mind but rather to sway his will, and one might wonder how this can be achieved by inviting him to take part in an exercise of textual criticism. The answer lies in the adjectives - 'frivolous', 'childish', 'wilful', 'fraudulent'. As in Weston's summing up of the debate with Ridley, so here ⁴: an

1. W.W., vol.1, 223.

2. Ibid., 45.

3. Ibid.

4. See p. 123 above.

ostensible preoccupation with the argument conceals the real aim of undermining the opponent's character. Describing Cartwright's book, Whitgift is by extension describing the man himself.

Final judgement in each case presented is formally reserved for God, whether for God as revealed in his Word:

... that ... the arguments of both sides may be weighed, not with the changeable weights of custom, of time, of men ... but with the just balances of the incorruptible and unchangeable word of God, 1

or as operating through the structures of his church. Since, however, in the case of the church order debate an author's interpretation of divine authority is part of the theological system he wishes his reader to adopt, it could hardly be assumed that a statement claiming divine sanction for a personal position would in itself be convincing. To avoid an obviously circular argument the first appeal must be to 'the changeable weights of custom, of time, of men'. Begging his reader to suspend judgement on the issues until the work is read, the author does his best to build up confidence in his own fidelity to the evidence, while presenting his opponent as a dishonest verbal trickster. Whitgift is a master of this dubious art, as a brief survey of the techniques used in his Defense will show. He flatters the audience; addressing Cartwright, he writes:

And I doubt not but that your undutiful, uncivil and uncharitable dealing in this your book ... hath so detected you, that honest, discreet, quiet and godly-learned men will no more be withdrawn by you, and such as you are, to any such schism or contention in the church. 2

He points out to them how Cartwright is trying to hoodwink them; again addressing his opponent, he states: 'Howbeit you do very politicly

1. W.W., vol.1, 44.

2. Ibid., 313; see also vol.3, 6.

to refer your readers to the whole books, which you are sure the most of them cannot, and of those many that can will not, peruse' ¹. Every intellectual slip on Cartwright's part is ascribed to that resentment at past failure which distorts his judgement: 'Surely it is very like that ... the old grief conceived for missing the divinity lecture came into your mind, and so much overcame you, that you could not understand what I had said' ²; while attacks on his own intellectual capabilities are treated with contempt as examples of Cartwright's malice. In short, when he writes:

I beseech God forgive you your outrageous contempts,
and unchristian flouts and jests ... But I will
omit them all, and only desire the reader to
consider of what spirit they come, and in both our
writings to respect the matter, not the person ... ³

he presents the reader with a contradiction in terms; urging him to consider the spirit in which Cartwright's work was written he invites him to consider not the matter, but the person. It is Cartwright himself who is on trial, and he is well aware of the fact. In the preface to the Second Replie he indicates that he intends to 'sink' - i.e. to answer - nearly half of Whitgift's latest work within the scope of that short preface:

For if one would make survey off reproches/
untrw surmises/ and false accusations/
wherwith he hath fraught yt ... he should
(I suppose) finde/ nigh one half spent in
these wares. Wherin he dealeth with me/
as certein beastes: which pursued cast
forth behinde them an untollerable savour/
therby to affray their hunters from further
chasing them. ⁴

In this image the tables are turned - Whitgift becomes not the hunter,

1. W.W., vol.1, 449.

2. W.W., vol.3, 68.

3. W.W., vol.1, 284.

4. Second Replie, Epistel, sig. ii recto.

but the hunted. In spite of Cartwright's self-righteous tone his work is full of similar 'reproches, untrw surmises and false accusations', delivered with a vigour which compensates for his lack of Whitgift's gentle, sardonic finesse. Despite pious disclaimers from both protagonists of any belief in the personal method ¹, the aim is to explain away the opponent's position in terms of his moral or psychological defects rather than to provide detailed refutation of his points - to convince the reader, as Whitgift put it, that: '... you frame your doctrine according to your affection towards certain persons' ².

For this kind of 'proof' the technicalities of the disputation are in themselves inadequate; indeed, to the non-specialist reader they seem like an escape into the safe world of academic abstractions. At one point, for example, Whitgift is in the process of analysing a fallacious argument in highly technical terms when he suddenly recalls that discussions of figure and mood are so much 'caviar to the general':

But, lest the ignorant reader should think that I shift off matters with such quiddities as they understand not, I will set aside the deformed face of your argument, and come to the matter ... ³

It is a moral rather than an intellectual judgement which is invited, and the 'quiddities' of dialectical evasion are of interest only because they give a clue to the moral character of the man who uses them.

Bancroft's later comment on Cartwright:

The best lawyer that is, when he giveth himselfe to shiftes and to feed his clyentes with quirkes, refusing not to brabble in anye cause, be it never so false: he looseth his estimation and with the

1. Whitgift - see W.W., vol.1, 64; Cartwright - see vol.1, 44.

2. W.W., vol.1, 326.

3. W.W., vol.2, 229.

graver sort is little regarded 1

underlines the forensic nature of the whole debate, presenting the inadequacies of Cartwright's logic as proof of a consciously dishonest attempt to defend a bankrupt case.

Much, then, of this literature might be more accurately classified as forensic oratory than as a printed form of disputation.

Contemporary writers recognised the Ciceronian style which gave impetus to the detailed comparison of texts, and finally superseded it

altogether; as the author of A Defense of the Ecclesiasticall Regiment in Englande ... put it:

I appeale to the platteforme of Master Cartwrights Replie: from whence I durste undertake to pick out Tullie his invectives against Cateline and Verres, if by any casualltie or misadventure they should happen to miscarrie. 2

Despite its claims to academic objectivity the proof it supplies is that of the rhetorical enthymeme, the materials for which, as Aristotle said, are 'probabilities and signs' ³:

The propositions then which are the material of rhetorical syllogisms are seldom necessary. The ordinary subjects of our judgments and investigations are indeterminate; for it is human action which is the sphere of deliberation and inquiry; and as all such action is of an indeterminate character, it may be said to be practically never necessary. 4

Under the reputable cover of formal debate this literature deals rather with the speculative area of human motivation. The advantage of the argument ad hominem is that it can be countered only with bare denial; it cannot be disproved. The attempt to convince the judge that the accused is guilty not only in fact but in intention

1. Bancroft, Survay, 382.

2. p.3.

3. The Rhetoric of Aristotle, tr. and ed. J.E.C. Welldon (London, 1886), 17.

4. Ibid.

is of the essence of classic forensic oratory; as Aristotle put it: 'In all such cases the point at issue is the criminality and wickedness or the reverse of the person accused, as it is the purpose which constitutes vice or crime'¹. The most blameless statement can be shadowed with suspicion by some comment like those of Whitgift which so irritated Cartwright: 'This is wel said, if unfained: these glorious wordes are but mistes, to blind the eies off the simple: the Anabaptistes would saie the like'².

In short, the ostensibly rigorous logical exchange of the disputation becomes a reciprocal campaign of innuendo. In the first part of this chapter we noted how the political context of any debate on authority tended to focus attention on the status and claims of the writers, rather than on the text in itself; here we see that the profound nature of the disagreement precludes any possibility of moving forward to a creative synthesis. Each protagonist prejudges the issues at stake, tacitly assuming that any other way of assessing the evidence can only be the product of wilful blindness or the excesses of unenlightened zeal; the exchange therefore becomes a dramatic exposé of the opponent's ignoble motives.

1. Ibid., 95. See above, ch.2, pp. 104-10 for an account of the way in which later in the reign the writings of Puritan radicals were punished under a statute which derived intent from fact and obviated any need to prove it separately; and below, ch.6, pp. 290-2 for an analysis of the way in which this legal development affected the presentation of 'intent' in polemical writings.

2. Second Replie, Epistel, sig. iiii recto.

CHAPTER FOUR

The Impact of Whitgift's Primacy

Thus far we have examined the context and content of the printed debate genre in a schematic way which, however necessary, tends to obscure the fact that history is not a static context in which literature is set, but a process set in motion by human activity (including literary activity) and altering, in its turn, the data of experience which future literary activity will seek to interpret. It is not easy to view controversial literature in any but a historical perspective; it will have been noted that the consciousness of a process repeatedly irrupts into any attempt to generalize, forcing our attention back to the particularity of each statement ¹. In the previous chapter, therefore, I examined the early manifestations of the genre of printed debate in an attempt to isolate the general principles which determined its development; in this chapter I shall begin to analyse the way in which these principles are worked out to their logical conclusions in the particular context of the Elizabethan church, focusing in particular on the impact of Whitgift's primacy.

Any literature whose prime intention is to alter the process by which the reader reaches a decision on the point at issue is tested and challenged by the passage of time; as we have already noted ², it can be assessed in relation to the consonancy or disparity between the impact it claims and that which it actually achieves. Over the period between the publication of the first Admonition and Whitgift's nationally effective campaign against the Puritans in the mid 1580s, printed debate as a genuinely effective weapon rather than as a rhetorical gesture was weighed in the balance and found wanting. For the Establishment it had

1. See p. 133.

2. See pp.144-5.

never been more than a politic expedient, a response to the demands of public opinion at a particular time. There is a suggestive report of Whitgift's later reflections on the Admonition controversy in the document catalogued by Peel as no. 135 in The Seconde Parte, which is headed: 'A Breife and true reporte of the proceedinges againste some of the ministers and prechers of the diocese of Chichester for refusinge to subscribe to certaine articles'. In discussion with these rather conciliatory ministers, Whitgift is reported to have said:

And for Mr Cartwrite and my self, we mighte both have bene better occupied, especially the man that first began, yet of my self I doubt, because I have defended the booke which so manye martyrs have sealed with their bloude. But since this diversitie hath bene in the church, religion hath gon backwarde ... It hath bene reported that I should repent me of my workes against Mr Cartwrighte, but I protest I do it not, nor never will, yet I love the man, and if he would returne and live in the peace of the church, he should not find a better frend than my self. But this strife amongst ourselves doth drive men from us, even to popery. ¹

The risk of losing face in the eyes of the Papists by keeping silence had been one of the main motives of Whitgift's original Answer ²; some ten years later, he is convinced that reply does nothing for the public image of the Establishment and, indeed, that it drives men into the arms of the Roman church. His failure to reply to Cartwright's final challenge - the Second Replie - had obviously been construed as regret at the whole literary sequence: while denying the specific charge of 'repenting', however, he leaves the ministers in no doubt that his enthusiasm for debate has waned. While no Puritan would ever admit disillusionment with debate, for reasons made clear in the last chapter, one may not unjustifiably detect a certain failure of momentum in the fact that between the publication of The rest of the Second Replie and that of the Learned Discourse no significant new contribution to the

1. The Seconde Parte, vol.I, 215-6.

2. See Strype, Whitgift, vol.I, 61-3.

debate was made - and indeed, in the fact that the latter was not a new work. Reprints there were; in 1578 a petition was sent to Burghley from several prominent members of the Stationers' Company, advising him that:

... one Thomas woodcock an honest younge man, and
one of our Company
by the Lord Bisshopp of London
hathe bin imprisoned in newgate theis six dayes for
selling of certaine bookes called the Admonysion
to the parliament. 1

and requesting him to secure Woodcock's release on bail. The evidence seems to suggest that he was engaged in the clandestine sale of an illegal new edition, particularly since in the same year a dated reprint of Crowley's Briefe Discourse appeared. This latter tract reappeared without the associated epistles and minor tracts, but prefaced by a lamentable new piece of doggerel on the 'coxcombs' of the Establishment. The sense of lost momentum is caught by an interesting addition to the title-page. Beneath the text taken from Psalm 31: 'I have hated all those, that holde of superstitious vanities', is added the despairing comment: 'I would that you so hattid them, that you used them not' ², which is initialled W.C. (William Charke?). Presumably the suppression of the prophesyings heightened the need for succinct presentations of the case for reform to be readily available. Yet merely to reprint tracts which made a powerful impact on a particular situation is not to guarantee the same impact again; time and history move on, while the debate seems to have become a matter of the static reiteration of past formulae.

A consideration of contemporary assessments of the Admonition debate may help us to understand the loss of confidence expressed by Whitgift, and the fact that the Puritans could find nothing new to say.

1. Arber, Transcript, vol.I, 484.

2. S.T.C. 6080, A briefe discourse against the outwarde apparell of the popishe church (no place, 1578).

Both Bancroft and Sutcliffe quote a caustic comment on the Second Replie allegedly made by a man who in principle warmly supported free debate - Whitaker himself:

I pray God I live not, if ever I saw anything more loosely written and almost more childishly. It is true that for wordes, hee hath great store, and those both fine and new: but for matter, as farre as I can judge, he is altogether barren. 1

Bancroft's own uncharitable condensation of this view is: '... that his great bundell of shredde' 2.

The amount of directly related Scriptural material for the discipline debate is very small; much of the evidence which is adduced by both sides is drawn from analogous Old Testament situations which deal with the question of authority in some form or other, but whose relationship with the current church debate is vague enough to permit directly contrary applications of the same incident 3. The necessary amplification of this limited material is achieved, first, by a concentration on the forms rather than the contents of arguments which reaches its conclusion in the sterile debate over legal technicalities exemplified by the Second Replie. Cartwright at one point alludes to Whitgift as '... the vainest trifler and hawker after syllables which can possibly be' 4 - the description might equally well be applied to himself. There is indeed no new matter here; words become both means and end. A similar reaction to that of Whitaker's quoted above is evoked by Udall's comment on the 'learned adversaries' of the cause, among whom Whitgift is mentioned: '... the former, if they write anye thing

1. Richard Bancroft, A Survey of the Pretended Holy Discipline (London, 1593), 379.

2. Ibid., 381.

3. See, e.g., the use made of the story of Korah, Dathan and Abiram (Numbers XVI). Compare Bancroft, Survey, 122, where Bancroft compares the rebels to the Puritans: 'they are fallen into the contradiction of Chore and doe tell both Moyses and Aaron that they take too much upon them' and Section IV of The Notebook of John Penry 1593 (a draft of part of a treatise published in 1609 as The Historie of Corah,

against it, are contented to deal in so roving a course as may rather arise unto great volumes, then soundly to saye anye thing againste the cause. 1

And as the original, highly condensed material of the Admonition is spun out in diffuse analysis of key terms and passages, it becomes ever clearer that the true motive force is not theological, but forensic. Only the energy of a prosecuting counsel keeps the weight of words afloat and advancing. To later readers it was all too apparent that such debate was inconsistent with the Christian profession of both sides. One might cite Josias Nichols' account of the literary consequences of the Admonition:

Wherupon arose great volumes of prooving and defending, which are famouslie known to all men, that understand of these causes. Bot how flesh and bloud did in these wrightings oversway the Christian moderation and mildnes, which brethren should have ben verie careful of, in contending for trueth, by the hote pursuite of either side, I rejoyce not to rehearse ... 2

In other words, many moderate contemporaries began to examine the covert direction as well as the content of these works in the kind of way outlined in the last chapter, and came to not dissimilar conclusions.

And the move in time away from the date of the Admonition crisis is as important as the change in form from the terse summary of the Admonition to the longueurs of works which read like a succession of footnotes. The only effective controversial literature is that which both springs from and addresses a particular situation, however general

Dathan and Abiram), which identifies the rebels with the 'Prelacy, Ministerie and Church Assemblies of England' (p.25).

4. Second Replie, LXXXIX. See also W.W., vol.1, 281.

1. J. Udall, A Demonstration, 10.

2. S.T.C. 18542.5, Josias Nichols, The Plea of the Innocent Wherein is averred; that the Ministers and people falslie termed Puritanes are injuriouslie slaundered for enemies or troublers of the State ... (no place, 1602), 8.

the recommendations it may make. This is partly due to its close relationship with the public disputation, which despite its professed detachment from the particular constitutes in itself a particular dramatic event. There is a strong dramatic element in all polemic; where it does not spring from a genuine external crisis it seeks to generate a sense of crisis in the reader by exaggerating the possible results of delay or neglect in heeding its warnings. Naturally the greatest impact is made when the reader can verify by observation that the crisis referred to is actually taking place; where all the evidence is internal to the work studied it begins to lose credibility.

A study of the literature produced by the church order debate reveals that the greatest impact was made by sharp exchanges which never lost sight of the need to refer the reader to specific external verification as well as to promote an inner crisis of conscience. The literature of the Vestiarian controversy derives its impact from the immediate crisis among the London ministers. In the appendix entitled 'A godly prayer, agreeable to the tyme and occasion' which follows Crowley's A Briefe Discourse, the device of presenting a case to God conceals the real aim of recalling the reader's attention from debatable points of interpretation to the undeniable facts: 'Are we not bereaved of some of our pastors ...? Ah good Lord, these are now by power put downe from pastural cure, they are forbyd to feede us, theyr voyce we can not heare. This is oure great discomfort.'¹ Similarly, the second tract of the Admonition, that entitled A View of Popishe abuses yet remaining in the Englishe Church, for the which Godly Ministers have refused to subscribe, takes the form of a detailed consideration of the claims implicit in the famous 'articles' - articles whose application had already wreaked havoc in the church. A View of Popishe abuses opens

1. Sig. C vi verso - C vii recto.

by recalling to the reader the sequence of events on which the tract forms a commentary:

Whereas immediately after the Laste Parliament, holden at Westminster, begonne in Anno. 1570. and ended in Anno. 1571. the ministers of Gods holy word and sacramentes were called before her Majesties highe commissyoners and enforced to subscribe unto the articles, if they woulde kepe their places and livings, and some for refusyng to subscribe, were unbrotherly and uncharitably intreated, and from their offyces and places removed ... 1

Debate over principles, then, can only retain its interest if the literary phenomenon is paralleled by a similar confrontation in the political sphere, enabling the reader to observe the practical implications of those principles. After the Vestiarian debate of 1565/66 had died down, and it had become apparent that few had suffered materially for their principles, the vigorous pamphlet warfare which characterised 1566 virtually ceased. It is a measure of the greater seriousness of the Admonition debate of the early 1570s that a literary exchange was sustained over several years; yet as the 1570s progressed the voice of Cartwright became increasingly that of a man crying in the wilderness without receiving a response. An immediate response to historical contingency is more effective than a measured and comprehensive analysis published two years too late. This principle has clearly been grasped by the author of the tract An Answere for the tyme and by the Admonitioners:

... neither yet judging our selves, so exactly to have set out the state of a church reformed, as that nothyng more coulde be added, or a more perfect forme and order drawen ... But therby to declare our good wylls toward the setting forth of Gods glorie, and the buildyng up of his church, accoumpting this as it were, but an entrance into further matter, hoping that our God, who hath in us begonne this good worke, will not only in time hereafter make us strong and able to

go foreward therin: but also move other, upon whome
 he hath bestowed greater measure of his gyftes and
 graces, to labour more thorowlie and fullie in the
 same. 1

'In time hereafter', however, when the immediate pressure had eased, the external stimulus to literary action which had motivated the Admonitioners was no longer present. When there is wide scope for immediate action in the practical sphere - as, for example in the years of Grindal's primacy - there is less incentive for the underground operator to draw attention to himself by printed aggression. In addition, the psychological effect of a time of relative freedom is to loosen the bonds between individuals once tight-knit by persecution and to reduce the desire to act in concert. Religious polemic in the Elizabethan context cannot be the effort of an isolated individual; it is produced by the spokesman of a party powerful enough either to control the official means of printing or to set up alternative ones. The only partial exception to this rule is that of exiled individuals able to make use of local printing facilities; even so, the effort of import and dissemination requires a close-knit organisation ².

While, then, individual radicals might remain active at a local level during the respite granted by the primacy of Grindal and the comparative disarray of the hierarchy after his suspension, the need for corporate action - including literary action - was less strongly felt. Realising too late the insidious impact of 'this unhappy tyme of looseness and liberty' on his commitment to the national cause, John Field, author of A View of Popishe abuses, wrote in self-condemnation to one correspondent:

... Sir, though our entercourse of writinge hath
 faynted of late, yet methinkes there is good occasion
 given that yt shuld be agayne renewed, for the trials
 being many that are laid upon us it shuld provoke us

1. Puritan Manifestoes, 19.

2. See, e.g. A.F. Johnson, 'Books printed at Heidelberg for Thomas Cartwright'.

stirre up one another that we might stand fast and
 yeld a good witness unto that truth wherof he hath
 with comferte made us messengers unto many. And
 surelie herof I feelee myself to have great need
 who am privy to myne owne weaknes, having bene
 strongly drawn of late not to be soe carefull
 diligent and zealous in Godes causes as I was
 wonte, this unhappy tyme of looseness and liberty^{ch}
 gayning upon me and choking those good thinges w^{ch}
 I thanke god I was wonte to feelee in greater measure
 ... 1

The immediate occasion of this letter was a request from Dr. Chapman of Dedham for 'a more generall conference for unity both in affection and judgment if yt may be' to confront the new historical crisis - Whitgift's accession and the 'Articles' he promulgated². The connection between external trials and closer co-operation could hardly be clearer; one may not be surprised to note, as Josias Nichols did, that with the installation of Whitgift '... came there foorth a new cloude of wrighting'³.

The Puritan polemic associated with the discipline debate is at its simplest a challenge to the reader to take sides in the current historical crisis. In its more sophisticated and extreme later forms its rhetoric seeks to create the sense of impending divine judgement hidden from the eyes of the worldling but revealed to the saints, which similarly challenges the reader to an immediate decision (see pp. 199-213 below). Emphasis on an imminent apocalypse, however, is a response to effective persecution; only a martyr without hope of human redress can contemplate with equanimity the destruction of structures he may once have hoped to reform. Until Whitgift's activities of 1584 and after there was no such pressure towards complete alienation from the outer

-
1. John Field to Dr. Chapman, 'the 19 of this IImoneth 1583' (probably February 1584), in The Presbyterian Movement in the Reign of Queen Elizabeth, ed. R.G. Usher, Camden 3rd. series, no.VIII (London, 1905), 96.
 2. Ibid., 95. See also P. Collinson, The Elizabethan Puritan Movement, Part 5, passim.
 3. Josias Nichols, The Plea of the Innocent, 11.

courses of history and the creation of a compensatory alternative version which was revealed only to the godly. References to divine judgement in, say, the Admonitions are frequent, but vague and fragmentary:

Either must we have right ministerie of God and a right government of his church, according to the scriptures sette up (bothe whiche we lacke) or else there can be no right religion, nor yet for contempt therof can Gods plagues be from us any while differed. 1

The stimulus which moved the Admonitioners to write is one which could be observed by the historian rather than one based on private prophetic insight: '... by experience their [i.e. the Bishops'] rigoure hath too plainly appeared ever since their wicked raigne, and specially for the space of these five or sixe yeares last past together' ². When, therefore, all was quiet in the public sphere and historical stimulus was lacking, the literary exchange tended to lapse. As we have already noted, the Establishment never initiated debate and responded to challenges only when the situation demanded; it is not, therefore, surprising that the late 1570s and early 1580s were a time of reissues rather than of new works.

The importance of correct timing, of course, underlines the extent to which this literature is written (and invites judgement) not by the criteria of coherence and intellectual validity, but by the criteria of effectiveness. Despite pious disclaimers such as: 'It hath been the manner always of wise and learned men to esteeme of things by the causes and not by the events and especially in matters of religion' ³, reasoning is a means to a practical end rather than a process of discovery, as ~~Corrington~~ puts it:

I (because these trees mount up so high and spread their boughs and arms so broad that for the cold

1. Puritan Manifestoes, 6.

2. Ibid., 5.

3. W.W., vol.2, 61.

shade of them nothing can grow and thrive by them)
will ... set down certain reasons (as it were
instruments) to take away the superfluous lop and
spread of their immoderate offices. 1

Reasons are deployed as 'instruments' rather than emerging as inescapable truths. Where the connection with history grows tenuous, however, a sense of unreality possesses the reader, and by the chosen criteria this literature fails. Effective oratory, as Wilson reminds his readers, deals not with infinite but with definite questions; although every particular question conceals a wider general issue: '... notwithstanding the particular question is ever called in controversie and the generall only thereupon considered, to comprehend and compasse the same, as the which is more generall' ². Infinite questions studied in isolation, according to him, belong to logicians; the proper analogy for the orator is that of the trial: '... considering particuler matters in the law, are ever debated betwixt certaine persons, the one affirming for his parte, and the other denying as fast againe for his parte' ³.

And like the public disputation, a work of polemic not only relates closely to current events, but constitutes in itself a historical event. It is, therefore, important to choose a dramatically appropriate moment of publication. The year 1584, qualified by a later writer as 'that fertile year of contentious writings' ⁴, was just such a moment. Whitgift, now in a position to use more direct and effective means of coercion than the printed debate, initiated first a further, more rigorous subscription campaign and then a more selective victimisation of certain individuals by the administering of 'Interrogatories' by means of the ex officio mero oath. The historical details of this campaign are well known; it was

1. W.W., vol.2, 80.

2. Wilson, Arte of Rhetorique, 2.

3. Ibid.

4. Thomas Rogers, 'A sermon upon the 6, 7 and 8 verses of the 12 chapter to the Romanes' (1590), 2. Cited in Collinson, The Elizabethan Puritan Movement, 273.

(for the time at least) a successful application of the adage 'Divide and rule' ¹. Whitgift's politic acceptance of limited subscription and of subscription qualified by protestation enabled him to produce a substantial majority in favour of conformity. Declining either to give ministers a certificate recording the exact terms of their subscription ², or to allow their ingenious casuistry any moral weight, Whitgift forced the conformists to dissipate much of their energy in an attempt to regain the moral stature they had lost. The policy of singling out radical individuals and silencing them by the use of the Interrogatories or by special commission, thrust upon such individuals the role of martyr for the cause; some, indeed, preferred to remain in safe obscurity and to redirect their controversial energies ³, but most accepted and even flaunted the prestigious position of suffering saints ⁴.

The qualitative difference of this anti-Puritan campaign lay in the ruthlessness with which Whitgift pushed his principles on uniformity to their logical conclusions. Previous campaigns had been less general; the crisis had lasted some few months and then the intensity of the persecution had lessened and the momentum of the response had been dissipated ⁵. Records of the treatment meted out to those who were not even radical Presbyterians but had scrupulous doubts about certain passages in the Prayer Book indicate the lengths to which Whitgift was prepared to go in order to obtain the token of submission to episcopal authority which was all that subscription represented ⁶. The authority debate within

1. See Collinson, The Elizabethan Puritan Movement, Part 5, '1584', *passim*.

2. See, e.g., Dudley Fenner, A Defence of the godlie ministers against the slaunders of Dr. Bridges ... (1587), sig. G I recto.

3. See George Gifford in D.N.B. and S.T.C.

4. The Seconde Parte, vol.II, 238-258, no.241-2, 'Giles Wiggenton'.

5. See Collinson, The Elizabethan Puritan Movement, 152-55 on the crisis of 1573.

6. See, e.g., The Seconde Parte, vol.I, 291-6, no.177, 'John Elliston'. Elliston was forced to go not less than ten times to London to appear before the High Commission; most of these journeys were undertaken

the church, then, began to shift its ground from the right of the sovereign to make rites and ceremonies for the church to the much more pragmatic and limited question of the extent to which the hierarchy had the right to demand canonical obedience in excess of the legal requirements prescribed by statutes. At the centre of every controversy stood the lonely but powerful figure of Whitgift; dialogue on issues of principle was rendered impossible by the existence of a single figure who incarnated all that was held odious by one side and admirable by the other, a natural butt for satire or idol for veneration but a barrier to the kind of discussion which disregards personalities. The contrasting views of Whitgift's all-important role can be seen in the following two quotations, each of which stresses his actions as being those of an individual against a multitude. The first comes from a brief polemical chronicle of current events contained in A parte of a register:

And this, who can denie that it came from the humor of one man, as may be esteemed, more carried away with private conceit, then with any grave counsell and godlie experience, perhaps (as myself of some of them understand) against the tide of advise of many of their owne coat: but undoubtedly against almost the former practise of three or foure and twentie yeares experience: of the peaceful government that hath been under her sacred Majestie, and some of the best of those grave and christian predecessours of his: who, howsoever towards some particular good men, some hard dealing here and there were shewed by the instigation of some ignoraunt and halfe popishe persons, for lacke of judgement and knowledge: yet none ever dealt so generallie against the whole Ministerie, and so egerly against the streame and light of all mens judgements, in so learned an age, before this newe plot was hearde of: and now (alas) with too much calamitie is felt. 1

at the summons of the pursuivant to whom the hapless minister had to pay enormous fees - no less than 38/- on one occasion. Summing up the affair, Elliston writes: 'These my troubles endured almost the space of iii yeres, in which time besides these 10 journeyes to London and vii to Peterbor., I was constrained to have one to Cambridge, many to Leicester and Northampton, so that all my charges by occasion of my troubles came to above £31, and since my deprivation have bene 3 quarters of a yere without any maintenance at all' (vol.I, 294-5).

In contrast one might cite George Cranmer's letter to Hooker, which reaches the same long-term conclusion as the Puritan author in his immediate reaction:

One man there was, to speak of, (whom let no suspicion of flattery deprive of his deserved commendation) who in the diffidence of the one part, and courage of the other, stood in the gap, and gave others respite to prepare themselves to their defence: which by the sudden eagerness and violence of their adversaries had otherwise been prevented. Wherein God hath made good unto him his own emprise, 'Vincit qui patitur': for what contumelious invectives he hath at their hands sustained, the world is witness; and what reward of honour above his adversaries God hath bestowed on him, themselves (though nothing glad thereof) must needs confess. 1

Many previous church leaders had maintained an uneasy distinction between their public office and their private consciences; this often reflected a compromise between the freedom of thought they had exercised while in exile and their awareness of the need of the emergent Elizabethan church for stability. Grindal, in particular, made clear the tension of his dual allegiance - to the Plumbers' Hall group he said half-apologetically: 'You see mee weare a coape or surplesse in Paules, I had rather minister without these things, but for orders sake and obedience to the Prince' ². In the end he was, of course, forced to choose between the demands of his conscience before God and those of the Queen; his choice is immortalised in his famous letter to his Sovereign: 'Bear with me, I beseech you, Madam, if I chuse rather to offend your earthly Majesty, than to offend the heavenly majesty of God' ³.

Whitgift, on the other hand, passionately identified his whole personality and will with his office. Replying to Burghley's angry letter on the articles of interrogation, Whitgift said:

1. R. Hooker, Works, vol.II, 598-9.

2. A parte of a register, 30.

3. J. Strype, The Life and Acts of Archbishop Grindal (Oxford, 1821), 570.

Your Lordship further semith to burthen me with wyllfulness, etc. ... There ys a difference betwixt willfulness and constancie. I have taken upon me the defens of the religion and rites of this Church: the execution of the lawes concerning the same: the appeasing of the sects and schismes therein: the reducing the Ministers thereof to uniformitie and due obediens. Herein I intend to be constant ... 1

It is this perfect compatibility between personality and office which earned him the perfect hatred of his opponents. Penry describes him as:

... John Cant. (as he writeth himself) whome both in respecte of his Antichristian Prelacye over Gods Church, and for the notable hatred which he hath ever bewrayed towards the Lord and his truth, I think one of the dishonorablest creatures under heaven, and accordingly doe account of him. 2

In his primacy, then, it was easy to see the conflict in highly personal terms, as a clash of wills rather than a debate. In any case the policy of his regime was clearly one of coercion rather than of reasoned persuasion. The Puritans greeted their opponents sardonically as aggressors who, frustrated by the refusal of language to accommodate itself to error, resorted to an instrument which might gain political victory but was the sign of moral defeat:

This only (I saye) is the canker that fretteth so sore, and fire which causeth them to boyle with such heate against their brethren, when they can not any longer mayntayne their errors by the word, they will nowe upholde the same by the sworde ... 3

In effect, Whitgift's activities could be seen as the final refusal to meet the challenge issued years before by the Admonitioners: 'a worde will not be bound but with a woorde ... ⁴ in its own terms. In Udall's dramatic 'conference', The State of the Church of England, the representative of the Establishment declines to turn discussion with a

1. Strype, Whitgift, vol.III, 15th July, 1584.

2. John Penry, Reformation no Enemie, Preface, sig. 4 recto.

3. 'The copie of a Letrer (sic) written by a gentleman in the Countrey, unto a Londoner, touching an answer to the Archb. articles', A parte of a register, 176-7.

4. Puritan Manifestoes, 71.

Puritan into a serious debate:

Diotre: 'Awaye thou rayling hypocrite, I will talk with thee no longer, if I catche thee in London, I will make thee kiss the Clinke for this geare.'

Paul the Puritan retorts dryly:

Indeed the Clinke, Gate-house, White-lyon, and the Fleet, have bin your onely argumentes wherby you have proved your cause these many yeeres ... 1

Paul speaks more truly, perhaps, than even Udall knew: the Establishment increasingly saw its position as validated by the historical ascendancy conferred on it by God, which included the power to exercise effective coercion against dissenters. Couched in more pious terms, this principle underlies the defence of religion as by law established which becomes increasingly common in the last twenty years of the reign. At the end of Book IV of the Laws for example, Hooker describes in glowing terms God's miraculous sustaining of the Church of England, and challenges his readers: '... what can we less thereupon conclude, than that God would at leastwise by tract of time teach the world, that the thing which he blesseth, defendeth, keepeth so strangely, cannot choose but be of him?'² The argument from history, he concludes, is stronger than that from reason:

Wherefore, if any refuse to believe us disputing for the verity of religion established, let them believe God himself thus miraculously working for it, and wish life even for ever and ever unto that glorious and sacred instrument whereby he works. 3

By extension, any activity undertaken to promote the peace and order of this divinely sanctioned church was justified by the result it produced; thus the 'argument' of coercion was justified if it produced (as it did)

1. Udall, The State of the Church of England laid open in a Conference between DIOTREPHES a Bishop, TERTULLUS a Papist, DEMETRIUS a usurer, PANDUCHUS an Innkeeper, and Paul a Preacher of the Word of God, 22.

2. Hooker, Works, vol. I, 488.

3. Ibid.

a measure of general conformity. The line between the operation of the church and that of the state became as blurred in practice as the line between the definitions of church and state was in theory. The use of the High Commission to control the press and to initiate proceedings against writers and printers discussed in Chapter 2 is one historical parallel of a trend also seen in the development of polemic.

Prior to the 1580s, sustained action to defend the integrity and identity of the English church had not been possible in part, at least, because there was no single, coherent body to defend. For the first twenty-five years of Elizabeth's reign the church was in the making; that is, the terms of the settlement were gradually being interpreted in and applied to the everyday conduct of church government. Differing views of authority were debated; and although there were obvious signs of future division, and a number of crises when the desires of more radical reformers seemed to conflict with the primary need for stability, the church still contained a sufficient variety of styles and beliefs to accommodate most of its natural (as well as titular) leaders most of the time.

By the 1580s, however, sufficient time had elapsed both for the limits of conformity to be set and tested and for those limits to be apparently hallowed by the very fact of the church's survival. As a crystal is precipitated over time, so the desirable form of the English church gradually took shape in the minds of its leaders. There was, of course, an increasing gulf between the grass-roots experience of the church and official rhetoric about its appropriate form; but we are concerned here precisely with official rhetoric and attempts made to carry it into effect. This process of crystallisation was, of course, much hastened by Whitgift's powerful personality, and by his own elevation of church unity in the formal, external sense to the place of supreme public good.

As we saw in Chapter 2, the Establishment view of censorship is

static, not dynamic, concerned above all with maintaining the integrity of a given structure; it is, therefore, not surprising that censorship first became truly effective in the 1580s, when the identity of the church to be defended was much clearer than it had previously been. Similarly, the 1580s Establishment polemic adopted an increasingly static mode of assertion, laying particular stress on the rights of the Establishment to defend and consolidate its domain.

The lines of anti-radical argument produced by this attitude to the status quo are well illustrated in their simpler form by the writings of Robert Some. A moderate reformer, Some was nonetheless an ardent defender of the right of the godly sovereign to force upon his or her subjects conformity to the external service of God as laid down by statute. His first Godly Treatise, that dealing with questions of 'Ministerie, Sacraments, and Church', opens with a table of nine propositions to be proved (ten in the second edition) which concludes with the firm pronouncement: 'The Church of England is the visible Church of Christ' ¹. This introductory 'table' of points does not, in fact, form the agenda for an open debate; throughout Some assumes that which he purports to prove and treats all contrary arguments as objections to an established fact. In the second edition of his work he adds a section advertised in the title as follows: '... After the ende of this Booke you shall finde a defence of such points as M. Penry hath dealt against. And a confutation of many grosse errours broched in Mr PENRIES last Treatise' ². This additional section - almost five times the length of the original

-
1. Robert Some, A Godly Treatise containing and deciding certaine questions, mooved of late in London and other places, touching the Ministerie, Sacraments and Church (London, 2nd. ed., 1588), S.T.C. 22909.
 2. The treatise referred to is Penry's work, A defence of that which hath bin written in the questions of the ignorant ministerie and the communicating with them (no place or date [East Molesey, 1588]). Some also quotes from Penry's earlier work, An exhortation unto the governours and people of Wales. He appears to have been in possession of its final version (S.T.C. 19606).

treatise - does not represent a serious engagement with Penry's conclusions. Throughout Some refuses his opponent the dignity of serious confutation: his reply to Penry's demand for written disputation illustrates his dismissal of his opponent's right to a hearing. He merely comments: 'Incitia audax: none so bold as blind bayard' ¹ and refers the reader to a later section in which he dismisses Penry's plea for free access to print:

You have not, you say, such libertie of printing,
as I. No reason you should. You broche and print
grosse errorrs and Anabaptistical fancies: so do
not I. You refuse to offer and submit your writings
to the view and allowance of the Magistrates: so
do not I. ²

Only that which is consonant with the religious practice sanctioned by law has the right to be discussed or disseminated. Whatever has been established is validated by the very fact of its legal existence. As the shrewd and witty commentator who wrote M. Some laid open in his coulers puts it, this way of thinking produces self-perpetuating circular arguments: 'Talke of a sacrament why he proves they deliver it thus They have a calling. Speake of a calling he proves it thus They deliver a sacrament ³.

Some defines valid ministry in terms of adherence to the prescribed forms; he is enough of a Puritan to admit that this is a minimal requirement and that an ability to preach is highly desirable ⁴, but nonetheless he crosses swords with Penry's underlying contention that '... the outward calling of the Church makes not a Minister to us, unlesse he have the inward' ⁵. The status of the church which prescribes the

1. Robert Some, A Godly Treatise (2nd. ed.), 51.

2. Ibid., 143.

3. Anon., M. Some laid open in his coulers: wherein the indifferent reader may easily see, howe wretchedly and loosely he hath handeled the cause against M. Penri (no place or date), 41.

4. Robert Some, A Godly Treatise (2nd. ed.), 26-27.

5. Ibid., 132.

forms and therefore validates the ministers is unquestionable; after all, God himself has established it in a purified but unbroken historical tradition. So the argument runs. If debate may be defined as the submission of the premisses of both sides to the scrutiny of a commonly agreed instrument of judgement (formal logic, for example), it is clear that Some does not really engage in debate. One might rather say that he pronounces judgement on the opponent, deriving his authority to do so from that of the divinely established church which he represents. As the author of M. Some laid open in his coulers notes, when one might expect 'some plaine demonstration or silogistical profe':

There appeares before us a man new come out of
the cloudes (as it were) with his mace in his hand,
and his sandalles on his feet (as it should seme)
rather to make lawes than to handle controversies,
pointing with his finger, at this and that, telling
us what he thinks, as if al the world were to gape
on him .. 1

Allowing for a little malicious exaggeration at the expense of Some's self-importance, this comment reflects his style with some accuracy. He presents his opponent disparagingly as a sick man whom the magistrate has the right to discipline for his own good:

You are farre gone alreadie. Strange fancies have
almost consumed you. The Magistrates discipline
is the fittest medicine for you. If that will not
recover you, your disease is desperate. 2

The threats implicit in Whitgift's writings here become explicit:

I confesse freely that sharpe wordes are not
sufficient plaisters for such proude sores. I hope,
the Magistrates will consider further of him and
such as he is. Duro nodo, durus cuneus etc. that is,
A wedge of yron, is fittest for knottie wood. 3

1. M. Some laid open, 70.

2. Some, A Godly Treatise, 98.

3. Ibid., 155. The chief characteristics of Some's style - its epigrammatical bluntness and proverbial over-simplifications - are caught in this comment: 'The next prettie thing to this, was to my remembrance, chaplain Some confuted with the balde sheath of his own dagger, wherein al his short cuts, latine Apothegs, and childishe Pen-an-inke-horne proverbes, were wholly inverted upon himself',

In this latter quote we note that he distances himself from a personal encounter with his opponent by referring to Penry in the third person as the concern of the magistrate, rather than adopting the more usual second person form of address; throughout the work he comments on Penry rather than engaging with him directly.

Some, then, issues threats rather than employing persuasive logic. The inappropriateness of his style for a religious debate is pointed out by the anonymous commentator already quoted:

.... whie alassee, the question being, whether we may be assured to receive a sacrament at the dumbe ministers hands, is it not possible for a christian in humblenesse to handle this question, unlesse he runne to Vulcan the blacksmith for weapons, or bring Hercules furens upon the stage as M. Some doth ... For when men (desirous even in simplicitie of heart to learne the trueth) shall sensiblye perceave that so famous and learned a man as M. Some reputeth himselfe to bee, ... can none otherwise assaile or defend the cause, then by houlding (as it were) a naked dagger in hand, striving by all meanes to drawe bloude of his adversarie, and crying out aloud on the Magestrate, the Magestrate, as if he had solde his logicke to become a journeyman in the shambles: will not this thinke you bring many into a mammering, and make them doubt of that they never doubted of? 1

At the provincial Synod held at St. John's College, Cambridge,

in the tract The Protestatyon of Martin Marprelat (no place or date), 28. Note: all quotations from the Marprelate tracts in this thesis are taken from the facsimile edition published by the Scolar Press (Menston, Yorkshire, 1967). Details of the seven tracts (none of which contains a reference to date or place of publication) are as follows:

- a) S.T.C. 17453, Oh read over Dr. John Bridges (The Epistle) [East Molesey, R. Waldegrave, October, 1588].
- b) S.T.C. 17454, Oh read over Dr. John Bridges (The Epitome) [Fawsley, R. Waldegrave, November, 1588].
- c) S.T.C. 17455, Certaine Minerall and Metaphisicall Schoolpoints [Coventry, R. Waldegrave, 20 February, 1589].
- d) S.T.C. 17456, Hay any worke for Cooper [Coventry, R. Waldegrave, March, 1589].
- e) S.T.C. 17457, Theses Martinianae [Wolston, J. Hodgkins, 22 July, 1589].
- f) S.T.C. 17458, The just censure and reproofe of Martin Junior [Wolston?, J. Hodgkins, 29 July, 1589].
- g) S.T.C. 17459, The Protestatyon of Martin Marprelat [Hasely, R. Waldegrave, September, 1589].

In the remainder of this thesis I normally refer to these tracts by the appropriate short title - the first two as The Epistle and The Epitome respectively, except where a fuller account illuminates the thesis text.

in 1589, this question was the sole topic of discussion and was handled 'in scholastical manner' ¹. It was, then, by no means a trivial issue; rather, it was one which provoked a crisis of conscience among radical Puritans. It was, then, all the more galling to have the challenge to the Establishment to produce a coherent theological defence of its position treated with such cavalier disdain. Some's threats constitute not an appeal to reason but an attempt to pressurise the magistrate into action; they are in themselves acts of repression against the opponent.

Turning from the work of Some - a dismissive attack on an extreme radical against whom inconclusive legal proceedings had already been taken and who was shortly to die for his beliefs - to Dr. John Bridges' confutation of the Learned Discourse, we seem to be in a different climate of thought. In the preface to his massive Defence, Bridges stresses the need to offer a reasoned response to all attacks on the status quo:

... we are all obliged (after the measure of each ones calling and habilitie) to mayntayne and defend it, and that not onely against the breakers of it, by the Magistrates execution of authoritie, but the Ministers no lesse in their vocation, when it is openly written against are bounde by their writing againe (if the goodnesse of the matter be able so to justifie it selfe) to lay open the whole state thereof, by detecting and confuting all the paralogismes and fallations of the gaynesayers, and by defending it, even with the firmenesse of the grounds, and the owne good nature of the cause: which manner of defence, being not destitute of lawfull authoritie, to see it observed, not only represseth the resisters bodie, but satisfyeth, to convinceth his minde, which is chiefly in these contentions to be respected. 2

Confuting a work written (though now disowned) by the respected Puritan academic William Fulke, Bridges is careful to stress the academic rigour of the response he proposes to offer.

Yet as we turn from Bridges' high-sounding promises to his work itself, we become aware that his preface is not genuinely descriptive

1. According to Perkins' deposition on oath two years later. See H.C. Porter, Reformation and Reaction in Tudor Cambridge, 192.

2. Bridges, Defence of the Government Established, Preface, sig. 9 4 recto.

of the treatise as a whole. Bridges was clever enough to see the importance of asserting the Establishment's capacity to produce a reasoned response to all objections, but his Defence was not such a response. Already in his confutation of Field's preface to the Learned Discourse he is dismissing the plea for conference as a rhetorical gesture: ' ... and is it likely they will yeelde, and revoke thes their principles, set foorth in print, and divulged to all the worlde, by our reasoning afterwarde with them, howsoever by reasoning we shoulde evict them?' ¹. His concern that the 'resisters' mind should be satisfied seems to have evaporated rather quickly: and his massive work does not in fact have as its primary aim the examination of the Discourse's arguments. The first book, for example, is entirely devoted to a critique of a methodology which fails to treat the authority of the Christian Prince first, and therefore, by implication, denies its supremacy. The imputations of disloyalty made crudely by Some are here introduced with greater subtlety in long series of rhetorical questions which leave the final judgement to the reader:

What suspicious speeches, and byous glances ... are heere cast foorth? ... What is raysing of mystes, dazeling of eyes walking in cloudes: yea daunsing naked in a net, and when all the worlde looketh on, to thinke no bodie seeth us, if this be not? ²

Bridges plays with the verbal surface of the work rather than engaging with the mind behind it, and, as one of his Puritan answerers saw, his obsession with the structure of the argument conceals something more menacing than mere punctiliousness:

1. Bridges, Defence, 14.

2. Ibid., 101. Reference to the bishops 'daunsing naked in a net' (like Venus and Mars when trapped by Vulcan) appears to have been a polemical commonplace: the allusion is to their attempt, when trapped in an untenable position, to placate all sides. See, for instance, the work reprinted in A parte of a register as 'A comfortable epistle written (as it is thought) by Maister D.W. Doctour of Divinitie', especially p.5 (quoted below, p.202).

Aristarchus they say, when he founde a faulte in Homer, would marke it with his penne, and Phalaris the tyrant for as litle faultes, would put men to great tortures. If there had bin indeede a faulte in the Methode, I perceyve the Replyer would not be content as Aristarchus, to make a note of it with his pen, but would bring a question of Methode to the barre at the Kings Bench, and arrayne it of high treason, and doe as cruell execution for such an offence, as Phalaris was wont to doe for as little. 1

In the preface he purports to see strictly logical confutation and coercion as partners in the fight against dissidence. In practice, however, the first is little more than a mask for the second. The address of 'our Brethren' which is used throughout comes to seem faintly ironic to the reader; Bridges uses it as a legal acknowledgement of allegiance to the same Lord, but his attitude towards them is rather less than brotherly:

All that our Br. say, must be plaine truth and just complaints. and all our sayings and doings, are with them contrarie falshoods and abuses and yet these and al their other so foule speaches, are (forsooth) but their glimpses by the way. What will these fellows doo (trow ye) when they come directlie upon us, with such vehemencie of wordes as they say the worthinesse of the matters deserveth? 2

'These fellows'; we note again the contemptuous use of the third person which avoids engagement with the opponent ³.

Thus while Some makes no bones about his reliance on 'meere authoritie', Bridges dissembles intelligently with regard to his underlying rationale. Though Bridges is subtle enough to leave the reader to make the final judgement on the deserts of the dissidents, however, his questions are so phrased as to lead to the conclusion that the Puritans cloak their seditious ends with dishonest rhetoric, and that they should be exposed and dealt with appropriately by the law.

The work of Some and Bridges analysed above, then, illustrates

1. Travers, A Defence of the Ecclesiastical Discipline ordayned of God to be used in his Church (no place, 1588), 145.

2. Bridges, Defence, Bk. 12, 1085.

3. See p.

the move away from personal engagement with an opponent to detailed observation of that opponent's clash with the apparently impersonal force of law. The debater is now commentator; the real action takes place in the legal field. This introduction of the law as protagonist illustrates once again the effect of the passage of time. However reinterpreted by Whitgift, the basic structure of church government had now been in force long enough for its essentially contingent nature, deriving from a series of finely balanced human choices, to be forgotten and for the law to appear an absolute, self-perpetuating entity, the master rather than the tool of those in authority. The effect of this shift in perception on the language of polemic is well illustrated by Hooker's response to a supposed plea for conference:

... those whose authority is required ... do think it ... unmeet that laws, which being once solemnly established are to exact obedience of all men and to constrain thereunto, should so far stoop as to hold themselves in suspense from taking any effect on you till some disputer can persuade you to be obedient. 1

The human volition which enforces and can change laws is tacitly ignored. Similarly, in the passage quoted above on p.177, Whitgift firmly disclaims all personal interest in the effects of his campaign, and claims to be simply implementing the laws of the church.

The new challenge to radical polemicists, then, was that of a coercion both physical and verbal, which grounded itself in a triumphalist view of the visible church and referred to the current legal framework of that church as if it were an immutable given ². Three different responses to this shift in emphasis can be detected. Some works affected

1. Hooker, Works, vol. I, 164.

2. See, for example, Thomas Cooper's assertion 'the cause why wee are so spighted / is because we doe endeavor to maintaine the lawes which hir Majestie and the whole state of the Realme have allowed/ ... (as quoted in Hay any Worke for Cooper, 4). The Marprelate author perfectly understands this approach: 'But you know also that our laws will have church governours to be Lords and what? should our Bishops (good noble men) refuse that which the law would have them to take? (The Epitome, sig. E 4 recto)

to ignore the new stress on historical justification, reiterating basic theoretical issues in forms which imitated the impersonal timelessness of pure logic. The publication of Fulke's Learned Discourse - a work written at the same time as the Admonitions but kept in manuscript for some twelve years - demonstrates particularly clearly the desire to stress that basic questions had neither altered nor been answered. In the next chapter of this thesis I shall examine in some detail the literary exchange this work provoked in the context of a wider analysis of the use of logical language in the 1580s.

In the remainder of this chapter, however, I shall be considering two ways in which individuals and groups seeking further reform directly countered the Establishment's position. Some sought to undermine the Establishment's claim of justification in English law for its actions, others to subvert the Establishment view of recent history. The first, legal approach was modest in its aims; it sought to break down the claim that actions taken to defend the church by law established were justified by a minute analysis of the legality of the particular means employed. The other approach involved a more radical reappraisal of history, claiming to penetrate deceptive appearances by the eye of faith and to lay bare the true dialectic of history. One should not, perhaps, describe as dialectical a conflict in which no synthesis is possible; for what they saw as the Establishment's disreputable synthesis of superficial uniformity, radical writers (in particular John Penry) substituted a timeless conflict between the absolute antitheses of Christ and Satan, which could only be ended by the annihilation of the latter by the former.

The first approach, then, deliberately tries to reduce the data to precise legal terms; the attention of the reader is in the first instance focused on recent history as a series of invidious precedents set by the bishops which conflict with the ancient prerogatives of the realm. As a corrective to the increased use and power of the High Commission, the authors emphasize that Parliament is the source of definitive

legislation on all matters; the bishops' freedom of action is to be defined by the will of the sovereign in Parliament. On the question of dispensations, for example, the author of An Abstract, of Certaine Acts of Parlement states categorically that the bishops should grant nothing to which Parliament would not agree; that Parliament would never grant dispensations:

... is evident unto everie one, that duetifullie considereth, with what wisdom, justice, and equitie the high court of Parlement determineth matters amongst them discussed. They are not content to have a Bill barelie read unto them, but they throughlie examine the reasons and proofes of him that preferreth the same. 1

Parliament is flattered, one notes, for the qualities which rendered it least congenial to the Queen; though royal authority is never overtly questioned, the criterion for a valid decision is not the personal will of the reigning sovereign but the general consent of the monarchy as expressed in the statutes. Similarly, the bishops' methods of procedure, in particular the oath ex officio, are subjected to a critical scrutiny which measures them against the standard of the law of God as expressed in the laws of England: '... the matter which wee endeavor to proove is, that those generall oathes and oathes ex officio ... are altogether unlawfull (whether by the Canonically sanctions or lawe cannon, I care not) but by the lawes of God and of this Realme' 2.

From one point of view, then, it may seem a mistake to consider these documents as part of the church order debate; they seem to point to a future political dialectic rather than to a past theological controversy, symptoms of the new political awareness of the individual

-
1. Anon., An Abstract, of Certaine Acts of Parlement: of certaine her Majesties Injunctions: of certaine Canons, Constitutions, and Synodals provincially, established and in force, for the peaceable government of the Church ... (no place or date [1584?], 156.
 2. Anon. [James Morice], A Briefe treatise of Oathes, exacted by Ordinaries and Ecclesiasticall Judges ... (no place or date [Middelburg, 1592?], 26. My conjectural date for this work differs from that of S.T.C. on the grounds that Cosin did not obtain a printed copy until he had written An Apologie which replies to it. This must have been at the earliest 1592 (see 'The Advertisement to the Reader' prefixed

which was to lead to godly revolution ¹. It is worth noting, however, that at the time they were seen not as a new departure but as the same implacable opposition to the hierarchy and devotion to the new church order in a different form. Cosin comments mordantly on the 'innovators' who have in the past attacked both the calling and the persons of the bishops:

But these succeeding not to their wish, nor sorting to that effect which they purposed; sundry of them have entred into, and pursued a more politike course. For by themselves and others (more simple) excited cunninglie by them, they challenge divers received proceedings in Courts Ecclesiasticall, not to be justifiable by lawe: pretending now their especial griefe to rest herein; for that they are all delt with and oppressed contrary to law, even as if they did carie a principall and zealous care to have all her Majesties lawes dylie observed. ²

He is, however, careful to draw the distinction between these men and others 'very grave, wise and learned (no way affected to their other fansies)' ³ who have been drawn to commiserate with the persecuted minority and hence to question the legality of the moves taken against them. This latter group is primarily concerned with the right implementation of the laws as they stand; the former group of 'innovators' sees the laws not as ends in themselves but as means to a further end. Hence the innovators are less careful than they might be to accord different laws their appropriate status; anything with a colour of legality is grist to their polemical mill:

... not onely do [they] most greedily take hold of these exceptions pretended to be taken from the Common Law against jurisdiction Ecclesiasticall; but do allege also sundry others, yet pretending to ground themselves for both, not alonely upon the

before the third part of *An Apologie*). This is not, of course, conclusive; clearly, however, Cosin had influential contacts and it seems unlikely that the printed copy eluded them for two years.

1. See Michael Walzer, The Revolution of the Saints - A Study in the Origins of Radical Politics (1966), ch.5.
2. Richard Cosin, An Apologie for sundrie proceedings by Jurisdiction Ecclesiasticall (London, 1593), sig. A 2 recto/verso.
3. Ibid., sig. A 2 verso.

lawes of the realme (as those do, of whom we hitherto have spoken) but upon Gods law also, the Civill, the Cannon^{of} Ecclesiasticall law, and upon equitie and reason ... they ... have first ... entred into the opinions; and after, sought some colour to vernish them over with ... 1

Clearly Cosin is a less than sympathetic reporter; there is, nonetheless, a significant truth in what he says. One must distinguish between those who were drawn into the arena by their concern over the administration of human justice and those who simply transferred their opposition to the Establishment on the authority question from the discussion of the ultimate law - God's Word - to the debate over human laws as applied in particular situations. A study of the works in the legal vein which can legitimately be considered here as forming part of a debate sequence reveals that the Puritan authors who initiated the exchanges clearly belonged to the second group. Under cover of a legalistic preoccupation with canons and injunctions they smuggled the absolute demands of God's law back into the centre of the argument.

The arguments used by the author of An Abstract against the practice of granting dispensations for pluralities exemplify their method perfectly; it involves a redefinition of legality. The general principle that dispensations are undesirable is established from the canons, and the rhetorical argument a minime ad maximum used to underline the point:

If the disease and maladie of pluralities in time of ignorance and superstition was such, that the blinde leaders of the blinde had their eies in their heades to see the infection thereof to be most perillous, as well to their synagogue, as to the commonweale: how is it possible, that plurified men in the time of the knowledge and truth of the Gospell, should finde anie meanes to escape the fire and revenge which the idolators feared. 2

Unfortunately, the canon law made numerous provisions for dispensations; the author, determined to prove them illegal, resorts to a tendentious

-
1. Cosin, An Apologie for sundrie proceedings by Jurisdiction Ecclesiasticall, sig. A 3 verso/ A 4 recto.
 2. An Abstract, of Certaine Acts of Parlement, 112.

expansion of the commonplace Ratio legis est anima legis:

The reasons whereuppon pluralities are forbidden are reasons taken from the lawe of Nature, and from the equitie of the Lawe of God ... If then naturall reason bee the cause and soule and life of a naturall Lawe, and the Will of God the onelie cause of the Lawe of God, and his onelie will the rule of all justice unchaungeable, none can challenge authoritie to chaunge or dispense with the Lawe of Nature or with the Law of God, but hee must foorthwith challenge authoritie to dispense both with the reason of the Lawe of Nature and with the pleasure and will of God. 1

The further development of the argument concentrates on the law of God rather than that of Nature, which is introduced more for purposes of amplification than because the author considers it relevant. Thus, the author states that if dispensations are unlawful by God's Word, the clause in the statute renewed in the first year of Elizabeth's reign, which states that dispensations can only be granted: ' ... for causes not being contrarie or repugnant to the holy Scripture and lawes of God' 2 constitutes an absolute prohibition. The nature of the Scriptural evidence may be vague and indirect; the author is, however, confident that his application of it is correct, and he concludes triumphantly:

For though the adversarie cavil, that wee finde not in the Scriptures these tearmes: viz. Licenses, Tollerations, Dispensations etc preciselie specified in anie commandement prohibitorie in the Scriptures: yet in as much as the matter or cause of dispensations for manie benefices is there generallie forbidden: as ambition, pride, covetousness, perill of soules etc Therefore it followeth that by this statute Dispensations in this case are absolutely inhibited. 3

The real purpose of this approach, then, is not to examine the relative status of different categories of legislative act; it is to highlight once again the simple authority of Scripture, levelling all human attempts to apply divine laws in a complex world. The tortuous

1. An Abstract, of Certaine Acts of Parlement, 115.

2. Ibid., 131.

3. Ibid., 133.

nature of the prose arises not from casuistry, but from a determination to force complex evidence to yield a simple answer. As Hooker noted later in his analysis of this particular argument, such simplicity is the privilege of the opposition, determining standards which they do not then have to implement:

... they determine of effects by a part of the causes only out of which they grow ... they lay them in the balance stripped from those necessary material circumstances, which should give them weight, and by show of falling uneven with the scale of most universal and abstracted rules, they pronounce that too light which is not, if they had the skill to weigh it. This is the reason why men altogether conversant in study do know how to teach but not how to govern;... 1

Hooker's approach, by contrast, justifies privileges as special exceptions to (not contradictions of) general laws by an examination of what can reasonably be expected in the 'necessary material circumstances' of the English church's poverty and lack of sufficient learned clergy. For the Establishment (and, indeed, for many moderate reformers, most of whom had by now abjured written polemic) Scripture was only part of the overall data on the basis of which policies were formulated; for radicals like the author of An Abstract no other factor was considered relevant.

And, as before, the sterility of the confrontation as an academic exercise points to the covert personal attack below the surface of an investigation of valid 'causes' by the methods of formal logic ². In 'A Preamble before the examination of his proofes', the answerer to An Abstract (Richard Cosin) comments:

It seemeth to me that the principall scope of the authour of this booke was, covertlie to bring the governours and government ecclesiasticall of this

1. Hooker, Works, vol. II, 514.

2. See, e.g., An Abstract, of Certaine Acts of Parlement, 82: 'And againe by these proofes you may evidently see, that the calling, the triall, the examination, the time, the person appointed to present, and the age of one to be presented, have not been things meere contingent, but rather essentiall, not causas sine quibus non, but causes formall to the making of Deacons and Ministers ...'

church of England, into contempt, hatred and obloquie, speciallie with prejudicate and unwarie readers of it; as though the said governours were either grossely ignorant or wilfull breakers of lawes, canons, etc in force, touched in this booke; yet in other points readie enough to put in ure other Canons, Constitutions, and Synodals provincial of like nature, which serve better for their purpose. 1

The technique of Cosin's book is to query systematically the validity of the quotations made and of the inferences drawn from them; the integrity of the author of An Abstract is in question. In response to the Puritans' representation of the Establishment as inconsistent and selective in its attitude to the law, Cosin indicates the diversity and incompatibility of the reformers' opinions; his concern is to dissipate the effect of their rhetoric by showing how much of it rests on highly personal interpretation and how little of it derives directly from the unequivocal command of the Word.

In A Counter-poyson, Dudley Fenner's riposte to the precise, sardonic dissection of An Answer, no attempt is made to counter reason with reason: indeed, reason itself is denounced:

... to deale with the untamed and untaught reason of man, is a vanity and vexation of spirit, unto those who love the truth. For what cunning shiftes and exquisite variety of subtleties have they, to decline the mighty strooke of the word of God? 2

A Counter-poyson, one observes, leaves aside legal niceties to concentrate on the one central issue, seeking to prove that there is 'one certaine forme of Ecclesiasticall government' ³. Like so many works of polemic

-
1. Anon. [Richard Cosin], An Answer to the two first and principall Treatises of a certeine factious libell, put foorth latelie, without name of Author or Printer, and without approbation by authoritie, under the title of An Abstract, of Certeine Acts of Parlement, 1584, 1.
 2. Dudley Fenner, A Counter-poyson, modestly written for the time, to make answere to the objections and reproches, wherewith the answerer to the Abstract, would disgrace the holy Discipline of CHRIST (London, no date), Preface, sig. A 2 recto.
 3. Ibid., I. In the preface the author explicitly states that he is not attempting to deal with the legal questions: '... as wel because the purpose of this reply, was to instruct the conscience by the proper means therunto ordayned by God; as because the shortnes of time could not

it claims to be an interim measure, a help to the reader: ' ... till some more larger discourse shal be adventured, wherein the holy scripture is made the onely judge of this controversy' ¹. It pre-empts, however, the future judgement of the Word; the opposition is not debated with but denounced. To radical Puritans the legal concern was little more than an opportunity to clothe the same arguments, the same denunciations, in a different vocabulary - a vocabulary as readily discarded when its specialisation was seen as a barrier to direct persuasive communication with the reader.

The final exchange in the series of tracts directly prompted by An Abstract consists of a sermon by Dr. John Copcot ² commenting on A Counter-poyson, which was delivered at Paul's Cross, probably some time in late 1584 ³, and a commentary upon it printed under the title A Defence of the Counter-poyson in 1586. Copcot's sermon is no longer extant, but the author of A Defence of the Counter-poyson had a written copy by him when he wrote and we can gain some impression of its content by the reply. This catalogues Copcot's offences against 'plaine dealing' in his dubious Scriptural exegesis ⁴ and analyses the motivation behind his general conclusion that: ' ... they which stand for Discipline are thought to bring in contention and to undermine the power of the Magistrate' ⁵ as follows:

In this accusation first you must well observe, he

suffer any more, and the pen which wrote this, is of an other profession' (sig. A 4 recto - my underlining).

1. Ibid.
2. See D.N.B. article.
3. See Maclure, The Paul's Cross Sermons 1534-1642, 214.
4. See A Defence of the reasons of the Counter-poyson for mayntenance of the Eldershippe, against an answere made to them by Doctor Copequot, in a publike Sermon at Paules Crosse, upon Ps 84 1584 ... in A parte of a register, 517 ff.
5. Ibid., 525.

doth not, nor dareth not say, it is so, but that it is thought so. To which it may be answered, that it is thought, that the other side seeke to drive out the sufficient Ministerie, that they alone may raigne, pill the people of her Majesty, abuse and grind them, without having any of their filthinesse discovered ... Nay some of these are not only thought, but manifestly by experience in many places felt. Secondly, you may observe how the light of his conscience strive with his affections against the cause. His affection and desire was to disgrace the cause itselfe, as prejudiciall to the peace of the Church, and civill Magistrate. Nowe, when in his conscience he founde he could deduct no such thing out of the matter of Discipline; he turned from the matter to the persons, and saith, they are thought so to doe. 1

Copcot is clearly not the only protagonist to have 'turned from the matter to the persons'.

Copcot died in 1589 and the challenge issued by Martin Marprelate went unheeded: 'Ha / ha / D. Copcot are ye there / why do not you aunswere the confutation of your sermon at Pauls crosse?' ². In the same tract a further challenge is also issued to Cosin: ' ... D. Cosins hath a very good grace in jesting / and I woulde he had a little more grace and a handful or two more of learning / against he answer the Abstract next. Nay beleeeve me / it is inough for him to answere the Counterpoyson' ³. No such reply was, however, forthcoming; the novelty of the new approach had worn off and the bare bones of the old arguments had re-emerged, arguments which had reached a logical impasse and which could only be reiterated with increasing venom.

There the matter might have rested but for the Star Chamber cases of 1590-91, a public crisis which prompted each side to renewed literary activity ⁴. According to 'An Epistle to the Reader, conteyning the occasion of the publication of this Apologie', Cosin's work, An Apologie for sundrie

1. A Defence of the Counter-poyson, 525-6.

2. The Epistle, 3.

3. Ibid., 2-3.

4. See Chapter 6, Introduction and Part I.

proceedings by Jurisdiction Ecclesiasticall, was first undertaken at the request of an 'eminent' man - Hatton? - for a reasoned defence of the Establishment, a request made late in 1590 or early in 1591¹. About the same time a Puritan attorney of the Court of Wards, James Morice, wrote his Briefe Treatise of oathes exacted by Ordinaries and Ecclesiasticall judges, and sent it to Cecil in an attempt to show up the current proceedings as : '... repugnant to the law of God, and injurious to the policy of the land'². Some time later Cosin was, as he says, 'moved, by such as may commaunde me'³ to reply to Morice's treatise. This he did by incorporating replies to specific points made by Morice in the appropriate sections of the general defence he had already produced, which had been printed in a limited edition of forty copies for private circulation. The revised work was put into public circulation.

Morice's treatise contains no new material in terms of arguments; as Cosin pointed out, it is not an adequate proof of the unlawfulness of the oath to indicate that the procedure is different from those used elsewhere⁴. The real impact of the work derives from Morice's use of history; making a scathing survey of past Roman prelates and their practices and leaving his readers to make the assumption 'as then, so now', he is able to vent his anger on the present hierarchy and its activities with impunity. The indirectness of this attack is doubtless determined by the fact that although the treatise was printed anonymously, its manuscript circulation in the highest London circles was set in motion by a copy personally sent to Burghley by the author; he could hardly, then, disavow it and as a named public figure he was wise to avoid a direct attack which might have brought him within the scope of the Statute

1. An Apologie for sundrie proceedings, sig. B I recto.

2. Strype, Whitgift, vol.II, 28.

3. An Apologie for sundrie proceedings, sig. B 2 recto.

4. Ibid., 'An Epistle to the reader', sig. B 3 recto.

23 Eliz. cap.5 (against slandering of the Queen or her government) as then interpreted. The disguise was not, however, difficult to penetrate; in the Preface to the Reader which prefixes Cosin's Apologie Cosin asks pertinently: '... may it be denied, that the matters wherewith he reprocheth the "Popish Prelates" of former times, are bent per obliquum through their sides to wound all the Reverend fathers, and others nowe living?' ¹. In reply Cosin uses evidence also bent per obliquum to strike not only at the literary product before him but also at the public figures who had been on trial. He ends the second section of his work, for example, with a sly quotation from an epistle of Calvin to Farel, which shows Calvin in the Consistory making ruthless use of the oath, dismissing contemptuously the objection based on the text 'Receive not an Accusation against an elder, under two or three witnesses' ². The margin makes the relevance of this particular quotation clear: 'Cartwrightes allegation against the othe ex officio in a criminall cause, by Calvin answered long agoe' ³.

The immediate stimulus of a trial acted out in the public sphere lent impetus to a literary exchange which (whatever its pretensions to objectivity) was simply another trial, highlighting the moral inconsistencies, failures and deliberate perversity of the opposition. Without a unifying irony at the expense of the disunited, dishonest Puritans, Cosin's work would be an arid collection of disjointed facts; Morice's treatise would be an equally arid display of bad logic without the animus directed against: '... those Pharisaicall Cleargie men (who will not enter Pilates Common Hall, least they should be defiled, and yet crye out with loude voyce "Crucifige, Crucifige" ...)'⁴.

1. An Apologie for sundrie proceedings, 'An Epistle to the reader', sig. C I verso.

2. Ibid., pp.139-40.

3. Ibid., p.140.

4. Morice, A Briefe treatise, pp.43-4. This may refer to Whitgift's determination that those who commit major offences against the religious establishment should be tried by civil courts.

The events of Whitgift's archepiscopate, then, concentrated the attention on the growing power of the ecclesiastical hierarchy and its increasingly efficient use of that power to eliminate dissidents. Those who did not wish to indulge in the dangerous exercise of presenting this as a direct affront to Christ chose to present it in the more restricted human terms of a violation of legality. This seems to introduce a possibility of dialogue on points of interpretation, a way of escape from the current historical pressure to a consideration of those basic rights which by English law the individual always possessed. A closer look at the actual development of the premisses of both sides, however, shows that the apparently modest scope of this legal discussion conceals the same absolute opposition on the question of authority as the intransigent theology of the Admonition debate. As dialogue it is still-born; its life derives from the vigorous incidental abuse of the opposition and a glance at the progress of the Abstract debate in particular shows that legal considerations gradually emerge as mere illustrations of the moral turpitude of that opposition. The point of the historical illustrations, with their vivid and satirical presentation of corruption, goes home, while the reasoning which they are supposed to illustrate remains obscure or (in later works) disappears altogether.

The prophetic approach to the current situation, however, does not merely use history as illustrative material; it locates the real struggle in events rather than in debate, and hence confronts the opposition not with a statement which is open to refutation, but with a description which in its own terms is strictly factual. The imagery of the Book of Revelation clothes a myth developed to cope with the anomaly between claims made for the invincible Word of God as expressed in the 'Discipline' and its continued historical defeat. In reply to the pragmatism which saw the practical triumphs of the regime as indications of God's favour, the stress is on a history beyond history which can be perceived only by revelation and which contradicts all the facile conclusions drawn from

appearances ¹.

The development of this myth marks an obvious move away from dialogue. Rather than attaching the adjectives 'anti-Christian' or 'popish' to aspects of liturgy or practice in the church as established, the apocalyptic myth identifies Establishment protagonists as representatives or even incarnations of the omnipresent Antichrist himself - not, therefore, persons with whom dialogue on church imperfections could be contemplated. The development of this vocabulary forms an interesting study. When the Vestiarian controversy first polarised the church, those who bore with deviations for policy's sake were satirised as cowards: 'These are in dede over mylde and toe toe softe and sobre Christians, which can beare with all such Antichristian trasshe' ². But the direct equation which made such men the representatives of Antichrist himself was avoided; when in A godly prayer, agreeable to the tyme and occasion Crowley refers to their persecution as '... the joy and triumph of Antichrist his lymmes our enimydes ...' ³, he alludes not to Protestant prelates but to papists. The Admonitioners, too, were quite clear as to the divine view of the government of the English church, characterizing the bishops as: '... that proude generation, whose kingdome must downe, holde they never so hard: bicause their tyrannous Lordshippe can not stande wyth Christes kingdome' ⁴. Yet in 1572 the imprisoned John Field said to Parker's chaplain Pearson: 'But God knoweth we ment to touche no mans person, but their places and abuses, which derogate from the trueth, as that any minister should take upon him the name of Archbishopp and be called Metropolitane etc' ⁵.

1. Although, however, the full meaning of events is accessible only to those to whom it is revealed, this historical view exploits age-old superstition about natural calamities by saying that they are visible signs of the secret divine judgement.

2. The mynd and exposition of that excellent learned man Martyn Bucer, sig. C I verso.

3. A briefe discourse, sig. C vii recto.

4. Puritan Manifestoes, 5.

5. The Seconde Parte, vol.I, 85-90, no.51.

Savage as is its vocabulary in places, the first Admonition carefully avoids the condemnation of specific individuals - it contains no anecdotes. While reform is still a possibility, one cannot dismiss the only group powerful enough to achieve it by constitutional means as individually under the control of Antichrist; one cannot enter into persuasive dialogue with those who have consciously set themselves up against God, but those who are merely Antichrist's unwitting tools are not beyond hope of reclamation. Nonetheless, in the Admonitions we see a deliberate identification with an older literature of dissent, a literature of extreme statements against a hierarchy whom the writers had never regarded as in any sense their 'brethren'. Of the three early tracts cited by the writer of the Second Admonition as 'presidentes', The Complaynt of Roderyck Mors presents the closest parallels with the style and content of the Admonitions. Like them it is an appeal to Parliament against the bishops; and when one reads a sentence like the following:

And the word of God, which we say we have receyvd,
is not, nor can not be sufferyd to be preached and
taught purely and sincerely, without mixyng it with
your invented tradycyons and servyce. For who so ever
doth (standing faythfully unto it) he shal dye for
it. 1

one is aware that the motive for writing - outrage at the eclipse of the Word by human traditions - is exactly the same. Roderyck Mors' conclusion is so reminiscent of the Admonitioners' phraseology that it is difficult not to believe that they had it in mind:

Wherefore, to open the conclusyon of this lytle
lamentacyon, if ye wil banyssh for ever the
Antychrist, the Pope, out of this realme, ye
must fell down to the ground those rotten postys,
the bisshops, which be cloudys without moyster;
and utterly abolyssh all and every his ungodly
lawys, decreys, tradycyons, and ceremonyes, without
signifycacyons ... Well, these filthy dreggs

-
1. Henry Brinklow's Complaynt of Roderyck Mors, somtyme a gray fryre, unto the parliament howse of England his natural cuntry, ed. J.M. Cowper (1872), E.E.T.S., Extra Series no.22, 57.

onys abolisshed, than make no lawys but such as shal
be agreaby1 to Gods Word. 1

In readapting this vigorous vernacular style of abuse, rather than argumentation, the Admonitioners begin, like their predecessor, to blur the distinction between Antichrist himself and those who are effectively his agents - perhaps not in terms of formal identification, but certainly in terms of the equal opprobrium reaped on each.

It is in any case very difficult to maintain the distinction between person and office. The Puritans observed with growing contempt the efforts of the ^{formerly}exiled bishops to maintain their personal integrity in a creative tension with their obedience to the Queen; 'lying flatterie' was one author's summary of this hopeless exercise:

They would have men beleeeve that thay both wishe and
indeavour the abolishing of all the ragges and dreggs of
poperie, and yet those that use them not, they forbid
to preach, they deprive, they imprison. Thus they
daunce naked in a nett and thinke that no man seeth
them ... 2

As time went on their anger at this hypocrisy translated itself into a view of the opponents as personally identified with the cause which their moral failure promoted - that of Antichrist. One of the documents in the series printed in A parte of a register under the general title 'A viewe of Antichrist, his lawes and Ceremonies, in our English Church unreformed', is a Table comparing the Pope of Rome with the Pope of Lambeth; that which may have begun as rhetorical exaggeration intended to shock gradually became the alternative Puritan version of Elizabethan religious history ³.

It seems to me that the point of no return in this polarisation was reached with the appointment of Whitgift to the See of Canterbury.

1. Complaynt of Roderyck Mors, 58.

2. A parte of a register, 5.

3. Ibid., 56ff. Compare Robert Harrison's letter to the Bishop of Norwich, 1576 (p.365ff): '... I know it for a trueth that the Archbishop begate you, and the Bishop of Rome begate him, and the Divell begate him, I meane concerning your offices.'

The minority of radicals who produced the bulk of printed comment found themselves victimised by a man who claimed to be acting in the best interests of the church. Earlier polemic had reflected the bitter disillusionment of the Henrician church; now the sharp confrontations portrayed seemed to reflect the events of Mary's reign. The story of the Marian persecutions in England, as set by John Foxe in the long perspective of Christian history as a whole, provided a myth and a vocabulary for the perception of universal strife between Christ and Satan underlying divisions in the visible church ¹. Foxe explained the paradox of Christian persecuting Christian by drawing a distinction between those in the visible church whose profession is outward only and those who share not only in the sacraments but also in the inward blessings and grace of Christ:

... as between the world and the kingdom of Christ there is a continual repugnance, so between the two parts of this visible church aforesaid groweth great variance and mortal persecution, insomuch that sometimes the true church of Christ hath no greater enemies than those of their own profession and company. ²

Similarly, radical polemic identified the events of 1584 and subsequent years as further stages in the cosmic struggle between Christ and Antichrist, taking place within the visible church itself ³.

In adopting this line, the radicals turned from argument to dramatic narrative. No longer can one enter into dialogue with the temporisers;

-
1. For an account of the editions of Foxe's Actes and Monumentes printed under Elizabeth, see W. Haller, Foxe's Book of Martyrs and the elect Nation (London, 1963), Chap.IV, 'The Book of Martyrs', and Chap.VI, 222-3.
 2. Quoted in Haller, Foxe's Book of Martyrs, 135.
 3. For Field's involvement with Foxe, see Patrick Collinson, 'John Field and Elizabethan Puritanism', in Elizabethan Government and Society: Essays presented to Sir John Neale. Evidence of a desire to produce an analogous Puritan collection is to be found throughout the polemic of this period; 'The Unlawful Practices of Prelates', for example, ends by explaining that it seeks: 'to discover the wicked practises, both of force and fraude, used against the defenders of the most holie Discipline, till it please God, that the stories of these times be more at large published and set out to the whole world (A parte of a register, 303). For a discussion of the extent to which this desire was carried out, see the discussion of A parte of a register in Chapter 6, pp. 329-34 below.

they are guilty of 'high treason against the Lord' ¹ and are to be denounced rather than dissuaded. Appeals to Parliament, for example, no longer demand that it should exercise its critical judgement on the evidence; the debate is simplified to a choice between the protagonists whose perpetual warfare is reflected in history: 'You are nowe to declare unto which of the two you would have us subjectes, who shal be king, Sathan or the Lord Christ: and therefore whether of the two can prevaile more with you' ². Behind the façade of peace and enforced uniformity a dreadful slaughter of the innocent souls of men is taking place: the challenge is to enter the lists on the side of Christ to combat the ravages of the devil. Citing one biblical account of a battle between apostate Israel and faithful Judah - the exact Old Testament equivalent of the struggle between apostate members of the visible church and true members of Christ's body - the 'godly ministers' added:

... so is this slaughter nothing lesse, but much more cruell and lamentable which is committed in this land by the darts of ignorance, wherewith the Divell goreth them through, so that rivers of blood doth runne downe the streetes of every Towe and Citie. ³

The plausible arguments of order and tradition used to defend the hierarchy are seen as the work of the Evil One disguised as an angel of light. Archbishops and bishops, according to Penry, are members of the

-
1. Penry, A treatise containing the Aequity of an Humble Supplication, 22.
 2. Ibid., 19. Compare, e.g., the choice as presented in 'The humble petition of the Communalitie to their most renowned and gracious Sovereigne, the Ladie Elizabeth ...' (A parte of a register, 309ff.); as befits the status of the addressee, the tone is much more conciliatory, but the cause of Christ is identified with the specific requests made: 'Now is the Lord Jesus become an earnest petitioner, in the person of his poore people [sic], unto your highnesse ...' (p.313) and the temptation for Elizabeth to refuse to intervene is portrayed as directly analogous to the words of Peter to Christ urging him to avoid the cross; in both cases Satan is the real source of the temptation, and Elizabeth's choice is seen in terms of identification with one side or the other.
 3. 'A Petition made to the Convocation house in the yeare 1586, by the godly Ministers, tending to reconciliation and translated into English', A parte of a register, 330.

body of Antichrist (the Pope); all their activities are directed to one secret but nefarious end: '... so now being cut off from their heade, they will not be quiet untill againe they be engrafted into their proper and naturall bodie'¹. No longer are they considered as representatives of a system separate from their own moral consciousness: they are presented, on the contrary, as personal incarnations of the evil their regime promotes. Whitgift's identification of his public role with his private identity, and the personal fervour with which he and other members of the hierarchy harried their enemies was repaid by a literary presentation which saw them as the personal embodiments of evil. This may be achieved very simply and crudely, as when the account of one interrogation reminds one forcibly of the presentation of the devil in popular iconography: 'But then I founde him in deed all on a fier, for the flames flashed out of his mouth very whotly and feircely, but first the smoke came forthe in this manner, The more wee consider of your matter the worse we finde it to be', as John Wilson wrote of his encounter with Archdeacon Walker of London². The real impact of the change in attitude, however, goes far deeper than a choice of dramatic imagery. To identify the person with the system releases the controversialist from any obligation to deal gently with an opponent who remains a brother in Christ despite his faults and errors. Those who are individually members not of Christ but of Antichrist merit no special consideration³.

1. Penry, Reformation no Enemie, sig. H 2 recto.

2. The Seconde Parte, vol.II, 230, no.237. See also no.238, in which the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of London are described as: 'A couple of valiant squires, forsoothe, to serve the popes holynes at a pinche, to stampe the beastes markes, and to bargayne with the marchandise of Antichrist' (vol.II, 233).

3. It is important to note that this development is stylistic rather than theological. The author of Hay any worke for Cooper, for example, is careful to deny that every petty pope and Antichrist - i.e. every bishop - is of necessity a reprobate in the eyes of God. He cites the examples of Cranmer and Hooper, *inter alia*, and generously allows that even Pope Gregory the Great left behind him 'undoubted testimonies of a chosen childe of God' (p.22). Thus the attacks on specific members of the hierarchy are not to be taken to indicate that every bishop

The characterisation in this dramatic myth, then, is so over-simplified as to admit no change or development. As in morality plays, each protagonist is defined by the name he is given or the party to which he belongs, and all his actions and thoughts are presented in a way which bears out that definition. Similarly, when one turns from the treatment of individual characters to look at the way in which their interactions are presented, one sees still more clearly that the rich variety of apocalyptic imagery conceals a simplistic scheme of events which scarcely does justice to the complexities of history. Although, as I have indicated already, this interpretation of events owes much to Foxe, the difference in tone and range from the great martyrologist are even more illuminating than the similarities: and I propose to illustrate this point by drawing comparisons between the situation and work of those reflecting on the Marian crisis and those reacting to Whitgift's regime.

There is one immediately obvious difference between Foxe's use of an apocalyptic myth to interpret English history and the adaptation of this convenient polarisation made by Puritan extremists. As William Haller has indicated, Foxe's version of recent events was nationally recognised as authoritative:

... there has never been any doubt as to the historical importance of a book which the shapers of opinion, the masters of policy, and - except for adherents of the old religion - Englishmen in general in the reign of Elizabeth accepted as an expression of the national faith second in

will be damned ex officio - nonetheless the fact that the Marprelate author finds it necessary to make this defence indicates that the attacks made are so violent and sweeping in their rhetoric as to invite some such inference.

It is, however, hard to avoid the conclusion that the reprobation of some individuals is assumed: Whitgift is the prime example here. Addressing the Council, Penry applies to Whitgift the apostle Paul's comment on evil men and imposters in ²Tim. 3, v.13: 'But though he be like to continue as he is, vz, ^(sic) a deceiver that waxeth worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived, as the holy ghost sayth: yet it concerneth your Hh to turne over a new leafe' (Reformation no Enemie, sig.D. 3, verso). There is still hope for the Lords of the Council; Whitgift, however, is fixed in his role as Satan's chief emissary.

authority only to the Bible and as an unanswerable defence of England's ideological position in the contemporary struggle for national independence and power. 1

Its massive coherent dignity gave the events which it described their full ideological significance without ever losing sight of the need for fidelity to the human and particular. Its general historicity was in no doubt, nor was its relevance to an England which for the greater part of Elizabeth's reign existed in a state of extreme tension with its foreign Catholic neighbours.

In contrast, the radical interpretation is very much the creation of a minority. Whereas under Mary the martyrs were publicly burned, under Elizabeth the massacres of the innocent were discernible only to those endowed with sufficient prophetic insight to lay bare the alleged tragic reality behind the comparatively calm exterior (see the quotation from 'A Petition made to the Convocation house' on p.204 above). One might say that while Foxe started with the given historical events and sought a pattern which gave them coherence without violating their individuality, the Puritan prophets started with the myth and sought by their rhetoric to impose its simple polarities on the complexity of their battle with the Established church.

Their method shows interesting parallels with the literature produced by the political prophets active in Geneva during the exile. Goodman, Knox and Whittingham, like (for example) Penry and Udall, sought to undermine the opposition's appearance of legality and its claims to wield divinely delegated authority. Both parties were faced with the problem of fitting a theology of the absolute predestination of God and of the inevitable

1. Haller, Foxe's Book of Martyrs and the Elect Nation, 14. Later scholars have questioned one aspect of Haller's thesis - Foxe's alleged stress on England as an elect nation - pointing out that Foxe took a deliberately international view of the spread of the Word (see, in particular, Paul Christianson, Reformers and Babylon: English Apocalyptic Visions from the Reformation to the eve of the Civil War (Toronto, 1978), There is no doubt, however, about the central importance of Foxe as a popular interpreter of the apocalyptic myth.

triumph of his decrees to a polemic which, by inciting men to battle against the forces of evil, suggested that the destiny of the cause depended upon their free choice. They were also driven to produce an explanation for the fact that the will of God was revealed only to a select few; should not the plan of an omnipotent God be clearly revealed to all? Michael Walzer suggests the shifts by which the Genevans accommodated theology to propaganda:

Denunciation made judgment a possibility; it had broken the link between divine command and earthly event. Although the theology of the Genevans remained strictly predestinarian, their rhetoric actually shifted the ground of argument. As is often the case with prophets, their polemical tongues and pens were bolder and more inventive than their theological minds. The prophet announced the effective and independent power of the devil. He could not, of course, fit such a power into his conception of God's omnipotence, but whatever the shifts to which he was driven, it was dramatically clear that with the devil in the field God's will was no longer revealed by what happened on earth. 1

Similarly, in the epistle 'To the supposed governours of the Church of England', one of the two which preface his Demonstration of Discipline, Udall challenges his opponents rhetorically: 'Have you solde your selves unto Sathan, to fight for him untill you be dampned in Hell with him?' ².

The exercise of temporal authority against the Puritans, however valid the legal claims of that authority in terms of delegation from the royal Governor of the church, could have only one prophetic explanation - the attempt of Satan to destroy the true children of God.

This simple duality, however, fitted the stark opposition of the 1550s better than the confused situation of the 1580s. In the 1550s Catholic and Protestant were radically different and knew themselves to be so. This may seem obvious; it is nonetheless a different situation to that which confronted radical Puritans in the 1580s and early 1590s, a situation

1. Michael Walzer, The Revolution of the Saints, 103.

2. Udall, A Demonstration, 3.

in which the Established church .. and, indeed, moderate reformers .. would not concede any vital difference on matters of doctrine and sought to minimise the issues of dissent ¹. These later prophets, then, use apocalyptic to simplify the issues involved: the perspective of a developing tradition is narrowed to focus on the present moment of choice:

Now therefore the Lord warneth us, to take the opportunity while it is offered. Now hee taketh heaven and earth to witnes that at this instant, at this Parliament, at this time of her Majesties prosperous raigne, he laith before us life and death, good and evil, salvation and damnation, and that for ever. We shal never have the time to choose againe for anie thing we knowe. 2

The crisis here, we note, is one which Penry's rhetoric seeks to create, not one which could be recorded by an impartial observer. Polemic begins to cut loose from the moorings of strict historical fact; rather than being prompted by a crisis in the outside world, it seeks to impose upon history the sense of personal crisis felt by the author. Penry evokes a number of prophecies of doom in the work quoted above and in conclusion he adds: 'Account not these I pray you (whome I have before named) to be the visions of the daies afarre off Ezech 12. 18 but tremble and feare least the Lord say the words in our daies and perform them' ³. His own revulsion at the events of his day takes on the clothing of prophetic imagery and is presented to the reader as an objective judgement pronounced by God.

1. See, for instance, the discussion of the marks of the true church in Sampson's treatise, A Briefe Collection of the Church and of certaine Ceremonies thereof (London, 1581). Sampson identifies true preaching and sound administration of the sacraments as the external signs of a true church; he then adds a qualifier: 'And in truth there ought to be such a christian policie for the givernement of the church, as the lorde of the church, Christ Jesus hath ordained: and such obedience shewed to the gospell, as it commaundeth. But because the abounding and force of our sinnes are such, that often times these two last things do not so fully apeare in their majestie, and excellencie as they ought to doe: Therefore we doe rest ourselves upon the two first named markes' (p.16). A leading figure of dissent in the Vestiarian controversy, Sampson here minimises the importance of the discipline he clearly desires in order to concentrate on areas of general agreement.

2. Penry, The Aequity of a Humble Supplication, 38.

3. Ibid., 61.

Thus in comparison with the works produced during and about the Marian crisis, the polemic of the 1580s suffers from excessive subjectivity. By reducing the complex classifications of Elizabethan Protestants to a simple dichotomy:

... here be only two estates of men spoken of, either those, in whom Christ Jesus shall be glorified (in every of whose harts, the Lord hath so wrought, by his spirit, that they desire nothing more, than that he maie rule the soules of men by his woord) or the other whose portion shall be woe of soule 1

and by externalising that dichotomy to fit the historical confrontation between the Establishment and themselves, the radicals created a martyr history far more satisfying in its simplicity than the untidy pattern of harshness, harassment, compromise and inconclusive action reflected in so many of the documents catalogued in The Seconde Parte.

In this assertion of a history beyond history, radical Puritans escape from the dilemma posed by claims for the historical impact of the irresistible Word which are not matched by its performance. If history as seen by the majority even of religious people is a delusion produced by the god of this world, it is hardly surprising that the Word of the true God is not seen to triumph. There is, however, a high price to pay for liberation from the inconvenient facts of public history. A narrative which is little more than an adequate correlative for the feelings of an individual or a party is not subject to the restraints imposed by historicity; it is self-sufficient and self-perpetuating. Yet as we noted above (see p. 163) the most effective polemic is that which springs from and addresses a particular crisis, drawing the reader's attention not only to the evidence of his conscience but also to the drama of history, in which he can see the choices before him acted out. As the gap between image and reality widens the work may gain in verbal force, but it inevitably loses in credibility.

1. Penry, The Aequity of an Humble Supplication, 36.

And the claim of the radical to possess the key to history is linked to an increasing tendency to claim possession of, rather than by, the Word. The historical crisis is one of ignorant ministers massacring helpless souls with official connivance: in response, the absolute necessity of preaching is stressed and the position of the preacher elevated from that of mere channel to that of mediator. The former emphasis on the irresistible Word which uses a human mouthpiece is replaced by a stress on the role of the prophet who actually makes the Word efficacious to the hearer: 'Every minister is able to make the word of God powerful, either unto death or unto life, in some of the hearers ...' ¹. Some rightly comments thus on Penry's expression of his full dogma:

It hath pleased M. Penry to deliver an other strange point of divinitie in these wordes; viz, The word of God uttered, is not an edifying word, unlesse it be uttered according to the ordinance, both in regard of the persons that utter the same, and the end wherefore it is uttered. Is not this (M. Penry) to make the person to give credit to the holy word of God? ²

Penry stresses the conditions under which the Word is proclaimed at the expense of its content; the effective application is left to the discretion of the preacher. Accordingly, as in the historical sphere there is a hiatus between fact and image, so in the sphere of biblical interpretation the link between the Word on paper and the Word as presented becomes an increasingly arbitrary one, forged not by a consideration of the biblical context but by the need for evidence to support the prophet's pre-determined theories of imminent judgement. It may be remembered that Cartwright defended the marginal citations in the Admonition by stating that they often acknowledged a purely verbal debt rather than establishing a valid parallel with the text ³. This tendency to use verbal formulae without

1. Penry, An Exhortation, 56.

2. Some, A Godly Treatise (2nd. ed.), 102.

3. W.W., vol.1, 58.

regard to the limitations on their meaning imposed by the original context is carried to its logical conclusion in a style like Penry's, which summarises biblical history in evocative phrases and uses those phrases as battle slogans: 'Wo be unto you all, for you have followed the waye of Caine, and are cast away by the deceit of Baqlam's wages' ¹.

Exercising such an authoritarian control over the two givens of Protestant polemic - history and the Word - it is small wonder that the prophet-writer's style reflects entire confidence in his own point of view, and a consequent withdrawal from the possibility of dialogue. Like his opponent, Some, Penry sidesteps serious theological discussion of issues which cannot be simplified into slogans:

Concerning the controversie then, whether the element administred by an ignorant man, be a sacrament, being once delivered, I would wishe all men in modestie to abstaine from so ungodly a jar, because it tendeth not to edification, and it is not the point, it is not the question. ²

Like both Some and Bridges, Penry has the habit of sitting in judgement on his opponent's objections rather than answering them. This is achieved not only by the distancing use of the third person rather than the second, but also by implicit or explicit association of the writer with those who have the right to pass judgement in the practical as well as the theoretical sphere - Some, for example, constantly allies himself with the Christian magistrates. Penry uses this device with startling boldness, associating himself with no temporal authority, but invoking the direct judgement of God, which cuts across the whole temporal order. To illustrate this point, I shall quote a section of argument from Th'appelation of JOHN PENRI ... He quotes a common objection to the cause made by the hierarchy - represented here by Thomas Cooper: 'It is further objected, that the lawes maintaining the Queen's supremacy in governing of the church, and

1. Penry, An Exhortation, 21.

2. Ibid., 31-2.

hir prerogative in Ecclesiastical causes, must be abrogated, or els Christe cannot raigne in our state.' His response makes no attempt to refute the substance of the charge:

But remember them, O my God, if they belong not unto thee, that thus slander the truth, and the upright ordinances of thy sonne Christ Jesus, and if they be thine, convert them speedily. My lords, and you the rest of the parliament, as you have any care of the glory of your God, see that the enemies of reformation, may either desist from their forgeries against the trueth, or proove their accusations. 1

As one secular contemporary observed of this kind of argument: 'Yea, I know some of them that would think it a tempting of God to hear or read what may be said against them: as if there could be a quod bonum est, tenete without an omnia probate going before' ². So categorical is Penry's certainty that he cannot even concede to the reader the degree of independent judgement required to answer a rhetorical question. Accordingly, he answers all his own questions:

I demaund also whether this way, both for the substance and the manner of Gods service, be not set downe in the worde of God alone, and not elsewhere to be founde? It will not be denied, I trowe; I am sure it cannot. 3

Bridges may slant his rhetorical questions in such a way as to leave the answer expected in no doubt; but he flatters the reader by allowing him to make the final inference himself. Penry, on the other hand, is crude and overt in his directions to the reader. It is hardly surprising that one common reaction to such works, that exemplified by the comment of Bacon quoted above, is that they constitute an insult to the intelligence. Violence of language is substituted for proof; as Some remarked: 'Woulde you have your boisterous speech go for an Oracle, and cary all as a violent streame before it?' ⁴

1. Penry, Th'appelation of JOHN PENRI, 32.

2. Bacon, 'An Advertisement touching the Controversies of the Church of England' (written 1589-90), in Letters and Life, ed. James Spedding, vol.I (1861), 94.

3. Penry, An Exhortation, 12.

4. Some, A Godly Treatise (2nd. ed.), 67.

Both the legal and the prophetic approaches, then, give to contingent historical edicts and events an absolute and simple significance. In the first case the delicate mechanism of positive law is simplified to fit a tendentious definition of legality; in the second the unpredictable pattern of human events is simplified to fit a new theory of history. The interpretation of experience and of written data is predetermined by theories which seek to eliminate paradoxes and contradictions and in so doing eliminate any agenda for debate.

In Chapter 3 I suggested two causes for the decay of the disputation form as the norm for controversial religious exchange. One of these related to the political context in which sixteenth-century religious debate invariably took place and which had the effect of focusing attention on the protagonists and turning every exchange into a trial. In this chapter I have sought to substantiate this point by showing how Puritans reacted to an official policy which put them on trial for their livelihoods by arraigning the Archbishop and his hierarchy before the bar of God's will as formalized in the law, or the bar of his Word as pronounced by the prophet. But despite the move away from genuine exchange, a considerable number of the tracts under consideration do retain the apparatus of logical discourse - the list of propositions to be proved, and detailed syllogistic proof by deductions from premisses commanding general assent to more controversial conclusions. We noted also in Chapter 3 the unsuitability of the disputation form to this particular controversy, and it is perhaps surprising to see that its forms remain after historical pressures have undermined the possibility of substantive dialogue. In Chapter 5 I shall seek to explain this paradox by examining in more detail what happened to logical language in the polemic of the 1580s, focusing in particular on the wild but not unsystematic parody of logical discourse to be found in the Marprelate tracts.

CHAPTER FIVE

The Distortion of Dialectic

PART I: Pragmatic Language: The Influence of Ramus

As we noted at the end of the previous chapter, the new approaches to controversy stimulated by Whitgift's measures against the Presbyterian cause distort the medium as well as the material of discourse. (In terms of the holistic view of discourse held in the sixteenth century and expounded in the first chapter of this thesis, of course (see above, pp. 20-22), such parallel developments are only to be expected.) Logical structures which are traditionally considered to operate independently of time are silently altered to accommodate historical comment, and casuistry gives opinion the weight of proof. As an example of this latter point, one might consider the function of the parenthesis in this syllogism by Penry:

They that are ministers in deed, do not sinne because
they do administer the sacraments: But our readers
(as all the godly confesse) sin in presuming to deal
with any function belonging unto a minister, and
therefore the sacraments: ergo. 1

In this chapter I intend to discuss the abuse of the medium in more detail.

Plainly the tendency to claim scientific status for one's reasoning without warrant is most invidious in works which make major claims to be considered as impersonal expositions of the truth. In a tract like Penry's A Treatise containing the Aequity of an Humble Supplication, the author proclaims God's direct call to himself as an individual as the validation of his arguments and the guarantee of his success: 'Seing it pleased him, who also separated me from my mothers womb to stir me up hereunto, I doubt not but hee wil give that successe of my labours, that may be most to his glory.' ²

1. Penry, An exhortation, 60.

2. Penry, The Aequity of an Humble Supplication, 4.

Where, on the other hand, a tract states part of its brief in the title, as follows: 'The lawfull refusinge also of the Ministers to subscribe, is /mayntayned by evident groundes of Gods worde, and her Majesties lawes against his evident wresting of both' ¹, its right to be considered is not located in the call of the writer, but in the 'evident' coherence of the argument; hence one must examine not the credentials of the prophet, but the logicality or otherwise of 'the words on the page'.

Accordingly, I have chosen to illustrate this discussion by quoting from the exchange provoked by the publication of Fulke's work, A Briefe and Plaine Declaration, in 1584 ². This body of work purports to turn away from the puzzling facts of history in order to draw the attention of both sides back to basic differences of principle which remained unchanged by circumstance. Impassioned pleas for conference are common features of the prefaces and conclusions of works in this line of descent; it is repeatedly insisted that debate is still a live option which would produce fruitful results ³. The aim seems to be to revive the academic debate as carried on between Whitgift and Cartwright; there are, however, significant differences in tone between this debate and the earlier one. Cartwright presents himself as an aggressive champion of the Word in its struggle to break down human defences of silence and ignorance ⁴. In that respect it is Penry who carries the claims inherent in Cartwright's prefaces and title-page verses to their logical conclusion, emphasizing the prophet himself as the expense of the Word. The compromise of the subscription debate, however, put moderate Puritan intellectuals on the defensive; even if the writers themselves had not

1. See the full title of A Defence of the godlie Ministers, against the slaunders of D. Bridges, contayned in his answere to the Preface before the Discourse of Ecclesiasticall government, with a Declaration of the Bishops proceeding against them (no place, 1587) by Dudley Fenner (quoted in ch.6, p. 333 n.1).

2. The story of the delayed publication of this work has been told by A.F. Scott-Pearson in Thomas Cartwright and Elizabethan Puritanism, 83-4, 273.

3. See especially the editorial preface before Fulke's tract.

4. See pp. 139-410 above.

subscribed, they were aware that their party had generally lost much of its credibility¹. The Word had not achieved the victory claimed for it, nor had all its champions lived up to its demands. Accordingly, there is a perceptible shift away from an emphasis on the power of the Word to a stress on its self-evident clarity - a claim which is not historically verifiable. In theological terms, the dianoetic function of the Word is stressed at the expense of the dynamic². The role of the controversialist is no longer that of a prophet; it is that of an impartial expositor of truth as unfolded systematically and incontrovertibly in the Word.

It is my contention in this chapter, however, that despite the claims of the authors to present a strictly logical exposition of eternal truth, their real concern is to develop rhetorical techniques which by making their position clear to the reader may persuade him that the clarity is inherent in the coherent, self-evident material, and not simply imposed by the method. The reader is deceived by the clothing of rhetorical persuasion in the forms and vocabulary proper to logical inference.

Fulke's work has been chosen as the terminus a quo of this examination because later Puritan writers lay such stress on its quality of impersonal engagement with eternal issues. Later comments on the reasons behind the publication of Fulke's work note that it was chosen because its earlier date of composition frees it from the suspicion of being an ad hoc response to a historical crisis: '... we thought it woulde appeare to be most voyde of percialitie whiche was not written upon the occasion of these late

1. A study of title-page texts substantiates the claim that the mood among Puritans was anxiety to defend themselves, rather than a desire to attack. See especially Job, 31, v.35-7, prefixed to Travers' work, A Defence of the Ecclesiastical Discipline ordayned of God to be used in his Church (no place, 1588):

'Oh, that I had one to hear me!
(Here is my signature! let the Almighty answer me!)
Oh, that I had the indictment written by my adversary ...
I would give him an account of all my steps;
like a prince I would approach him' (v.35 & 37, R.S.V.).

2. See Kittel, A Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, trans. Bromiley, vol.4, 69-136.

grievances'¹. A similar attempt to stress the ahistorical nature of the work is made by Travers in his tract A Defence of the Ecclesiastical Discipline. He suggests that the official silence after the publication of the Declaration could perhaps be put down to the fact that: '... the doctrine conteyned in it was generall, without particuler application to the state of our Church ...'². Accordingly, Bridges' huge reply should not be entitled a 'defence' of English church government, since it replied to a treatise which dealt in general terms: '(... and dealing little more with this Church, then anie other, much lesse impugning it, that it should neede his defence)'³. Throughout he refers to the Dean's work as 'A Replie to the Declaration' and alludes to Bridges as 'The Replier'.

It is not long, however, before Travers flatly contradicts himself: 'Our ecclesiasticall state and policie (of which onely, it is as cleare as the light, that the Declaration speaketh and of no other, howsoever he would wrest it) is blamed in deede as disordered'⁴. Clearly the material of the Declaration is less independent of history than Travers claimed. In fact, it reflects that tension between engagement with the adversary on a cerebral level in a debate over theological ideals, and the need to vent anger and frustration caused by the actual state of the church, which marks all the Elizabethan attempts at reformation by proof⁵. The undoubted impact of

-
1. Fenner, A Defence of the godlie Ministers, sig. A2 recto.
 2. Travers, A Defence of the Ecclesiastical Discipline, sig. A 2 recto (p.3).
 3. Ibid. I am not unaware that the view of the Word actually propounded is that of the earlier period: 'such is the maiesty of Gods worde, when it is presented, that either it boweth or breaketh the wicked in peeces.' It seems to me that its clarity and restraint of style were the main influence on later writers, and in this respect it fits in well with the later works. In any case, it is almost impossible to consider an exchange in isolation from the work which provoked it.
 4. Ibid., 128.
 5. The same tension can be seen at work in the earlier work by Travers, A full and plaine Declaration of Ecclesiasticall Discipline owt off the word off God/ and off the/ declininge off the churche off Englande from the same (no place [Heidelberg], 1584), trans. from the Latin by Cartwright. Both the close parallels in title, and the coupling of the

Fulke's work, however, may be attributed to the fact that he makes the tension a creative one. His exposition is informed by an acute and often witty awareness of the impact of general theories on the particular individual:

... we of long time in England have beene caried away, with an untrue principle, that uniformitie must be in all places, and thinges alike, as though we would ... compell men of ripe age to sucke the dugges, to weare their biggins, and to carrye Rattles and other Childish bables. 1

Knowing that bloodless generalities alone cannot persuade the reader, but that 'examples move much' ², he makes a strong plea for the reader to assess the relative merits of both cases by the evidence they see around them, carefully omitting to point out that what they see may be abuse rather than the full outworking of the opposition's principles:

We will derogate nothing here from the dignitie of those homilies: we will not accuse here the unsensible reading of unlearned ministers, neither yet the unreverent contempt of the ignoraunt hearers: but which all godly and wise men must needs confesse, those exhortations that are not applied to the proper circumstances of times, places, persons and occasions are of small power to perswade any man, and least of all the ignoraunt people. Let long experience the Mystresse of fooles teach us, if knowledge the instructor of wise men cannot moove us. Howe many papists converted? Howe many ignoraunt instructed?

Latin Ecclesiastica Disciplina with A Briefe and plaine Declaration by the author of An Humble Motion as exemplifying 'the same course', the first for the unlearned and the second for the learned (see p.72), suggest to me that the publisher of Fulke's work intended it as an 'epitome' of the material in Travers book, with more popular appeal than its highly technical predecessor. In the translator's preface to this work, Cartwright stresses that: '... the author off the booke, not buklinge him selfe with any adversary, and havinge his minde bent onely on the cause, inveieth not against any mannes person' (sig. b I recto). By page 41, however, the author has already wandered from this strict brief, and recalls himself guiltily. 'But I do otherwise then I was purposed: that am fallen to threatninges and exhortacions/ whereas in the beginnunge I only purposed to declare what ought to be doone and what we do not. And yet ther be so great faultes committed in this behalff/ that it seemuch [sic!] nothings can be grevously and vehemently enoughe spoken against them'. One may wonder how far this guilt is more than a rhetorical gesture; it seems to me that this recalling of oneself to one's theoretical brief from a consideration of practical matters is a way of emphasizing that the two are inseparable, and that even the most scrupulous disputer cannot fail to be moved by the harsh facts.

1. Fulke, Declaration, 42.

2. Ibid., 43.

Howe many wicked reformed are ye able to shew
by this ignoraunt and unlearned ministry ... 1

The need for proclamation to be rooted in history could hardly be more clearly stated!

The 'doctrine' of this tract, then, is not merely 'generall'. Fenner and Travers are not wholly mistaken, however; stylistically the Declaration has a detachment which never sacrifices the end of exposition to the stylistic indulgence of denunciation. Fulke subordinates his moral indignation to the demands of his current task:

But we meane not in this place to prosecute our just
complaintes, nor to inveigh against the abuse of these
thinges, with such vehemencie as the worthiness of the
matter deserveth: but onely in setting forth the plaine
trueth to give a glimpsst by the waye of the contrarie
falshoode ... 2

Similarly, his concern for the 'plaine trueth' gives him an expository style which sets clarity above academic finesse. To the most casual observer his reasoning is tendentious and often circular; it makes its impact, however, by issuing imperatives ('we maye not thinke'; 'we must needes confesse') which guide the reader through the maze of assertions without allowing him time to reflect on each detail of the argument³. The sequence of thought may not stand detailed scrutiny, but Fulke handles the reader so carefully that one is left with the impression of a work which makes use of a few proofs carefully selected from a much more extensive body of evidence and yet manages to convince. He hints several times at all he

1. Ibid., 48.

2. Ibid., 100.

3. For example, when seeking to substantiate his claim that elders are responsible for the calling of deacons, he writes: 'Concerning the form of chosing of Deacons, we may reade at large Actes 6: they were chosen, by consente of the whole Churche, and hadde the approbation of the Apostles. And because we may not thinke, there was anye confusion in that blessed companye, we must needes confesse, that which hath beene before declared, that there were even in that assemblie and firste Churche of Hierusalem, certaine Elders appointed ... (pp.105-6).

might say, thereby blinding the reader to the logical inadequacy of what he does say. In short, the great virtue of the Briefe and Plaine Declaration is the clarity with which the scheme is set out, rather than the acumen with which it is proved.

The author of the tract An Humble Motion with submission unto the Right Honorable Ll of Hir Majesties Privie Counsell recommends Fulke's work to the unlearned reader. Writing of the Presbyterian case, he says:

If thou wouldst heare it handled in a sweet and pleasant latine style, the Ecclesiastical discipline is able to content thee, if thou be unlearned and desire the same course in thy mother tongue, beholde the Learned discourse (which D. Bridges assaying to confute hath confirmed)
... 1

The somewhat misleading running title of Learned Discourse which the Puritan editor gave to the tract proper has a political rather than a descriptive significance. By stressing the status of the author the radicals hoped to regain the intellectual standing they had enjoyed at the height of the Admonition debate and since lost through a number of notable desertions². Thus Fenner writes in his preface:

This Treatise was written divers years past, by a learned and deepe Divine, who hath bin after Master Jewell and M. Nowell, the chiefest Defender by writings both in our tongue and in Latin, of the trueth against the Papistes: and was now only revised and published by us ... because we had it in reverent regard for the learning of the man acknowledged of both partes ... 3

-
1. Anon., An Humble Motion (London, 1590), Preface 'To the Reader'.
 2. For example, in a tract written some fifteen years after his work A briefe discourse against the popishe outwarde apparell ..., Robert Crowley counters the charge of internal divisions which would disprove the Catholicity he claims for the English church, in the following terms: 'But now will the Schismaticke [i.e. the Catholic] saye: how doth this note proove, that your Church is Catholique? have you not Donatists, Pel agians, Eutichians, Anabaptistes, Precissians, Puritans, and your new founde Familie of Love? I confesse, that all these, and many moe, are amongst us, and so are Papists too, but they are not of us ... neither doo we allow of them ... But as we can we doo suppress them, and do labour (if it were possible) utterly to remove them from amongst us.' Crowley, A breefe discourse, concerning those foure usuall notes, whereby Christes Catholique Church is knowne (London, 1581), sig. C iv verso.
 3. Quoted in Scott-Pearson, Thomas Cartwright and Elizabethan Puritanism, 84. Bridges continually mocks the pretensions to learning of Fulke's tract: perhaps realising that the editorial device of the running title had

When, however, one looks at it as it is, rather than as it is presented, it is seen to be not a 'learned discourse', but a popular manifesto, which sacrifices all other considerations to the end of clarity.

This becomes more evident when we consider the line of attack used by Bridges. His massive work does not have as its primary aim the examination of the Declaration's arguments. Rather he attempts to dissipate its undoubted impact by detailed analysis, showing it to be a deceptively impressive whole of intellectually slipshod and prejudiced parts. Each simple statement is subjected to a series of conjectural interpretations, each more damaging than the last to the integrity of the author of the Declaration. Admittedly, Bridges overplays his hand; the techniques of the spare, athletic Ciceronian oration are abused to produce complex conditional 'dilemmas' and long series of rhetorical questions, which merely confuse the reader by presenting an infinite number of possibilities ¹. The basic technique, however, is sound. All the unspoken assumptions, 'suspicious speeches and byous glances' which lie behind an apparently impersonal statement are revealed ². Bridges notices the skilful use of veiled imperatives to furnish the missing links in the deductive chain, and with some irony puts his summing up of their method into their own mouths:

What, will our Learned brethren here say? Tush, we meane not, in saying: 'it may be plaine to everie man by this reason: to reason' so strictly according to the 'order of teaching' in Logike: but we reason at large Rhethorically. ³

Bridges is accusing the author of the Declaration of claiming the status of a demonstration for that which is no more than a probable oration.

caused Fulke embarrassment and offence, Travers underlines the fact that it is: '... of like the Printers or some others to whose hande the copie might come, a thing usuallie done and without anie just note of ostentation in the Author, who is seldom or never privie to such additions' (A Defence of the Ecclesiastical Discipline, 4).

1. Bridges, Defence. See p.117 for a whole page of rhetorical questions dissecting the statement 'Whatsoever shall please themselves to call of count indifferent, that must be so holden of all men'.
2. Ibid., 101.
3. Ibid., 124.

Hence the obsession with form and method which so irritated his Puritan repliers. On the material which occupies most of Book I Travers comments:

The Replie to this section is the most impertinent and tedious that may be. For differing nothing from the Declaration in opinion of any matter here directlie set downe, yet standeth he playing in a maner, upon every worde ... 1

Fenner attempts to recall him to the controversialist's real task: 'Wherefore desiring him in the bowells of Christ JESUS, to leave slaundring, caveling, perverting of playne sentences, and to reason pithelie and Syllogisticallie out of Gods worde ...' ². Yet a closer examination of Fenner's own work reveals it to be even more vulnerable to Bridges' criticism than that of Fulke - more vulnerable, in that the pretensions to strict logic are more formal and explicit. The very title of his work suggests that he is dealing with contingent areas of human behaviour rather than with absolute truths. Justifying his colleagues' procedures rather than their beliefs, he cites reasons which suggest that the cause is sufficiently 'probable' to merit the stand they have taken and to discredit the persecution they have encountered ³. For example:

Hath it not of M. Raynolds and other men bin publiklie proved out of the booke of Common prayer, M. Nowels Catechisme, the booke of ordayning B. Priests, and Deacons, and other bookes published by authoritie, that wee may preache for, praye for, and by all good meanes seeke for this Discipline we desire? 4

For all his appeal to his opponent to reason 'pithilie and Syllogisticallie out of Gods worde', the progression of Fenner's own argument tends to be by historical casuistry of the kind quoted above. The syllogisms at the end of the work are little more than static verbal diagrams summing up his own point of view; they are not means of disciplined engagement with the opponent's views.

1. Travers, Defence of the Ecclesiasticall Discipline, 137.

2. Fenner, A Defence of the godlie ministers, 150.

3. Ibid., 54-5.

4. Ibid., 55.

Fenner's work illustrates perfectly the development of a style which, while still advertising its adherence to the conventions of disputation and 'the evident groundes of Gods worde'¹, actually uses those conventions not to promote disciplined interchange by careful definition of the point at issue, but to give quasi-logical form and clarity to rhetorical assertions based on historical or legal casuistry.

This development is one whose seeds can be traced in earlier writings (see pp.161-2): I would like to suggest, however, that the exact form taken by an increasingly pragmatic controversial logic in the 1580s is determined by the dominant influence of the French dialectician Ramus. It is not my purpose here to attempt any extensive or technical survey of the impact of Ramus on English thought; this has already been done by Wilbur S. Howell in his book, Logic and Rhetoric in England 1500-1700². No student of controversial literature of this period, however, can afford to ignore the connection between an increasingly mechanistic view of logic and the decline of personal engagement in debate which is so thoroughly explored by Walter J. Ong in his work, Ramus, Method and the Decay of Dialogue. From the Art of Discourse to the Art of Reason³ (Harvard, 1958).

Ramus' ideas on the structure of discourse are extremely simple, despite the fact that in later editions of his works he cloaks them in technical verbiage. Words and propositions are seen as so many discrete mathematical equations which can be shuffled around without losing their meaning; Ramus sees reasoning in terms not of the perception of relationships between human statements, but of simple mathematical calculations:

Et semble que ces vocables soyent traduictz de
mathématiques en dialectique car comme le bon compteur
en adjoustant et déduisant veoit certainement en la
closture du compte le relique, ainsi les dialecticiens

1. Ibid., see full title.

2. Princeton, 1956.

3. The discussion which follows is heavily indebted to Father Ong's work, as the footnotes will testify.

en adjoustant la proposition et déduisant l'assomption,
voient en la conclusion la vérité ou faulseté de la
question. 1

In the 1546 edition of Training in Dialectic he visualises definitions, rules and judgements as being written on pieces of paper and jumbled together in an urn; the process of expounding an art logically is seen as that of arranging these lottery tickets in descending order of generality². This Ramus called the 'Method of Teaching'. The term 'method' used to describe a shortcut to the presentation of any subject was hardly a novelty. Ramus, however, redistributed the subject-matter of logic and rhetoric in a way which gave the word new significance. As Howell sums it up:

To Aristotle and Cicero, dialectic was the theory of learned communication, rhetoric of popular communication, and thus both arts needed the two former processes (i.e. invention and arrangement) while rhetoric needed the two latter (style and delivery) in particular. To Ramus, dialectic was the theory of subject matter and form in communication, rhetoric the theory of stylistic and oral presentation. By his standards, invention and arrangement were the true property of logic, and must be treated only in logic, even if arrangement had to have two aspects, one for the learned auditor and the other for the people. 3

Thus 'method' became proper to logic alone; and Ramus invested the word with a pseudo-scientific significance by trying to assimilate the complex progression from antecedent to consequent to his own simple progression from general to special, and insisting that his Method of Teaching - later called the Method of Nature - reflected the innate logical unfolding of the subject by deduction and was thus more than an arbitrary shortcut⁴. This claim is a feature of later editions of his works in which he seeks to give the simple practicalities of the earlier editions (born of a desire to revise the arts curriculum) greater academic status. It is clearly present in the technical jargon of his 1572 definition: 'Method is the intelligible order (dianoia)

1. Pierre de la Ramee, Dialectique (French edn. of 1555); Edition critique ... de Michel Dassonville (Geneva, 1964), 89 (original pagination).

2. See W. J. Ong, Ramus, Method and the Decay of Dialogue, 245.

3. Howell, Logic and Rhetoric in England, 165.

4. See Ong, Ramus, 248-51.

of various homogeneous axioms ranged one before the other according to the clarity of their nature ...' ¹. Clarity, as Ong notes, is essentially a rhetorical ideal which relates to ease of communication; it is all too easy, however, to accept Ramus' implicit claim that what is clearest and most communicable in rhetorical terms is also that which is self-evident in logical terms. In earlier editions of the Dialectic he maintained the distinction between the logical 'Methode de Nature' ('Methode de Nature est par laquelle ce qui est du tout et absolument plus evident est prepose' ²), and the 'Methode de Prudence' - in which the things put first are not logically primary: '... mais neantmoins plus convenables a celluy qu'il fault enseigner, et plus probables a l'induire et amener où nous prétendons' ³. By 1569 his lifelong desire to stress that the same logical progressions are proper to both necessary and contingent arguments has caused him to name only one method, and to treat the obvious divergence from it employed by poets and orators as cunning dissimulation which distorts the one basic order in the interest of effect.

Dudley Fenner's highly compressed translation of Ramus' logic into English ⁴ illustrates for us the ways in which Ramus' mathematical view of language and emphasis on method influenced the Puritan way of thinking. To Fenner logic is no longer the guiding thread in the metaphysical labyrinth; rather it renders the known more comprehensible by placing it in simple categories. In his preface he commends:

... the simple plainnesse of these treatises, which draw men to no curious or doubtfull discourses, but onely put them in minde of that which they may easily seeke and know in most familiar examples with great fruite and delighte ... ⁵

His account of Ramus' 'Methode de Nature' is entirely pragmatic:

1. Ibid., 251.

2. Ramus, Dialectique (1555), 120.

3. Ibid., 128.

4. Dudley Fenner, The Artes of Logike and Rethorike, plainlie set foorth in the Englishe tounge (no place [Middelburg, Schilders], 1584), facsimile reprint in Robert D. Pepper (ed.), Four Tudor Books on Education (Gainesville, Florida, 1966).

5. Ibid., sig. A 2 verso.

Methode ... whereby many and divers axiomes ... are so ordered as that the easiest and moste generall be set downe first, the harder are [sic: for 'and'] lesse generall next ...

For as we consider in an axiome truth or falshood, in a Sillogisme, necessarie following or not following, so in Methode the best and perfectest, the worst and troublesomest way to handle a matter. 1

Yet it is classed under 'Logike': 'Rethorike' has become no more than 'an Arte of speaking finely' ².

This classification legitimises the Puritan tendency to fulminate against 'Rhetoric' (seen as excessive verbal ornamentation) while continuing to make use of arguments which in the Ciceronian system would have formed part of the armoury of rhetorical invention and judgement. With a gloss of Ramist terminology and a careful use of 'method', probable arguments suddenly acquire the status of necessary ones and an oration is presented with the scientific seriousness of a demonstration. The nature of Ramism is that of a shortcut:

Art. 22: In the Universities, by bringing in the studie of Ramus writings, a man ignorant in Logike and artes, and fantastical in all actions, they have almost overthrowen all good learning, by studying of naked comments, all sound divinitie.

Art. 32: In leaving the studie of fathers and ancient writers, and schoole learning, all the puritans are become verbal divines, without sound matter. 3

'Naked comments', 'verbal divines', hints at the nature of the argument conducted by later Puritans. Like the Ramism from which it derives, it engages with the surface of language, rather than trying to plot the exact intersection between the historical derivation and current usage which places a theological word in a given religious exchange.

Thus, as the Establishment developed a pragmatic critique of dissent, its moderate Puritan opponents developed a pragmatic methodology to cope with it, while still paying lip-service to the ideals of open debate and the validity of proof by syllogism. Confronting an adversary whose belief in the

1. Ibid., sig. D 1 recto.

2. Ibid., sig. D 1 verso.

3. Sutcliffe, An Answere to a certaine Libel supplicatorie, 140-1.

perpetual government of the church by the Presbyterian system had hardened into a set of indestructible formulae, Bridges had wisely aimed his attack not at the theory per se, but at the implications of the practice, especially in the current compromise of the subscription debate (to which he devotes much of his confutations of Field's preface) and in the potential political implications of the new distribution of authority (the subject of Book I). The fact that these two parts of his massive work are the only ones to receive detailed confutation (the first by Fenner and the second by Travers) indicates that Puritans realised that in the politically charged climate of the 1580s they were most vulnerable to attack on this practical front - and, indeed, the campaign carried on against them by Whitgift had given them plenty of material for detailed and specific historical reply. Yet they were unwilling to admit that their arguments, like Bridges' attack on their motivation, were only probable; this would have involved retreat from the proud claim that all their arguments were based on the clear infallibility of the Word. The tension between mental engagement with the opponent and the desire to vent one's anger at historical injustice is partially resolved by rephrasing historical comments as logical propositions, or by presenting one's own reactions as the inevitable conclusions of a properly methodical exposition of events. The proportion of visible logical machinery is much higher in late Puritan writings than in earlier tracts; this merely represents a desire to impress the reader with quasi-mathematical clarity and thus cause him to overlook the fallacies of arguments more often based on historical observation than on first principles.

To illustrate this point one might quote the anonymous tract printed in 1590 which bears the title An Humble Motion with submission unto the Right Honourable Ll of Hir Majesties Privie Counsell. This explicitly disclaims the intention of being 'any invective against the present state'¹. It sets out to prove a single thesis:

1. An Humble Motion, 11.

The proposition which I take in hande to prove is this: It is the best and surest policy for the maintenance of peace, and the good estate of this land every way, to reforme the disorders of the church according to the holy Scriptures of God, and to have no other church-government, than that which Christ hath ordained and the apostles practised. 1

In so formulating his case, the author is yielding to the temptation to confront the Establishment pragmatism on its own terms; in Aristotelian terms, his work falls into the category of a deliberative oration. The sequence of the argument shows the influence of Ramistic method - he proceeds from 'generall' to 'speciall' reasons - but the proofs cited do not exhibit a logical progression from antecedent to consequent. For example, his 'proof' that subscription is wrong is based not on an examination of its theoretical rationale, but on an emotive sequence of later events said (without any warrant) to be consequences of the earlier campaign - the 'post hoc ergo propter hoc fallacy': 'So', he writes, 'if we woulde consider what hath followed the disorderly and rash urging of subscription ... we know that one feare or plague hath ever since followed an other ...' ². He goes on to mention Papist plots against the Queen, the dearth of corn, resultant penury, and the protracted Spanish threat. His arguments are, in fact, borrowed from the rhetorician's armoury. Their use in religious controversy is no novelty; what is new is the Ramist influence which allows the author to set them out in a formal order and present them as strictly logical demonstrations.

This kind of writing is inimical to debate; where every suggestion is given the status of an axiom nothing remains open to discussion. Conversely, substantial objections of the adversary can be dismissed by a sort of legerdemain as errors in method ³.

1. Ibid., 10.

2. Ibid., 32-3.

3. For example, when Bridges insists that Scripture mentions more gifts than the Discipline allows for, Walter Travers comments dismissively: 'eyther he mistaketh generalls for specials, or maketh a difference of sundrie kindes of offices where none is' (Travers, A Defence of the Ecclesiastical Discipline, 50).

The syllogism, too, becomes a rhetorical gambit. Ramist logic is often little more than a functional arrangement of statements for easy comprehension, and in certain later Puritan writings the syllogism is used to stress by reiteration rather than to prove. To illustrate the point, I shall quote and comment on one of the syllogisms 'proving' the eldership perpetual with which Fenner ends his defence of the ministers:

If there be anie reason to make this form of government mutable, not ordinarie, perpetuall, and the best, it is eyther because the extraordinarie giftes of prophesying, workinge of myracles, etc, are ceased, or because of the accesse of the Christian Magistrate unto the Church:

But these rather doe make for the continuance and excellencie of this government:

Therefore there is no cause to let it from being ordinarie, perpetuall and the best. 1

Earlier Puritan writers like Cartwright used the syllogism in a way which presupposed their own definitions of the premises, but which was at least nominally correct. This has no logical status at all. The two alternatives stated in the major premise do not exhaust the range of possible cavils against the eldership and thus the negative conclusion is invalid. Fenner is simply taking the two commonest arguments in favour of a mutable church government and denying them without giving any valid reason for doing so - the minor premise begs innumerable questions.

This use of the syllogism is an important element in the rhetoric of assertion which later Puritan controversialists developed to counter the insinuations of the Establishment rhetoric of suggestion. Confronting an opponent whose speculation probed and dissected the motive behind every statement, Fenner here presents his conclusion in the form of an impersonal inference from first principles, rather than as a statement of personal commitment in which the speaker is clearly visible and therefore vulnerable. In earlier debates the Puritans had countered accusations of subjectivity by pointing to the univocal and absolute nature of the Word which they expounded,

1. Fenner, A Defence of the godlie Ministers , 141.

and this claim is never consciously abandoned. Faced with an increasingly sophisticated analysis of the subjective element inherent in interpretation (which culminates in the work of Hooker), they reinforced the prior claim by setting out their interpretations as syllogisms. As the use of overt logical form and terminology increases, however, so the actual logical content of the works diminishes. Contraries are treated as contradictories and arbitrary antitheses created which over-simplify the categories observable in reality but which have the merit of putting the position of the author in a clear and memorable way. In other words, axioms and syllogisms cease to be the instruments of reason and become instead the tools of method. In one tract Penry comments in parenthesis: ' ... (I doo not tie my selfe unto exact formes in my syllogismes) ¹. This exactly sums up the dominant mentality, which rather than submitting to common linguistic forms seeks to manipulate them.

Engaged with an enemy not averse to the use of coercion, both verbal and physical, Puritan controversialists retaliate by turning the syllogism into a defensive weapon for use not in debate but in the courtroom. The need now is not for lengthy and technical explorations of the issues at stake, but for pithy résumés which can be grasped and reproduced by every defendant, however deficient his formal education. The relationship between historical pressure and the move away from literary disputations to epitomes is clearly expressed by Udall in the second preface, that addressed 'To the Reader', before his work, A Demonstration of the trueth of that Discipline which Christe hath prescribed in his worde:

... when these wofull troubles that were renewed upon us (by that wretched subscription, that was every where urged) did begin to increase, I thought it meete to betake myselfe unto that which I had read, or might any way by studie finde out, concerning the cause, and collected all into a briefe sum, and referred every thing unto some head; whiche beeing ever present with me, might furnish me to answere in the defence of the trueth, though

1. Penry, An exhortation, 27.

it were of a sodden ... 1

The author of An Humble Motion recommends the Demonstration to those who wish to see the cause 'layd open and concluded in scholastical manner'², but we must not be misled by its technical vocabulary³ into thinking that it represents a serious and learned engagement with the opposition. His use of the term makes explicit an ambiguity in all Puritan use of logic. As every boy at university learned, demonstrative proof of a scientific nature proceeded from premisses: 'true, primary, immediate, better known than, prior to and causative of the conclusion'⁴. It was the proper elucidation of the necessary consequences of first principles. Debates on the origins or validity of human judgements not susceptible to verification as self-evident were probable only. Normally, then, debates on matters of religion could be held to produce only probable results: but because their proofs were conducted in the words and terms of Scripture, the religious equivalent of natural first principles, radicals considered the syllogisms they constructed to be demonstrative. The point is well illustrated at Udall's trial. One of his accusers pressed Udall to say what a demonstration was, suggesting that Udall's work showed he failed to understand the term. Udall angrily replied that every boy at Cambridge of one year's standing knew what a demonstration was, but his accuser continued to press him, stating that the work 'seemed to me in many things

-
1. Udall, A Demonstration of the trueth of that Discipline which Christe hath prescribed in his worde for the governement of his Church, in all times and places, untill the ende of the worlde (no date [1588] or place), ed. E. Arber (London, 1880), 9. Brevity was not, however, seen by the opposition as the soul of theological wit; as Gabriel Harvey wrote in Pierces Supererogation: 'Platformes offer themselves to every working conceit; and a few Tables, or Abridgements are soone dispatched; but, whatsoever pretext may coulerably bee alledged, undoubtedly they attempt, they know not what, and enterprise above the possibility of their reach, that imagine they can in a Pamflet, or two, contrive such an omnisufficient, and incorruptible method of Ecclesiasticall governement, as could not by any private meditation, or publike occasion be found out, with the studdy, or practise of fifteene hundred yeares' (The Works of Gabriel Harvey, ed. Alexander B. Grosart (London, 1884), vol.II, 134).
 2. An Humble Motion, Preface 'To the Reader'.
 3. Udall, A Demonstration. In proving archbishops and bishops distinct from other ministers in ch.2, Udall uses the scholastic vocabulary, e.g. 'A divers forme maketh divers things' (p.19).
 4. Posterior Analytics, 71b, trans. Hugh Tredennick, in Loeb Classical

not to conclude probably, much less demonstratively¹. Udall's reply is interesting:

I will shew you, as I take it, why the author called it a Demonstration; because the reason which is usually brought to prove the conclusions, is commonly drawn from a place of scripture, which hath more force in it to manifest the conclusion *ἡ ἀπὸ τῆς γραφῆς* than any of Aristotle's proofs drawn, as they say, ex primis, veris, necessariis, et immediatis causis.²

Unwilling to admit any human and therefore merely 'probable' modification to Scripture to suit syllogistic disputation, radicals claimed the status of a demonstration for the activity of detaching from their context biblical statements (all too often statements clearly relating to a particular historical situation) and presenting them as free-standing first principles capable of furnishing the major premise of a syllogism.

The faults of such syllogisms, and of the rationale behind them, are analysed exhaustively in a hastily printed Remonstrance against the Demonstration. Identifying technical faults such as the use of the undistributed middle, and criticising Udall's habit of arguing from secular analogies - 'this is to parabolize, not to demonstrate'³ - the author concurs with Udall's trial critics, calling his syllogisms: '... probable sylogismes, and those but very fewe, or indeede Paralogismes, meere Sophismes, to make a brawle against received trueth'⁴. The imagery of violence is echoed by Martin Marprelate: 'you defend your legges against Martins strokes while the Puritans by their Demonstrations crushe the very braines of your

Library no. 391 (London and Cambridge, Mass., 1960), 31.

1. Cobbett, State Trials, vol.I, col.1275.

2. Ibid.

3. Anon., A Remonstrance or Plaine Detection of some of the Faults and Hideous Sores of such Sillie Syllogismes and Impertinent Allegations as out of sundrie factious Pamphlets and Rhapsodies, are cobled up together in a Booke entitled A DEMONSTRATION OF DISCIPLINE (London, 1590), 14. Hasty printing is suggested by the confused syntax and the lengthy erratum list.

4. Ibid., 1.

Bishopdomes'¹. A claim of aggressive force which ten years before would have been made by a Puritan only for the Word itself is here made for a presentation of that Word's message in the non-Scriptural terms of formal logic. The element of human persuasion is still not admitted, for the conclusions are presented as irresistible, almost mathematical deductions from axioms, but it is even more clearly present than before.

PART II: The Marprelate Tracts and After

Writers like Udall and Fenner do not mock the conventions they distort; a study of the Marprelate tracts themselves, however, reveals a much more sophisticated and self-conscious parody of the accepted conventions of discourse. Consideration of these tracts has in the past been rendered difficult by misconceptions about their political implications - misconceptions such as those which impelled William Pierce to subtitle his Historical Introduction to the Marprelate Tracts: 'A Chapter in the Evolution of Religious and Civil Liberty in England'². Donald J. McGinn has recently exploded the persistent myth of the tracts as being the product of 'an apostle of freedom of thought'³. His own account of the author, identified with Penry, is free from such sentiment, but may still mislead if not read with care:

But who, we might ask, would look for either chivalry or courtesy in a Savonarola? Surely Penry's hatred of the episcopacy, which, in his opinion, had blocked the reformation of the English Church, was scarcely less violent than that of the great Italian reformer for what he considered the religious abuses among the Florentines. Indeed, in a rare moment of objectivity Pierce himself accurately expresses the true spirit of Penry's writing: 'Fire and indignation redden and glow in some of his pages'.⁴

1. The Epitome, sig. [A] 2 verso.

2. Pierce, An Historical Introduction to the Marprelate Tracts, Title Page.

3. Donald J. McGinn, John Penry and the Marprelate Controversy (New Brunswick, 1966), 202.

4. Ibid., 203.

This is an accurate enough description of the tone of Penry's serious tracts, but it seems to me that the Marprelate tracts deserve a less naive stylistic analysis. The author of the Marprelate tracts was not overcome by apocalyptic ire which eliminated literary courtesy; I would submit that he was deliberately adopting a style fashionable at the time, that of polemic which expressed contempt by making humorous use of colloquial vocabulary ¹:

I sawe the cause of Christs government/ and of the
Bishops Antichristian dealing to be hidden. The most
part of men could not be gotten ^(sic) to read any thing/
written in the defence of the on/and against the other.
I bethought mee therefore/ of a way whereby men might
be drawne to do both/ perceiving the humors of men in
these times (especially of those that are in any place)
to be given to mirth. I tooke that course. 2

To treat the bishops themselves with a lack of respect normally shown only to disreputable stage players and similar figures in low society is to administer a calculated shock to the reader's sense of decorum; it does not indicate a lack of artistic control. In the study which follows I hope to show that the transformation of the dignified exchange of the disputation into the casual repartee of the stage is part of that deliberate attack on decorum which gives the Marprelate tracts their startling readability.

The first tract, The Epistle, declares itself to be the introductory preface to an 'epitome' of Bridges' first book ³. In the title it is qualified as 'learned' ⁴; but on the first page Martin makes an ironic plea to the bishops: 'Againe/ may it please you to give me leave to play the Duns for the nonce as well as he/ otherwise dealing with master doctors booke I cannot keepe decorum personae' ⁵. In fact, of course, decorum personae is exactly what he intends to flout. As we read on in the tract, we see that he takes

1. For a possible stylistic precedent see the discussion of Stephen Gosson's contribution to the anti-stage debate in William Ringler's monograph, Stephen Gosson: A Biographical and Critical Study (Princeton Studies in English, vol.25 (1942)), esp. chs.IV and V.

2. Hay any Worke, 14.

3. The Epistle, Title Page.

4. Ibid.

5. Ibid., 1.

cavalier liberties not only with the persons, but with the normal mode of religious dialogue. In one sense he is closer than any other writer to reproducing the oral confrontation of disputation: 'Ha/ ha/ D. Copcot are ye there/ why do not you answeare the confutation of your sermon at Pauls crosse?' ¹. The level of the exchange, however, is that of a series of challenges which amount to insults. Marprelate parodies the polite preliminaries of debate: 'Right poysond/ persecuting and terrible priests ...' ², and when a few pages into the tract he presents his formal thesis in syllogistic form, the cynicism with which he adapts logic to his own ends becomes obvious. For example, Martin's second and fuller statement of his position proceeds from the major: 'They are pettie popes/ and pettie Antichrists/ whosoever usurpe the authority of pastors over them/ who by the ordinance of God/ are to bee under no pastors' ³, to the conclusion: 'Therefore our L. Bb ... are pettie Antichrists/ pettie popes/ proud prelates/ intollerable withstanders of reformation/ enemies of the gospell/ and most covetous wretched priests' ⁴. An objection is interpolated in the margin: 'M. Marprelate you put more than the question in the conclusion of your syllogisme' ⁵. This is clearly true; the syllogism has been used to formalise indiscriminate abuse. The text, however, continues with some contempt: 'This is a pretie matter/ that standers by/ must be so busie in other mens games: why sawceboxes must you be pratling?' ⁶. That questioning of form which is so important in formal logic is treated as impudent heckling; the final withdrawal from dialogue is seen in Marprelate's reply: 'Woulde you be

1. Ibid., 3.

2. Ibid., 1.

3. Ibid., 4.

4. Ibid., 5.

5. Ibid.

6. Ibid.

answered? Then you must knowe that I have set downe nothing but the trueth in the conclusion/ and the syllogismes are mine owne/ I may do what I will with them/ and thus holde you content.' ¹ At the end of what he calls his 'learned discourse' on the subject of this syllogism, he seems reluctant to abandon it, and adds: 'But what doe you say/ if by this lustie syllogisme of mine owne making/ I prove them Popes once more for recreations sake' ².

The Marprelate author makes use of logical language in a private and idiosyncratic way which is not open to objective criticism based on accepted public norms. Attacking the contradictions in the Establishment statements on the subject of the civil magistrate's right to preach, Martin writes:

And because it shall be seene that I deale uprightly betweene you and the P.P. prelates, I will set downe my reason and answer it when you can: it shall be concluded I warrant you in moode and figure. But in deed I have invented a newe moode of mine owne (for I have bin a great schooleman in my daies) which containeth in it a great misterie. The misterie I will expound/ it may be in a book for the purpose. In the meantime/ if you resort to my sonne Martin senyor that worthy wight he it may be/ shalbe able to unfold the secresie thereof. ³

The syllogism which follows 'Concluded in Perncanterburikenold' ⁴ simply sets out the contradiction by quoting statements of Perne and Whitgift which, taken together as major and minor of the same syllogism, produce the unflattering conclusion: 'No Lord Bishop can be an ordinarie preacher without sinne' ⁵. The 'misterie' is simply a use of statements out of context to produce a false mathematical equivalence; by describing his techniques in near-blasphemous theological terms (see I Tim., 3, v.16) Marprelate is in fact mocking all those who view the proofs of logic with almost superstitious reverence. He refers us to his son Martin Senior for a further explanation, and if we follow his advice and turn to the tract The just censure and reproofe

1. Ibid.

2. Ibid., 7-8.

3. The Epitome, sig. E 4 verso.

4. Ibid.

5. Ibid.

of Martin Junior, we find a most extreme and startling elucidation of his attitude to ruled language. The elder brother is berating his junior for publishing his father's theses in an imperfect form; Old Martin may, says Martin Senior, be forced into a more adequate defence of them, which may necessitate a change in the structure of the as yet unpublished 'More work for Cooper':

I deny not in deede, but it is easier for him to alter his course, then for any one writer that I knowe of, because hee hath chosen him such a methode/ as no man else besides hath done. Nay, his syllogismes, axiomes, method, and all are of his own making, hee will borrowe none of those common schoole rules, no not so much as the common grammar ...' 1

In the Marprelate tracts we see the abuse of logic taken to its illogical conclusion in the creation of a field of language entirely - and explicitly - under the author's sole control. Defeat in argument hence becomes impossible; as one anti-Martinist wrote of Martin:

Hee was a wrangling Logician, that had rather say anything, then seeme to be conquered in disputation, which made him as a man mad and impudent, to maintaine by argument, that his dog was his father, and the father of all the world; he grew so perverse and so slippery in his conclusions, that he proved as quick as an Eele in every quirke; the harder he was griped, the sooner he slipt out of every hand. 2

The Marprelate tracts are illuminating, then, because one can check one's conjectural interpretation of earlier controversial trends against such overt statements of intent as those quoted above. Marprelate is openly committed to the primary aim of audience persuasion; one feels that at least part of the Puritan reaction against his scurrilous and jesting spirit is one of shock at seeing their own dubious logical techniques pursued to the point of parody and pointed out to the reader as a source of entertainment. The pragmatic uses to which Martin puts the conventions of disputation find less obtrusive

-
1. The just censure and reproofe of Martin Junior ..., sig. B ii verso.
 2. The Returne of the renowned Cavaliero Pasquill of England, from the other side of the Seas, and his meeting with Marforius at London upon the Royall Exchange (London, 1589), sig. D ii recto/verso, in The Works of Thomas Nashe, ed. R. B. McKerrow. Reprinted from the original edition with corrections, ed. F. P. Wilson (Oxford, 1958), vol. I, 98.

but still valid parallels in overtly serious works whose authors might have described their use of logic in such idealistic terms as those of the moderate Puritan Bredwell:

The worde Lodgicke is derived from two Greek words, which together signifie 'to use reason' and so the learned understand by the worde 'Lodgicke' the role of disputing or reasoning: not reason itself, but the regular use thereof: not the actual nor habitually knowledge which is in every man, according to greater or/ lesser aptnes and clearnes, but a ruled course of long observed precepts, for the helpe of all. And this artificiall rule of reasoning, foloweth and expresth (as in a sensible image) the universall force of the naturall ... that so a man beholding in this artificial glasse, as it were the face of his antient estate, before the sinful deprivation (which brought in, not only that same disorder and corrupting of our affections, but also this confuse cloudines of our understanding, which we see in every one, more or less cleared, according as they have more or lesse laboured in reforming it, either by the observation of all times, which stands in arte, or els by their owne proper observations, which consist in the rawe experience of their owne short lives) might strive on still, to take away the spottes remaining ... 1

The distinctive fascination of these tracts is that their satire is not an incidental feature which diverts the tone from one of general seriousness to lash the opponent, but an all-pervading genre which mocks the whole mode of controversial communication. In other words, they form both

-
1. Stephen Bredwell, The Rasing of the Foundations of Brownisme ... (London, 1588), 119. His status of moderate Puritan is indicated by the statement of intent in the epistle To the Christian Reader, which declares that he wishes to distinguish clearly between moderate reformers and schismatics in the public mind: 'that hereby those impure mouths shall be dashed, that hertofore in their malicious defence of corruptions, have made no conscience, to clothe all those, that have duetifully urged the proceeding of our Church unto perfection, in one liverie, with these schismaticall spirites ...' (4 recto/verso). Bredwell's statement recalls Ramus' explanation in the Dialectique for his production of a work explaining his logical method when he believed that reason was innate and universal. The mind, he says, is often turned aside by 'trompeuses affections', and therefore it requires a constant disciplined effort to recall it to the unchanging rectitude of the syllogism: 'La methode, bien que naturelle, exige un effort constant dont tous les esprits ne sont pas capables parce qu'ils se laissent distraire par la vraisemblance'. Bredwell's description of the two methods of learning ('the observation of all times, which stands in arte', 'their owne proper observations'), recalls Ramus' account of his own 'voye' of induction: '... partie de principes, qui est la raison universelle, partie d' experience, qui est l'induction singuliere'. See the Introduction, chs.1 and 2 of the critical edition of Ramus already quoted. His statement also reflects neo-Platonist ideas, particularly his 'sensible image'.

the logical conclusion of one trend and an entirely new departure. In the rest of this section, therefore, I wish to look first at the way in which the use of language in the Marprelate tracts epitomises all that has been hinted at in the earlier part of this chapter, and then at the novel way in which Martin's jests undermine the credibility of the whole debate.

One might summarise the points made earlier about controversial logic by saying that it can become a three-fold disguise. Firstly, a statement of personal commitment may be transformed into a thesis; thus a predication made by an individual becomes an axiom and claims self-evident and impersonal truth. Secondly, historical and personal comment may be set in a framework of logical enunciation which appears to give the most trivial anecdote a universal significance ¹. Thirdly, the tendency to reduce a complex discussion to a simple syllogism often conceals a great deal of violence done to the evidence, and a desire to impress one's ideas on the reader's mind rather than clarifying for him the real issues at stake.

These three areas of language abuse - the first dealing with propositions, the second with method, and the third with the syllogism - could be described as systematic distortions of the three kinds of 'judgement' which are mentioned (though not in the same order) by Ramus: 'Enonciation' (his word for proposition), 'Syllogisme', 'Methode'. This illustrates the point that the language of polemic is not merely an entertaining diversion from the serious expository task of (in this case) theology; it is a serious attempt to subvert the reader's ability to assess the evidence he has found, and to draw valid conclusions from it. Verbal pyrotechnics divert the reader's attention from a more insidious onslaught on his mind; and the discussion of the Marprelate tracts which follows concentrates not on describing the superficial characteristics of the tracts' style, but on an analysis of them

1. This may be the linguistic equivalent of the principle of biblical interpretation stated as follows by Udall: 'Examples not contrarying anye rule, or reason of the Scripture, be to be followed, as if they were commaundements' (A Demonstration, 42).

as controversial dialectic. The reader may be surprised to find that these tracts, often treated as pure entertainment, are here given what may seem inappropriately solemn treatment. It seems to me, however, that although Martin Marprelate mocks the formal conventions of disputation with an adversary, he takes the business of audience persuasion very seriously indeed, and his sophisticated use of language to persuade deserves detailed consideration.

To illustrate the first point, I would like to analyse the tract Theses Martinianae. Subtitled Certaine Demonstrative Conclusions, sette downe and collected (as it should seeme) by that famous and renowned [sic] Clarke, the reverend Martin Marprelate the great ..., this work is presented as an attempt to pacify 'Those whom foolishly men call Puritanes' by couching the data in an impersonal and therefore inoffensive form ¹. To consider writing in theses and invective as mutually exclusive is, of course, a faux naïf defence used by reformers from Knox ² to Beza ³. Indeed, though Martin says he is writing 'without inveighing against either person or cause' ⁴, a few lines later, after expressing his despair of the bishops, he adds: 'Yet ere I leave them, I do heere offer unto the view of the world, some part of their monstrous corruptions ...' ⁵, which is hardly an impartially descriptive phrase. The real aim of the tract is not to avoid scurrility, but to contrast sharply with the style of argument from opinion adopted by the latest protagonist

1. Theses Martinianae, sig. A ii recto.

2. See John Knox's 'Declaration' to Queen Elizabeth, printed in the Appendix of Edward Arber's edition of The first Blast of the Trumpet against the monstrous regiment of women (London, 1880; first edition, 1558): 'I can not Deny the Writeing of a booke against the usurped auctoritie and Injust regiment of wemen ... but why that eyther your grace, eyther yit ony such as unfeanedlie favour the libertie of England should be offended at the auctor of such a work I can perceave no just occasion for first my booke tuchheht not your graces person in especiall ...' (p.58).

3. In a letter to Beza written in 1593, Whitgift not unjustly commented on the habit of writing 'in thesi' that it brought with it: 'very great prejudice; and in effect condemned all other reformed Churches which did not follow or admit this kind of government'. Strype, Whitgift, vol.II, 162.

4. Theses Martinianae, sig. A ii recto.

5. Ibid.

of the Establishment, Thomas Cooper. In his preface Martin plays scornfully with the word 'opinion':

I am not of opinion (saith he) that una semper debet esse oeconomia Ecclesiae. That the government of the Church shoulde alwayes, and in all places, bee one and the same, especially by a company of Elders. Lo sir, what say you to this? here is inough, I trowe for any mans satisfaction, that bishop Couper is not of opinion. Yea but our Savior Christ his Apostles and holy Martirs are of opinion, that the government of the church should alwayes, and in all places, be one, especially by a company of Elders. As for my Lord Winchesters opinion, wee have little or nothing to doe with that: nor no great matter which side it leane on, whether with or against the trueth. 1

The Bishop of Winchester's personal preference is irrelevant to the truth.

Martin is careful to present that truth as self-existent, and to disclaim all responsibility for the form in which it is found here. Thus, the overall title and the heading to the main body of the tract, allegedly provided by Martin Junior, stress that Martin merely 'sette downe', 'collected', or 'compiled' the conclusions. Martin Junior's claim to have found the papers lying beside a bush, accidentally dropped and accidentally found, and to have printed them in their imperfect first draft form, is a further attempt to persuade the reader that this tract is innocent of literary artifice and to turn his attention from the persona of Martin to the theses themselves ².

The Epilogue is careful to stress that proof of these contentions is or shortly will be available; here, however, they are presented in a deliberately bald and impersonal form in order to contrast with the style of Cooper's argument, dominated as it is by the first person pronoun singular ³. In fact, as at

1. Ibid., sig. A ii verso.

2. Ibid., sig. C iii verso-C iv recto.

3. For example: 'And surely I am of this opinion, that a poore and straight state of living in the Ministerie, especially in these dayes, would bee a greater cause of evill and inconvenience in the church ... then nowe their ample and large livings are. I coulde, and will (when God shall give occasion) declare good reason of this my opinion; which for some considerations I thinke good at this time to lette passe' (Thomas Cooper, An Admonition to the People of England (London, 1589), reprinted in the English Scholar's Library, no.15, ed. E. Arber (Birmingham, 1883)), 135.

least one anti-Martinist tract explicitly notes, the passage from the preface quoted above simply sets up one unsupported opinion against another, with the difference that Martin is arrogant enough to put his opinion into the mouth of Christ himself, and to present it in the form of 'Demonstrative Conclusions' ¹.

Theses Martinianae, however, is perhaps the least successful of the tracts in literary terms. The sacrifice of one controlling persona entails the loss of any coherent satirical achievement. The mind of the satirist may be compared to a distorting mirror which receives the image of nature as it is and casts it back to the reader in a comically distorted form; no work which lacks such a central focus can achieve more than a few felicitous but incidental comments. The first three tracts in the series, however, exhibit an impressively coherent style of satire, which for all its exuberance never loses its sense of direction; and I would like to turn to an examination of these tracts, in particular the first, to demonstrate how the structures and techniques of the disputation are used to give a sense of sequence to what might be a series of unconnected anecdotes and to give even the most scurrilous particular comment a universal value.

It is often noted that the Marprelate tracts are more successful in literary terms than the lampoons commissioned by the Establishment to combat them ²; I would submit that this is because they do not lash out indiscriminately, but rather seek to build up a coherent case against the bishops, a case which not only records their unguarded deeds and words in anecdotes, but also orders this fragmentary evidence into a sequence which is given the status of proof. For example, at the beginning of Hay any worke

1. See The Returne of the renowned Cavaliero Pasquill, sig. C 1 recto.

2. In the context of the argument which follows, it is interesting to note the comment of W. P. Holden in his book, Anti-Puritan Satire (Yale and London, 1954), on the anti-Martinists: 'Usually, they do not manage to connect the libels with any particular weakness in the reformer's position. They make fun of Martin but they do not make fun of what he stands for' (p.51). It is my contention that the Marprelate tracts succeed at exactly the point at which their rivals failed.

For Cooper, Martin replies to Cooper's defence of 'the dignitie of priests' by quoting two tales of one unfortunate priest who is said to have acted the vice in a play and who (if Martin's tales are correct), certainly acted the fool in the pulpit ¹. Anecdotes had always been used as illustrative material; in the Marprelate tracts they emerge as the argument itself. The whole is more than a sum of the narrative parts; Martin's tendency to argue affirmatively from the particular to the general (a common fallacy) transforms discrete incidents into general statements about the leadership of the church.

Thus, Martin assumes throughout that the individual sins of the bishops can be used to produce general conclusions about the state of the church. This is strikingly illustrated by the passage at the end of The Epistle in which Martin takes a syllogism he has unfairly constructed out of a section of Bridges' argument by transforming complex modal propositions into simple categorical ones:

Some kinde of ministerie ordained by the Lorde/ was
temporarie (saith he) as for example the Mosaicall
priesthood and the ministerie of Apostles/ prophets/
etc. But the ministerie of pastors/ doctors/ elders
and deacons/ was ordayned by the Lord: Therefore it
was temporarie. 2

He then parodies this in a series of syllogisms which allow him to introduce a number of scandalous incidents in a context of logical enunciation which makes that which applies to one apply to all:

Some presbyter priest or elder in the land/ is accused
... to have two wives/ and to marie his brother unto
a woman upon her death bedd/ shee being past / recoverie.
As for example the B. of sir Davies in wales/ is this
priest as they saye: But you presbyter John are some
priest: Therefore you have committed all these
unnaturall parts. 3

In strict logical terms this is nonsense: but the point that all those who participate in the same hierarchy are all similarly guilty against God is

1. Hay any Worke, 3-4.

2. The Epistle, 48.

3. Ibid., 50.

made, and becomes clearer in the later and more serious syllogisms: 'Some men would play the turncoats/ with the B. of Glocester/ D. Kenold/ D. Perne ... But all the L. bishops/ and you brother catercap are some men: Ergo you would becom papists againe' ¹. At the end of the series Martin says to Bridges:

Admit their syllogisms offended in form as yours doth:
yet the common people ... will finde an unhappy trueth
in many of these conclusions/ wher as yours is most
false. And many of their propositions are tried truths/
having many eye and eare witnesses living. ²

General truths, then, are deduced from historical events; logic has become a way of making a statement testify to a truth beyond immediate factuality. I would like to suggest that much controversial talk about 'truth' benefits from the inherent ambiguity of the word itself. A true statement may be no more than a full and accurate account of that which occurred on a particular occasion; hence the witness's promise to 'tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth'. It may, on the other hand, be a statement of that which holds good permanently and universally, a statement about the relationship between phenomena which its maker believes to be an entirely adequate explanation of all the data available. Very often (as in the last passage from The Epistle quoted above) when Martin talks of 'truth' he refers to a statement which can only be said to be true in the first sense, but which he puts in syllogistic form as if it were true in the second sense as well. That is, he treats particular truths of fact as if they were of universal import; it is a basic rule of classical logic that from two particular premisses nothing follows, but Martin consistently disregards all the basic rules of logic ³.

1. Ibid., 51.

2. Ibid., 52.

3. For proof of this general rule of the syllogism, see A. A. Luce, Teach Yourself Logic (London, 1958), 90. This point is further developed below (see Chapter 6, pp.297-99) in an examination of the way in which the evidence proper to a criminal trial comes to assume greater importance in this debate than the evidence of ruled language.

The kind of proof normally considered appropriate at the trial of an individual accused of some particular misdemeanour - that of witnesses and statements of observation - is thus treated as condemnation of the nature of the system that individual is considered to represent. Martin seeks to persuade the reader that this further inference is permissible; in fact, it represents a dishonest attempt to force the facts to conform to a highly subjective framework of interpretation. Martin assumes that the bishops' actions do not proceed from their individual wills, but are predetermined by the nature of their office; thus one evil action is used to prove the evil nature of the system. In the Marprelate tracts we have the sense of encountering individuals, so skilful is the author's presentation of dialogue; in fact, however, the closest parallels for these vivid colloquial encounters between good and evil are found in the medieval dramatic tradition, in which every character was defined by his name, whether allegorical or biblical, and the literary interest lies in the skill with which the author transposed the cosmic struggle into a personal idiom relevant to a contemporary audience. So, too, the literary interest of the Marprelate tracts lies in the vivid incarnation of figures who represent more than the historical individuals whose names they bear. It is important to the persuasion of the audience, nonetheless, that the prior assumption controlling the presentation of the bishops should be concealed, and that conclusions about their turpitude should appear to arise naturally from impartial, historical evidence. Thus, Martin repeatedly stresses his scientific attitude to historical reporting: 'I speak not of things by heresay as of reports/ but I bring my witnesses to proove my matters' ¹.

-
1. The Epistle, 27. It is perfectly clear that this statement and others like it are part of the overall persuasive framework of the tracts, and that Martin's techniques were by no means as scrupulous as he suggests. Henry Sharpe's account of Penry's evasive reply when questioned as to the authorship of The Epistle, '... his answere was that some such notes were found in Master FEILDS study' (see Arber, Introductory Sketch, 94), strongly suggests that Field's collected material was the basis for the work; and a study of the accounts of confrontations with the Establishment presumed to be from the same source which are calendared in The Seconde Parte reveal that more often than not the fragmentary incidents have already

The expository material which links these anecdotes moves from singular propositions to general conclusions with that famous breathless rapidity which does not give the reader time to work out whether the all-embracing condemnation to which he is under strong pressure to assent is really deducible from the evidence which preceded it. For example, Martin mentions a recent order that no bibles are to be bound without the Apocrypha, and continues: 'Monstrous and ungodly wretches/ that to maintaine their owne outragious proceedings/ thus mingle heaven and earth together/ and woulde make the spirite of God/ to be the author of prophane bookes' ¹. None of this can be deduced from the simple fact of the order, which is all that Martin quotes; but the reader is swept along by the momentum of the style, and all too easily gives that condemnation the assent given to the historical fact (which, of course, he could verify for himself).

Thus the Marprelate tracts are successful in part at least because they pay attention to that most important controversial necessity, constant reference to facts and anecdotes, which in outline at least the reader could verify from other sources. At the same time these facts are silently accommodated to a 'truth' which represents a radical over-simplification of the significance of such historical contingencies.

It will have been observed that the world-view adduced corresponds very closely to that put across in Penry's serious tracts. While there are

taken on a satirical slant and are amplified with appropriate dialogue. One might quote 'Mr Settle' who complained of the Archbishop's language. When Whitgift replied that he had called many better men similar names, Mr. Settle dryly responded that that, at least, was beyond question: 'I grant so, said Mr Settle, but the question is, how lawfully you have done so' (no.194, May 1586). A similar satirical account of name-calling in the Marprelate tracts is that of the encounter between Aylmer and Madox, the freeholder of Fulham (The Epistle, 21). Cooper angrily protests at this dialogue: 'Further, for lacke of true matter, M. Maddocks must be brought in by the Libeller to furnish his railing comedy' (Admonition, 43), and shows that Martin has conflated a number of insults from different sources and given them a dramatic setting. Martin is quite unperturbed: 'The substance of the tale is true. I have told you that I had it at second hand' (Hay any Worke, 44). Had his concern for detailed accuracy been genuine, one feels he would have been more concerned to defend his reputation.

1. The Epistle, 37.

certain internal probabilities which make me unwilling to accept McGinn's persuasive survey of the external evidence for the authorship of the Marprelate tracts as constituting categorical proof that Penry wrote them (see p.235), it is clear that the author belonged to the small group of radical Puritans associated with the secret press, who shared a common apocalyptic view of the significance of current events. I would like to suggest that the author here has found the literary solution to the problem of the gulf between the image and the historical reality which even the hysterical force of Penry's serious style cannot bridge. The discipline of a conscious commitment to audience persuasion constrains Martin to anchor his work firmly in the immediate world of his readers and to use its facts as the basis for his arguments, rather than seeking by sheer violence of language to impose upon them an alternative view of history. Rather than assaulting the reader with radical conclusions, The Epistle slips them in almost as incidental comments on historical facts; when the reader is satisfied that the anecdote or report is a true account of what actually happened (taking 'true' in the court sense of the word) he is likely to accept the interpretation which accompanies it without question as 'true' (in the second sense).

Turning, finally, from a consideration of Martin's method to examine his use of the syllogism as a means of epitomising and falsifying an opponent's argument, one instinctively looks for evidence in The Epitome, the tract in which he seeks to illustrate his contention that

... he [Bridges] hath very wisely and prudently observed
the decorum of the cause in hand ... Presbyter John
defended our Church governement which is full of
corruptions/ and therefore the stile and the proofes must
be of the same nature that the cause is. 1

Again one notes the heavily ironic use of the concept of decorum; it is typical of Marprelate's iconoclasm that he turns even this fundamental Elizabethan principle into a flippant excuse for unjustified ridicule. His condensation

1. The Epitome, sig. B 2 recto.

of Bridges' arguments has as its aim the demonstration of their absurdities; and a closer study of those absurdities reveals that far from being inherent in Bridges' argument they are created by Martin himself. In the first place, Martin forces Bridges' subtle discussions of individual cruces of interpretation into the rigid mould of general propositions, creating syllogisms which reduce the complex distinctions present in the original text to crude antitheses. The fate of Bridges' analysis of Hebrews, 3, is a case in point.

This passage forms the standard Presbyterian proof text for a church government as clearly and precisely set down in the New Testament as were the Jewish religious ordinances in the Law of Moses. Bridges gives limited assent to the general principle that since the church is God's house: '[it] ought to be directed in all thinges, according to the order prescribed by the housholder himselfe' ¹, but issues the caveat that the passage from Hebrews 3 generally cited in proof of the proposition, a passage which ends with the statement: 'And we are his house, if we hold fast our confidence and pride in our hope' ², refers to incorporation in the Body of Christ by faith; it deals, therefore, with fidelity to 'the inner and spirituall regiment thereof' rather than with the external holding fast of any particular form of ecclesiastical regiment ³. Martin reduces this careful analysis of a single passage to the categorical form: 'First Christ is the owner and governour of his house which is the Church, concerning the inward and spirituall government of the heart. Therefore he hath not prescribed the outwarde government thereof' ⁴. This is quite unjustified; Bridges draws no such dogmatic conclusions from his exegesis. It allows Martin, however, to introduce his other main target in this tract. He wonders ironically on which 'topike

1. Bridges, A Defence, 54.

2. Hebrews, 3, v.6b (R.S.V.).

3. Bridges, A Defence, 55.

4. The Epitome, sig. C 1 verso.

place¹ of secular logic this argument is based, since Scripture cannot be used in defence of the established government:

As though (will M. Bridges saye) you are ignorant brother Martin whence I drew this argument. You would make the worlde beleëve/ that you know not that I resoned as my brother London did/ in his Harborough of faythfull subjects ... O I remember well in deed brother Sarum/ the place you mean/ and I remember that John Elmars reason is very like yours. For (sayth Elmar) 'The scripture medleth/ with no civill pollicie, anye farther then to teach obedience, therefore it teacheth not what persons should beare rule And again ... p. 47 Paules commission is to teache obedience, therefore hee hath nothing to doe to call for a redresse of matters in civil pollicie ... 1

Aylmer was actually refuting Knox's contention that Scripture forbids a woman to rule, but Martin prudently refrains from elucidating the context of the statements quoted, since to oppose Aylmer on that particular point would have been plain treason. The page heading stresses the simple but misleading point which Martin wishes his readers to grasp: 'Paule hath gone beyond his commission, saith John of London' ².

By association, therefore, it is insinuated that Bridges reasons from the same political premisses as Aylmer in his supposed limitation of the scope of Scripture ³. To reinforce his claim that Bridges is a political casuist defending the indefensible, Martin rephrases Bridges' exegesis yet again in the form of a blatant non-sequitur and mocks it by parody:

'We are his Church if we holde fast the confidence of our hope unto the end. Therefore there is no externall government of the Church set downe in the word'. This reason/ to omit what ground it hath in the worde/ is very plausible even in nature: is it not thinke you? A man is a man though he go naked Therefore by master deanes reason/ the Lorde hath ordained no covering for his nakedness. 4

1. The Epitome, sig. C 1 verso-C 2 recto.

2. Ibid., sig. C 2 recto.

3. Martin does, however, point out, with an appearance of scrupulous honesty (and considerable underlying irony), that Bridges deigns to be rather more generous to the Apostle than Aylmer had been (C 2 recto).

4. The Epitome, sig. D 2 recto-verso.

Most of The Epitome could be analysed in this way; it represents the reductio ab absurdum of the literary exchange. In the previous chapter (see pp.181, 186) we noted how a more cavalier attitude to the opponent's text was creeping in, characterised either by a failure to deal with it in detail, or by a distortion of its content. Here the opportunities for distortion were greater than ever before. Martin deals with two works; the earlier, Aylmer's Harborowe, was a highly topical tract of 1558, dealing with a question - that of a woman's right to rule - which had long ceased to be a focus of controversy among English Protestants. It seems unlikely, therefore, that many readers of the Marprelate tracts would possess a copy of Aylmer's book, since most of them would belong to the generation that had come to full maturity after the Elizabethan Settlement.

Bridges' massive tome, Martin's second target, was hardly a best seller.

Martin taunts Bridges:

Sohow/ brother Bridges/ when will you answere the
booke intituled/ an answere to Bridges his slanders:
nay I thinke you had more need to gather a benevolence
among the Cleargie/ to pay Charde toward the printing
of your booke/ or els labour to his grace to get him
another protection/ for men will give no mony for your
book/ unles it be to stop mustard pots/ as your brother
Cosins answer to the Abstract did. 1

Cooper in the Admonition debate denies Whitgift's involvement ²; Martin remains unrepentant: 'From whom soever Charde had his protection/ his Face is glad of it/ for otherwise he knoweth not how to get a printer/ for the established government/ because the books will not sell' ³. This might be dismissed as slander; it is, however, attested by inherent probability ⁴,

1. The Epistle, 10.

2. Cooper, An Admonition, 33: 'That which he calleth a Protection, Chard had from the Lords of her Majesties privie Counsell, upon charitable and good causes mooving their Lordships'.

3. Hay any Worke, 37.

4. Bridges' work is a typesetter's nightmare; at the end of the preface he apologises for the many errors that remain: 'And though directly it pertaine not to me, yet I crave the Printers ... pardon, for a great number of petit, and some grosse escapes in the impression, which have fallen

and also by the discouraging experiences of Hooker when, five or six years later, he looked for a printer for his Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity¹. Even had the hardy reader possessed a copy of the Defence, it seems hardly likely that he would have studied it in detail. Thus Martin could rely on the fact that both the works with which he deals would be known by repute but probably not by perusal to the majority of his readers. He takes advantage of this fact by presenting a merciless caricature of both - more particularly of Bridges' work. After the model of Ramus he abstracts words from the context of continuous discourse and treats them as mathematical symbols which should bear exactly the same meaning every time they are used. His discussion of the Dean's use of the word 'necessary' is an excellent case in point. Citing two passages in which Bridges uses the word in ways which, although sufficiently qualified in context, can be so presented as to seem contradictory, he mocks his opponent for this supposed inconsistency: 'Do you think that you can answer men/ by saying that you in deed wrote page 59. But D. Perne wrote page 60 the which you had no leysure to oversee. This is a prettie answere is it not thinke you?'².

Martin's pseudo-academic analysis does not attempt to answer Bridges; it merely transposes into respectable theological terms that kind of dramatic

out the more, for the difficultie of my coppie unto him, and by so often interchanging of the character, either in citing our brethrens wordes, or some other testimonie, or the text it selfe of Scripture ... And many wordes and sentences which the compiler nor corrector did well conceive and have so passed, I being not alwayes present at revising the proves' (¶¶i verso). It must have been enormously time-consuming - and therefore expensive - to produce.

1. See C.J. Sisson, The judicious marriage of Mr Hooker, Appendix C (transcript of Hooker v. Sandys), esp. p.134, Richard Churchman's deposition: '... That he hath long synce Credibly herd and doth beleewe that the sd. Mr Richard Hooker having dealt wth dyvers Printers for the printing of the sd. Bookes and finding none that would bere the Charge of printing them unles him self would geve somewhat towards the charge thereof, because bookes of that Argument and on that parte [my underlining] were not saleable as they alledged, was very much dismayed.' It is interesting to note that the printer who eventually undertook the work - which was, however, paid for by Sandys - was that same John Windet who had printed Bridges' work for Chard. He was a relation of Hooker's; it seems; probably he also felt some sympathy with the cause of the Establishment.
2. The Epitome, sig. C 4 verso.

dialogue which outwits the opponent by dazzling him with the ambiguity of words. The French critic Bergson defined wit as a dramatic deployment not of persons but of words: 'Au lieu de manier ses idées comme des symboles indifférents, l'homme d'esprit les voit, les entend, et surtout les fait dialoguer entre elles comme des personnes' ¹. Martin sees the key words of the church order debate in this kind of light; and it is this fact which prompts his contemporaries to present him as the literary heir of the jester Richard Tarleton in particular ², and in general as the new Roscius of controversy, transferring the disputation to the stage. In the final section of this chapter I wish to discuss the significance of Martin's distinctive, self-conscious wit for religious controversy in general.

In order to clarify further what Martin's contemporaries meant by comparing Marprelate to the famous Queen's player Tarleton, one needs to study the few surviving examples of Tarleton's wit as printed in the Shakespeare Society edition of Tarleton's Jests ³. It is hardly surprising that despite several entries in the Register of the Stationers' Company which refer to collections either written or inspired by Tarleton, so little of his work remains in the permanent medium of print; it is essentially ephemeral, each jest being presented as an ad hoc response to a particular situation. What survived was the myth of the clown able to talk his way out of any compromising situation or beat down any verbal challenge by clever if superficial manipulation, which sets the challenger at a momentary non-plus. One might cite the incident in which Tarleton, adjured by the watch to 'Stand', responded with the words: 'Stand! ... let them stand that can, for I cannot' ⁴, and slid in feigned drunkenness into the gutter, thus evading their unwelcome

1. Henri Bergson, Le Rire: Essai sur la Signification du Comique (Paris, 1900), 107.

2. e.g. the rhyme Mar-Martine (1589), sig. A 4 verso: 'These tinkers termes and barbars jestes first Tarleton on the stage, then Martin in his bookes of lies, hath put in every page.'

3. Tarleton's Jests and News out of Purgatory, ed. James O. Halliwell (London, 1844).

4. Ibid., 5.

attentions. He was famous for his ability to accept a 'theam', usually a rhymed couplet or stanza containing a veiled insult to himself, and to reply on the spot with a brief epigram which turned the insult back on the one who first made it. It would be a mistake to think that he was exclusively scurrilous; he was capable of using logic as well as innuendo to humiliate an opponent. For example, he was once present at a conversation at which a certain gentleman named Woodcock jokingly said to William Byrd of the Queen's chapel:

... that he was of his affinity and hee never knew it.
 Yes, sayes M. Woodcock, every woodcock is a bird,
 therefore it must needs be so. Lord, sir, sayes
 Tarlton, you are wide, for though every woodcock be a
 bird, yet every bird is not a woodcock. 1

Strictly speaking, it is Tarleton who is 'wide'; to indicate affinity, as Woodcock did, is not to assume interchangeable affinity. The reply has a certain verbal neatness, however, which makes it perfectly appropriate to its trivial context. As a jester filling a traditional role in a hierarchical society, it was permissible for Tarleton to 'put down' those far above his own station; indeed, the first jest in the collection records an impudent reply made to the Queen herself. One has only to study the licence allowed to Feste by Olivia and the Duke in Twelfth Night to understand the convention by which such figures as Tarleton played an important part at the court of the Virgin Queen².

Such clowns as Tarleton or Feste, however, are not seriously attempting to subvert the authority of those whom they mock; indeed, their positions are dependent on the continuance of hierarchy. I would like to suggest that the outrage felt by conservative readers of the Marprelate tracts is prompted by the half-conscious realisation that behind this particular flouting of 'decorum personae' there is a serious anarchic intent. To dismiss the writings

1. Ibid., 27.

2. See esp. Act V, Scene I, The Arden Shakespeare, 5th edn. (London, 1937), 150-7.

of reverend deans and bishops as furnishing no more than a quantity of inept 'theams' and to treat reply simply in terms of repartee, is to threaten all the reader's assumptions about the accumulated wisdom of tradition. The exhibitionist tendency in the public disputation is here taken to its extreme and becomes dominant, so that one might be deceived into thinking that this is mere unrestrained verbal self-indulgence: 'Trust me truly/ he hath given the cause sicken a wipe in his bricke/ and so lambskinned the same/ that the cause will be the warmer a good while for it' ¹. But the style never, in fact, gets out of control; the satirical persona of Martin is seen to manipulate it as he self-consciously tries out a wide range of rhetorical effects: 'Well nowe to mine eloquence/ for I can doe it I tell you ...' ². His crude colloquialisms and general bravado create a Lord of Misrule atmosphere appropriate enough to the clown ³. It is not, however, a brief interlude of social anarchy which Martin seeks, but the destruction of the whole ecclesiastical hierarchy. The persona of the jester gives him a curious kind of diplomatic immunity, allowing him to make the most salacious of innuendoes ⁴, and to threaten members of the hierarchy with fists about their ears ⁵. Enjoying the daring of the satirist, the reader may not notice until too late that all his ideas of the acceptable norms of behaviour in religious controversy have been systematically undermined; more seriously still, he may not realise that he has come to look for a triumph which is one of verbal violence rather than of truth. As the author of Plaine Percevall the Peacemaker of England described the exchange between Martin and his equally violent

1. The Epitome, sig. B 1 recto.

2. The Epistle, 19.

3. As Richard Harvey remarked: 'It goeth ill with the world, but woorse with the Church, when all must be ruled by Lordes of Mosrule, and all governed by Martins peeres' (R. Harvey, A Theologicall Discourse of the Lamb of God and his Enemies (London, 1590), 'Epistle to the Reader', sig. a 2 recto, reprinted in The Works of Thomas Nashe, vol.V, Appendix B, 178).

4. See e.g. the suggestion of an illicit liaison between Whitgift and Mistress Toye (Hay any Worke, 48).

5. Nashe calls Martin's technique that of poetica licentia. See An Almond for a Parrat or Cutbert Curry-knaves Almes (no date or place [London,

opponents: 'And he that hath most toong powder hopes to drive the other out of the field first ...' (p.7) ¹.

For the persona of the clown is not merely adopted in order to escape from the shackles of 'decorum personae'; it also provides a framework in which violent language seems normal. One has only to think of Feste's baiting of the bewildered and imprisoned Malvolio ² to realise that the clown's role has a darker side. He not only has the privilege of criticising the hierarchy in public (though only in ways they could afford to recognise and were able to contain); he also channels social aggression, dissipating its pent-up tensions in a comic denouement of destruction in which all can participate vicariously by their laughter. To quote Bergson again:

Le rire est, avant tout, une correction. Fait pour humilier, il doit donner a la personne qui en est l'objet une impression pénible. La société se venge par lui des libertés qu'on a prises avec elle. Il n'atteindrait pas son but s'il portait la marque de la sympathie et de la bonté. ³

This is hardly an adequate summary of the impact of comedy, but it is an admirable description of the kind of verbal slapstick in which both Tarleton and Marprelate indulged. The final indignity offered to logical disputation is its transformation into an exchange of comic violence:

I will presently prove both maior and minor of this sillogisme. And hold ny cloake there sombody that I may go roundly to worke. For ise so bumfeg the Cooper as he had bin better to have hooped halfe the tubbes in Winchester then write against my worships pistles. ⁴

1589?], sig. B 2 verso, reprinted in The Works of Thomas Nashe, vol.III, 347.

1. A similar attempt to exploit a 'churl' persona can be observed in 'The lamentable Complaint of the Commonaltie' (A Parte of a Register, 237-8): 'But if any thing shall escape our penne, unfit to be spoken by us, to so high and honourable a court of Parliament, we most humbly beseech you uppon our knees ... to pardon us, imputing it either to the grieffe and bitternes of our soules, which caused Job to utter some foolishe wordes, or to the rudeness of our education, whereby in wordes and termes we may faile, against our will'. This is purely a legal fiction, however; an attempt to avoid assuming responsibility for verbal violence.
2. See Twelfth Night, Act IV, Scene II.
3. Bergson, Le Rire: (Paris, 1900) 200-201
4. One might cite a traditional interpretation of the difference between logic and rhetoric, based on Zeno's image, found in Richard Rainolde's

Yet the reader accepts from the clown threats which in the context of serious polemic seem incongruous. The old commonplace of logic as a 'clunch fist' is exploited to the full, and its true metaphorical sense - that logic, as the most precise and tightly constructed form of discourse, is also the most intellectually convincing - is lost in a style which comes perilously close to suggesting a literal interpretation. Martin is careful to disclaim literal intention; in the preface to Hay any worke for Cooper he states that none but Cooper:

... would be so groshead as to gather/ because my
reverence telleth Deane John/ that he shall have twenty
fists about his eares more than his owne (whereby I meant
in deede/ that manye would write against him/ by reason
of his bomination learning/ which otherwise never ment to
take pen in hand) that I threatned him with blowes and
to deale by Stafford law: Whereas that was far from my
meaning/ and could by no means be gathered out of my
words ... 1

But as we note the way in which he describes his intentions in his titles:

Hay any worke for Cooper: or a briefe Pistle ...
Wherein worthy Martin quits himself like a man I
warrant you in the modest defence of his selfe and
his learned Pistles and makes the Coopers hoopes to
flye off and the Bishops Tubs to leake out of all
crye,

one realises that his real intention is not to disprove, but to destroy; the mask of the clown here conceals a genuine hostility which the society confronted cannot contain. Martin is careful not to allow himself to fall into a vein of unrelieved denunciation; the element of surprise is maintained by sudden shifts in tone which leave the audience uncertain of the exact weight of the accusations made, and intrigued by the ambiguity of the author's

A Booke called the Foundation of Rhetorike (London, 1563), and quoted by Howell in his Logic and Rhetoric in England: '... Logike for the deepe and profounde knowledge, that is reposed and buried in it, in soche sort of munition and strength fortified, in few wordes taketh soche force and might by argumente, that except like equalitee in like art and knowledge doe mate it, in vain the disputa cion shalbe, and the repulse of thadversarie readie. Rhetorike is like to the hand set at large, wherein every part and joint is manifeste, and every vaine as braunches of trees sette at scope and libertee ... (p.141)'.

1. Hay any Worke, preface 'The Epistle to the Terrible Priests', sig. 3 recto.

style ¹. The bishops, however, were not deceived:

When there is seene in any Common wealth such a loose boldnesse of speech, against a settled lawe or State, it is a certaine prooffe of a loose boldness of minde. For Sermo est index animi, that is, Such as the speeche is, such is the minde ... It hath also in all Histories bene observed, that loose boldnesse of mind toward the Superiours, is joynd alwayes with contempt: and contemptuous boldnesse is the very roote and spring of discord ... 2

Logic is the weapon Martin claims, but his logic is only a way of rephrasing personal expletives ('you sodden headed Asse you' ³) and subjective interpretations in syllogistic form in order to give them the status of proven fact. Martin subverts his audience by playing on the easy assumption summed up in the proverb 'No smoke without fire'; in other words, he persuades them that those whom his logic and satire can present as fools and knaves must be so indeed. This conceptual jump is formalised in the presentation of personal reactions as propositions and conclusions. Just as the opposition hid behind the impersonal machinery of the law (see pp.186-7), so Martin disciplines his anger to fit the impersonal forms of logic. His logic, then, is little more than a static summary of his assertions - assertions which if carefully considered are performative rather than merely descriptive.

Martin's use of logic, however, has other practical functions. It allows him to present his prejudices in propositional form; it also allows him to criticise most severely any serious reply which attempts to avoid logical engagement in favour of a more direct appeal to the audience. Martin has the stage trick of making asides which, although ostensibly addressed to himself, are actually intended for the ears of the audience; he thus

1. What, for instance, are we supposed to make of the protestation: 'I delt not herin, as the Lord knoweth, because I woulde please my selfe, or my reader, in a pleasant vain of writing. If that bee the thing I sought or seek after; then let my writings be buried in the grave of all proud prelates; that is, never mentioned in the Church of God without detestation' (The Protestatyon of Martin Marprelat, 17), which neatly combines apparent candour and a backhanded insult.

2. Cooper, An Admonition, 31.

3. Hay any Worke, 25.

preserves the externals of debate while destroying its spirit. The author of the first attempt to answer the Marprelate tracts, Thomas Cooper, is much less subtle in his signals to the audience:

Nowe (good Christian Reader) seeing by the good blessing of God, we have all parts of Christian fayth and Religion professed and taught in this Church ... What a vaunting pride is it? (as Cyprian speaketh) what an unthankfulness to God? what uncharitable affection toward the Church of their naturall Countrey, that they cannot abide any good to be spoken of it? 1

The portentous directness illustrated by this quotation is typical of Thomas Cooper's tract. The Bishop of Winchester sets out to answer the 'slanderous untruethes' uttered by Martin against the bishops in a way which proves that while he understands well enough his antagonist's destructive intent, he is unable to come to terms with the dazzling elusiveness of the clown's style. The implicit intention of the Marprelate tracts may be serious, but any attempt to refute them as one would an explicitly serious list of accusations is foiled by the wit which makes light of the whole literary enterprise. By paying

-
1. Cooper, An Admonition, 55. It seems to me that McKerrow has argued convincingly that this book was written and, in part, printed before the Marprelate controversy broke, and that what we have here is an uneasy amalgam of a tract defending the church's property and a detailed response to accusations which dealt more with office per se than with mishandling of its privileges. His study of the pagination would be conclusive enough (see McKerrow (ed.), The Works of Thomas Nashe, vol.V, 42, note 4); in addition, any casual reader of the tract must be struck by the clumsiness of its structure if considered specifically as a reply to the first two Marprelate tracts. The digression from the heavy generalisations of the section 'Answers to generall quarrels made against the bishops' to the satirical allegory of Martin (see pp.71-3) and back again is so startling a break in stylistic continuity as to render McKerrow's suggestion of a hastily rewritten sheet inserted to replace some erroneous or misleading information highly probable. Apart from this brief passage, only the section headed 'Answeres to the untrueths and slaunders uttered in Martins late libell' and the introductory 'Epistle' refer specifically to the Marprelate tracts. The entire introductory 'Admonition' deals in vague general terms and seems to refer to direct rather than to satirically oblique attacks on the church. The fact that two 1589 editions of the work are extant, and that the main difference between them is the addition of the words 'I will now come to answere briefly some particular slanders uttered against some Bishops and others by name' at the end of the introductory 'Admonition', suggests that the transition between the two blocks of material was seen to be unconvincingly abrupt, and that an attempt was therefore made to suggest a logical progression from a general treatment of the problem to a consideration of specific instances. In accordance with this view, I have used only the two sections noted above - 'The Epistle' and 'Answeres to the untrueths' - in my consideration of the effectiveness of Cooper's reply to Martin.

serious attention to accusations made in jest, one simply gives them more weight in the reader's mind. Martin's logic is that of wit - extrinsic, verbal and arbitrary - and it cannot be refuted; it can only be capped by a still more outrageous parody of discourse. Even if one denies the factual truth of the superstructure of dialogue and description which Martin silently adds to his historical basis, one cannot destroy the satirical vignette which has already seized the reader's attention and in which fact and embellishment are fused into a new artistic whole.

Thomas Cooper, however, made the cardinal error of trying to shift the tone of the exchange from comic to serious. He makes what Bridges derides in Fulke as a 'tragicall beginning'¹, presenting himself and his fellow bishops as the persecuted victims of slanderous tongues:

I am not ignorant (Gentle Reader) what daunger I drawe upon my selfe, by this attempt to answere the quarrels and slaunders of late time published in certaine Libelles, against the Bishops and other chiefe of the Clergie of the Church of England. We see the ea^cgernesse and boldnesse of their spirit that be the authors of them ... Seeing they have sharpened their tongues and heart's ^lsⁱc^k against heaven, wee poore creatures on earth must be content in our weaknesse to beare them. 2

This may have been an appropriate episcopal line under Parker, but in the context of Whitgift's aggressive policy it is a ridiculous anachronism. In Hay any worke for Cooper Martin picks up and derides this pretence of risk. Cooper nobly quotes Ambrose: 'Non tanti est unius vita, quanti est dignitas omnium Sacerdotum.'³ Martin paraphrases this as: 'But I feare them not/ while I go about to maintain the dignitie of priests'⁴, and responds encouragingly: 'Well fare a good heart yet/ stand to thy tackling/ and get the high commission to send abroad the purcivants/ and I warrant thee thou wilt do something'⁵.

1. Bridges, A Defence, 3.

2. Cooper, An Admonition, 3-4.

3. Ibid., 4.

4. Hay any Worke, 3.

5. Ibid.

The defence of the government Establishment is hardly, then, a daring risk; but Cooper's solemn tone also suggests that it is a necessary enterprise, and that the dignity - indeed, the continued survival - of the hierarchy is seriously imperilled by Martin's accusations. Disproof, then, becomes vital. Cooper makes the most gloomy prognostications about the possible impact of these writings on the immediate historical situation:

What then meaneth this untemperate, uncharitable and unchristian dealings ^{among} among our selves, at such an unseasonable time? but as it were, to joyne handes with the Seminaries, Jesuites, and Massing priests, and other Messengers of Antichrist, in furthering their devises, by distracting the mindes of the Subjectes, and drawing them into partes and factions, in increasing the number of Mal-contents and mislikers of the state ... 1

Cooper continues with a point by point refutation of Martin's serious accusations against several of the hierarchy - the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishops of London, Rochester, Lincoln, and Winchester. On closer examination, however, these are merely denials, and do not furnish adequate contrary evidence to convince a critical reader. He frequently gives a charge greater prominence than it had in Martin's text; by treating the tracts as collections of libels rather than as connected discourses he naively ignores the complex levels of wit involved and treats a passing innuendo as simply and directly as he does a statement of fact. For example, in the course of a discussion of Bridges' views, Martin refers in passing to Whitgift: 'Neyther will I saye that his Grace is an Infidell/ (nor yet sweare that he is much better) ...' ². Cooper paraphrases this as: 'He seemeth to charge the Archbishop with infidelitie &' ³, but having drawn attention to the charge which Martin was careful not quite to make, his only answer is to say that no answer is required: 'This needeth no answeare, it sheweth of what spirit

1. Cooper, An Admonition, 30.

2. The Epistle, 15.

3. Cooper, An Admonition, 33.

they are'¹. When he tries to out-Martin Martin he lacks the lightness of touch to carry it off, and his gratuitous bursts of ill temper seem out of place in an avowedly serious work. Reading his unnecessary attack on Giles Wigginton (see p. 37), one is immediately tempted to sympathise with the deprived preacher and to discount Cooper's attempts to right the facts. In short, Cooper's work is a signal failure. His clumsy attempts to parry certain accusations allow still more incriminating facts to slip out, and his failure to reply to others lays him open to the charge of granting their justice. Martin's response seizes with delight both on the publicity Cooper's official publication - 'seene and allowed by authoritie' - has given his clandestine tracts, and on the two failures just mentioned:

Now truly brethren/ I finde you kinde/ why ye do not know what a pleasure you have done me. My worships books were unknowne to many/ before you allowed T. C. to admonishe the people of England to take heed/ that if they loved you/ they woulde make much of their prelates and the chiefe of the cleargie. Now many/ seeke after my bookes/ more than ever they did. Againe, some knew not that our brother John of Fulham was so good unto the porter of his gate/ as to make the poore blinde honest soule/ to be a dum minister ... Many I say were ignorant of these thinges/ and many other prettie toyes/ until you wrote this prettie booke. Besides whatsoever you overpasse in my writings/ and did not gainsay/ that I hope wilbe judged to be true. And so John a Bridges his treason out of the 448 page of his booke you graunt to be true. Your selves you denie not to bee pettie popes ... And this hath greatly commended my worships good dealing. But in your confutation of my booke/ you have shewed reverende Martin to be truepenie in deede: For you have confyrmed rather than confuted him. 2

Cooper rightly judges that Martin's real purpose is to slander rather than to argue. He therefore disregards the logical form many of the slanders take, and fails to reply with the appropriate exhaustive and formal analysis of Martin's points. Martin comments on this neglect of propriety at some length. In the body of the tract, for example, he amplifies one of the

1. Ibid.

2. Hay any Worke, preface 'The Epistle to the terrible Priests', sig. 2 recto/verso.

statements quoted above:

But heere first the reader is to know what answere this
T. C. maketh unto the syllogismes/ whereby I proove all
L. Bishops to be petty popes and petty Antichristes. I
assure you no other than this/ he flattly denieth the
conclusion/ wheras he might (if he had any learning in
him/ or had read anything) know/ that every dunstical
logician/ giveth this for an inviolable precept/ that
the conclusion is not to be denied. 1

Cooper is blatantly a pragmatist; Martin parodies his arguments savagely
but not inaccurately:

You reson thus, It [the government of Christ] must not
be admitted into this kingdome/ because then Civillians
shal not be able to live/ in that estimation/ and
welth wherein they now do. Carnal and sensles beastes/
whoe are not ashamed to prefer the outward estate of men
before the glory of Christs kingdom. 2

In his reply Martin is careful not to let the intermittent violence of his
reactions sever the thread of logical continuity which he continually draws
to the reader's attention.

The rustic violence of the clown and the claim to learned proof are
held in a delicate balance; the fact that Martin oscillates from one to the
other without losing continuity is a tribute to the skill and energy of his
writing. Concluding a long section of detailed logical analysis, he lapses
into a dialect made familiar to the modern reader by Shakespeare's use of
it ³:

whau/ whau/ but where have I bin al/ this while. Ten
to one among some of these puritans. Why Martin? Why
Martin I say/ hast tow forgotten thy selfe? Where hast
ti bene?/ why man cha bin a seeking for a Samons nest
and cha vound a whol crue/ either of ecclesiastical
traitors or of bishops of the Divil/ of broken and
maimed members of the church ... I will speke the truth/
lett the puritans doe what they can. 4

1. Ibid., 21.

2. Ibid., 23.

3. King Lear, Act IV, Scene VI, Edgar to Oswald: 'Nay, come not near th'
old man; keep out, che vor'ye; or ise try whither your costard or my
ballow by the harder. Chill be plain with you'. (Arden Edition, ed.
K. Muir (London, 1972)) It is, says the Arden editor, 'conventional
stage dialect, approximating to that of Somersetshire, but used for a
variety of other counties'. Again we see Martin's close links with and
awareness of stage practice.

4. Hay any Worke, 30.

Thus he distances himself from the serious tone of the passage above, associating it with those whom he calls the Puritans, moderate reformers who conceal their cowardice beneath fine words. His distinctive style, he suggests, is very different; he is not afraid to call a spade a spade. Yet the passage concludes: 'But hereof more warke for Cooper shal learnedly dispute'¹.

By keeping the forms of logic Martin can claim to observe 'decorum causae'; that is, making use of the mode of discourse traditionally considered appropriate to the solution of theological problems. He is also able to comment on the violation of this decorum by those who oppose him; and a study of the Marprelate tracts in historical sequence reveals that while The Epistle, The Epitome, and to some extent Hay any worke for Cooper deal largely with the failure of literary logic in the writings of certain leading Establishment figures, the later tracts, printed in increasingly perilous circumstances, are obsessed with a more radical flouting of convention not in word but in deed - obsessed, that is, with the increasing violence of episcopal repression. The transition can be observed in the tracts which date from the first quarter of 1589 - Certaine Minerall and Metaphysicall Schoolpoints and Hay any worke for Cooper. The Epitome, for example, ends with an expression of intellectual contempt:

And let the learned reader judg whether other men cannot
play the ignorant sots as well as you brother Bridges.
Tush/ Tushe I would not have you claim all the skill/
in Barbarismes and Solecismes unto your self. Other men
can behave themselves with commendations that way as well
as you/ though in deed not so naturally I graunt. Farwell
sweete Doctor/ and make much of the courtier Martin. 2

Hay any worke for Cooper, on the other hand, ends with a gesture of defiance:

'Farewell/ farewell/ farewell olde Martin/ and keepe thee out of their
handes for all that. For thou art a shrewd fellowe/ thou wilt one day
overthrow them'³. By the time it was being printed all the powers of the

1. Ibid.

2. The Epitome, sig. G i verso.

3. Hay any Worke, 48.

hated High Commission were being deployed in search of the press¹. Martin's response to this activity is to profess an exaggerated respect for logic as the only means of defeating an enemy in controversy, and a corresponding contempt for any other method:

Therefore yf they will needs overthrowe me, let them goe in hand with the exdloyte, rather by prooving the lawfullnes of their places: then by exercising the force of ther unlawfull tyranny. For onc again I feare not ther tyranny. And one sound syllogism (wich I tell yon [sic] is dainty ware in a bishopes breast) ... shall more dismay and sooner enduce me to give over my course then a thousand warants a thousand pursevants, a thousand threts and a thousand racks ... what get they by ther tirannye: seeing it is truth and not violence that most^(sic) uphoulde their places? 2

Martin exposes the incongruity of repression by using the linguistic device of mixed vocabulary registers; he translates the episcopal threats into the language of debate and allows the reader to judge for himself the resultant travesty of intellectual justice³. The peroration at the end of Certaine Minerall and Metaphysicall Schoolpoints is a fine example of this kind of wit:

Good reader/ if thou know of any that dare argue or dispute/ against any of the former points ... Let him set up his name and we will sende a purcivant for him. Whosoever he be/ the matters shalbe according unto order/ quietly tried out between him and the bare walles/ in the Gatehouse/ or some other prison.

The violence in Martin's works is verbal, implicit, and can be denied; that of the bishops is publicly verifiable. Martin minimises the shock of

-
1. The official letter authorising the use of 'all privy meanes by force of your Commission ecclesiasticall or otherwise, to serch out the authors hereof and the(i)r complices and ye printers and ye secret dispersers of ye same ...' was apparently sent from Burghley to Whitgift on 14 Nov. 1588 (see Arber, An Introductory Sketch, 108). The fact that the same date appears on the first depositions on oath taken from Kingston-on-Thames inhabitants, those of Nicholas Kydwell and John Good, suggests that this formally ratified a policy which was already being vigorously pursued. The detailed record of Nicholas Tomkin's examination at Lambeth dates from 15 Feb. 1588/9 and is thus roughly contemporaneous with the printing of Hay any Worke.
 2. The Protestatyon of Martin Marprelat, 7-8.
 3. For a brief modern survey of the device of 'mixed registers', see Raymond Chapman, Linguistics and Literature (London, 1973), ch.2, particularly pp.18-19. The author notes that this device was 'generally frowned upon in the past as an offence against "decorum"'; once again we see how

the first by adopting a persona in which a certain degree of crude verbal violence is to be expected and by disciplining his anger into the forms of logic; the shock of the second is heightened by using a vocabulary which points out ironically the gulf between what the bishops should be doing and what they actually do. Martin Senior reproaches his younger brother for stirring up new animus against Martin:

... now upon this scrabbling and paltring of thine, marke whether John Canturburie will not sende for all the knave pursuivants that belongs unto his popedome, and set them a worke with confutation of Martin, using some such speach as this is, in the direction of them, for the choice of their Arguments against him.

Several pages of assorted stratagems against Martin follow, most of doubtful legality, and Whitgift is made to conclude:

Therefore, my maisters, as you have anie care for the pacifieing of the state, and your owne preferment, some waie or other compasse mee to finde the first Martin himselfe wheresoever hee bee. Spare no charges. Get him, and see what weelee do for you. For if we were not in hope to come by him throgh your meanes, we woulde cast about another waie, to suppresse his libelling. For wee would make friendes to have him proclaimed traitour, and have it felonie, if we coulde, for anie manne to reade his writings, And hee're an end with you. 1

Another tract presents the view that violence is adequate refutation by a similar, if rather cruder, use of the same linguistic device:

Then I thought to touch Martin with Logick, but there was a little wag in Cambridge, that swore by Saint Seaton, he would so swinge him with Sillogismes, that all Martins answeres should ake ... I have read but one of his arguments.

Tiburne stands in the cold,

But Martins are a warm furre:

Therefore Tiburne must be furd with Martins.

O (quoth I) boy thou wilt be shamed; tis neither in moode nor figure; all the better, for I am in a moode to cast a figure, that shall bring them to the conclusion. I laught at the boye, and left him drawing all the lines of Martin into sillogismes, everie

Martin achieves his effects by subverting his audience's expectations.

1. The just censure and reproofe of Martin Junior, sig. A ii verso and B i recto.

conclusion beeing this, Ergo Martin is to be hangd. 1

The fact that this is a tract commissioned by the Establishment in its own defence indicates how far from the original logical exchange the exigencies of history have driven both sides.

At this point we may observe how closely the stylistic development of the Establishment's literary campaign against the products of the Marprelate press mirrors an increasingly efficient and determined campaign against the press itself and those associated with it. For having learned from the fiasco of Thomas Cooper's Admonition that it was fruitless to isolate the underlying issues and deal with them in a serious way - that is, to tackle the content of the Marprelate tracts without coming to terms with the style - the Establishment then made the opposite error in attempting to match the style without coming to terms with the serious underlying issues of dissent. Thus they commissioned pamphlets which outdid Martin in verbal violence, but made no attempt to answer his 'matter'. Those whom Martin described contemptuously as 'al the rimers and stage plaiers, which my Ll. of the cleargy had suborned against me' ², show by their style that they had learned one important lesson from their adversary; literary violence is more acceptable in a comic form. The rationale behind the new policy is well expressed in the tract Martins Months minde. In the past, says the author, grave answers have been returned to the 'fewe and frivolous matters' of the radicals; since, however, they react like the ape - 'the more sagelie you looke on him the more he grinmeth' - it has been decided to follow the advice of the Wise Man in the Book of Proverbs, and answer the fool according to his folly ³. Until then,

-
1. Pappe with an hatchet ... (London, 1589[?]), reprinted in The Complete Works of John Lyly, ed. R. W. Bond (Oxford, 1902), vol. III, 398-9. 'Saint Seaton' refers to a former fellow of St. John's College, Cambridge, whose Latin 'Dialectica' was widely used; as an Aristotelian treatise it was that favoured by Studioso and Philomusus in their 'pilgrimage to Parnassus', despite the efforts of the Ramist Stupido to persuade them to adopt the simpler Ramist approach. See The Three Parnassus Plays, ed. J.B. Leishman (London, 1949), 68-71, 112.
 2. The Protestatyon of Martin Marprelat, 25.
 3. Anon., Martins Months minde, That is, A Certaine report, and true description of the Death, and Funeralls, of olde Martin Marreprelate, the great makebate

they become soberer: '... wee will returne them the Cuffe instead of the glove, and hisse the fooles from off the stage, as the readiest meanes to outface them' ¹. Another author puts it even more bluntly: 'Contention is a coale, the more it is blowne by dysputation the more it kindleth; I must spit in theyr faces to put it out' ². The image is an Establishment commonplace (see pp.139-40 above), but the suggested solution to the problem a novel one.

In these pamphlets the use of logic terminology is mocked: one author says of the Martinists: 'Thus much may we conjecture without any figure [my underlining] that they are some young Divels' ³, and another proposes to abandon logical confutation in favour of that more profitable brand of slander to which Martin himself points with his talk of a Register:

While you consult with your Topicks to grounde your
Reasons sure, Pasquill will come uppon you with another
venewe! ...

To be breefe with your worshipfultie, Pasquill
hath posted very dilligently over all the Realme, to
gather some fruitfull Volume of THE LIVES OF THE SAINTS,
which ~~mauge~~ your five hundred favorites shall be printed. ⁴

The abstract 'places' of topical logic have been replaced by specific geographical places in England in which scandalous lives can be observed and recorded; the anecdotal style of the Marprelate tracts is here taken to its logical conclusion. Similarly, A Whip for an Ape opens with the couplet: 'Since reason (Martin) cannot stay thy pen,/ We'il see what rime will doo: have at thee then' ⁵, and the author goes on to speak strongly against the utility of serious reply:

And ye grave men that answere Martins mowes,
He mocks the more, and you in vaine loose times,
Leave Apes to dogges to baite, their skins to crowes,

of England and father of the Factious ... (London [?], 1589), sig. D 2 verso.

1. Ibid., sig. D 3 recto.
2. The First Parte of Pasquills Apologie (London [?], 1590), sig. A 3 verso, reprinted in The Works of Thomas Nashe, vol.I, 110.
3. Martins Months minde, sig. A 2 verso.
4. A counter cuffe given to Martin Junior, sig. A ii verso-A iii recto (no place, 1589), in The Works of Thomas Nashe, vol.I, 60-1.

And let old Lanam lashe him with his rimes.
 The beast is proud when men wey his enditings:
 Let his workes goe the waie of all wast writings. 1

The most plausible conjecture about the identity of Lanam suggests that he was one of the five players for whom Leicester obtained a royal patent in May 1574; as Bond notes, in the pamphlet Martins Months minde Martin is made to speak of 'Twittle twattles learned in Alehouses, and at the Theater of Lanam and his fellows' (sig. F 2 recto), and to bequeath all his fooleries to 'my good friend Lanam' (sig. G verso)². In the new, ironic version of literary decorum proposed by this author, then, clown replies to clown, Lanam to Tarleton; and the desire to destroy which Martin masks by a careful facade of logic is unveiled and countered by equal violence. The author summarises the characteristics of Martin's style by relating them to those of his namesake, the ape. In the first place, he points out the political implications of the violation of decorum in the clown persona:

For first the Ape delights with moppes and mowes,
 And mocketh Prince and peasants all alike:
 This jesting Jacke that no good manner knowes,
 With his Asse heeles presumes all states to strike. 3

He then suggests the natural progression from verbal to physical violence:

The third tricke is; what Apes by flattering waies
 Cannot come by, with biting they will snatch ...
 He'il make their hearts to ake, and will not faile,
 Where oen cannot, their penknife shall prevaile. 4

In reply, he threatens Martin with the same harsh medication, in which verbal is merely the precursor to physical violence:

And this I warne thee Martin Monckies face,
 Take heed of me, my rime doth charme thee bad:
 I am a rimer of the Irish race,
 And have alreadie rimde thee staring mad.
 But if thou ceaseest not thy bald jests still to spread,

1. Ibid., 421.

2. Ibid., 591.

3. Ibid., 418.

4. Ibid., 420.

Ile never leave, till I have rimde thee dead. 1

Similar threats could be quoted from any anti-Martinist tract of this nature; Nash, for example, threatens Martin with Buls slicing tooles - that is, with public execution ².

This reading of the Marprelate tracts is as much of an over-simplification as that of Cooper. Reducing their wit to the crudest and most violent form of verbal slapstick, it disregards all the nuances with which Martin safeguards the ambiguity of his tone. In The Reproofe of Martin Junior the Marprelate author slyly suggests that the bishops would have been only too pleased had they succeeded in convincing the general populace that this reductionist view of the tracts was correct:

And the men of sinne themselves, I meane the Canturburie
Caiphas, with the rest of his Anti-christian beasts ...
were content in a maner to turne his purposes from a
serious matter, to a point of jesting, wherewith they
would have only rimers and stage-players (that is, Plaine
rogues, as thou hast well noted) to deale. 3

The Marprelate tracts, however, do not correspond to any such simple model as 'a point of jesting'. Replies which remain on that level, imitating the surface of apparently random insults and anecdotes without perceiving the inner logic of polemic which makes each tract into a coherent statement, seem trivial and shallow. Style becomes an end rather than a means, and the desire to shock and startle takes precedence over the need for clarity. The general effect is thus one of a disconnected series of verbal squibs, which make little coherent impact on the reader. Pappe with an Hatchet is probably the crudest of all the tracts; Lyly was not a natural satirist, and his unfamiliarity and boredom with the exercise leads him to pointless excesses ⁴. An Almond

1. Ibid., 422.

2. Nash, An Almond for a Parrat in The Works of Thomas Nashe, vol.III, 348; see also Pierces Supererogation in The Works of Gabriel Harvey, vol.II, 129-30, in which Harvey mentions the anti-Martinist rhymes, the Cambridge wag (Nash) and Lyly, and says: 'All three jumpe in eodem tertio: nothing but a certaine exercise, termed hanging, will serve their turne ... they must draw cuttes, who shall play the Hangeman: and that is the argument of the Tragedie, and the very papp of the hatchet.'

3. Sig. A ii recto.

4. See Lyly, Works, ed. R.W. Bond, vol.III, 392, for Bond's comments on the

for a Parrat has occasional flashes of genuine wit: '... whose reformed fraternity quoad Scripture so confidently as if they had lately purchast a commission of cum privilegio ad interpretandum solum from Christ and his twelve Apostls' ¹, but its general stylistic level is represented by the following quotation: 'It was told me ... that your grout-headed holinesse had turnd uppe your heeles like a tired jade in a meadow, and snorted out your scorneful soule, like a mesled hog on a mucke-hill' ². McGinn deals at some length with this tract, and credits Nash with outdoing Martin in the use of satirical invective ³; but the techniques of personal 'flyting', which Nash begins to develop here in his attack on Martin and perfects in his quarrel with Harvey, are less subtle than the techniques by which Martin personifies and caricatures the system in its individual representatives.

More telling are the less familiar 'Pasquill' tracts, which make some attempt to criticise Martin's arguments as well as his person. An attempt at some more oblique and telling critique than the frontal assault of hurling insults is also made by the author of Martins Months minde, who recreates the persona of Martin on his death-bed, and introduces some salient observations on the counter-productive nature of Martinism in his account of Marprelate's final words to his sons:

... after that some of our companions had dealt sagelie in the cause, and gained good credite with some of some sort; in lept I ... with twatling tales ... and in one houre overthrewe, what the wiser sort had been working, and with heave and shoove, had reared up and set on end, many yeares before. ⁴

The point is a shrewd one; the case of the Puritans can no longer

tract, which are pithy and, in my judgement, quite correct.

1. An Almond for a Parrat, sig. B 4 verso, in The Works of Thomas Nashe, vol.III, 344-5.
2. Ibid., 344.
3. McGinn, John Penry and the Marprelate Controversy, 181.
4. Martins Months minde, sig. F 1 verso-F 2 recto. For the moderate Puritan reaction to Marprelate see Josias Nichols, The Plea of the Innocent, 31-2.

be taken seriously. Paradoxically, Martin's wit has made the genuine dialogue for which he clamours impossible. As Harvey puts it in Pierces

Supererogation:

A glicking Pro and a frumping Contra, shall have much-
adoe to shake handes in the Ergo. There is no end of
girdes, and bobbes: it is sound Argumentes, and grounded
Authorities, that must strike the definitive stroke, and
decide the controversy with mutuall satisfaction. 1

Martin's techniques, however, are not those productive of 'sound Argumentes'; they are the techniques of the stage: 'So that now Roscius pleads in the senate house; Asses play upon harpes; the Stage is brought into the Church; and vices make plaies of Church matters' ². The dialogue of the stage may be seen as a literary short-cut after the complexities of rigorous logical exchange. Such an exchange, however, is staged by a single mind - that of the playwright - and its protagonists are figments of one individual's imagination. Thus the characters operate in a world free from any external check but that of the author's dramatic sense. Episcopal comments are introduced as a foil setting off Martin's wit, and their substantive content is ignored. Martin's use of the margin in The Epistle sums up his contemptuous manipulation of his opponents. At first the bishops are allowed to register their formal objections in the text: 'We denie your minor M. Marprelat say the Bb and their associates' ³. But their next objection is consigned to the margin, and Martin derides it as unmannerly: 'But it is well that since you last interrupted me (for now this is the second time) you seeme to have lernt your Cato de moribus in that you keepe your selves on the margent' ⁴.

1. Harvey, Works, vol.II, 133.

2. Martins Months minde, sig. D 2 recto. It seems possible to me that part of the outrage typified by this quotation stems from an awareness that Martin's techniques run contrary to one major tendency of the Reformation, which effectively secularised drama by driving it out of the church; most of the notable town cycles of mystery plays were suppressed in the 16th century (see e.g. The Revels History of Drama in English (London and New York, 1980) ch 2, 7-11

3. The Epistle, 4.

4. Ibid., 5.

erman Sanders
Shard Southern
V. Craik and
s Potter
II 1500-
76

The Epistle is like a play in which the author also plays the hero's role; opponents are mere functions of dramatic effect, and his 'debate' with them represents no serious engagement with independent minds.

Martin drives a nail into the coffin of disputation every time he parodies it; after studying the following title:

Certaine Minerall and Metaphysical Schoolpoints to be defended by the reverende Bishops and the rest my cleargie masters of the convocation house against both the universities and al the reformed Churches in Christendome, Wherin is layd open the very Quintessence of all Catercozner divinitie ...,

the reader finds it hard to take any appeal for disputation seriously. An iconoclastic writer, Martin leaves his audience vulnerable because he attempts to destroy not only their objects of worship, but also the traditional frames of reference by which they may judge both those objects and his discourse about them for themselves. Hence he makes logic his subjective possession and reduces debate to an abrasive restatement of his own positions. In so doing, whatever his claims to the contrary, he violates the decorum of serious theological debate by altering its given form to suit himself; the literary hegemony implicit in the works of the Puritan writers quoted earlier in this chapter here becomes explicit. There is no possible refutation of a controversialist who claims not only a definitive revelation of faith but the right to manipulate language in his own favour, while maintaining rigorous objective standards for the judgement of his opponents' works. Martin, then, dramatises the controversy in such a way as to exclude the possibility of defeat; the only congruous response is a redramatisation in favour of the opposite point of view, and it is this which the satirical anti-Martinists fail to achieve.

Decorum, however, was not so easily to be set aside. In the tightly knit and interconnected hierarchy of values which dominated Elizabethan society, a violation of decorum in one sphere had repercussions in every other; and a study of the rhymes contained in Mar-Martine reveals the fear that Martin's flouting of convention in one area posed a threat to standards which a modern

critic might think quite distinct from religious controversy. One rhyme, for example, deals with the abandonment of the secure hierarchy of rural society in favour of the comparative licence and extravagance of urban culture:

... Get home, keepe house, ware tounes so pure:
 Their zeale is hot, theyle paie you sure.
 When home you come, joine faith and love,
 Let pri^est his portion have,
 Let neighbours field be as it was,
 Cast off your garments brave.
 Love God and Gospel as you ought,
 And let that goe, that was il sought. 1

Another rhyme noted that Martin's style threatens the traditions of responsible writing; the craft of literary composition is undermined by the production of such apparently careless squibs: 'Weil lettred clarkis endite thair warkes (quoth Horace) slow and geasoun,/ Bot thou can wise forth buike by buike at every spurt and seasoun' ². The author adds that if puritan egalitarianism promotes the belief that learning does not of itself merit respect: ' ... litrature mon spredde her winges, and piercing welkin bright:/ To heaven from whence she first did wend, retire and take her flight' ³. The link between theological and political revolt has already been commented on above. And this instinctive fear of general anarchy emerged in a more articulate form as a reasoned opposition not simply to Martin, but to any satirical treatment of theological controversy. In short, the final consensus of educated opinion was that to trivialise serious religious matters to the level of the stage, abandoning all the traditional procedures by which society contained and controlled dissent and appealing directly to the mass, was to threaten to reduce all received standards to the level of mass opinion. By satire that which is solemnly received as absolute can be made to appear all too human and relative; and the conclusion of the educated populace was that this was too high a price to pay for entertainment. In Pierces Supererogation

1. Mar-Martine (n.p., [1589?], sig. A 2 verso.

2. Ibid., sig. A 3 recto.

3. Ibid., sig. A 3 verso.

Harvey sums it up as follows:

If the world should applaude to such roisterdoisterly
Vanity, (as Impudency hath beene prettily suffered to
sett-up the creast of his vainglory) what good could
grow out of it, but to make every man madbrayned, and
desperate: but a generall contempt of all good order,
in Saying, or Dooing: but a Universall Topsy-tur(v)y? 1

In his Advertisement Bacon notes that while 'bitter and earnest writing may not hastily be condemned: for men cannot contend coldly and without affection about things which they hold dear and precious' , there is no excuse for 'this immodest and deformed manner of writing lately entertained, whereby matters of religion are handled in the style of the stage' ². This important distinction helps to clarify for us why even Puritans who had been far from restrained in their imprecations against the system - Cartwright, for instance - could not brook the flouting of convention they found in the Marprelate tracts. Verbal violence is excusable when the author clearly sees the matter at stake as one of life or death; it is the appropriate stylistic response to the real threat of spiritual annihilation. When, however, the author's tone leads one to believe that he views the whole subject with a certain detachment as fit material for satire, that which otherwise might be excused as the excess of zeal becomes gratuitous scurrility. As Bacon goes on: 'Non est major confusio quam serii et joci'; there is no greater confusion than the confounding of jest and earnest. The majesty of religion, and the contempt and deformity of things ridiculous, are things as distant as things may be' ³. Later writers may see only the literary phenomena in isolation and consequently applaud the technique of returning slander for slander. Writing at the end of the seventeenth century, Anthony A. Wood commented: 'I say, that these Buffoonries and Pasquills did more non-plus Penry and his Disciples, and so consequently make their doctrine more ridiculous among the common sort, than

1. Harvey, Works, vol.II, 131.

2. Bacon, An Advertisement touching the Controverises of the Church of England, in J. Spedding, Letters and Life, vol.I, 76.

3. Ibid., 77.

any grave or learned Answer could do¹. Writing at the time, however, Bacon - an equally secular and neutral observer - realised that more was 'called in doubt' by satire than the dubious excesses specifically pilloried:

But, in plain truth, I do find (to mine understanding) these pamphlets [the anti-Martinist satires] as meet to be suppressed as the other [the Marprelate tracts themselves].

First, because as the former sort doth deface the government of the church in the persons of the bishops and prelates, so the other doth lead into contempt the exercises of religion in the persons of sundry preachers, so as it disgraceth an higher matter, though in the meaner person. 2

To fulfil a corrective rather than a merely penal role in society, satire must operate within well defined limits; the abuses which are suitable for comic treatment, and the norms which are above it, must be clearly distinguished in the author's mind. Bacon's point is that by treating the whole area of religious debate with an air of flippant contempt, these satirists cast the norms into question as well as throwing the abuses into relief.

Not everyone, unfortunately, saw the issues at stake as clearly as Bacon did; and the reaction against religious satire tended to take the form of a plea for peace at any price, a plea which sought to minimise the real differences between the two sides in the interests of public harmony. An interesting resume of such feelings is found in the tract Plaine Percevall the Peacemaker of England. Percevall picks up the homonym pistle/pistol and casts it back at Martin: 'Thy pamphlets which thou sendest into the broad world, may well be Pistles, but certainly they be no Gospels. The worde of God is sufficient to work the will of God'³. To such outbreaks of violence the proper response is silence; better to let one's opponent dissipate his

1. Anthony A. Wood, Athenae Oxoniensis An exact history of all the Writers and Bishops who have had their Education in the most Ancient and Famous University of OXFORD from the fifteenth year of King HENRY the Seventh 1500 to the Author's Death in Nov. 1695, 2nd edn., corrected and enlarged (London, 1721), col.260.

2. Bacon, An Advertisement, 78.

3. Anon., Plaine Percevall (n.d. [1590?]), 14. Nash's contemptuous reference to this work in his Foure Letters Confuted (sig. C 2 verso-C 3 recto) confirms its author to be Richard Harvey, brother of Gabriel. See The Works of Thomas Nashe, vol.I, 270.

energy than by reply to give him a focus and incentive for further violence: 'If a swift running stream have free passage along the kennell, fare well it, you shall never heare worse of it: but stop it, and Hercules like where it finds no way it will make one: and so set the next neighbors medowes all on a floode' ¹. His proposed solution to religious differences, however, is facile in the extreme: '... carrouse up your quarrels in the cup and let the licour and they, like good fellowes, march arme in arme, downe your throats' ².

It would seem that Percevall was not alone in his pacific mood. Further corroboration of this shift from delight in scurrility to suspicion of it may be obtained by comparing the defensive tone of the introduction of The First Parte of Pasquils Apologie with the uninhibited delight in verbal warfare evinced by the same writer's tracts of the previous year. In The Returne of the renowned Cavaliero Pasquill of England, Pasquill inquires of his friend Marforius how the Countercuffe has been received, and is assured of universal admiration and a widespread desire to contribute to the campaign against Martin ³. The author is clearly confident of his reception and of the judicious timing of his attack. Writing a year later, he finds it necessary to disclaim all personal delight in his task, and to maintain that his own preference is for peace rather than war:

I could for my part be well contented, to throwe my self at their feete with teares, and entreatie, to stop their course: that the weake (for whom Jesus Christ hath dyed) may not see us runne one at another like furious Bulles, foming and casting out these reproches, which heereafter we shall never be able to wipe awaie ... ⁴

He apologises for breaking his long silence, explaining his new tract as an unavoidable consequence of the Puritans' continued refusal of all overtures

1. Ibid., 10.

2. Ibid., 23.

3. Sig. A 2 recto-verso, in The Works of Thomas Nashe, vol.I, 71.

4. The First Parte of Pasquils Apologie, sig. A 3 verso, vol.I, 110.

of peace:

The peace of Jerusalem, which the faithfull are bound to pray for, is the onely thing that hath brought me to thys long and quiet pause: wherein I have set the example of David before mine eyes, seeking with my hart a surcease of Armes, even of those that hated peace, and prepared themselves to battaile when I spake unto them. The case so standing, I trust I am worthy to be held excused, if I muster and traine my men a newe, that the enemies of GOD and the state wherein I live, may be stopt of theyr passage and driven backe, or utterly foyled in the field and overthrowne. 1

Without wishing to see in this alteration in tone more than the writer's skilful accommodation to the mood of his audience, I would like to suggest that it reflects a certain general unease with the use of satire in religious quarrels. In response to this mood the Establishment rapidly shifted the tone of its own official literary response to Martinism. None of the scurrilous anti-Martinist tracts or rhymes bore the official imprimatur 'Seene and allowed by authoritie'; although there seems little doubt that they were in fact written in response to the episcopal commission, the bishops clearly desired to keep the connection out of the public eye ². Almost simultaneously, however, works which promulgated a publicly acknowledged party line began to appear; one example is the rhyme Marre Mar-Martine, which appeared with the same printer's device on the title page as the two versions of A Whip for an Ape, but bore the additional legend 'Printed with Authoritie'. This vividly evokes in a dream-vision form the power of satire to undermine absolute standards

1. Ibid.

2. The very fact that these pamphlets, though not officially authorised on the title page, were allowed to circulate freely indicates the involvement of the ecclesiastical hierarchy, since (as we saw in Chapter 2) they were largely responsible for censorship. Bacon, who wrote pointedly: '... I hope assuredly that my lords of the clergy have none intelligence with this other libeller (or of this inter-libelling) but do altogether disallow that their credit should be thus defended', added equally pointedly: 'Nevertheless I note, there is not an indifferent hand carried towards these pamphlets as they deserve. For the one sort flieth in the dark, and the other is uttered openly' (Bacon, An Advertisement, 78). Confirmation of this involvement is found in Whitgift's summary of the case for Richard Bancroft's elevation to the bishopric of London in 1597, reprinted by Strype (Whitgift, vol.II, 386), and by Stuart B. Babbage in Puritanism and Richard Bancroft (London, 1962), 39-41.

and thus render the reader vulnerable to plausible pragmatic arguments; satire is personified as Lucian, and Machiavelli is introduced to suggest the covert political aims of all satirical attacks on the status quo:

On Whitson even last at night
I dreaming sawe a pretie sight,
Three monsters in a halter tide,
And one before, who seemde their guide,
The formost lookt and lookt againe
As if he had not all his traine:
With that I asked that gaping man
His name: my name (said he) is Lucian.
This is a Jesuite quoth he,
These Martin and Mar-Martin be:
I seeke but now for Machyvell
And then we would be gone to hell. 1

The message of the work as a whole seems to be one of tolerance; peace is to be achieved by the reciprocal bearing of each other's burdens: 'Beare joyntly one anothers weakenesse so,/ That though we wither, yet the Church may grow ².

A similar impression is given by Leonard Wright's brief pamphlet A Friendly Admonition to Martin Marprelate and his mates, which ends with a magnificent concatenation of Pauline exhortations to charity and humility; beside the final paragraph there are no less than nineteen marginal references to the origins of the phrases he has woven together with great skill:

Finally (my brethren) in generall, forasmuch as we are all fellowe servants of one houshold; and none of us without his imperfections, and shal all appeare before the judgement seat of Christ, the only searcher of mans

1. A 3 recto-verso. The link of Martin with Machiavelli is also made in Martins Months minde, where one of the bequests mentioned is as follows: 'Item, I bequeath to my lay brethren, my works of Machivell, with my marginal notes and scholies thereupon: wishing them to peruse and mark them well, being the verie Thalmud and Alcoran of all our Martinisme' (sig. G 2 recto). In most contemporary contexts reference to Machiavelli can be taken to indicate simple condemnation (e.g. Pierces Supererogation, The Works of Gabriel Harvey, vol.II, 44: 'Machiavell will yerke the Commonwealth'). For an interesting exception to this general rule, see The Returne of the renowned Cavaliero Pasquill, sig. B i verso, in The Works of Thomas Nashe, vol.I, 79, which quotes with approval Machiavelli's condemnation of Savonarola as a dangerous religious innovator, and describes the Italian author in neutral terms as a 'pollitick, not much affected to any Religion'. From the references in The First Parte of Pasquills Apologie, however, it is clear that this use of Machiavelli occasioned considerable protest, so that the author feels obliged to define and limit his use of such a suspect author (see The First Parte, sig. A 4 verso-B I verso, The Works of Thomas Nashe, vol.I, 111-13).

2. Sig. A 4 recto.

hart, where every one shal beare his own burthen, and receive reward according to his own labor. Let us learn of the Apostle to deck our selves with humilitie and lowlines of mind, and be more loving, friendly and charitable one to another. Let him that stands take heed least he fall. 1

The impression of a new spirit of mutual toleration given by this paragraph, however, fades when we look at the one above it:

The foxe for prying in the lyons den, had his skin pluckt over his eares; and surely if your wound be so uncurable, as neyther friendly caveat can warne you, gentle admonition allure you, nor the feare of God withdraw you, but that still you meane to persist in your divellish enterprise, then must you know and feelee, that her Majesty beareth not the sword for naught. Where lenitie cannot reclaime, severity must correct, duro nodo, durus cuneus. 2

The final image is a commonplace also quoted by Some³; the same crude threats are made here, quietly inserted among the undeniably authoritative exhortations of the Apostle and thus making the same claim on the reader's assent as the words of Paul himself.

Clearly, then, the Establishment envisages that all the necessary concessions leading to peace are to be made by the other side. The effect of the Marprelate satire was to drive those satirised into a new rigidity in their assertion of the immutability of every procedural detail of their position, fearing, as Bacon put it, that the least concession would 'make a breach upon the rest'⁴. This rigidity can be seen clearly in another tract printed by John Wolfe in 1590, entitled A Myrror for Martinists and all other Schismatiques. The author of this tract asserts that religion: 'will not suffer alteration, or innovation, nor losse of propertie, nor anie varietie of definition'⁵, and his definition of the individual's role in public religion is such as to

1. London (J. Wolfe), 1590, 6.

2. A Friendly Admonition, 6.

3. See Some, A Godly Treatise (2nd edn.), 155.

4. Bacon, An Advertisement, 87.

5. The publisher's initials are given as T.T. (p.19).

exclude all possibility of change. Thus no justification is admitted for any complaint. The aim of those defending the Established church is to convince the reader that Martin Marprelate's vehemence is not the result of long-neglected theological grievances, but rather their cause; reasons which the radicals brought forward as the cause of their disaffection are treated as excuses invented after the event to justify their decision to rebel. Style as the expression of personality is therefore the primary target of these 1590 tracts:

Bury in the bottome of the sea, all the taunts and bitter speaches, and untrue reports, together with so many ungodly and uncharitable pamphlets, the seede of all schisme, and sedition [my underlining] and let us henceforth labour by all manner of charitable meanes, to reduce the Church unto unity. Let not the name of these externall things, be once more spoken of in the Church of Christ ... 1

The writer is Anthony Marten, whose long tract, A Reconciliation of all the Pastors and Cleargy of this Church of England, was printed by John Windet in 1590. Marten does in fact deal with a large number of Puritan theses, some of which are quoted verbatim from Udall's Demonstration. The seriousness with which he takes the exercise, however, may be gauged by his introductory apology for introducing issues of controversy into a peace treaty, in which he says that:

... when I had at the first, but only seene and superficially read the manyfold places of the Scripture, and the multitude of reasons, which the other part alleaged for themselves, I supposed that their complaints had bin a great deal more to be pitied, and that the same had bin builded oupon more certaine and assured grounds, 2

but that further consideration had convinced him that so negligible were the objections that a brief answer to them could easily be given. He eschews the normal method of debate:

-
1. For one contemporary view of this work, see Strype, Whitgift, vol.I, 53, where Strype quotes a vindictive letter of Knollys to Burghley on the subject. (Knollys calls the book: 'no other but a parasitical promoter of the ambitious and covetous government, by the claimed superiority of Bishops'.) The passage quoted is from the peroration (sig. 108 verso).
 2. Marten, A Reconciliation, 'The Preface to the Reader', sig. A i verso.

And yet would I not willingly in so plain and manifest
 a cause try the right, by arguments of Logick, which
 breed nothing els in divinitie, but endlesse and
 bootlesse disputations. Onely I would in some easie
 and briefe manner answere some fewe of your chiefest
 reasons ... 1,

and deliberately popularises and condenses the discussion, using the image of a small map which is easier to take in at a glance than a large and detailed one ². His appeal is not to his audience's rational judgement of detailed evidence, but to an instinctive fear of anarchy, that same powerful instinct that led popular opinion to draw back from the satire of the works he opposes: 'For we see by dayly experience, what dangers are like to insue to the whole Commonweale, by breaking of the least custome that hath bin long used and toucheth a publick multitude' ³.

The Marprelate tracts, then, focused the attention of contemporaries on the stylistic dress of controversy at the expense of its content. In so doing they brought to public attention the undermining of logic in the interests of persuasive rhetoric, which serious Puritan tracts had managed to conceal beneath a gloss of technical Ramist vocabulary, but which Marprelate's parodies flaunted to the attention of the perceptive reader. The radicals of the late 1580s use logic not to clarify an ongoing debate, but to epitomise. To epitomise a debate is to set it instantly in the past; conclusions may be summarised, but it is impossible to *précis* an argument which is still in progress and in which statements are exploratory rather than definitive. This truth is admirably stated in a memorable image by Walter Travers, apologising to the Council for the length and thoroughness with which he has pleaded his right to retain his post:

I have been bold to offer to your honours a long and
 tedious discourse of these matters; but speech being
 like to tapestry, which, if it be folded up, sheweth but

1. *Ibid.*, sig. 3 verso.

2. *Ibid.*, Preface, sig. A 2 verso.

3. *Ibid.*, sig. 98 recto.

part of that which is wrought, and being unlapt and layd open, sheweth plainly to all the world all the work that is in it; I thought it necessary to unfold this tapestry, and to hang up the whole chamber of it in your most honourable senate, that so you may the more easily discern of all the pieces, and the sundry works and matters contained in it. 1

Reading such summaries as the Demonstration, however, one realises that one is in possession of a training manual for the converted, in which nothing is open to question and therefore everything can be stated simply. The language of logic, therefore, came to seem not an instrument for the solution of problems, but a tool by which subversion sought to justify itself; in the Marprelate tracts that tool is seen to be subject to the distortion imposed by the overwhelming desire not to prove, but to persuade. Hence the decisive rejection of logic as a tool of polemic summed up by Marten's words (quoted above, p.282), and confirmed by the fact that after Marprelate the Establishment made no further attempt at the confutation of any particular text by the techniques of logical disputation. The target of Establishment attacks is no longer the statements made, which are so formulated as to be circular and therefore impregnable to logical assault. The polemic developed by the Establishment in the 1590s dismisses these formulations with a brevity which matches their own, and concentrates on the process of causation which produced them. Rejecting the radicals' hermetically sealed account of mental causation, Bancroft, Cosin, and others sought to show that many factors besides rational deduction went into the making of the radical 'Platforme'. Rather than engaging their opponents directly they sought to explain them away.

Throughout the earlier part of the reign sly insinuations about the disreputable motivations which might lie behind apparent idealism had been made, but an entire absence of corroboratory evidence had blunted their impact. The 1580s, however, had seen a number of developments which compromised the impeccably consistent stand of earlier radicalism. Certain notable defections

1. Hooker, Works, vol.III, pt.2, 707.

had become common knowledge; since some of the persons concerned enjoyed high public respect this cast a shadow on the motives of those who persisted in an extremist position. The following comment by Harvey in Pierces Supererogation is typical:

Doctor Humfry of Oxford, and Doctor Fulke of Cambridge, two of their standard-bearers a long time, grew conformable in the end, as they grew riper in experience, and sager in judgement: and why may not such, and such, in the like, or weightier respectes, condescend to a like toleration of matters Adiaphovall? 1

The growth of Separatism gave some substance to the charges of potential schism; indeed, schism was the logical conclusion of radical beliefs in the Discipline as an essential part of divine worship. As Bacon pointed out:

It is very hard to affirm that the discipline which they say we want is one of the essential parts of the worship of God, and not to affirm withal, that the people themselves upon peril of salvation, without staying for the magistrate, are not to gather themselves into it ... This I speak, not to draw them into the mislike of others, but into a more deep consideration of themselves. Fortasse non redeunt, quia suum progressum non intelligunt. 2

Penry, at least, finally admitted the logical conclusions of his own beliefs and became a Separatist³. Finally, the shock waves emanating from the publication of the Marprelate tracts, with their violent language and derisive parodies of conventional religious discourse, gave the Establishment a chance to capitalise on the real fear that violation of the traditional order in one area might lead to anarchy in other spheres of life. 'Let Order be the golden rule of proportion; and I am as forward an Admonitioner, as any Precisian in England', wrote Gabriel Harvey⁴. A moderate Puritan sympathiser and ardent Ramist, he voices the all-important restraint which the Marprelate tracts seem to him to have disregarded.

1. Harvey, Works, vol.II, 157.

2. Bacon, An Advertisement, in Life and Letters, vol.I, 87.

3. See McGinn, John Penry and the Marprelate Controversy, ch,16.

4. Harvey, Works, vol.II, 159.

In a literary sense, then, the Marprelate tracts were a blind alley. Historically, however, the challenge which their anarchic humour presented to public norms and the consequent widespread reaction against them and, by association, against the positions they represented, contributed to the increasing consensus in favour of more stringent enforcement of uniformity. The events of the next few years, which have briefly been described in Chapter 2 and whose literature forms the subject of the opening section of Chapter 6, would probably have been impossible without the Marprelate controversy.

These events gave a new edge to the analogy of disputation as trial, allowing the careful detective work of Bancroft to take the place of a case argued from first principles. In the final chapter of this thesis I examine the literary products of a decade in which the confrontation has moved irrevocably from the debating school to the courtroom.

CHAPTER SIX

The Trial: From Image to History

INTRODUCTION

In earlier chapters of this thesis I have suggested that the style of polemical dialogue, like the educational conventions of the schools on which it was ostensibly based, owed much to the forms and traditions of forensic oratory as defined by Aristotle, practised by Cicero, and since frequently imitated and refined. At the beginning of the 1590s, a series of events took place which metamorphosed analogy into a precise historical parallel of the classical trials in which forensic oratory had been used and developed.

A number of prominent subscribers to the Book of Discipline (a version of Presbyterianism condensed to form a convenient programme for action) were arrested, examined by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners and then tried in the Star Chamber, accused (inter alia) of having by their signatures committed themselves to the immediate implementation of reform, without the sanction of the magistrate, and of having already created the alternative church structures by which these reforms were to be forced upon the Established Church in England. It is not my purpose here to retell in any detail the story of these trials, which have already been chronicled by a number of professional historians ¹. In themselves they were inconclusive; the attempts of the ecclesiastical authorities to obtain harsh exemplary sentences against the defendants ² were thwarted by the realism of the

1. See e.g. Collinson, The Elizabethan Puritan Movement, Part 8.

2. Strype, Whitgift, vol.II, bk.IV, ch.1, 13 ff., 'Proceedings of certain unlawful Ministers, tending to innovation and stirs'. See particularly p.20, where the author urges the High Commission to consider '... what course were best to be taken for the terror of others? Whether by praemunire, if they have incurred it by law; or by some exemplary corporal punishment, to be inflicted by the Lords of the Star Chamber, or otherwise.'

Council in face of widespread support for the imprisoned ministers, coupled with what they ultimately considered to be insufficient evidence; and after some delay on Whitgift's part, Cartwright, Snape, Fen and the others were released on a submission which appears to have been little more than a promise to remain quiet ¹. Their freedom was not unconditional, however; after a verdict which amounted to 'not proven for lack of evidence' they lived under constant if unspoken threat of rearrest at any move which might sway the crucial balance of probabilities against them.

Short-term victory, then, turned into a defeat in real terms; and both sides perceived the unmasking of the classical movement, and the specifically political way in which it was publicly interpreted, as a watershed in the internal struggles of the church. We saw earlier (see Chapter 2, p.107) how the emergence of the facts about this alternative structure of authority caused the literary evidence against John Udall to be reassessed more seriously; the apocalyptic predictions of radicals lose the political innocence of biblical genre which is claimed for them when apparent evidence of a real conspiracy is discovered. In a letter to the Secretary of France which may have been drafted by Bacon, Walsingham (no enemy to reform per se) summed up the unfortunate concatenation of events. As long as the reformers were content 'to make propositions, and to leave it to the providence of God and the authority of the magistrate', all was well:

... But now of late years, when there issued from them a colony of those that affirmed the consent of the magistrate was not to be attended; when, under pretence of a consession to avoid slanders and imputation, they combined themselves by classes and subscription; when they descended into that vile and base means of defacing the government of the church by ridiculous pasquils ... when they began both to vaunt of the strength and numbers of their partisans and followers, and to use comminations that their cause would prevail though with uproar and violence; then it appeared to be no more zeal, no more

1. Ibid., vol.III, bk.IV, no.VI, 262-4.

conscience, but mere faction and division; ¹.

In isolation, neither the rhetoric of the pamphlets nor the quiet assemblies of the godly (emanating from different groups among reformers) would have posed a serious threat; becoming public knowledge almost simultaneously, they appeared to justify the dark hints of political sedition which had crept into earlier Establishment works (see below, p.292) but which had passed largely unheeded for want of evidence.

In the first section of this chapter, then, I shall study the continuation of these trials in print, arguing that the treatises produced mark the end of an interest in theological language as a mode of self-revelation and an obsession with language as a deliberate disguise, a Machiavellian cloak for the writer's serious intentions. In the second, I shall examine the polemical writing of Richard Hooker, whose work of the 1590s had its origins in a clash of opinions typical of the age ², but transcends the circumstances of its genesis. Finally, I shall look at the fragmentary and inconclusive response of reformers to the sustained attack on their political loyalty.

PART I: Evidence for the Prosecution; Bancroft and Cosin

As we saw in Chapter 2, the use of controversial language as evidence in court involves the isolation of metaphor, hyperbole and other literary devices by which a text is enlivened and enriched, treating each as evidence of criminal rather than literary intent. Immoderate language is no longer cited merely as proof of an unchristian spirit ³; it is treated as the

1. Bacon, Letters and Life (ed. J. Spedding), vol.I, 101, letter from from Sir Francis Walsingham to Monsieur Critoy, Secretary of France.

2. For a brief account, see Knox, Walter Travers, ch.5.

3. As, for example, by Whitgift and Cartwright; see W.W., vol.1, 284, where Whitgift writes: '... I beseech God forgive you your outrageous contempts, and unchristian flouts and jests ... But I will omit them all, and only desire the reader to consider of what spirit they come, and in both our writings to respect the matter, not the person.'

equivalent of a violent action, meriting the same punishment. At their trial in the Star Chamber, however, Cartwright and his Warwickshire friends successfully avoided - one can hardly say defended themselves against - the full impact of this technique by consistently denying the inevitable translation of words into action, asserting by their silence that judgement was free and did not fall within the scope of the law. They refused to answer a question on the lawfulness of the sacraments as administered, because that was: ' ... but a matter of judgmente, and not of fact' ¹. Similarly, they asserted that their subscription to the Book of Discipline was ' ... but a declaration of their judgemente, leaving the determination to her Majestie and the Parliament' ². Refusing to take the oath, they were also refusing to admit that their opinions could constitute evidence against them.

In reply, the Establishment proposed its own, much wider definition of fact. The 'daungerous positions' mentioned in the title of Bancroft's work ³ were held not merely to be 'published' but also to be 'practised'. In Chapter II, Book III of the same work, Bancroft seeks to prove by analysis of the detailed Articles of Subscription that many had already been implemented, arguing that the provisional structures found in the classical movement were in fact the final structures of the new national church. Summarising the core of his argument, he writes:

Now by these articles, and by their subscription unto them, it is most evident, that the pretences made by some, are but meerly shiftes: as that their purpose onely was, to have the booke in readiness against a Parliament, and that they subscribed the articles to no other ende, but onely to testifie their agreement in judgement, for that they were charged to disagree amongst themselves. ⁴

1. Strype, Whitgift, vol.III, bk.IV, no.IV, 243.

2. Ibid., 248.

3. Richard Bancroft, Daungerous positions and proceedings, published and practised within this Iland of Brytaine, under pretence of Reformation, and for the Presbyteriall Discipline (London, 1593).

4. Ibid., sig. 02 recto (pagination exists but it is faulty).

Nowhere, however, in all the hundreds of pages of documentation studied by Bancroft, does any member of the classical movement explicitly state the intention to proceed to unilateral action (though it was admittedly discussed as a theoretically possible position ¹): had they done so, the outcome of the trial would undoubtedly have been different. At the core of this disagreement are two ambiguities, one evidential (while the classical movement was by no means so well-ordered and hierarchical as Bancroft seeks to prove ², one may well feel that Cartwright was being a trifle disingenuous in claiming that subscription to the Book of Discipline was not intended to effect any change in the world), the other literary; how far may total commitment to an ideal be said to imply the intention of implementing it? What kind of a word is 'judgement'?

This problem has been redefined illuminatingly in the twentieth century by linguistic philosophers concerned with the points at which language and activity overlap; in How to Do Things with Words, Austin lists as commissives such words as 'promise', 'undertake', 'give my word', 'intend', 'plan', but is driven immediately to admit the uncertainty we have just been discussing:

Declarations of intention differ from undertakings, and it might be questioned whether they should be classed together. As we have a distinction between urging and ordering, so we have a distinction between intending and promising. ³

Applying this formulation of the distinction to the question in hand, we see that Bancroft is seeking to convince his readers that subscription was a promise which altered historical fact in much the same way as (say) a marriage vow, while Cartwright and the other signatories are concerned to prove that their gesture was merely one of a hope without immediate prospect

1. Ibid., sig. K2 verso.

2. Ibid., sig. N verso.

3. J.L. Austin, How to Do Things with Words (2nd edn., Oxford, 1976), 158.

of fulfilment. Perhaps there is more to this difference of opinion than mere expediency; to an adherent of the ruling party, whose exhortation is a veiled order and whose promise must (to retain public credibility) be a guarantee of both will and means for implementation, the experience of opposition, in which one proceeds from idea to reality (if at all) by an infinite series of gradations, is inevitably strange. In the circumstances it is understandable that Bancroft and his fellows so over-simplified the complex balancing act of those who 'partlie hoping, partlie fearing'¹ sought to guard their integrity without overstepping the bounds of political realism. Be that as it may, this disagreement over the nature of fact, in which one side is seeking an inclusive, the other an exclusive definition, is not only intriguing in itself; it is a clue to the whole shift of emphasis in this later period. Strype describes the end of the Star Chamber case thus:

And at the last, the Lord Chief Justice of England persuaded the Lord Chancellor and the rest, after dinner in the Star Chamber, that they should not deal against Cartwright and his fellows, until they should have matter to prove some seditious act de facto to be committed by them. 2

Bancroft (who clearly felt that his researches had produced just such matter) and others such as Cosin sought throughout their works of the 1590s to rewrite history to conform to the Lord Chief Justice's condition; the earlier crux of the debate, namely, whether the sovereign exercised de jure or merely de facto authority in the church, is replaced by a tendentious attempt to spin de facto evidence out of the random mass of verbal evidence collected by the indefatigable ecclesiastical detectives. The technique is essentially one of projection; one takes a number of promising verbal leads to their logical conclusion, hoping that they will intersect at some point which one can then label as factual evidence of sedition.

1. Josias Nichols, The Plea of the Innocent, 31.

2. Strype, Whitgift, vol.II, bk.IV, ch.VI, 84.

A variant of projection is the argument from analogy, in which rather than projecting a given line the author invites us to study the unexpected relationship between two lines, the one apparently innocuous, the other clearly threatening. Both variants share one common feature; they involve filling in a pattern, completing evidence which in itself is too fragmentary and inconclusive to convince; that is, they go beyond interpretation to creation. One critic dismisses Bancroft's writings in particular as having 'nothing more than a historical interest'. In fact, their considerable literary and controversial interest lies in the way Bancroft creates history, using the raw material he had gathered to redefine the controversy in terms of 'facts' ¹.

Before we study these techniques in a little more detail, it is worth noting that they were not new to Establishment polemic; interestingly, they were pioneered by Whitgift himself, in the brief section headed 'An exhortation to suche as bee in authoritie and have the government of the Church committed unto them, whether they be Civile or Ecclesiastical Magistrates' which in one of the 1572 editions of Whitgift's Answer forms a separately paginated appendix, but which in the other 1572 and the enlarged 1573 edition is part of the main body of the work, printed immediately after the 'Epistle to the Christian Reader' ². Whitgift's ingenuous rationale for this description of Anabaptist practice (which is totally unrelated to the main purpose of his work) is as follows:

I thought it good to set before your eyes the practises of the Anabaptistes ... to the intent that you understanding the same, may the rather in tyme take heede to such as proceede in like manner. ... I accuse none, only I suspect the authors of this admonition, and their fautors. ³

-
1. See Tracts ascribed to Richard Bancroft, ed. A. Peel (Cambridge, 1953), xx, xxi.
 2. S.T.C. 25427, Whitgift, An Answer to a certen Libel (London, 1572), has the 'Exhortation' printed as a separate annex. In S.T.C. 25428 (same title, but different edition) and in S.T.C. 25429, the augmented edition (London, 1573), it is printed in the main body of the work.
 3. S.T.C. 25427, Whitgift, An Answer, Annex, 1.

Cartwright was not deceived by this pretence of detachment:

And although the D. hath in this behalf travailed mightily and gathered (as yt were) a heape off stones to throw at us: yet for feare off being convicted [sic] off so manifest untrwthes [sic] he dare not throw one but privilie and as yt were underhand: saying he will not accuse any, he will not condemne any. That is: he will (forsothe) not slea us himself but hould our legs while other slea us. 1

Angry disclaimers, however, are of little power against hints and suggestions which leave final judgement to the reader; the cool tone of appraisal seeks to remove the issue from the centre of debate, giving it an air of historical objectivity. Whitgift's use of the technique of analogy is sophisticated and devious; with every disclaimer of a proven parallel, he plants a new suspicion in the reader's mind. His pupils of the 1590s recognised their master; on pages 434-5 of the Survey Bancroft refers specifically to the 'Exhortation' as indicating Whitgift's near-prophetic perceptiveness about the way in which the then nascent Presbyterian party would develop². Only Hooker, however, in the preface to the first five books of the Laws retained Whitgift's tone of oblique irony. Bancroft, Cosin and Sutcliffe go far beyond dark hints of anarchy lurking in the shadows, professing to give the reader an entirely factual account of anarchy working itself out in daylight. I would suggest that to exercise any lasting influence on a relatively sophisticated and uncommitted readership, polemic should invite the active mental co-operation of the reader, leaving him to insert the necessary

-
1. The second replie of Thomas Cartwright: agaynst Maister Doctor Whitgiftes second answer touching the Churche Discipline, Preface 'To the Churche off England', sig. iii verso. In the 1570s Whitgift denied that he sought capital or corporal punishment of reformers: 'It is neither the sword that taketh away life, nor fire that consumeth the body, which I move unto; but it is the "sword of correction and discipline", which I may by sundry other means be drawn out than by the shedding of blood' (W.W., vol.1, 124). Twenty years later, it is clear that the punishment sought by Bancroft is not a mere ecclesiastical censure such as deprivation: the ministers had already been deprived, but his campaign against them continued.
 2. The full title of this work makes it clear that even where lip-service is paid to argument, 'historicall narration' - the presentation of judgement as fact - is the real mode of discourse.

connections and draw the necessary conclusions. The thoroughness with which Bancroft (for example) runs every inference to ground merely renders the implausibility of the whole elaborate construction all too painfully obvious. And I would further argue that here we see the negative impact of censorship not only on the censored, but also on the censors. When Whitgift wrote in the 1570s, the struggle was still a real one; it would have been impolitic to launch too far-fetched an attack directly on men with such powerful friends and protectors. His technique is therefore indirect and subtle. By the 1590s, however, the opposition had effectively been silenced. As we noted in Chapter 2, the dangers of attributable self-expression in print, as demonstrated in the trial of Udall, were not lost on Cartwright. Although the personal scurrility of Sutcliffe's repeated attacks drew from him a brief pamphlet refuting Sutcliffe's wilder attempts to implicate him with the plot of Hacket, his only comment on Sutcliffe's revival of the Star Chamber charges is:

I leave it to be considered with what christian modestie Mr Sutcliffe may now the second and third time (and that in print) move question of those thinges to our discredite, which her Majesties most honourable Counsell was pleased, should be no further proceeded in. 1

In this climate, there was nothing to hinder long drawn out and increasingly wild disquisitions on the most trivial of events or the flimsiest of evidence; no stinging retort would be forthcoming². Censorship lessens

-
1. Thomas Cartwright, A brief Apologie of Thomas Cartwright against all such slaundersous accusation as it pleaseth Mr Sutcliffe in several Pamphlettes most injuriously to loade him with (no place, 1596), sig. C verso.
 2. As an indication of the shift, one might compare the literary treatment of minor London incidents, occurring 20 years apart, in all of which the principal agents were no longer fully sane. In 1573, when the reputation of the bishops was at its lowest ebb, a murder attempt (that of Birchet) and a murder plot (that of John Day's apprentice) came to light, in both of which the stated motivation of the would-be assassin was the impulse of the Spirit (for further details of the plot against John Day, see Ch. 2, p. 66). Undoubtedly these attempts were significant in persuading the Council to give firmer backing to the bishops, but in neither case were they written up as propaganda. Almost 20 years later, three individuals, one of whom had already been punished for insanity, stood up in a London street and proclaimed imminent divine judgement about to fall on an apostate state. This much less serious incident was investigated with the full detective apparatus developed to penetrate the classical movement, and

the need for intellectual self-discipline on the part of those who exercise it. While this may be a relief in the short term, it diminishes their ability to respond quickly and persuasively to a real challenge when it arises, a point not without relevance to the history of the English church over the next few decades.

Having explored, however briefly, the historical lineage of this kind of polemic, I shall now analyse it more closely by an examination of one work - Bancroft's Daungerous Positions - with supporting evidence from other works as necessary. In the 'Advertisement to the Reader' prefixed to Daungerous Positions, Bancroft informs his contemporary audience that it had not been his intention to have the work printed, but that its unexpected length had rendered copying impracticable. Even when the work had been printed, public circulation is presented as an afterthought¹. This is partly a disingenuous way of presenting a carefully structured work as if it were a mere compilation of facts which had found its way into print almost by accident; once again we notice the desire to stress history rather than debate. It seems likely, however, to be partly true; had the cases in the Star Chamber been successful,

merited one full length treatise and considerable space in Bancroft's Daungerous Positions. In addition, Arthington's abject submission, The seduction of Arthington by Hacket especiallie, with some tokens of his unfained repentance and Submission, which probably saved his life, was carefully edited for the press by the ecclesiastical authorities (see Matthias Shaaber, Some Forerunners of the Newspaper in England 1476-1622 (Philadelphia and London, 1929), 49-50). The full length treatise is Richard Cosin's Conspiracie for Pretended Reformation: viz Presbyteriall Discipline; A Treatise discovering the late designments and courses held for advancement thereof by William Hacket Yeoman, Edmund Coppinger and Henry Arthington Gent out of others depositions and their owne letters, writings and confessions upon examination Together with some part of the life and conditions, and the two Inditements, Arraignment and Execution of the sayd Hacket Also an answere to the calumniationes of such as affirme they were mad men: and a resemblance of this action unto the like, happened heretofore in Germanie (London, 1592). It is a curious and unpleasant work, in which Cosin's natural inclination to ridicule the delusions of these unfortunate individuals is in tension with his need to load this minor incident with serious political intent. As a whole, it is an exercise in the use of the technique of analogy to the bounds of credibility and beyond; we note, once again, the favoured use of the alarming German precedent.

1. Bancroft, Daungerous Positions, sig. A2 recto.

the work would probably not have attained circulation beyond the immediate caucus of Establishment figures for whom it was originally intended. It is a response not to a statement, but to an inconclusive event; having failed to attain its aim in court, the evidence for the prosecution is redisplayed in the wider and less critical arena of public opinion. No longer does the writer pretend any interest in reclaiming the souls of the extremists; they are fixed with the contemptuous use of the third person plural, a phenomenon to be observed from a distance ¹.

Like everything Bancroft wrote after 1590, Daungerous Positions is tinged with resentment, both against the dissidents and against the failure of judicial procedure to act decisively against them. As he wrote bitterly in the Survay:

There is no Church established in Christendome, so remisse in this point, as the Church of England. For in effectte: every man useth and refuseth what hee listeth. Some few of late have beene restrained, who had almost rayseed the lande into an open sedition. But else, they followe theyr owne fancies: and may not bee dealt withall (forsooth) for feare of disquietnes. 2

Informed with this animus, Bancroft loses no plausible opportunity to set his opponents in an ill light. Taking advantage of the widespread speculation concerning James the Sixth of Scotland's position as Elizabeth's putative successor, he opens his work by noting the frequent appeals made by the disciplinarians to the example of the Scottish Presbyterian party (which by the 1590s had consolidated its position after an apparent volte-face by James which must have been alarming to English churchmen) ³. He then

-
1. See also the translator's preface (especially sig. 4 verso) before the English version of Hadrian de Saravia's Of the divers degrees of the Ministers of the Gospell (London, 1592; a translation of the Latin original De Diversis Gradibus Ministrorum, printed in 1590).
 2. Bancroft, Survay, 311. Bancroft also saw the rejection of the ex officio oath as a challenge to his detective prowess. In the Survay he writes of the challenge presented by the radicals as being one to prove all the charges made against them; and it is this proof which his works purport to provide.
 3. Bancroft is here writing on a subject dear to his heart. In his Paul's Cross sermon he caused lasting offence in Scotland by suggesting on the basis of Archbishop Adamson's work, A declaratioun of the kings majesties intentioun and meaning concerning the lait actis of parliament (London,

summarises the principles and recent practice of the Scottish Reformation, seeking to underline the basic premise that threats which begin with bishops tend to extend to civil magistrates. Such, says Bancroft, are the courses in which the English preachers 'have already proceeded further ... then some of their favorers will acknowledge or (I thinke) doo as yet suspect' ¹. As yet he offers no proof of this assertion; analogy is being used to create a climate of suspicion only. Bancroft then continues by analysing the significance of the English ministers' literary output, concluding that since in their words they are more vehement than even their Scottish colleagues, their action is all the more to be feared ².

Having sown the seeds of disquiet by inviting the readers to perceive the courses of the Scottish ministers as the inevitable conclusion to the verbal protests of their English counterparts, he comes to the core of his argument in Book III. These things are certain not merely by the logic of analogy (not, one may note, an argument admissible in strict logical debate), but by the irrefutable weight of evidence. The argument of Book III is not

1585), that James's views of Presbyterianism remained hostile despite his apparent support for its reinstitution following the overthrow of the Arran government. (For an account of the subsequent political difficulties and of Bancroft's half-hearted recantation, see in particular Gordon Donaldson, 'The Attitude of Whitgift and Bancroft to the Scottish Church', Trans. Royal Hist. Soc., 4th Series, vol. XXIV (1942), 101-12.) While Bancroft apologised for utterances about James's intentions which were susceptible to misinterpretation, he refused to retract his views on the essentially political threat posed to James's authority by the Scottish Presbyterian ministers. Bancroft himself would appear never to have been in any doubt of the King's true sympathies. One wonders, however, how less well-informed churchmen viewed James's reign to date. One of the responses to Bancroft's sermon, John Davidson's Dr Bancroft's Rashnes in Rayling against the Church of Scotland (Edinburgh, 1590), proposed an evolutionary view of the King's thought which must have seemed ominously (or, to moderate Puritans, promisingly) plausible to those without an understanding of the delicate balancing act of James's political method: '... nowe being of perfect age, and yeres of discretion, he is christianlie moved, in singleness of hart, by his auctority to approve that christian discipline, which nowe he cleerely seeth to be so well warranted by the worde of God, which perhaps in his minority and noneage (being misled by crafty men) he did not so perfitly understand.' (sig. 3 verso)

1. Bancroft, Daungerous Positions, sig. F recto.

2. Ibid., sig. 14 verso.

a careful linear structure; it moves in a circular way, piling accretions of evidence round one central thesis:

If hitherto, as yet the point (I have in hand) be not sufficiently proved: vz, that our English reformers have attempted after the Scottish Ministers fashion, to bring into the Church of England their pretended Disciplinarian government, of themselves, and by their owne authority, without any further staying (as they had done) for the civill Magistrate, albeit they pretende now the contrary: then it is fit that I produce some further matter to this purpose. 1

The extent to which the cut and thrust of logical debate is abandoned in favour of another kind of evidence is interestingly shown by Bancroft's adoption of terms of proof proper to the syllogism to a use that is more modern and scientific: 'But it may be said that these are onely collections. Well let them be, as they are. Indeede there is no cause, why I should stand upon collections, having yet in store most evident demonstrations' ². These are not syllogistic 'demonstrations' in the conventional sense illustrated by the title of Udall's fateful work: A Demonstration of the trueth of that Discipline which Christe hath prescribed in his worde for the governement of his Church ... Wherein are gathered into a plaine forme of reasoning the proofes thereof, in which he first defines the discipline and then proves it syllogistically, dealing with theoretical objections as they arise. Bancroft does not seek to establish truth or untruth in this general sense, but to isolate particular truths of history. His 'demonstrations' take the form of quotations from the recorded doings of the classes which purport to show from their own account that the English ministers had put the discipline into daily practice ³. He is seeking, then, to produce 'proof' in the sense acceptable to a modern court (though, as we shall see, many of the 'facts' turn on closer examination to be specious), not proof in terms of a logic

1. Ibid., sig. N3 verso-N4 recto.

2. Ibid., sig. 0 recto/verso.

3. Ibid., sig. 0 verso-02 recto.

contained in the common language. This point may be illustrated by a quotation from an article by W. S. Howell, who describes the change in the position of logic over the last four hundred years as follows: 'Logic has dissolved its alliance with the communication arts and has aligned itself instead with the theory of scientific investigation' ¹. Elaborating this theory, Howell considers the difference between the presentation of a legal case in the Renaissance and in the modern era; in the former case the orator builds his subject matter out of a rational interpretation of the laws, in the second by exhaustive research into the compelling details of the concrete and particular ². By these criteria, it seems to me that one useful way of judging the kind of work which we are discussing is to treat it as an early example of the shift which Howell identifies: logic is no longer a tool with which one disciplines language, but a means of ordering perceptions of the outside world into a coherent whole. Logical terms and concepts are simplified to fit not an exposition but a narrative: 'The consequence doth often show the grossnesse of the Antecedent' ³ wrote Bancroft: a logical anomaly, but a skilful device for linking past and present to produce that illusion of inevitability so necessary for successful historical polemic.

As we have already noted, however, close examination of Bancroft's text reveals that this linguistic structure of factuality is not borne out by the evidence; we are told not what the consistorians did, but what they discussed, debated, wrote and thought. His technique depends on equating words with actions; and to achieve this he reduces the complex theological language used by his opponents to a simple ostentive code, each word standing for a form of visible action or a visible state. Key technical terms of the debate, over which battles of theological definition had been fought twenty

1. W. S. Howell, 'Renaissance Rhetoric and Modern Rhetoric' in Poetics, Rhetoric and Logic: Studies in the Basic Disciplines of Criticism (Cornell, 1975), 144.

2. Ibid., 151.

3. Bancroft, Survay, 436.

years earlier, lose the ambiguity of their stance at the crossroads of theology and politics and become merely political. The word 'liberty' is an excellent case in point. In the exchanges between Whitgift and Cartwright each protagonist sought to establish its true value in the context of the debate. Advocating the scriptural principle of election in the church, and opposing the right of the sovereign to make laws governing external form, Cartwright asserted: '... we would have the liberty of the church preserved, which Christ hath bought so dearly, from all tyranny ...' ¹. What Cartwright calls 'liberty', Whitgift qualified by the adjective 'licentious'; he sought to maintain the original Lutheran distinction between the outer man, engaged in Christian society, who must obey that society's laws, and the inner man who enjoys true freedom: '... the true liberty of the church, which is liberty of conscience, and freedom from false doctrine, errors, and superstitions, and not licence for every man to do what himself listeth, was never more in any church ...' ². When one sets against these careful if not original delimitations of the word's meaning Bancroft's hectoring tone:

The world now a dayes, is set all upon liberty ...
 The cantoning of kingdomes, is in many mens mouthes
 ... Be there not some in the world (and yet none
Anabaptistes) that will say: what is a gentleman
 but a man? And am not I in behaviour as gentle as
 he? and for my manhood, as good a man as he? ³,

the extent of the shift is clear. Again, referring to the Puritan watchword 'the first institution', Bancroft sneers at the 'blood and confusion' produced both by the first family in Eden and by all subsequent attempts to regain that supposedly egalitarian condition, quoting 'When Adam digged and Eve spanne ...' ⁴. This is a total distortion of the theological meaning of the phrase, which refers not to a regression to a simpler social structure,

1. W.W., vol.1, 405-6.

2. Ibid., 423.

3. Bancroft, Survey, 7-8.

4. Ibid., 9.

but a reinstating of timeless divine principles. Bancroft treats the theological claims of the Presbyterians as category mistakes, and retranslates the whole controversy into political terms before responding. To take one further incidental example: he borrows the terminology of the topical debate over trading monopolies to describe Calvin and Beza's dominance in Geneva: 'Generally for Church-matters; they had ingrossed the whole managing of them into their handes' ¹ (my underlining). These linguistic features are not incidental; they are essential to a polemic which, as we have already seen, relies on producing incriminating evidence from words alone. Where theological words cannot be reduced to the lowest common denominator of political intent, they are treated as a decoy, luring the unsuspecting reader to a more charitable view than is warranted by the truth - truth, in this context, is created by the polemicist but presented as an objective discovery. Bancroft, for instance, presents himself as the interpreter of this code with a hidden and sinister meaning. He takes the evidence of the traitor Johnston that '... when the name brother is given to ministers it signifieth them to be of some Classis ...' ², and that the word 'Church' is used to signify the local gathered group to prove that:

... as they have cut off themselves from the fellowship of the rest of the Christians in England, by joyning themselves into a severall brotherhood, so have they already seduced her Majesties subjects, by gathering them together into a new societie, whereunto they doe appropriat the name of the Church: as though all other Churches in the realme, were but as Jewish Sinagogues or heathenish assemblies. ³

The terminology to be found in any closely knit group is seen as the political action of separatism.

This technique sometimes reaches near ludicrous extremes. For example, the deluded reformer Coppinger approached Cartwright with an earnest request

1. Bancroft, Survey, 42.

2. Bancroft, Daungerous Positions, sig. R recto.

3. Ibid., sig. R2 recto.

for conference; this was at first promised, but on mature reflection Cartwright (together with Travers, Chark and Egerton) sent word to Coppinger that '... they would leave him to himself: or rather to Sathan: and that they thought him unworthy, to bee conferred withall'¹. This apparently unequivocal message is thus interpreted by Bancroft:

They sent him some cold messages, of their dislike of his proceedings ... not so much to with-draw him from his lewdenesse, as that therby if thinges fell out amisse, they might have some meanes to cleare themselves, by the testimonies of such their messengers, as Hockenhull and others. 2

Their refusal of conference is seen as suspicious in the extreme: it might, after all, have been used to dissuade the conspirators: 'which, (as it seemeth) was very farre from their meaning'³. As he summarises his argument in the heading to Chapter VIII, it proves 'The cunning dealing of certaine ministers in London, how notwithstanding they wished Coppingers plot to goe forward: yet they might be (if it were possible) without the compasse of law'⁴.

This technique is infinitely extendable: it is always possible to assert that one's opponent does not mean what he says and to present an alternative reconstruction of his intention. Certain literary conventions (such as irony) achieve this effect in an economical way, alerting the reader to their presence by the use of such devices as meiosis. Devices such as irony, however, derive their value from a studied departure from the normal matter of fact acceptance of statements and facts at face value. To deny the existence of a norm by treating every verbal expression, however trivial and incidental, as bearing a meaning other than the one suggested by the normal procedures of hermeneutics, is to deny the possibility of an

1. Ibid., sig. V4 recto.

2. Ibid., sig. Z3 recto.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid.

agreed common language capable of infinite subtle gradations of tone. The reformers' vocabulary is reduced to a series of overt or covert threatening gestures, and important distinctions (such as that between the considered opinion of the sane and the delusions of the demented) are not even attempted. It is clear, for instance, that Coppinger, Arthington and Hacket were not in full possession of their senses ¹; Coppinger's threats 'that God would throw some fearefull judgement amonst the Lordes, so as some the chiefe of them should not goe alive out of the place' ², proceeded from a deluded sense of personal insight into the purposes of a vengeful God. Bancroft, like Cosin, was aware that this view of the conspiracy enjoyed credence among those in no way sympathetic to the discipline; he refers, in particular, to the considered judgement of one 'gentelman of good credit' ³. To prove his opposing view - that the conspiracy was a genuine threat best seen as an 'imitation' of the Scottish ministers' violent tactics - he draws a parallel between the bare phrase used by Coppinger and the words of Cardinal Beaton's murderer (as cited by Knox in his Historie of the Reformation in Scotland):

... But here this maske is pluckt from such faces as could not be ignorant, what was ment, in that the same spirit which was in Copinger speaking before in James Melvin or rather (as I thinke) in Knox, and his fellow ministers, (according to whose humor he penned that history) doe tearme the saide cruell murther of the Cardinall, to bee the worke and judgement of God and that for the manner of the execution of it. ⁴

Bancroft is suggesting (preposterously) that the ministers would have been alerted by this verbal echo to the true nature of Coppinger's threats. The phrase is, however, a commonplace, dependent on context for its precise

-
1. In Conspiracie for pretended Reformation Cosin gives a scathing account of Hacket's torments and revelations, and of the near ecstatic submission and reverence these aroused in his fellow conspirators (pp.41-55).
 2. Bancroft, Daungerous Positions, sig. Aa2 verso.
 3. Ibid.
 4. Ibid.

meaning. Once again we have the sense of language, in all the complexity of its uses, reduced to a simple code of signs indicating a limited number of impulses. Appropriately enough, Bancroft's favourite image for his literary activity (see above) is that of unmasking, of tearing away the deceptive facade of language to show the dishonest minds which lurk behind its protection: debating a point in the Survay he writes: 'I trust the vizards of such maskers will be so thoroughly weatherbeaten (in short time) as that the simplest will be able, to discerne their deformities' ¹. As we saw earlier, orthodox literary theories of this period stressed the inevitable, organic link between mind and speech:

... for man is but his minde, and as his minde is tempered and qualified, so are his speeches and language at large, and his inward conceits be the mettall of his minde, and his manner of utterance the very warp and woofe of his conceits ... 2

Bancroft's polemic denies this basic premise, stressing the disjunction between language and intention. Language is the decoy, intention the 'real' thing. Since, however, our access to another's intention is through his language, this 'real' intention at variance with the surface of any statement must (in the absence of clear evidence drawn from his actions) be the creation of the commentator. Both in the Renaissance and (more recently) among communication-intention linguistic philosophers, language has been seen as the 'real' thing, with all mental phenomena as secondary: 'Look on the language-game as the "primary" thing. And look on the feelings, etc, as you look on a way of regarding the language game, as interpretation' ³. This moderate position (which does not deny the relevance of feelings, though it subordinates them to the incontrovertible fact of what was said) seems to me an admirable basis for the analysis of human statements. By reversing

1. Bancroft, Survay, 86.

2. Puttenham, The Arte of English Poesie, bk.III, ch.V, 148.

3. Wittgenstein, Philosophical Investigations, 167, para.656.

this order, treating inaccessible intention as primary and language as secondary, this polemic ceases in any sense to be dialogue; there can be no commonly agreed rules for adjudication on the private and uncheckable movements of the mind, and hence no possibility of a fruitful exchange. A reliance on intention, of course, is essential to the technique of projection, enabling the author to construct a chain of conditional propositions showing how hidden intentions would or will come to light in certain circumstances. Bancroft ends Daungerous Positions with just such an excursion into the hypothetical; had the plot of Coppinger, Arthington and Hacket succeeded, he writes:

Oh (would some have said) the holy discipline, the holy discipline, the holy discipline: what Prince or Potentate may resist the holy discipline and prosper? Others. See the hand of the Lorde: when men do faile what God can doe. Others the greatest workes, that ever were done in the behalfe of the Church, have been brought to passe by the basest meanes ... etc. 1

The hypothetical is then read back into the present: in the concluding sentence of the work he refers to the need to enlighten the Queen's subjects as to what is currently going on under the apparently placid surface of English society. Having hypothesised an intention in excess of that explicitly stated, projected it into the future, and read projected acquiescence in rebellion back into the present, Bancroft has in effect created the facts he needs to prove his case. In so doing he has finally denied his opponent's statements the right to be taken seriously for themselves, completing the process discussed in earlier stages of this thesis by abandoning any pretence at serious logical engagement.

The works of Bancroft, then, represent one fully developed form of historical polemic. Achieving their effect by massive accumulation of 'evidence', they create for the reader an alternative version of history, in which the simplest gesture or word has a complex and menacing significance.

1. Bancroft, Daungerous Positions, sig. Aa2 verso.

Bancroft's texts are such carefully interwoven wholes that it is difficult to isolate the distorted assumptions and techniques on which the whole structure is based. Starker examples of the distortion of the 'trial' genre can be seen in Matthew Sutcliffe's acrimonious public correspondence with Job Throckmorton, whom he repeatedly accused of being the author of the Marprelate tracts ¹. The trial paradigm is strong; Sutcliffe's second tract in this controversy, An Answere unto a certaine calumnious letter published by M. Job. Throckmorton, is dedicated to Anderson (the judge who presided at Udall's trial) and presented as a formal case:

But if your Lordship could spare any time, then would I crave so much favor, that you would be pleased to heare a matter lately begun betwixt M. Throckmorton (a man I thinke not unknowne to your Lordship) and myselfe: and the rather, for I take this to be a matter of Justice, whose decision doeth especially belong to your selfe, albeit this man refusing ordinarie triall, hath appealed to other judges. ²

Throckmorton's self-defence is called 'This writ of slander' ³. But the evidence he presents is unrecognisable as such; his case is created by subjective interpretation imposed on insignificant verbal techniques. The gulf between event and interpretation is far wider than in Bancroft's works; Sutcliffe dwells at length on such issues as whether Throckmorton's use of the '5th moneth' rather than May is a 'new, absurd, consistorian style' (seeking to identify possible refusal to name pagan gods with illicit underground activities), and whether reference to 'the sanctified spirit of God' in one of Egerton's sermons was intended to imply that the Spirit was less than divine ⁴.

-
1. Job Throckmorton of Hasely was a Warwickshire squire who had been active for reform in the Parliament of 1584-5 and whose involvement in some capacity with the production (though possibly not the writing) of the Marprelate tracts is strongly suggested by the examinations of the captured printers (see Pierce, An Historical Introduction to the Marprelate Tracts, 333-9).
 2. Matthew Sutcliffe, An Answere unto a certaine calumnious letter published by M. Job Throckmorton and entituled A defence of J. Throckmorton against the slaunders of M. Sutcliffe Wherein the vanitie both of the defence of himself and the accusation of others is manifestly declared by MATTHEW SUTCLIFFE (London, 1595), sig. A2 recto.
 3. Ibid., sig. A3 recto.
 4. Ibid., 21 recto-22 verso; 25 recto/verso.

Accumulation of such details does not serve to convince that prominent London reformers were implicated in Coppinger's plot, far less that Throkmorton wrote the Marprelate tracts. Sutcliffe's technique is nonetheless merely a reductio ad absurdum of his master's. The version of historical polemic which Bancroft and Sutcliffe exemplify does not focus on events themselves; it uses them as stage props for the creation of a subjective 'history of intention'. In so doing, they may to some extent have been influenced by the current dramatic use of history as a basis for artistic creation rather than as a faithful source of information. To some extent, of course, all history which is more than mere chronicle represents the historian's subjective viewpoint; there is, however, a difference between the interpretation which takes events 'as primary'¹ and that which merely uses them to corroborate a preconceived notion. We have already noted that this style of writing devalued language by treating it as disguise; by treating events as disguise also the writer leaves the reader no reference point against which the veracity of statements may be checked. As we noted earlier, the radical apocalyptic view of history as a hidden reality revealed only to the godly is matched by the Establishment's creation of a myth of rebellion masked as conformity. Between the extremes there is not only no 'agreement in judgements' (see Chapter 3, p.153) but also no agreement as to the state of the historical arena in which debate must take place.

PART II: Hooker

Not all historical polemic on the Establishment side, however, treated historical events as a cover for conspiracy, and critics of the church established as conscious wreckers. In the tract already quoted, Throkmorton, offended by the vehemence of Sutcliffe's tone, advised him to

1. See above, p.304, note 3

... at length bethinke himselfe, and beware how he goes any further in his unchristianlie veine of biting and bitterness especially against such men whom their greatest adversaries (if they have not quite abandoned all modesty and shamefastness) do yet sometimes reverently accompt of, as may appeare by the late politike treatise of Mr Hookers who (though he be much distasted with the discipline, and for anything I see, as strongly bewitched, and every way as deeply interested in the cause of the Hierarchie as M. Sutcliffe) doeth yet in wordes at least, and I hope from his heart, vouchsafe to honour them and be-blesse them with many reverent and brotherly termes, as right well affected, and most religiously inclined mindes and such like. 1

Hooker, then, was seen by contemporary opponents as distinctive in approach. He was, nonetheless, classed as an Establishment polemicist, and it is very clear from the tone of Throkmorton's reference that he doubts the sincerity of Hooker's superlatives; the reference already quoted and (later) his reference to Hooker's exhortation to 'lay aside gall and bitterness' ², are debating points only.

To his contemporary opponents, therefore, Hooker was a polemicist whose eirenical tone, though welcome, was suspect. I would argue that this ambivalent response is more appropriate than that of later writers who, in analysing his works in terms of their philosophical roots, have detached them from the historical context in which they were written. It may be appropriate enough to style Hooker 'a knight of romance among the vulgar brawlers of the religious controversy' ³. However, it is important to remember - as Hooker's contemporary opponents never forgot - that knights and brawlers have the same end in view, though the former may be more scrupulous than the latter regarding means. Indeed, Hooker's work is morally distinguished precisely by an acute awareness of the disastrous historical consequences of the contention in whose literary support he wrote with such skill; he is as ambivalent about his own work as about that of his opponents.

1. As quoted in Matthew Sutcliffe, An Answere unto a certaine calumnious letter, 43 recto/verso.

2. Ibid., 53 verso.

3. Daniel C. Boughner, 'Notes on Hooker's Prose', in Review of English Studies, vol.15 (1939), 194-200.

Platitudes about love and unity were commonplaces in polemic, often contrasting oddly with the overall tone of the work in which they were embedded. Only in Hooker do we sense any moral pressure behind the obligatory references to the peace of the church. The polarities of his style - destructive irony and pain at the division it causes - can be seen most clearly in his earliest extant polemic, his Answer to Walter Travers' Supplication to the Council, protesting at Travers' failure to obtain the Mastership of the Temple and Hooker's preferment to that post. Hooker had clearly been stung by the injustice of Travers' vague and inadequately supported accusations of heresy and by the distortion of such evidence as was adduced. His irony at Travers' expense is far from gentle: the latter's general accusations are subjected to minute analysis revealing the substructure of doubtful judgements which their formulaic brevity conceals. He quotes, for instance, Travers' accusation 'that I have joined with such as have always opposed themselves to any good order in the church', and deflates it with a detailed account of the events on which this statement was based, concluding:

But whatsoever the men be, do their faults make me faulty? They do, if I join myself with them. I beseech him therefore, to declare wherein I have joined with them. Other joining than this with any man here, I cannot imagine; it may be that I have talked, or walked, or interchangeably used the duties of common humanity, with some such as he is hardly persuaded of. 1

The wise disregard of the vaguer theological challenge in favour of the vulnerable point on which he insists - Travers' lack of evidence for his 'joining' with the others referred to in any commonly understood sense of that term - and the abrupt move from self-defence to attack in the last phrase are masterly. Yet the Answer ends with Hooker's most passionate statement of the futility of contention: 'There can come nothing of contention but the mutual waste of the parties contending, till a mutual enemy dance in

1. Richard Hooker, Mr Hooker's Answer to the Supplication that Mr Travers made to the Council in Works, vol.III, pt.2, 575.

the ashes of them both' ¹. Here the irony is directed against contention itself; the unusual use of 'mutual' to stress the futility of co-operating only in destruction has a curiously modern ring! ²

The tension in Hooker's polemic sets it apart from the works we have already considered in this chapter, which conceal a simple message in a tortuous, oblique method. Hooker is at constant pains to explain his method in the Laws, but in controversial terms his message remains ambivalent. Both participant in and commentator on the contention, his perspective shifts disconcertingly from the immediate historical constraints to the wider questions of posterity's judgements on the debate and its long-term effects on the church ³. Most other authors are concerned solely to establish and reinforce theoretical and historical ascendancy; Hooker's prime concern is peace. Commenting on the method of settling disputes ordained by the Mosaic law, Hooker writes:

However, better it was in the eye of His understanding, that sometime an erroneous sentence definitive should prevail, till the same authority, perceiving such oversight, might afterwards correct or reverse it, than that strifes should have respite to grow, and not come speedily unto some end. ⁴

Hooker's God detests strife more than error in matters other than those central to faith. As we shall see when we consider Hooker's writing in more detail, this unusual perspective underlies the structure of Hookerian polemic.

It is, of course, impossible to treat Hooker's work comprehensively in the confines of the present section, whose aim is to illustrate different approaches to historical polemic in the 1590s. To omit any reference to the Laws would, however, leave the chapter seriously incomplete. I therefore intend to consider only that part of the Laws which can most directly be

1. Ibid., 596.

2. For example, the theory of nuclear deterrence as 'mutually assured destruction capability'.

3. Hooker, Works, vol.I, 168.

4. Ibid.

compared to the works of Bancroft, Cosin and Sutcliffe which have already been analysed. The main body of the Laws is expository; polemic is incidental rather than central to its purpose of stating clearly the assumptions on which the English church based its ecclesiology. The Preface, however, is a direct contribution to the polemical rewriting of recent religious history. (It is noteworthy that Throkmorton's two Hooker references come from the Preface; one suspects that its distilled wit was much better known to contemporaries than the painstaking reasoning from general to particular which occupies most of the remainder of the work.) The first four chapters of the Preface constitute a historical analysis of the Genevan origins and subsequent development of the discipline. This account offers a direct comparison with that of Bancroft in the Survey¹: it is also, in my view, 'original' Hookerian material for the Preface². Accordingly, I

1. Bancroft, Survey, chs.II and III.

2. As W. Speed Hill rightly points out, the conflicting theories about the origins and development of the Laws are of literary as well as historical interest (see W. Speed Hill, 'The Evolution of Hooker's Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity', printed in Studies in Richard Hooker: Essays Preliminary to an Edition of his Works (Cleveland and London, 1972), 132-3). If the Laws were originally conceived as a quasi-official defence of the Church of England as established, then Hooker's appeals for reconciliation are purely stylistic gestures: if, on the other hand, Sandys' offer to have the work printed at his own expense entailed a reshaping of the manuscript, then the ambiguity of tone is inherent to the ambiguity of the author's position. Hooker's complex response to the controversy with Travers - striking back but deeply disturbed at the disunity which controversy revealed - suggests to me that the latter explanation better fits Hooker's character as revealed throughout his works. In addition, had Hooker consciously tailored his work to the immediate needs of the Establishment, it is hard to believe that he would not have sought official sponsors before beginning to write. Richard Churchman's account of a disconsolate Hooker advancing only his own credentials and failing to find a printer suggests a work whose genesis lay with the individual author rather than in a commission from the Establishment (see C.J. Sisson, The Judicious Marriage of Mr Hooker (London, 1940), 134). For these as well as the other technical reasons suggested by Speed Hill, I accept the two-stage theory of composition. (In particular, I would agree that on both internal and external evidence (see Speed Hill, Richard Hooker: A Descriptive Bibliography of the Early Editions 1593-1724, especially 76-7) that Ch.VIII, and possibly also Ch.IX, of the Preface are interpolations.

For any study which relates works to their context, and in particular to the literary means of production, the Laws represents a complex and interesting example of the relations between General Ideology, the Literary Mode of Production, Authorial Ideology and Aesthetic Ideology (to borrow some of Terry Eagleton's categories - see Ch.1, p.5). Within the confines of this study I am primarily concerned with Hooker's original intentions, but there is scope for a more rigorously materialist analysis of the full text of this work.

shall proceed by analysing the first four chapters of the Laws in some detail, broadening the discussion where appropriate to take account of the positions stated elsewhere in his works.

At the beginning of the Preface Hooker presents his work as a personal pilgrimage. Impressed by the reformers' zeal and fervour, he states that he considered it prima facie likely that so many 'otherwise right well affected and most religiously inclined minds' should have had some 'marvellous reasonable inducements' ¹ causing them to assert the sole validity of the discipline. The plethora of superlatives here sets us on our guard. Hooker's serious style is noted for the sober precision with which he states his case; his lengthy periods invite the reader to suspend judgement until all the necessary distinctions have been drawn and qualifications made. Repeated overstatement indicates irony; Throkmorton was right, in my opinion, to doubt the apparently ingenuous brotherliness of Hooker's mode of address. In the Preface, as we shall see again, Hooker operates at two levels; he argues his case moderately and fairly, but the scrupulous allowances he makes for the opposition have a strong undertow of irony. The double negative in the famous 'Think ye are men, deem it not impossible for you to err' ² (my underlining) is a fine example of his use of meiosis to underline the overweening arrogance of the opposition.

Unlike his fellow Establishment writers, then, Hooker's prime target is not political ambition masquerading as theology, but certainty unsupported by evidence. Both the broad sweep of his argument and the incidentals of his style are directed to the deflation of excessive certainty. In Hooker's own view, passionate conviction was not the same as theological faith (which was essentially a matter of will motivated by love); conviction should be congruous with the accessibility to human reason of the evidence in Scripture

1. Hooker, Works, vol.1, 126.

2. Ibid., 194. The ambiguity of Hooker's tone has provoked considerable recent scholarly interest in the question of his view of Calvin. For W.D.C. Cargill Thompson, Hooker's Preface is a 'skilful exercise in denigration', and his account of Calvin 'a deliberate attempt to undermine Calvin's reputation among his readers' (see 'The Evolution of Hooker's

and nature for the position held ¹. His opponents' certainty in matters disciplinary he considered excessive in the light of the 'dark and doubtful' ² nature of the scriptural evidence; and the Preface is an account of that certainty's questionable sources and of the psychological processes whereby it is reinforced.

Hooker's own opening statements of position reflect no such certainty; they are stated in appropriately guarded and limited terms. No one, he asserts, has ever been able to prove from the law of God that those who defend the church established are in error; conversely, no proof has yet been adduced demonstrating beyond reasonable doubt that the discipline is the ordinance of Christ. He makes no absolute statements about the exclusive divine imprimatur of the episcopacy, nor about the indefensibility of the discipline in any circumstances. The bland and periphrastic style masks the real controversial force of his statements - the relegation of the discipline from the status of necessary belief impelled by revelation to that of a contingent structure based on the application of general principles to a particular historical crisis. Given the overwhelming priority accorded by Hooker to the peace of the church (see above, p. 310), his case is proved if he can reduce the Presbyterian platform to mere probability. If that is achieved, the existing orthodoxy of the church hierarchy becomes morally binding on all private church members ³.

Hooker prefaces his formal 'case' with a historical analysis of the recent history of Presbyterianism. As was suggested earlier, illuminating

Laws of Ecclesiasticall Polity', in Studies in Richard Hooker). For P.D.L. Avis, Hooker's primary quality was 'a not uncritical distance from all human authorities' (see 'Richard Hooker and John Calvin' in Journal of Ecclesiastical History, vol.32 (1981), 19-28, esp. p.28); and for Richard Bauckham, the correct diagnosis is neither misrepresentation nor impartiality, but over-simplification (see 'Richard Hooker and John Calvin: A Comment', Journal of Ecclesiastical History, vol.32 (1981), 29-33, esp. pp.31-2).

1. Hooker, Works, vol.I, 151.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid., 168.

comparisons may be drawn between his treatment of that crucial nexus of Presbyterian political and spiritual power, Calvin's Geneva, and the treatment of the same historical events in Chapters II and III of the Survey. Bancroft, who prefaces his analysis with the scathing remarks about 'liberty' and 'the first institution' which are discussed above (see pp.299-300) stresses Calvin's dishonest manipulation of the common people. As the popular judgement of Calvin's actions during his first stay, he quotes: 'They would have beene tyrants over a free cittie: they would have recalled a new papacy'¹. The letter to Sadoleto and the studied moderation on controversial issues (for example, communicating with unleavened bread) which occasioned his recall are portrayed as deliberate deceptions, and Calvin's subsequent position as Domine fac totum² is pilloried. The authority crisis which caused the question of the rights of the consistory to suspend from communion to be referred to the neighbouring cities is discussed at some length. Bancroft pours scorn on Calvin's power-seeking, and criticises his use of his 'oratorie faculty'³. Finally, his distaste for any form of popular government is revealed in his extraordinary translation of Calvin's already slightly contemptuous account of the ensuing referendum: In illa promiscua colluvie suffragiis fuimus superiores becomes 'In that disordered dunghill of rifferaffe, tagge and ragge, our presbyteriall platforme, having moste of their voyces, carried away the bucklers'⁴. Bancroft, then, portrays Calvin as a power seeker whose Presbyterianism was a convenient ideological cover for essentially political ambition.

Hooker is much more subtle. Rather than commending the first attempt of the Genevans to rid themselves of Calvin, he criticises them for their infidelity to their former oaths of obedience to the discipline⁵. Of the

1. Bancroft, Survey, 19.

2. Ibid., 25.

3. Ibid., 28.

4. Ibid., 36.

5. Hooker, Works, vol.I, 129.

consistorian discipline established on his return, he writes: 'This device I see not how the wisest at that time living could have bettered, if we duly consider what the present estate of Geneva did then require' ¹. This is doubtless disingenuous, and the passage which follows obliquely undermines the discipline by putting the main arguments against it in the mouth of 'some of chiefest place and countenance among the laity' ². This irony is, however, subordinate to Hooker's main purpose, which becomes clearer when he treats of the appeal to the four cities. No criticism is made of Calvin's letter, but some stress is laid upon the form of Bullinger's reply:

That they [the other churches] had heard already of those consistorial laws, and did acknowledge them to be godly ordinances drawing towards the prescript of the word of God; for which cause they did not think it good for the Church of Geneva by innovation to change the same, but rather to keep them as they were. ³

The italics in the original underline the point; the ordinances are not the very Word of God but merely 'draw towards' it, and obedience is incumbent on the Genevan church only. Hooker is building up his main case, which is shortly stated in full:

That which by wisdom he saw to be requisite for that people, was by as great wisdom compassed.

But wise men are men, and the truth is truth. That which Calvin did for establishment of his discipline, seemeth more commendable than that which he taught for the countenancing of it established. Nature worketh in us all a love to our own counsels. The contradiction of others is a fan to inflame that love. Our love set on fire to maintain that which once we have done, sharpeneth the wit to dispute, to argue and by all means to reason for it. Wherefore a marvel it were if a man of so great capacity, having such incitements to make him desirous of all kinds of furtherances unto his cause, could espy in the whole Scripture of God nothing which might breed at the least a probable opinion of likelihood, that divine authority itself was the same way somewhat inclinable. ⁴

1. Ibid., 132.

2. Ibid., 133.

3. Ibid., 137.

4. Ibid., 138.

The irony is unmistakeable; Calvin's followers, in particular, were inclined to judge divine authority as rather more than 'somewhat inclinable' to the Presbyterian cause! It was noted, though somewhat misunderstood, by current advocates of the discipline; the author of the Christian Letter writes:

Therefore we pray you to teach us how such ... crosse commending that for his divise which he simply propounded as out of the Scriptures of God; may not drop into your readers heart such unheeded impressions, as may make him highly admire R. H. great gravitie and judicious wisdom, and J. Calvins carnall pollicie, fine hypocrisie, and peremptorie follie. 1

'Carnall pollicie'; that phrase alone highlights the gulf in judgements between the two sides. The exercise of human judgement, to the disciplinarian, is of necessity 'carnall', fleshly in the Pauline sense of reliance on the self as opposed to the leading of the Spirit, and the result of human judgement 'pollicie', with the overtones of manipulation to an ulterior end. In fact, though this analysis might justly be applied to Bancroft's treatment of this part of history, it is too simple for Hooker. Hooker's prime concern is with the drawing of appropriate distinctions. The crux is highlighted stylistically. In the first sentence quoted, Hooker sums up Calvin's achievement in a way which draws our attention by grammatical inversion. He follows it by another more complex sentence with the same striking structure, indicating that one's response to Calvin's self-justification must be more complex than one's response to his achievement in its historical context. Between the two comes the brief epigram 'But wise men are men, and the truth is truth', which points up the danger of extrapolating from admiration for a man's qualities to unqualified belief in what he says; human achievement is bound to context, the truth a free absolute.

Having drawn this distinction, Hooker goes on to analyse in some detail

-
1. Anon., A Christian Letter of certaine English Protestants, unfained favourers of the present state of Religion, authorised and professed in ENGLAND: unto that Reverend and learned man Mr R. Hoo. requiring resolution in certaine matters of doctrine (which seeme to overthrow the foundation of Christian Religion, and of the church among us) expreslie contained in his five books of Ecclesiasticall Pollicie ([Middelburg], 1599), 39.

the self-justification of the Presbyterian party as a whole, prefacing his remarks with judicious praise of Calvin's real achievement and a brief conventional survey of the history of the controversy. As we saw earlier, Hooker considered that the certainty which ordinary Presbyterians felt in respect of their ecclesiology derived not from a consideration of the evidence, but from extraneous psychological factors. These factors are analysed as being, firstly, passionate attachment to authority figures and to the simplified ways of understanding which they impose; such figures, having gained a reputation for holiness by reproof of sin and for holiness by their sage ascription of sin and failure to the form of established religion, have proceeded to force their own narrow interpretations on the complexity of the biblical text, turning it into a simple prescriptive code which their unlearned followers can grasp and follow. Conviction once established is consolidated by a process of circular reinforcement credited to the special illumination of the Spirit:

These are the paths wherein ye have walked that are of the ordinary sort of men ... a slight of framing your conceits to imagine that Scripture every where favoureth that discipline, persuasion that the cause why ye find it in Scripture is the illumination of the Spirit, that the same Spirit is a seal unto you of your nearness unto God, that ye are by all means to nourish and witness it in yourselves, and to strengthen on every side your minds against whatsoever might be of force to withdraw you from it. 1

Having analysed the ways in which the common people are manipulated by their leaders, Hooker turns to analyse those 'whose judgment is a lantern of direction for all the rest' ². Here Hooker is dealing with his own peers; distinguished theologians (and personal friends) such as Reynolds are struck at by the terms of what follows, as well as those (such as Cartwright) whom Hooker would have had less compunction in criticising. And it is noteworthy that Hooker opens this section with a caveat against assuming the ill-will

1. Hooker, Works, Vol.I, 155.

2. Ibid.

of those whose defective reasoning he is about to criticise; they have, he says, been overborne by 'greater men's judgments' ¹ (that is, by the judgement of Calvin). No attempt is made in what follows to come to grips with the substance of the Presbyterian case, that being a matter for the main body of the work; Hooker notes merely that it is 'collected only by poor and marvellous slight conjectures' ² from the Word of God. Rather he adheres to his main theme of the process by which conjecture becomes certainty. Dismissing the Presbyterian reliance on the precedent of biblical times as unfounded, he focuses on the vague and much repeated formula 'the consent of the godly', showing firstly that not all who criticise abuse in the church are Presbyterian and, secondly, that the consent of reformed churches is not the powerful body of independent testimony which it might appear, since all those churches imitated and derived from the example of Calvin's Geneva.

The structure of this analysis is, then, circular; it begins with a survey of Calvin's Geneva, surveys its historical repercussions, analyses the ways in which the Presbyterian pattern is recommended by the learned to ordinary believers, and finally surveys the evidence adduced by the learned in its support - which turns out to derive from the same Genevan experiment again. This structure mirrors what Hooker saw as the circular psychology of Presbyterian belief, which derived from Calvin's intellectual inspiration and looked to Calvin's Geneva for historical confirmation of the divine imprimatur on the new doctrinal experiment.

Like Bancroft in the sections of the Survay we have just discussed, Hooker makes no attempt in his Preface to engage with the Presbyterian platform as such; his survey is historical. Unlike Bancroft, Hooker deals not with conspiracy lurking behind everyday events, but with a kind of psychological

1. Ibid.

2. Ibid.

history, an account of the consolidation of idea into ideology. He portrays minds moving in circles, circles which widened to accommodate more of the faithful, but which held no promise of forward movement. It has often been noted that the distinctive quality of Hooker's own thought is its 'rational thrust, constantly pushing along the chains of logical relationships', and that in contrast the figures of parallelism and antithesis are essentially static¹. Hooker's own image for his work is that of a journey, which the reader must undertake with him; not until the end is reached will the significance of all that has been written be perceived². He presents his opponents, however, as locked in a false certainty which inhibits them from undertaking further mental exploration. As we have already seen, the endless syllogisms of reformers do little more than mark the boundary of a well-trodden circular area of argument. In historical terms, one might say that by elevating the response of one man to a particular historical crisis into eternal truth, the strict disciplinarians allowed their capacity for flexible response to subsequent and different crises to atrophy. In his schematic and generalised account of its history, Hooker isolates the seeds of radical Presbyterianism's long-term failure: the end of purification and reform tends to be lost in an obsessive analysis of the means.

PART III: The Response of Reformers

The historical polemic of Bancroft, Cosin, Sutcliffe and Hooker was not, of course, the only response of the Establishment to their new ascendancy in the 1590s. As is already well known³, this period saw a consolidation

1. Georges Edeln, 'Hooker's Style', in Studies in Richard Hooker, 246-7.

2. Hooker, Works, vol.I, 199.

3. See, e.g. Claire Cross, The Royal Supremacy in the Elizabethan Church, especially pp.66-7; E.T. Davies, Episcopacy and the Royal Supremacy in the Church of England in the Sixteenth Century (Oxford, 1950); Norman Sykes, Old Priest and New Presbyterian (London, 1956), ch.III.

of the tentative defence of episcopacy as a system deriving not from the free exercise of will by the godly prince, but rather from the original divine institution as demonstrated by apostolic tradition and upheld by the godly prince. This view limited the sovereign's de jure authority in a way not dissimilar to that of the radical view of Scripture. Such petrification of structure held within it the seeds of long-term failure, for reasons not unlike those identified in Hooker's criticism of radical certainties. So long as the Elizabethan church emphasised the right of the sovereign to rule the church rather than the precise way in which she had to rule, queen and church could be flexible without diminishing their credibility. As soon as authority was tied to a particular set of statements about organisation, the church could not alter its practice in any major way without rewriting its ecclesiology. The early Elizabeth was astute enough to focus debate on her right to rule rather than upon her programme; the bishops later in her reign and her and their successors yoked obedience to the king and full acceptance of his ecclesiology so closely that the rejection of the latter must entail the downfall of the former.

In historical terms this change is fascinating, not least because the writers concerned demonstrate little awareness of the magnitude of the doctrinal shift they are propounding. One wonders whether this is disingenuous, or whether, after the controversy over Bancroft's sermon at Paul's Cross had subsided, orthodoxy simply passed unawares through the intermediate stage Bancroft's sermon represents to the full 'divine right' position as articulated most clearly by Hadrian de Saravia, a Dutchman beneficed in England whose vigorous defences of episcopacy earned him high favour with Whitgift. (Interesting evidence for the ready popular assimilation of the new theory without any awareness of its discontinuity with earlier pragmatic defences of the episcopacy has been provided by W. D. Cargill Thompson's essay, 'Anthony Marten and the Elizabethan Church' ¹.) In literary terms,

1. In Essays in Modern English Church History in Memory of Norman Sykes, ed. G.V. Bennet and J.D. Walsh (London, 1966), 44-75.

however, there is little new in these expository works of the 1590s. Writers and translators alike seem aware that the Star Chamber trials and the exemplary execution of two or three dissidents represent an act of political choice on the part of the Establishment which renders any further persuasive exchange otiose and, indeed, suspect. As the anonymous writer of the preface to the English translation of de Saravia's De Diversis Gradibus Ministrorum puts it:

I, but now we see the adverse part (partly by theyr lawlesse outrage and partly by theyr lawfull restraint) to be nowe as impotent in their faction, as they are odious in their opinion, to be at this time as unable, as they were at all times unworthy, to prevaile: and then, what need we any longer strive when the enemy can no longer stand? ... Notwithstanding, in the meane time we have entertained this profered aide, not so much to invade the seditious brethren, or to bring home the resolved recreant, as to strengthen the godly Subject and to bring forward the well affected Protestant. 1

The imagery of war is more concrete and particular; deriving earlier from the conventional image of logic as a closed fist striking powerful blows of conviction, it is now related to the political situation:

As soldiers beaten from their ground, defend themselves under their palissades and trenches; so the disciplinarians, as distressed in open field, do retire behinde certeine distinctions ... Out of which holes, now (God willing) I purpose to drive them, beginning with the distinction of ordinarie and extraordinarie. 2

Dialogue is dead; the opponents are fixed with a contemptuous third person; and Matthew Sutcliffe, in particular, gloats over the way in which conflicting dogmatisms and moral inconsistencies in their own ranks have destroyed them with little help from their opponents³. In expository terms, the works under consideration here would repay considerable further study; for the purposes of this thesis, however, they merely reiterate that final abandonment

-
1. Hadrian de Saravia, Of the divers degrees of Ministers of the Gospell, sig. * [sic] 4 verso.
 2. Matthew Sutcliffe, A Treatise of Ecclesiasticall Discipline: Wherein that confused forme of government, which certeine under false pretence, and title of REFORMATION and true discipline, do strive to bring into the Church of England, is examined and confuted (London, 1591), 160.
 3. See, e.g. ibid., 143.

of debate which has already been discussed (see above, pp.286, 307). I do not, therefore, propose to analyse them in detail.

The second chapter of this thesis explains in some detail the political and practical restraints which inhibited radical reformers from expressing themselves in print during the 1590s. Study of the few works produced confirms the acuteness with which these operating constraints were felt by writers. Even a cursory examination of the title-pages and prefaces of these works reveals the real fear of the authors that they might be identified with their writings, and their elaborate attempts to divert the reader's attention from the individual wielding the pen. A Triall of Subscription¹ bears on its title-page the legend: 'Both modestly written; that Neither should offend', and the preface, which is avowedly not written by the author, makes clumsy and not wholly convincing attempts to distance its author from the work's tenets ('The reasons following were written [sic] (as I am persuaded)')². However, more sincerity is instilled into the writer's plea

Whether the author be a Minister or no, or what he is,
I am not for my part, any whit inquisitive; and doe wish,
That all they who doe love peace and trueth, would
diligentlie and charitablie consider the reasons without
hearkening after the reasoner, Least they occasion trouble
to him, who seemeth to desire the good of our Church. 3

The writer's attempts to abandon the usual authoritative Puritan style for a more conciliatory and avowedly subjective approach are considerably overdone: 'The groundes (if I may so speake) of my doubting be two: First, The evidence (so seeming to mee) of certain Scriptures. Secondlie, The weaknesse (in my poore opinion) of your excuses'⁴. The author may well be seeking a stylistic compromise which allows him to mock those he appears to conciliate. Nonetheless, his attempts to minimise the offence given by what is, in its more unguarded

1. Anon., A Triall of Subscription by way of a preface unto certaine subscribers: and Reasons for lesse rigour against non-subscribers (no place, 1599).

2. Ibid., sig. A2 recto.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid., sig. A3 recto.

moments, a radical tract, is significant; it suggests that the author was not in exile, but still resident in England, within reach of a Commission or Privy Council warrant. We noted earlier (see Chapter 2, pp.108-9) how painfully aware radicals became that the most dangerous charge which could be laid against them was one of seditious writing. Establishment writers exploited this fear by turning the taunt of works left unconfuted (previously levelled at Whitgift) on disciplinarians and urging them on to their own certain destruction. As Throkmorton wrote angrily:

I would gladly know for my learning, what point of Cosmography M. Sutcliffe holds this to bee, namely, to press men so eagerly (as he doeth) to the defence of the cause, asking them whether they be quite spent, and having nothing to say (poore men) to send over to Geneva for helpe, and in the meane season by the verdure and venim of his pen to draw, as it were, a kind of enditement of treason and conspiracie against them, and so to put them to the jumpe and defence of their lives. 1

Another factor in the paucity of the Puritan self-defences may well have been confusion and disappointment at the silence of Cartwright, the leader so long respected with a fervour little short of idolatry. At the end of A Triall of Subscription there is a lengthy and interesting passage which expresses as a certainty that which must have seemed an increasingly vain hope:

I am perswaded; that howsoever the rayling of manie, and feare on everie side inforce Jeremie to cease speaking in the name of God; and the cunning, but counterfet prophesie of Hannaniah, make him laye his hande upon his mouth for a time; yet the worde of God will be in his heart, as a burning fire; so that he shal be wearie of forbearing, and not able to stay from prophecyng yokes of yron, in steed of those wodden ones which Hannaniah did or would break. And the rather because Maist. Hooker (too friendlie a censurer of Papistes) hath (by dawbing over, not onelie the walles of ceremonies, but also the grossest corruptions, and that with untempered Morter) provoked Jeremie or some of the Prophetes to stand in the gappe, to contend for the trueth; and so to knowe, not his [i.e. God's] wordes, but his power. 2

-
1. Job Throkmorton, A defence of J. THROKMORTON against the slaunders of M. Sutcliffe, as reprinted with commentary in Matthew Sutcliffe, An Answere unto a certaine calumnious letter, p. 43 verso.
 2. Anon., A Triall of Subscription, 21-2.

The reference in the latter part of the passage is to A Christian Letter of certaine English Protestants, the brief tract querying the orthodoxy of Hooker's Laws which had just been printed by Schilders at Middelburg ¹.

The hopeful ascription to Cartwright is, however, very unlikely, and reading Cartwright's only acknowledged production of the 1590s - a response to an attempt by the ubiquitous Sutcliffe to incriminate him in the conspiracy of Hacket - one realises how unlikely it was that the elderly Cartwright would take such risks. To Sutcliffe's accusation that Hacket had praised Cartwright publicly above the writers of the present age, Cartwright points out (apparently without irony) that the one praised had been his earlier self, before 'he was falne away from his former love' ². Nor does he adopt the standard disciplinarian response to the charge of 'odious and ignorant railing' ³ - that harsh words were necessary for serious matters - but simply refused to answer: 'I referre myself to indifferent judgement upon the bookes which are extant' ⁴. On the specific point of engaging in further controversy, he adds that he feels himself unfit to undertake any further answer, 'especiallie in this declyning and forgettfull age of mine' ⁵, though he adds:

And yet if my answere might have either that allowance of print, or passage that his hath, and none other were found: I myself in this weaknesse I am in, would not be behinde with answere to anie thing that he hath bene able to alleadge in this behalfe. ⁶

His concern is very clearly for his own safety - he stresses his scrupulous attempt to stop the circulation of his draft response to the Jesuit annotation of the New Testament when Walsingham countermanded his original commission, and the margin underlines the message:

1. See p.316, note1.

2. Thomas Cartwright, A brief Apologie, sig. B4 verso.

3. Ibid., sig. C3 recto.

4. Ibid.

5. Ibid., sig. C1 verso.

6. Ibid., sig. C1 verso-C2 recto.

And if he stayed the publishing of that whereunto he was once allowed by authoritie, it is not in all likelihood to be thought that he would hastily publish anie thing of himself, howsoever he might be perswaded of the truth of it? 1

As we saw above, Cartwright had learned very thoroughly the lesson of Udall's trial. His retreat from early intransigence is a fruitful source of Establishment irony; as Bancroft silkily puts it: 'But most of all it pleaseth me to see, how maister Cartwright draweth homeward' 2.

Fear of falling foul of the new interpretation of the law on 'seditious writings' and lack of leadership undoubtedly contributed to the relative silence of the opposition in the 1590s. Established moderates like Reynolds, of course, doubtless felt that given the imminent prospect of a new sovereign who appeared to have reached (albeit not without considerable difficulty) some form of modus vivendi with his strongly Presbyterian people, it would be tactically advisable to avoid exacerbating the present situation but instead to make an immediate plea to James for 'conference' as soon as he succeeded to the throne 3. (As we saw earlier, Reynolds' faith in the efficacy of 'conference' knew no bounds.) Another factor was no doubt the defection of younger and more radical reformers to the Separatist camp, weary of trying to maintain the delicate balance between the rights of the individual conscience and those of the national church 4. However one chooses to balance out the contributing factors, however, the overall impression is of a group formerly united in the hope of a fully reformed Presbyterian national church, whose

1. Ibid., sig. C2 recto.

2. Bancroft, Survay, 447.

3. For the official account of the conference obtained, see W. Barlow, The Summe and substance of the conference, which, it pleased his Excellent Majestie, to have with the Lord Bishops and others of his Clergie (whereat the most of the Lordes of the Councell werre present) in his Majesties Privy Chamber, at Hampton Court. January 14 1603 (London, 1604).

4. For an account of the progress to Separatism of one young radical, Francis Johnson, see H.C. Porter, Reformation and Reaction in Tudor Cambridge, Part 11, chs.7 and 8, and P. Lake, Moderate Puritans and the Elizabethan Church (Cambridge, 1982).

members have admitted (though not openly) that this dream is politically unattainable and unacceptably dangerous to express, and are casting around for modifications of the programme which will both preserve self-respect and provide some progress.

And as we turn to study the works produced, the impression of lost certainty is even clearer. Firstly, there are certain works of personal defence (such as that of Cartwright already quoted) which are of great historical but limited literary interest. Secondly, there are certain direct appeals to the bishops which merit closer attention; and thirdly, there is that fascinating piece of Puritan editing, A parte of a register. In the second category, I have already noted A Triall of Subscription, and I shall now examine in some detail Josias Nichols' work, The Plea of the Innocent¹, which has considerable interest as the only full-length statement produced in the period of that modified pragmatism with which those formerly radical in their demands sought to reopen dialogue with those in power. Nichols' work is avowedly a response to the redefinition of doctrinal controversy in purely political terms:

To have ben called prescisian, puritane, hotheaded, proude, contentious, scismaticks and troublers of the Church, we have borne it pacientlie (God knowing our innocencie) and could yet beare it more ... But when it is grown so far, that we are called and accounted worse than papistes, enemies to the state, worse than seminary priests, like Jesuites, subverters of the common wealth and enemies to her Majesties most royall crown and dignitie ... we can not now forbear any longer, but that we must needes shew unto all the worlde our innocencie. 2

It has as its subsidiary purpose the discrediting of the 'Crocodili lacrima [sic] false alarums, pure flattery'³ of those Catholics who disavowed the political schemings of the Jesuits and sought to present themselves as faithful subjects⁴. The reasoning is a curious mixture of deduction from the

1. See p.167, note 2.

2. Josias Nichols, The Plea of the Innocent, sig. B2 recto/verso.

3. Ibid., 183.

4. Ibid., chs.7-9, passim.

unalterable truths of the Word and pragmatic induction which presents the reformers as beneficial to the moral welfare of the state. Responding to the charge that a reformer may be bonus vir but not bonus civis¹, Nichols seeks to present reforming Puritanism as indispensable to the growth of a healthy civic body, appealing to common experience to support his case². For much of the work, then, Nichols is pleading for tolerance and latitude, for a consensus on major issues which allows minor areas of disagreement to be seen for what they are. If, as he points out, the statutes decreeing the consumption of fish on certain days, or providing for restraint in apparel, were prosecuted rigorously, an inordinate number of citizens would immediately become offenders against the law. By analogy, the bishops should recognise that rituals tainted by popish ancestry will never be readily accepted and attempts at rigorous enforcement should be abandoned³. This pragmatic tone is not, however, maintained throughout; and the tension between realism and conviction surfaces most obviously in the one chapter (that on the unpreaching ministry) in which Nichols consciously and not without misgivings moves into the attack. Here he adopts a more trenchant style, classifying the unpreaching ministry, non-residence and subscription not merely as inconveniences but as sins contrary to the Word⁴. The mode of argument becomes much clearer and tighter than elsewhere in the work, where he is prone to such vague generalisations as 'Experience sheweth' and 'It is well known that'⁵, without much supporting evidence. At this point, on the other hand, he introduces the results of a primitive statistical survey he has undertaken with the aim of discovering the extent of the understanding of the faith possessed by communicants under a non-preaching ministry; his

1. Ibid., 167.

2. Ibid., 174.

3. Ibid., 167-70.

4. Ibid., 191-2.

5. Ibid., 174.

concern is no longer with generalisations about society but with the commands of God, which are to be obeyed in every particular church and parish.

The stylistic tensions within this diffuse and rambling work highlight its tensions of principle. To argue for a 'live and let live' attitude, a non-implementation of rigorous laws on the analogy of the fate of laws governing food and clothing, implicitly relegates differences over ritual and discipline to the status of things indifferent; to argue against subscription to articles enshrining one view of discipline because those articles enforce lies about God, is immediately to give matters of discipline the status of things necessary in themselves ¹! It is hard to know how far this tension - which is reflected in other works of the period and commented on mordantly by Sutcliffe ² - results in any particular case from a politic decision to press as matters of divine principle only such aspects of the reforming case as commanded general agreement, and how far it represents genuine confusion over what is and is not essential. Certainly it fatally undermined the credibility of the reformers when, at the accession of James, a number of them petitioned him for the redress of a number of apparently minor grievances. In response to the so called 'Millenary Petition', a number of senior members of the deeply conservative University of Oxford published a damaging analysis of the intentions of the reformers: '... which wee may well resemble unto still running streames, which are deepest there, where they seeme to be most calme' ³. They pointed out that the form of subscription to the petition (that the church might be reformed 'in all things needefull; according to the rule of God's holy worde' ⁴) implied a more sweeping aim

1. Ibid., 200.

2. Matthew Sutcliffe, An Answere unto a certaine calumnious letter, sig. A4 recto and B2 recto.

3. Anon., The Answere of the Vicechancelour, the Doctors, both the Proctors, and others the Heads of Houses in the Universitie of Oxford: (Agreeable, undoubtedly, to the joint and Uniforme opinion, of all the Deanes and Chapters, and all other the learned and obedient Cleargy, in the Church of England). To the humble Petition of the Ministers of the Church of England, desiring Reformation of certaine Ceremonies and abuses of the Church (London, 1603), sig. ¶ 3 recto.

4. Ibid., sig. ¶¶ 1 recto.

than the modest demands in the petition itself. The petition sought: 'That the Discipline and Excommunication may be administered according to Christs owne institution. Or at the least, that enormities may be redressed' ¹.

The writers of The Answer respond by quoting statements made in the Ecclesiasticall Discipline and elsewhere on the absolute necessity of accepting the full discipline, which is (inter alia) described as 'a matter of faith to be received upon paine of damnation' ², and ask: 'Will it now suffer such an "Or else, at the least?"' ³. The attempts of moderates to rescue dialogue from ideological stalemate by re-establishing it at the level of pragmatism were, then, subverted both by wide public knowledge of their own past views (or the views of those with whom, in the public mind, they were identified), and by the unresolved tensions still inherent in what they wrote.

No greater contrast to the nice ambiguities of moderate platitudes could be found than in the documents reprinted in A parte of a register, contayninge sundrie memorable matters, written by divers godly and learned in our time, which stande for and desire the reformation of our Church, in Discipline and Ceremonies, accordinge to the pure worde of God, and the Lawe of our Lande. This is not an attempt to keep dialogue open; in effect, it is a memorial to the bitter political confrontations which undermined the possibility of dialogue.

A parte of a register represents part of the collection or register of evidence for the disciplinarian case and for the harsh treatment of its proponents at the hands of the bishops, largely compiled by John Field prior to his death in 1588 ⁴. Most of the collection remains in manuscript, though it has been catalogued by Albert Peel as A Seconde Parte of a Register

1. Ibid., 3.

2. Ibid., 20.

3. Ibid.

4. See Patrick Collinson, 'John Field and Elizabethan Puritanism' in Elizabethan Government and Society. Essays presented to Sir John Neale.

(London, 1915). As Collinson notes, the intention of publishing such a register was announced in the first Marprelate tract, with which Field is known to have been acquainted and whose historical material may derive from material in Field's possession ¹.

It is not known who took over the task of editing and selection for this volume after Field's death, though something may be gathered about him from his handling of material. Many of the tracts reprinted appear, like many of the manuscripts in A Seconde Parte, to have been undated in the original. The dates assigned by the editor to pre-1580 material are approximate only; he does not distinguish clearly between works belonging to the Vestiarian and Admonition controversies, locating the former vaguely 'around 1570'. He also makes certain striking errors, for instance, he ascribes A friendly caveat to Bishop Sands, then Bishop of London ² to the year 1567, when Sandys had not yet replaced Grindal in that see. On events of the 1580s he is much more precisely informed, telling us (for instance) that Dudley Fenner's Defence of the Godlie Ministers was completed only a month before Fenner's death. The evidence suggests a mass of documents being handled and organised by someone whose own personal knowledge of the controversy dated back some ten years only, a second generation radical for whom 1570 was already history. Similarly, the place of printing and printer are not definitely known, though it seems very likely that Bancroft was right in thinking that it proceeded from Waldegrave's Edinburgh press ³.

Although, however, anonymity is not necessarily a bar to textual analysis, what can we deduce from a work which is a mere chronicle, which lacks any clear evidence of editorial intention in the form of a preface? This is no doubt in part a security measure to protect editor and printer; in part,

1. See Patrick Collinson, The Elizabethan Puritan Movement, 394.

2. Anon., A parte of a register, 372 ff.

3. Bancroft, Daungerous Positions, sig. G3 verso. It is possible that Waldegrave was also the editor.

too, it seems to me symptomatic of a loss of confidence in the historical dynamism of the discipline. This point may be clarified by comparison with an earlier text in the chronicle genre, A brieff discours off the troubles begonne at Franckford in Germany Anno Domini 1554¹. This compilation of documents relating to the Marian exile church in Frankfort locates the origins of the current Admonition controversy not in the newfangled brains of young London preachers disowned by moderate reformers with Marian credentials, but in the revered Marian^{exile}/church itself:

Ye se (brethren) by this brieff and shorte discours that the grudge whereupon this dissension hangeth is paste the age of a childe and therefore maie ... be called an olde grudge which as it seemeth was never yet throughly [sic] healed ... 2

The compiler announces his intention of carrying on the record of reform up to the present day³; this chronicle is not merely an account of things past but a skilfully edited contribution to a current debate⁴. In contrast, A parte of a register is mere chronicle; the material is not organised to present a controversial idea. As Bancroft suggests, the purpose of publication was probably no more than the preservation of notable Puritan writings. Is there, then, anything which we can usefully discover from this tract about its editor's conscious or unconscious attitudes to the controversial exchanges of Elizabeth's reign? As I have already hinted, I think there is. In the first place, since the title is the only thing in the editor's hand, we can

-
1. Anon., no place or date. Printed in Heidelberg for Thomas Cartwright, probably in 1574 (see H.F. Johnson, 'Books printed at Heidelberg for Thomas Cartwright').
 2. Anon., A brieff discours, sig. Bb ii verso.
 3. Ibid.
 4. Throughout A brieff discours the editor uses linking narrative and marginal notes to shape his basic material into a single, forceful case. A good example of his technique is found on sig. Fiii verso, where the editor quotes Calvin's judgement that it was 'bothe triflinge and childishe' on the part of the exile congregations other than Frankfort to remain so attached to 'the leavings of Popishe dreggs' simply because 'they love the thinges wherunto they are accustomed'. Calvin is referring not to the prayer book as a whole, but to the remnants of popery therein. The margin, however, notes 'The booke triflinge and childishe, by Calvins judgement' which suits the immediate Puritan case well, but does not accurately reflect Calvin's words.

look briefly at the relationship between title and content. Secondly, since we know the full range of material from which the editor made his choice, we can consider his principles of selection. Thirdly, since independent texts of most of the documents reproduced exist, we can comment on his editing.

The use of the present tense in the title is interesting, since as a matter of fact all the named authors whose work is selected were already dead. Works of the later 1580s which are quoted tend to be anonymous petitions rather than the numerous accounts of individual interrogations existing in manuscript. This contrasts with editorial policy in relation to documents of the 1560s and 1570s, which has led to the inclusion of a number of short pieces recording the responses of named individuals to interrogation and the personal attacks of named individuals on named members of the ecclesiastical hierarchy. This policy is no doubt motivated by a desire to protect any individuals still alive, whose case might be brought to unwelcome prominence by the appearance of interrogations in print. Given this policy, however, the use of the present tense in the title is interesting; the editor seems to be trying to convince his readership and himself that the current state of radical dissent was as healthy and outgoing as this impressive record of self-expression suggests.

Evidence deriving from selection is, of course, highly conjectural; in general, however, it would be true to say that this selection suggests a view of the history of the cause not as a conflict of ideas but as a personal conflict between the godly and bishops, deans and other members of the Establishment. The major sequence of works dating from the Admonition controversy which is reproduced is The Bishops proceedings against Maist. Robert Johnson, Preacher, who dyed in the gate¹; the many documents relating to Field and Wilcox, who were much more important ideologically but whose treatment could not possibly be portrayed as martyrdom, are not included.

1. Anon., A parte of a register, 94.

Similar hints of martyrdom are included even where they are historically unjustified; as we have noted, we are told that Dudley Fenner's Defence of the Godlie Ministers was finished only a month before Fenner's death (which was, in fact, from natural causes when Fenner was at liberty).

The best evidence of editorial intention, however, is the drastic editing of texts to a very obvious polemical end. Fenner's Defence of the Godlie Ministers was a work of argument responding to Bridges' massive Defence of the established church. The full title ¹ makes it clear that the weight of the work was in its reasoned argument; the historical 'declaration' of the bishops' proceedings is a brief section occupying sig. F4 verso to sig. G4 recto only. It is this 'declaration' alone, however, which is reprinted in A parte of a register as Master Dudley Fenner's defence of the godlie Ministers against D. Bridges slaunders: with a true report of the ill dealinges of the Bishops against them, written a moneth before his death ². There is no hint that this is not Fenner's whole work; and some judicious tampering with the text gives the fragment the illusion of completeness. In the original Fenner denies that certain epithets to which Bridges objects ('conspiring Arabes' ³) were directed at the bishops; they describe the Jesuits and

-
1. Dudley Fenner, A Defence of the godlie Ministers against the slaunders of D. Bridges, contayned in his answere to the Preface before the Discourse of Ecclesiasticall government, with a Declaration of the Bishops proceeding against them

Wherein chieflie

1) The lawfull authoritie of her Majestie is defended by the Scriptures, her lawes, and authorised interpretations of them, to be the same which we have affirmed, against his cavilles and slaunders to the contrarie.

2) The lawfull refusinge also of the Ministers to subscribe, is maintayned by evident groundes of Gods worde, and her Majesties lawes, against his evident wresting of both.

3) Lastlie, the forme of Church-government which we propounde, is according to his demaunde sillogisticallie proved to be ordinarie, perpetuall, and the best.

For a brief discussion of this work in its own terms, see above, Chap.5, p. 223.

2. A parte of a register, 387.
3. Fenner, A Defence of the godlie Ministers, sig. F4 recto.

atheists whose increase made the need for reformation more pressing. He then continues:

But now wee can not cleare our handes of complayning of them, as such as undermined, revyled, displaced and grievouslie afflicted the ministerie: yea and by consequent plagued the Church. No indeed, neither will we seeke to doe it, but seeing we are urged by him, we will stande to the prooffe of everie particular. Yet did wee not call them false prophetes, as he is not ashamed in playne and directe wordes to charge us, but Prophetes. No then (will he say) why compared you them to such a man? We answeare, not to describe them as false prophetes, but to show how sugerlie they dealt with manie and yet in the end did undermine them ... 1

In A parte of a register the first sentence quoted above is italicised and in the margin it states 'Bridges chargeth them' [sic]. Editorial transference of these words to Bridges puts Bridges on the defensive; it also radically simplifies the argument of a somewhat complex passage. The editor then deletes the words from 'Yet did wee not' to the second 'false prophetes', and amends the following clause to make it read as a continuation of the previous sentence, eliminating the secondary matter of epithets from whatever source and concentrating the reader's mind on the facts of injustice, in particular the insults loaded upon the godly ministers in their audience with the archbishop and the iniquity of his breaking of earlier promises. Nice distinctions have no power to move; what retains its interest for this editor, and is neatly isolated from the surrounding text for that reason, is the concrete, particular account of injury and humiliation. We noted earlier the contemporary shift in the meaning of 'proof' from the proof which language can provide to that which requires a correct, full presentation of events. This piece of editing confirms that shift in the minds of protagonists on both sides.

In the last decade of Elizabeth's reign, the attention of protagonists in the church order debate focused on history, not ideology. The 'official' Establishment polemicists made use of the consistorian evidence and the Hacket

1. Ibid., sig. F4 verso.

plot to redefine the disagreement in purely political terms, building up shreds of largely oral evidence into a theory of conspiracy against the state. Hooker presented a more subtle, more credible and thus more devastating account of disciplinarian history as a process of mutual group reinforcement of beliefs which critical examination showed to be without foundation. In response, radicals like the editor discussed above chose to see only events, disregarding the ideological context. Only moderates sought to use the focus on history to reopen dialogue on the new basis of pragmatism. Paradoxically, these efforts were undercut by history itself: the change from certainty to compromise was (rightly or wrongly) perceived as a politic move to disarm the Establishment in a fundamentally unchanged game.

CONCLUSION

The subject of this thesis is the decay of dialogue, and its method a study of the processes by which external historical pressures and inherent flaws in the paradigm of dialogue chosen erode the possibility of consensus on church order. In conclusion, I wish to consider briefly what general lessons can be learned from the church order debate about the ways in which language ostensibly used for persuasive communication is distorted both by differing views on the authority which backs it, and by the pressures imposed by the exercise of authority in other spheres, into a static medium which can only reiterate, never develop, the positions held.

What follows is not exhaustive; I am not attempting to develop a complex model of language adequate to cover every controversial work previously discussed in the body of my dissertation. Rather I shall attempt to link and elucidate a few contemporary perceptions of the debate, taking into account any bias in their formulation arising from the controversial stance of the person making them. Put at its simplest, the central failure of this controversial exchange is its failure to recognise and acknowledge the difficulty of language. It would be wrong to think that sixteenth-century writers in general took a naive view of the difficulties of communicating religious truth. In one of his sermons, for example, Hooker analyses carefully for the benefit of his hearers the slow, painful process whereby we acquire religious knowledge:

Touching the manner, how men by the spirit of prophecy in holy Scripture have spoken and written of things to come, we must understand, that as the knowledge of that they spake, so likewise the utterance of that they knewe came not by these usual and ordinary means whereby we are brought to understand the mysteries of our salvation, and are wont to instruct others, in the same. For whatsoever we know, we have it by the hands and ministry of men, which lead us along like children, from a letter to a syllable, from a syllable to a word, from a word to a line, from a line to a sentence, from a sentence to a

side, and so turn over. 1

Learning theology is like learning to read; a failure to understand correctly the basic components of language - the terminology and structures used - vitiates the whole exercise. Still more arduous, in Hooker's view, is the attempt to pass on what one has learned:

When we have conceived a thing in our hearts and thoroughly understand it, as we think within ourselves, ere we can utter it in such sort that our brethren may receive instruction or comfort at our mouths, how great, how long, how earnest meditation are we forced to use? 2

That which is clearly perceived in the pastoral sphere, however, tends to be neglected in the controversial context. Persuasive use of language ideally comprehends three stages - setting out of one's case, elucidation of its terms and assumptions to remove (so far as is possible) any uncertainty in the reader or hearer's mind about meaning, and, finally, application of that case to the particular practical issue or interpretive crux under consideration ³. The controversialists we have been considering tend to omit the vital middle step, proceeding directly from statement to application. Whether Establishment or disciplinarian, each feels his

1. Hooker, Works, vol.III, 661.

2. Ibid.

3. See Richard Hooker, A Learned and Comfortable Sermon of the certainty and perpetuity of faith in the elect, especially of the Prophet Habbakuk's faith in Hooker, Works, vol.III, 469-81, for a scrupulous illustration of this pattern. Hooker opens with a conventional division of the text. Before, however, he completes that division with a consideration of the crucial pastoral question: 'Whether the prophet Habbakuk ... did ... show himself an unbeliever', he spends several pages on a subtle analysis of the relationship between faith and certainty, an analysis which he considers necessary, because 'nothing can be so truly spoken but through misunderstanding it may be depraved', and therefore some further explanation of the nature of assurance is necessary 'to prevent, if it be possible, all misconstruction in this cause, where a small error cannot rise but with great danger' (p.469, my underlining). This digression seems to me to contain Hooker's most interesting personal contribution to theology; the famous distinction between 'certainty of evidence' and 'certainty of adherence'. It is an excellent example of the fruitful teasing out of language, exploring and striving to order the different meanings which can be packed into a single conventional expression.

works to be backed by an unquestionable authority which precludes the need for internal self-analysis and explanation. Controversial energy is spent on persuading the audience of the a priori validity of that authority, rather than on elucidating the meaning of statements made by careful attention to the processes of language.

In terms of the logical language used by protagonists, this omission of the middle step can be seen in the use of syllogisms whose major is undisputed - either self-evident or couched in the words of Scripture - whose minor arbitrarily wrests the particular point at issue into sequence with the major with the help of extrinsic (and often unacknowledged) authority, and whose conclusion triumphantly prescribes the course of action which the church should follow.

The ways in which the application of general principle to particular case is reinforced by authority do, of course, differ widely. We saw above (see pp. 32-6) how the Establishment image of authority mediated by a divinely appointed hierarchy is countered by the radical view of authority as deriving solely and directly from Scripture. The Establishment, therefore, holding that it was among the duties of God's chosen officers to apply the Word to particular circumstances, did not scorn to admit that its minor premisses were backed by the opinion of those holding authority in the church. Those who believed in the sole authority of Scripture were obliged to claim direct scriptural warrant for all their minor premisses. In a syllogism embedded in the text of his Answer to the Admonition, Whitgift makes the Establishment justification for vestments perfectly clear:

- comelynesse and decencie ... be agreeable to Gods word
... - surplesse and cope, by those that have authoritie
in the Church, are thought to pertaine to comelynesse
and decencie ... -these things be agreeable to Gods
word. 1

The disciplinarians, of course, could not so overtly admit to the interpolation

1. Whitgift, An answer to a certen Libel, 1st edition (1572), 154.

of human opinion. Their use of logic was therefore quite different, as may be seen from the following syllogism, which closely parallels that of Whitgift quoted above in terms of subject matter and date. It is taken from a paper reprinted in A parte of a register under the title Certaine questions, argumentes and objections against the reasons for the apparell and ceremonies urged:

- The Minister of the Worde must rather obey God than man
- But when he doeth obey the Prince on ceremonies and in a fashion of apparell, he doeth not obey God rather than man
- Therefore he must not obey in these things. 1

In proof of the minor, another general text is cited urging the use only of such things as are conducive to edification. No attempt is made to elucidate the application of the original historical setting of the major (the response of the Apostle Peter to an order from the Sanhedrin to stop preaching the Gospel) to the particular duties and ceremonies in dispute, and an imperative whose content was determined by the crisis to which it formed a response is generalised to a maxim whose content derives from unspoken assumptions about the exhaustive nature of the scriptural revelation.

As this brief comparison suggests, the opposition - which was obliged to conceal its inevitable hermeneutical activity - required greater ingenuity in its presentation than the Establishment, which could without inconsistency make all the steps in its arguments clear. There was, however, another appealing way out of the difficulty, which I have already discussed in some detail above (see Chapter 3, pp. 140-9). So long as there was confidence not merely in the Word's clarity, but also in its inherent ability to overthrow the strongholds of error - and personal identification with the cause was not too dangerous - it was possible to adopt the stance of a prophet unable to repress the divine command to act as God's mouthpiece.

1. A parte of a register, 45.

The Admonitioners refer to 'God, who ... hath by us revealed unto you at this present, the sincerity and simplicity of his Gospel.'¹ God, as the hymn suggests, is his own interpreter²; human interpretation would be both sacrilegious and superfluous. This approach in effect eliminates the problem of the minor premise by assimilating it to the undisputed major.

As the reign progressed, however, the Establishment began to use the backing of 'those that have authoritie in the church' less as a source of authority than as a threat; the political success of those in authority was in itself sufficient guarantee of divine backing. Proof, then, begins to move out of the logical into the historical sphere. In response, radical prophets like Penry constructed an alternative view of history accessible only to the godly which validated their claims. Since, however, prophecy was becoming more dangerous (and an anonymous prophet is something of a contradiction in terms) less radical spirits sought to conceal their hermeneutic behind an increasingly impersonal facade of logic; this approach held at least the merit of keeping proof a matter of language, but, as we have seen (see above, p.273), it distorted language to the point at which the Marprelate tracts could, without being seriously unfaithful to the techniques used, turn logic into a May-game.

Dialogue fails, then, because the protagonists refuse to acknowledge the difficulty of the medium in which they are working. In the introduction to this thesis we noted the sixteenth-century stress on the scrupulosity with which persuasive writing in respect of serious causes must be undertaken (see above, pp.18-24). In adopting the disputation form, writers in this controversy were ostensibly respecting this imperative by choosing the form developed in an educational context for clarifying issues of language.

1. Puritan Manifestoes, 8.

2. 'Blind unbelief is sure to err
And scan his work in vain,
God is his own interpreter
And he will make it plain'.
William Cowper in The Church Hymnary (3rd edition) (London, 1973),
207.

As we have seen, however, this form was subverted by the differences in 'judgement' which neither side was prepared to submit to detailed scrutiny. Because of the political need to derive an adequate model of church order from one's model of divine authority, the language of disputation became not a way of elucidating language but a way of getting from the general to the particular by rhetorically easy stages, stages elided by the re-insertion of the authority to be proved as the minor premise in the way described above.

In the presentation of their own arguments, the protagonists tended to sacrifice due regard for language to a need to obtain neat solutions. The resulting stalemate was broken only by the Establishment, who abandoned disputation in favour of a more direct way of getting from general to particular - the performative fiat of the state imposing conformity on individual church members. A similar use of the short-cut, though to rather different ends, can be seen in the treatment meted out to the opponents' language. As Nichols commented despairingly on the Whitgift/Cartwright debate:

But how flesh and blood did in these wrightings oversway
the Christian moderation and mildnes which brethren
should have been verie careful of in contending for
trueth, by the hote pursuite of either side, I rejoyce
not to rehearse ... 1

We saw in Chapter 3 that the Admonition controversy, despite its maintenance of a certain logical form, was in fact a covert means of attack on the personal credentials of the opponent; the flaws in his logic were silently assimilated to the flaws in his life. As the exchanges between the two sides continued in an atmosphere of increasing political tension, the pretence of logical engagement with the opponent fades in favour of a more direct forensic anger. Nichols summarises the process well (though he is, for his own controversial ends, deliberately disingenuous in holding

1. Josias Nichols, The Plea of the Innocent, 8.

that the forensic element slipped in by accident):

... so that when they are in wrighting of an argument or answere, there falleth in some fine ironie, or close quibbe by allusion, and sometime a bitter sarcasme, before they be aware. Which when it is read of the adverse part it rayseth many hott humours and unseemlie retaliations; which not onelie hinder the light, oftentimes of a good cause; but also maketh such a breach as will hardlie be rapayred againe in many years. 1

The opponent's language is treated superficially; the substance of his argument is often disregarded in favour of the ad hominem approach. And the absence of engagement with an opponent's arguments in favour of pouncing on his isolated verbal indiscretions becomes even clearer when the trial paradigm moves out of the field of rhetoric into that of reality. The Establishment, as we have noted, moved from dialogue to performative utterances backed up by the enforcement powers of the state; by analogy, they came to view the opponent's language as a series of performative utterances, simplifying the complex levels of metaphor in his discourse to read into it an unequivocal commitment to violence. One brief example will serve to illustrate that which has been discussed earlier (see above, pp.114-6). Responding to a suggestion that Martin's claim of a hundred thousand hands ready to bring in the discipline was 'tropological', Sutcliffe rejects it angrily; it is, he says, 'rather Diabolicall and trayterous' ².

The evaluation of this polemic in overall terms may, perhaps, be most easily undertaken by contrasting its forgotten bulk with the one work - Hooker's Laws - which has survived as a work of lasting theological and literary value. Hooker is a polemicist - his epithets are loaded and he is not above the 'fine ironies' so deplored by Nichols. But he took language seriously on its own terms, as a system of communication governed by agreed rules which it was dishonest to short-circuit and dangerous to abandon. Writing of Hooker, his most perceptive twentieth-century critic notes that

1. Ibid., 88.

2. Matthew Sutcliffe, An Answere to a certaine Libel supplicatorie, 79.

moderns find it hard to accept a passion for style in the wider, structural sense as adequate justification for a long work:

I suspect that if there is a problem here, it is ... the acceptance that ... a learned, wise and systematic concern for the forms of discourse and the style of expression does not render a man an intellectual nullity, socially irrelevant, callous to the 'real' concerns of men and society. 1

It is, however, precisely this 'concern for the forms of discourse' which gives Hooker's work its enduring value. Practical theology must always be a matter of applying general rules to particular situations; what Hooker illustrates par excellence is neither the starting point nor the end product, but the linguistic route between the two. The image of the journey is (as we have already noted) central to Hooker. He professes his desire to abandon 'the beaten paths' ² of discourse to which his opponents were 'inured' ³ in favour of guiding his readers through the 'labour ... more necessary than pleasant, both to them which undertake it and for the lookers on' ⁴ of seeking out the origins and first causes of laws. Summing up the content of the first book, he returns to the image of the 'beaten path', this time referring to the polemic of his own side:

It might peradventure have been more popular and more plausible to vulgar ears, if this first discourse had been spent in extolling the force of laws, in shewing the great necessity of them when they are good, and in aggravating their offence by whom public laws are injuriously traduced. But forasmuch as with such kind of matter the passions of men are rather stirred one way or other, than their knowledge any way set forward unto the trial of that whereof there is doubt made; I have therefore turned from that beaten path and chosen though a less easy yet a more profitable way in regard of the end we propose. 5

Hooker is here contrasting the static polemical mode of assertion and counter-assertion with his own mode of persuasion, which seeks to lead men on from

1. Studies in Richard Hooker, ed. W. Speed Hill, Preface, xiv-xv.

2. Hooker, Works, vol.I, 198.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid., 199.

5. Ibid., 277.

principles which they understand to the outworking of those principles in practical questions of church order. To strike a blow with language is not the end here; the end which Hooker proposes is one to which language is merely a means. Without scrupulosity in language, he asserts, it is impossible for the argument to advance; due attention to the structures of thought which our language reproduces will, however, take us further towards common understanding.

In contrast, the other polemicists we have discussed use language as an end in itself, a static repository of authoritative statements. Where there is no movement to clarify and reconcile thesis and antithesis, there can be no dialogue: rather than conceding an opponent's point, protagonists prefer to see their own case disintegrate into a thousand verbal distinctions and quibbles. And as the historical pressures of the reign focused attention on behaviour rather than beliefs, so the linguistic exchange degenerated into contradictory sets of statements about contingent human actions, rather than about what is eternally the case. Here progress is not merely blocked by unwillingness to make concessions: it is excluded by the nature of the exchange.

Perhaps the clearest and least linguistically technical illustrations of these points can be found, ironically, in the works cast in the form of a dramatic exchange and entitled 'Dialogues'. Anthony Gilby's Pleasaunt Dialogue, for example, was published in 1581, but the title-page tells us that it was written seven years earlier but held back 'of charitie' from publication because some hope of reformation then remained¹. In fact, it is clearly a product of the rather earlier Vestiarian Controversy. In this tract the proportion of technical language remains high; it addresses itself primarily to the conflicting views of authority which underlie the debate, rather than to the plight of the non-conforming

1. Anthony Gilby, A pleasaunt dialogue, betweene a souldior of Barwicke and an English chaplaine [concerning] maintenaunce of popishe traditions in our English Church ([Middelburg? 1581]).

ministers. In no sense is it a real dialogue, however; the doltish Establishment chaplain is merely a foil for the theological outpourings of the Puritan. We may contrast with this early work the Dialogue wherein is plainly laide open the tyrannical dealing of L. Bishshops against Gods children, printed around 1589 by Waldegrave, possibly in La Rochelle. This work is closely linked to the early Marprelate tracts, using much of the same anecdotal material. Now the focus is on the harsh political realities of a situation in which the traitorous papist is more secure than the loyal Puritan. This political point is underlined by the dialogue's clever structure. Towards the end the Jacke of both sides and the papist conclude a whispered agreement to turn the Puritan over to the pursuivant, and the apparently conventional bravado of the Puritan's last words suddenly come into sharp focus: 'I will justifie anything that I have spoken, if not let me loose my life'.¹ The trial has clearly taken over from the schools as the model of discourse.

The significance of the stalemate reached at the end of Elizabeth's reign, and underlined by the Hampton Court Conference and its aftermath, has been assessed in different ways by successive generations of historians. As Collinson notes:

In the past ... it was possible by taking up a position in 1604 to enjoy an almost uninterrupted view of the outbreak a full generation later of what used to be called 'The Puritan Revolution'. Puritanism had been unnaturally suppressed, the abuses which had nourished it were unreformed, and eventually with a certain inevitability it would burst its bonds with a new and terrible energy. It was with an eye to this future that Gardiner took James I so severely to task for the cheap victory won at Hampton Court by his facile tongue.²

In fact, however, as Collinson himself points out, the picture is much less simple. The reign of James I witnessed 'a striking improvement in

1. Anon., A dialogue wherein is plainly laide open the tyrannical dealing of L. Bishshops, sig. D 4 verso.

2. Patrick Collinson, 'The Jacobean Religious Settlement: The Hampton Court Conference' in Before the English Civil War: Essays on Early Stuart Politics and Government, ed. H. Tomlinson (London, 1983), 27-51.

the academic qualifications and general competence of the clergy' ¹ (though not a corresponding improvement in the finances of the church). Many of the bishops appointed were Calvinist in theology and earnest supporters of the preaching ministry. The appointment of Laud to the see of Canterbury is identified by Collinson as a pivotal event leading to catastrophe which might well have been avoided, rather than a symptom of the irreconcilable division which had already appeared in the Commonwealth. For other historians, economic or social (not religious) factors which had been at work before Charles or even James ascended the throne are critical. Theories about the origins of the English Civil War continue to be reworked and refined, perhaps reflecting increasing uncertainty about and fascination with the causes of unrest in current and (by extension) past British society. As a non-historian, I am not qualified to offer any new insights; I merely accept that many contributing factors have been identified and that it would be unacceptably simplistic to accept any one as the sole explanation, however well it happened to suit my thesis.

Although, therefore, the traditional Whig thesis of repression leading inevitably to Puritan revolt is attractive (highlighting as it does the issues of censorship and exercise of political authority in relation to religious disagreements discussed above), the truth is less simple. It is therefore unsafe to say that the course of the church order debate in the reign of Elizabeth was one which, continued under the Stuarts, led ineluctably to the breakdown of the Commonwealth. Debates on ecclesiastical polity, of absorbing intellectual interest to the many, were life and death matters only to a few. What this thesis does show, however, is the bankruptcy of the traditional linguistic way of resolving theological questions in the context of a church which contained fundamental disagreements about the way in which God's authority was mediated to his

1. Ibid., 50.

people. Those disagreements might frequently be softened by pragmatism, blurred by the possibility in practice of a substantial degree of local freedom of interpretation, and glossed by the traditional high regard in which the role and personal responsibility of the monarch were held by the most ardent reformers within the church, but they could not be resolved. The actions of Charles and Laud in attempting to stifle 'unnecessary disputation' and to enforce uniformity at the local level brought these stresses once more to the forefront of the collective mind. Disputation and discussion were powerless: the effect of the church order debate under Elizabeth had been to reduce the complex issues involved to simple ones of civil obedience or disobedience, and the complex web of propositions, arguments and images with which reformers built up their case to simple evidence of disloyalty which could be cited in a trial for sedition. Dialogue no longer offered a way forward: the only solutions lay in the triumph of a single view of divine authority, or in the taming and erosion of the central, objective nature of that authority to suit the variety of human views and experiences. The taming of authority is in itself a fascinating subject, offering an interesting perspective on the following two centuries at least: but it goes beyond the scope of this thesis, which confines itself to the initial decay of dialogue within the English church and Commonwealth. Perhaps, however, Josias Nichols' despairing words on the impact of controversy on the church are of wider application than he would himself have thought; men, he wrote:

... by overstraying themselves to shadow other men's upright cause ... stirr up much garboile and confusion in the Church of God. And it is not so easilie stayed, as it is unadvisedlie begun. 1

1. Josias Nichols, The Plea of the Innocent, 85-6.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Part I of this bibliography records the principal primary sources on which the thesis is based, and Part II covers secondary sources.

PART I

The titles of contemporary tracts are given in the Short Title Catalogue form, which may be more abbreviated than the form used in the text. S.T.C. references are included where it would otherwise be unclear which edition had been studied. Many of the tracts studied are anonymous. Where authorship has been reliably attributed, I have included the work under the name of the putative author (while noting that it appeared anonymously); where attributions are doubtful or non-existent, I have listed the tracts alphabetically by title under 'Anonymous'. As elsewhere in the thesis, I have modernised the i/j and u/v letter parallels where the older form was used, but otherwise spelling is unchanged.

Acts of the Privy Council of England, New Series, vol.I [etc], ed. John Roche Dasent, London, 1890 [-].

Richard Alison, A plaine confutation of a treatise of Brownisme entituled: A description of the visible church, London, 1590.

Anon., An abstract, of certain acts of parliament: of certaine her maiesties injunctions: [etc] for the peaceable government of the church, [London, 1583].

[John Field and T. Wilcox], An admonition to the parliament (A view of popishe abuses yet remaining in the Englishe church), [Hemel

Hempstead?, 1572], S.T.C. 10847. Reprinted in Puritan Manifestoes, q.v.

[Thomas Nashe?], An almond for a parrat, or Cutbert Curry-knaves almes.

Fit for the Knave Martin, [London, 1589?]. Reprinted in The Works of Thomas Nashe, q.v.

An answere for the tyme, to the Examination put in print, with out the authors name, pretending to mayntayne the apparrell prescribed against the declaration of the mynisters of London, London[?]/ Rouen [?], 1566.

[John Penry], A briefe discovery of the untruthes and slanders contained in a sermon, preached the 8 of Februarie 1588, by D. Bancroft, [Edinburgh, 1590].

[William Whittingham?], A brieff discours off the troubles begonne at Franckford Anno Domini 1554, [Heidelberg], 1574.

[Abp. M. Parker?], A briefe examination for the tyme, of a certaine declaration lately put in print in the name of certaine ministers in London, refusyng to weare the apparell, [London, 1566].

A christian letter of certaine English protestants, unto Mr Hoo [ker], requiring resolution in his Ecclesiastical pollicie, [Middelburg], 1599.

[H. Howard, Earl of Northampton?], A defense of the ecclesiastical regiment in Englande, defaced by T. C. [artwright], in his Replie agaynst D. Whitgifte, London, 1574.

A dialogue concerning the strife of our Church, London, 1584.

A dialogue wherin is plainly laide open the tyrannical dealing of L. Bisshopps against Gods children, [La Rochelle, 1589?].

An exhortation to the byshops to deale brotherly with their brethren, [Hemel Hempstead?, 1572]. Reprinted in Puritan Manifestoes, q.v.

A godly and necessarye admonition of the decrees and canons of the Counsel of Trent. Trans. from the Latin (by Archbishop M. Parker?), London, 1564.

An humble motion with submission unto the Privie Counsell, that ecclesiasticall discipline [be] reformed after the Worde of God, [Edinburgh], 1590.

A lamentable complaint of the Commonalty by way of supplication to Parliament for a learned ministry in anno 1585, [London, 1585?].

Also reprinted in A parte of a register, q.v.

A myrror for Martinists, and all other schismatiques (published by 'T.T.'), London, 1590.

A parte of a register, contayninge sundrie memorable matters, written by divers godly and learned in our time, which stande for, the reformation of our church, [Middelburg?], Edinburgh[?], 1593?].

A remonstrance: or plaine detection of faults in a booke entituled, A demonstration of discipline, London, 1590.

[dubiously attributed to Cartwright], A second admonition to the Parliament, [Hemel Hempstead?, 1572]. Reprinted in Puritan Manifestoes, q.v.

A triall of subscription by way of a preface unto certaine subscribers, [Middelburg?], 1599.

[Henry Barrow?], A petition, directed to her most excellent majestie, [Middelburg?], 1590.

Certaine articles, collected and taken (as it is thought) by the byshops out of [S.T.C. 10847: An admonition to the parliament], wyth an answere to the same, [Hemel Hempstead?], 1572. Reprinted in Puritan Manifestoes, q.v.

Mar-Martine, I know not why a trueth in rime set out (S.T.C. 17461), [London?, 1589].

Marre Mar-Martine: or Marre-Martins medling, in a manner misliked, [London, 1589?].

[Job Throkmorton?], M. Some laid open in his coulers: Wherein the indifferent reader may easily see, howe wretchedly and loosely he hath handeled the cause against M. Penri, [La Rochelle, 1589].

[John Lyly?], Pappe with an hatchet. Alias, a figge for my God sonne [London, 1589]. Reprinted in The Complete Works of John Lyly, q.v.

[John Lyly], Rythmes against Martin Marre-prelate (S.T.C. 17465), London, 1589.

Sir Martin Mar-people his collar of Esses, London, 1590.

The Answere of the Vicechancelour, the Doctors, both the Proctors and others the heads of houses in the Universitie of Oxford: ... To the humble Petition of the ministers of the Church of England, desiring reformation of certaine Ceremonies and abuses of the Church, London, 1603.

The fortresse of fathers, earnestlie defending the puritie of religion, trans. J.B., [London?], 1566.

[trans. from Latin by J. Stubbs?], The life off the 70. archbishopp off Canterbury ... Englished and to be added to the 69., no place [Zurich], 1574.

The mynd and exposition of ... M. Bucer, uppon these wordes of S. Mathew: Woo be to the wordle [sic], Emden, 1566.

[Theodore de Bèze], The judgement of a most learned man from beyond the seas concerning a threefold order of bishops, [trans. J. Field], London, 1580.

The humble petition of the communaltie to their most renowned soveraigne, [London, 1588]. Reprinted in A parte of a register, q.v. [Thomas Nashe?], The returne of the renowned cavaliero Pasquill of England, [London], 1589. Reprinted in The Works of Thomas Nashe, q.v. The Seconde Parte of a Register, ed. A. Peel, Cambridge, 1915.

[The first by A. Gilby and the second by J. Pilkington], To my lovyng brethren that is troublid about the popishe apparel, two short epistels, no place or date [Emden, 1566].

To my faythfull brethren now afflycted, [etc. Against popishe apparel], no place or date [Emden, 1566].

Arthington, Henry, The seduction of Arthington by Hacket especiallie, with some tokens of his repentance, London [1592].

Ascham, Roger, The Scholemaster, London, 1570; Scolar Press Facsimile, 1967.

Aylmer, John, An Harborowe for faithfull and trewe subjectes, agaynst the late blowne Blaste concerning the Government of Wemen, Strasborowe [i.e. London], 1559.

The Letters and the Life of Sir Francis Bacon, ed. James Spedding, vol.I, London, 1861.

Tracts ascribed to Richard Bancroft, ed. A. Peel, Cambridge, 1953.

Bancroft, Richard, A sermon preached at Paules Cross, London, 1588.

(Anon.), Daungerous positions and proceedings, published and practised within this iland of Brytaine, London, 1593.

(Anon.), A survey of the pretended holy discipline, London, 1593.

Barlow, William, The summe and substance of the conference, which, it pleased his majestie to have with the lords, bishops and other clergie, at Hampton Court, London, 1604.

Bredwell, Stephen, The rasing of the foundations of Brownisme, London, 1588.

de Bèze, Theodore, A discourse of the true and visible markes of the Catholique church, trans. T.W [ilcox], [London, 1582].

Bilson, Thomas, The perpetual government of Christes Church, London, 1593.
A compendious discourse proving episcopacy to be of divine institution, London, 1593.

Bridges, John, A defence of the government established in the church of Englande for ecclesiasticall matters, London, 1589.

Brinkelow, Henry, The complaynt of Roderyck Mors, [Strassburg, 1542?].
Reprinted in Henry Brinklow's Complaynt of Roderyck Mors, ed. J. M. Cowper, 1872.

Browne, Robert, (Anon.), An answere to Master Cartwright his letter for joyning with the English churches, London, [1583].

Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series, Record Office, ed. Robert Lemon, 1547-80, London, 1856; 1581-90, London, 1865;
ed. Mary Anne Everett Green, 1591-4, London, 1867.

Calvin, John, Institutes of the Christian Religion, trans. H. Beveridge,
London, 1963.

Camden, William, (Anon), Annales. The true and royall history of Elizabeth
queene of England, London, 1625.

Cartwright, Thomas, A replie to An answere made of M. doctor Whitgifte ...

Agaynste the Admonition. By T.C., [Hemel Hempstead?,
1573]. Reprinted in Whitgift, Works, q.v.

The second replie of Thomas Cartwright: agaynst maister
Whitgiftes second answer, [Heidelberg, 1575].

The rest of the second replie against master Whitgifts
second answer, [Basle], 1577.

A brief apologie of Thomas Cartwright against all such
accusations as it pleaseth Mr Sutcliffe to loade him with,
[ed. J. Throkmorton[, [Middelburg], 1596.

Cartwrightiana, ed. A. Peel and L. H. Carlson, London, 1951.

Cecil, William, Baron Burghley, The execution of justice in England for
maintenaunce of publique and Christian peace, without any
persecution for questions of religion, London, 1583.

Cooper, Thomas, An admonition to the people of Englande: wherein are
answered, not onely the slaunderous untruethes uttered by
Martin, but also other crimes, London, 1589. Ed. E. Arber,
London, 1882.

Cosin, Richard, An answer to the two first and principall treatises of a
certaine factious libell, An Abstract of certaine acts of
Parlement, London, 1584.

Conspiracie, for pretended reformation: viz. presbyteriall
discipline. Discovering the late designments by W. Hacket,
E. Coppinger and H. Arthington, gent., with the execution of
the sayd Hacket, London, 1592.

An Apologie for sundrie proceedings by jurisdiction
ecclesiasticall, 2nd edition, London, 1593.

- Covell, William, A just and temperate defence of the five books of ecclesiastical policie by R. Hooker against an uncharitable letter, London, 1603.
- Crowley, Robert, (Anon), A briefe discourse against the outwarde apparell of the popishe church, 1566. (The editions studied are S.T.C. 6079, which bears the Emden imprint, and S.T.C. 6080, the 1578 reprint.)
- A breefe discourse, concerning those foure usuall notes, whereby Christes catholique church is knowne. Occasioned by a conference with that ranck traitor, E. Haunce, London, 1581.
- Davidson, John, D. Bancrofts rashnes in rayling against the church of Scotland, noted in an answere to a letter of a worthy person of England, Edinburgh, 1590.
- Dering, Edward, M. Derings Workes. More at large than ever hath heere-tofore been printed, London, 1597.
- Digby, Everard, E. Digbie his dissuasive from taking away the lyvings and goods of the church, London, 1590.
- D'Ewes, Sir Simonds, The Journals of all the Parliaments during the reign of Queen Elizabeth, London, 1682.
- Documents Illustrative of English Church History, comp. Henry Gee and William J. Hardy, London and New York, 1896.
- Fenner, Dudley, (Anon.), A counter-poyson, modestly written for the time, no place, 1584. Also reprinted in A parte of a register, q.v.
- The artes of logike and rethorike (The order of householde, S.T.C. 10765.5), [Middelburg], 1584.
- A defence of the reasons of the counter poyson for maintenaunce of the Eldership, Middelburg, 1586.
- Also reprinted in A parte of a register, q.v.
- A defence of the godlie ministers, against the slaunders of D. Bridges, [Middelburg], 1587.

Fish, Simon, A supplicacyon for the beggers, [Antwerp?, 1529?]. Re-ed. by
F. J. Furnivall, London, 1871.

Frere, W. H. and Douglas, C. E. (eds.), Puritan Manifestoes, 1907. Reprints:
An admonition to the parliament (S.T.C. 10847); An exhortation
to the byshops to deale brotherly with theyr brethren (An
exhortation to the bishops to aunswer a little booke, S.T.C.
10392); A second admonition (S.T.C. 4713); Certaine articles
(S.T.C. 10850).

Foxe, John, (The Ecclesiasticall Historie). Actes and monuments of matters
most special in the church. Newly revised and recognised, partly
also augmented, and now the fourth time published, 2 vols.
(S.T.C. 11225), London, 1583.

Fulke, William, (Anon.), A briefe and plaine declaration, concerning the
desires of all those faithfull ministers, that
seeke reformation of the churche of Englande, London,
1584.

Gilby, Anthony, A pleasaunt dialogue, betweene a souldior of Barwicke and an
English chaplaine [concerning] maintenaunce of popishe
traditions in our English church, [Middelburg?], 1589.

The Writings of Robert Harrison and Robert Browne, ed. A. Peel and Leland
H. Carlson, London, 1953.

Harvey, Gabriel, The Letterbook of Gabriel Harvey, ed. E. J. L. Scott,
London, 1884.
The Works of Gabriel Harvey, ed. Alexander B. Grosart (3 vols.),
London, 1884.
Pierces supererogation or a new prayse of the olde asse,
London, 1593. Reprinted in The Works of Gabriel Harvey,
q.v.

Harvey, Richard, A Theologicall discourse of the Lamb of God and his enemies,
London, 1590.
(Anon.), Plaine Percevall the peace-maker of England,
London, 1590.

Jacob, Henry, A defence of the churches and ministry of Englande (A short treatise [etc]), Middelburg, 1599.

Reasons taken out of Gods Word proving a necessitie of reforming our churches in England, [Middelburg], 1604.

John of Salisbury, The Metalogicon of John of Salisbury, trans. D. McGarry, Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1955.

Johnson, Francis, An answer to Maister H. Jacob his defence of the churches and ministry of England, [Amsterdam?], 1600.

Knewstub, John, A confutation of monstrous and horrible heresies taught by H. N.[iclas], London, 1579.

Knox, John, The first blast of the trumpet against the monstrous regiment of women. 1st ed., Geneva 1558. Reprinted and ed. E. Arber, London, 1875.

Luther, Martin, Works, General ed. H. T. Lehmann; vol.34, ed. Lewis W. Spitz, Philadelphia, 1960; vol.38, ed. Martin E. Lehmann.

Correspondence, 2 vols., ed. P. Smith and G. M. Johnson, Philadelphia, 1913-18.

Lyly, John, The Complete Works of John Lyly, ed. R. W. Bond (3 vols.), Oxford, 1902.

Marphoreus (pseud.), Martins months minde, that is, a certaine report, of the death, and funeralls, of Olde Martin Marprelate, the great makebate of England, London, 1589.

Marprelate, Martin, (pseud.), O read over D. John Bridges, for it is a worthy worke: or an epitome of the fyrste booke, of that right worshipfull volume, written against the Puritanes (The Epistle), [East Molesey, 1588].
O read over D. John Bridges, for it is a worthy worke: [etc] (The Epitome), [Fawsley, November, 1588].

Certaine minerall, and metaphisical school points to be defended by the reverende bishops [etc], [Coventry, 20 February, 1589].

Hay any Worke for Cooper: or a briefe pistle directed to the reverende bysshops, [Coventry, March, 1589].

Theses Martinianae: that is, certaine demonstrative conclusions. Published by Martin junior, [22 July, 1589].

The just censure and reproofe of Martin junior. By Martin senior, [29 July, 1589].

The protestatyon of Martin Marprelat, [September, 1589].

Marten, Anthony, A reconciliation of all the pastors and cleargy of this church of England, London, 1590.

Morice, James, A briefe treatise of oathes exacted by ordinaries and ecclesiastical judges, [Middelburg, 1590?/1592?].

Nashe, Thomas, The Works of Thomas Nashe, 5 vols., ed. R. B. McKerrow; re-ed. with corrections F. P. Wilson, Oxford, 1958. (All quotations in this thesis from A Countercuffe given to Martin Junior, The Returne of Pasquill, The First Parte of Pasquils Apologie, An Almond for a Parrat, are from this edition.)

Nichols, Josias, The Plea of the Innocent: Wherein is averred, that the Ministers and people falslie termed puritanes, are injuriouslie slaundered (S.T.C. 18542.5), [Middelburg], 1602.

Overton, William, A godlye, and pithie exhortation, made to the judges of Sussex, London, [1579?].

The Correspondence of Matthew Parker, ed. J. Bruce and T. T. Perowne, London, 1853.

Pasquill, [Thomas Nashe?], A countercuffe given to Martin junior, [London], 1589. Reprinted in The Works of Thomas Nashe, q.v. The first parte of Pasquils apologie. Wherin he gallops the field with the Treatise of reformation, [London], 1590. Reprinted in The Works of Thomas Nashe, q.v.

Paule, Sir George, The life of the most reverend prelate J. Whitgift,

London, 1612.

Penry, John, A treatise containing the aequity of an humble supplication,

Oxford, 1587, ed. A. J. Grieve, London, 1905.

A defence of that which hath bin written in the questions of the ignorant ministerie, and the communicating with them, [East Molesey, 1588].

An exhortation unto the governours and people of Wales, [London, 1588]; 2nd edition, S.T.C. 19606.

Th'appellation of John Penri, unto the highe court of Parliament, [La Rochelle], 1589.

A treatise wherein is manifestlie proved, that reformation and those that favor the same, are unjustly charged to be enemies, unto hir majestie, [Edinburgh], 1590.

The Notebook of John Penry 1593, ed. A. Peel, London, 1944.

The Presbyterian Movement in the Reign of Queen Elizabeth [the Dedham Classis Minutes], ed. R. G. Usher, London, 1905.

Puttenham, George, The Arte of English Poesie, London, 1589; ed. Gladys D.

Willock and Alice Walker, Cambridge, 1936.

Rainolds, John, The summe of the conference betweene J. Rainoldes and John Hart [Jesuit] touching the head and the faith of the church.
Perused by J. Hart. Whereto is annexed six conclusions,
London, 1584. (S.T.C. 20626:contains English translation of 20624)

Rainoldes or Reynoldes, Richard, A booke called the foundation of rhetorike,
London, 1563.

Ramus, Pierre de la Ramée, Dialectique, 1555; Edition critique de Michel Dassonville, Geneva, 1964.

Sampson, Thomas, A briefe collection of the church, and of certayne ceremonies thereof, London, 1581.

de Saravia, Hadrian (Hadrianus Saravia), 1. Of the divers degrees of the ministers of the gospell. 2. Of the honor due unto priestes. 3. Of sacrilege. Trans. from earlier Latin edition with editor's preface, London, 1591.

Some, Robert, A godly treatise, wherein are examined and confuted many execrable fancies, given out and holden, partly by Henry Barrow and John Greenwood: partly, by other of the Anabaptistical order, London, 1584.

A godly treatise, containing and deciding certaine questions, touching the ministerie, sacraments and church, 1st edition, 1588 (S.T.C. 22908); 2nd edition, 1588 (S.T.C. 22909).

Statutes and Constitutional Documents, 1558-1625, 4th edn., ed. G. W. Prothero, Oxford, 1913.

Strype, John, The History of the Life and Acts of Edmund Grindal ... Archbishop of ... Canterbury, Oxford, 1821.

The life and acts of Mathew Parker, the first archbishop of Canterbury in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, 3 vols., Oxford, 1821.

The life and acts of ... John Whitgift DD ... In four books, 3 vols., Oxford, 1822.

Annals of the Reformation and Establishment of Religion, and other ... occurrences in the Church of England. A new edition, Oxford, 1824.

Historical collections of the life and acts of the Right Reverend Father in God, John Aylmer, lord bishop of London, Oxford, 1821.

Stubbs, John, John Stubbs's 'Gaping Gulf' with Letters and other Relevant Documents, ed. Lloyd E. Berry, Charlottesville, 1968.

Sutcliffe, Matthew, A treatise of ecclesiastical discipline, London, 1590.
(1591)

An answere unto a certaine calumnious letter published by M. J. Throkmorton, London, 1592.

An answere to a certaine libel supplicatorie, London, 1592.

The examination of M. Thomas Cartwrights late apologie,
London, 1596.

Tarlton, Richard, Tarltons jests, London, 1613; Tarltons newes out of purgatorie, London, 1590. Reprinted and ed. J. O. Halliwell, London, 1844.

Throkmorton, Job, The defence of Job Throkmorton, against the slaunders of maister Sutcliffe, [London], 1594. Reprinted in Sutcliffe's An answere unto a certaine calumnious letter, q.v.

A Transcript of the Registers of the Company of Stationers of London 1554-1640, transcribed and ed. by E. Arber, 3 vols., London, 1875.

Travers, Walter, (Anon.), A full and plaine declaration of ecclesiasticall discipline (trans. from Latin by T. Cartwright), [Heidelberg, 1574].

A defence of the ecclesiastical discipline ordayned of God to be used in his church. Against a replie of maister Bridges, [Middelburg], 1588.

Tudor Royal Proclamations, ed. P. L. Hughes and J. F. Larkin, 3 vols., New Haven and London, 1969.

Udall, John, (Anon.), A demonstration of the trueth of that discipline which Christe hath prescribed for the governement of his church [East Molesey, 1588].

The state of the church of Englande, laide open in a conference betweene Diotrephes, a Byshop, Tertullus a Papist [etc], [London, 1588], ed. E. Arber, London, 1895. Also printed in A parte of a register, q.v.

Whitgift, John, An answere to a certen libel, intituled, An admonition; London 1572 (S.T.C. 25427); London, 1573 ('Newly augmented', S.T.C. 25429).

A godlie sermon preched before the queenes maiestie, London, 1574.

- The Works of John Whitgift DD, 3 vols., ed. J. Ayre, Parker Society,
Cambridge, 1851-3. Reprints Thomas Cartwright,
A repleye to an answere made of M. Doctor
Whitegift, [Wandsworth, c. 1574]; and John
Whitgift, The defense of the answere to the
Admonition, against the Replie, London, 1574.
- Whitaker, William, Disputatio de sacra Scriptura, contra R. Bellarminum etc,
Cambridge, 1588, trans. and ed. W. Fitzgerald, A Disputation
on Holy Scripture against the Papists, Cambridge, 1849.
- Wilkinson, William, A confutation of certaine articles delivered [by
H. Niclas] unto the Familye of Love, London, 1579.
- Wilson, Thomas, The Arte of rhetorique, London, 1560 edition. Reprinted
'Tudor and Stuart Library', ed. G. H. Mair, 1909.
- a Wood, Anthony, Athenae Oxoniensis ... The second edition, very much corrected
and enlarged ... 2 vols., London, 1721.
- Wright, Leonard, A friendly admonition to Martine Marprelate, and his mates,
London, 1590.
- Zurich Letters, 1st and 2nd Series, ed. Hastings Robinson, Cambridge, 1842 and 1845.

PART II

This is a selective bibliography covering only the principal works consulted. No attempt is made to list exhaustively all the numerous fields of discourse on which the thesis touches.

- Aristotle, Ethica Nicomachea, trans. and ed. W. D. Ross, Oxford, 1925.
Rhetoric, trans. J. E. C. Welldon, London, 1886.
- Arber, Edward, An Introductory Sketch to the Marprelate Controversy,
London, 1879.

- Atkins, J.W.H., English literary criticism. The renaissance, London, 1942.
- Austin, J.L., How to Do Things with Words, 2nd edn., Oxford, 1976.
- Avis, P.D.L., 'Richard Hooker and John Calvin', Journal of Ecclesiastical History, vol.32 (1981), 19-28.
- Babbage, Stuart B., Puritanism and Richard Bancroft, London, 1962.
- Bainton, Roland H., Here I Stand, Nashville, 1950.
- Baldwin, C.S. (ed.), Renaissance Literary Theory and Practice. Classicism in the rhetoric and poetic of Italy, France and England 1400-1600. Ed. with introduction by D.L. Clark, New York, 1939.
- Bauckham, R., 'Hooker, Travers and the Church of Rome in the 1580s', Journal of Ecclesiastical History, vol.29 (1978), 37-50.
- 'Richard Hooker and John Calvin: A Comment', Journal of Ecclesiastical History, vol.32 (1981), 29-33.
- Bennett, G.V. and Walsh, J.D. (eds) Essays in Modern English Church History in Memory of Norman Sykes, London, 1966.
- Bennett, H.S., English Books and Readers, 1474-1557, Cambridge, 1952.
- English Books and Readers, 1558-1603, Cambridge, 1965.
- Bergson, H.L., Le Rire. Essai sur la signification du comique, Paris, 1900.
- Bindoff, S.T., Hurstfield, J. and Williams, C.H. (eds.), Elizabethan Government and Society: Essays presented to Sir John Neale, London, 1961.
- Blagden, Cyprian, 'The English Stock of the Stationers' Company: An Account of its Origins', Library, 5th Series, vol.X (1955), 163-85.
- 'Book Trade Control in 1566', Library, 5th Series, vol.XIII (1958), 287-92.
- The Stationers' Company: A History 1403-1959, London, 1960.
- Blench, J.W., Preaching in England in the late fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, Oxford, 1964.
- Bloomfield, M.W. (ed.), In Search of Literary Theory, Cornell, 1972.

- Bolton, W.F. (ed.), The English Language: Essays by English and American Men of Letters, Cambridge, 1966.
- Bradshaw, D.I., 'Richard Hooker's Ecclesiastical Polity', Journal of Ecclesiastical History, vol.34 (1983), 438-44.
- Boughner, D.C., 'Notes on Hooker's Prose', Review of English Studies, vol.15 (1939), 194-200.
- Brook, V.J.K., A Life of Archbishop Parker, Oxford, 1962.
- Byrom, H.J., 'Edmund Spenser's first Printer, Hugh Singleton', Library, 4th Series, vol.XIV (1933-4), 121-56.
- Calvin, John, Institutes of the Christian Religion, trans. H. Beveridge, London, 1963.
- Caudwell, Christopher, Illusion and Reality, London, 1946.
- Chapman, Raymond, Linguistics and Literature, London, 1973.
- Chomsky, Noam, Current Issues in Linguistic Theory, The Hague/Paris, 1970.
- Reflections on Language, London, 1976.
- Christianson, P., Reformers and Babylon: English apocalyptic visions from the Reformation to the eve of the Civil War, Toronto/ Buffalo, London, 1978.
- 'Reformers and the Church of England under Elizabeth I and the early Stuarts', Journal of Ecclesiastical History, vol.31 (1980), 463-82.
- Cobbett, W. (ed.), State Trials, vol.I, London, 1809.
- Collinson, Patrick, 'The Authorship of A Brief Discours off the troubles Begonne at Franckford', Journal of Ecclesiastical History, vol.9 (1958); reprinted in idem, Godly People, q.v.
- 'Episcopacy and Reform in England in the later sixteenth century', Studies in Church History, III (1966), 91-125.
- Letters of Thomas Wood, Puritan 1566-1577, Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research, Special Supplement 5, 1966; reprinted in idem, Godly People, q.v.
- The Elizabethan Puritan Movement, London, 1967.

'The downfall of Archbishop Grindal and its place in Elizabethan political and ecclesiastical history', in P. Clark, A.G.R. Smith and N. Tyache (eds.), The English Commonwealth 1547-1640: Essays in Politics and Society presented to Joel Hurstfield, Leicester, 1979.

Archbishop Grindal, 1519-83: The Struggle for a reformed Church, London, 1980.

'The Jacobean Religious Settlement: The Hampton Court Conference', in Before the English Civil War: Essays on early Stuart politics and government, ed. H. Tomlinson, London, 1983.

The religion of the Protestants: The church in English Society 1559-1625, Oxford, 1983.

Godly People: Essays in English Puritanism and Protestantism, London, 1983.

Coolidge, John S., The Pauline Renaissance in England. Puritanism and the Bible, Oxford, 1970.

Copleston, F.C., Aquinas, London, 1955.

Couper, W.J., Robert Waldegrave, King's Printer for Scotland, Glasgow, 1916.

Craig, D. (ed.), Marxists on Literature: An Anthology, London, 1977.

Cross, C., The Royal Supremacy in the Elizabethan Church, London and New York, 1969.

Curtis, Mark, 'The Hampton Court Conference and its Aftermath', History, vol.xlvi (1961), 1-16.

Davies, E.T., Episcopacy and the Royal Supremacy in the Church of England in the Sixteenth Century, Oxford, 1950.

Dickens, A.G., The English Reformation, London, 1964.

Donaldson, Gordon, 'The Attitude of Whitgift and Bancroft to the Scottish Church', Transactions of the Royal Historical Society, 4th Series, vol.XXIV (1942), 101-12.

Eagleton, T., Criticism and Ideology: A Study in Marxist Literary Theory, London, 1976.

- Eccleshall, R., 'Richard Hooker and the Peculiarities of the English: The Reception of the Ecclesiastical Polity in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries', History of Political Thought, vol.2 (1981), 63-117.
- Elliott, J.H., Europe divided, 1559-1598, London, 1966.
- Elton, G.R., The Tudor Constitution, Cambridge, 1960.
- Feuer, L.S. (ed.), Marx and Engels: Basic Writings on Politics and Philosophy, London, 1978.
- Figgis, J.N., Studies of political thought from Gerson to Grotius (1414-1625), Birkbeck lectures, Cambridge, 1923.
- Firth, K.R., The Apocalyptic Tradition in Reformation Britain 1530-1695, Oxford, 1979.
- Frend, W.C., The Early Church, London, 1965.
- Gardiner, S.R., The first two Stuarts and the Puritan Revolution, 1603-60, 15th Impression, London, 1902.
- Garrett, C.H., The Marian Exiles, Cambridge, 1938.
- Gibson, E.C.S., The Thirty-Nine Articles of the Church of England, explained with an introduction by E.C.S. Gibson, 3rd edn., London, 1902.
- Gilby, T., Barbara Celarent. A Description of Scholastic Dialectic, London, 1949.
- (ed.), St. Thomas Aquinas: Philosophical Texts, Oxford, 1951.
- Greenslade, S.L., The English Reformers and the Fathers of the Church, Oxford, 1960.
- Greg, W.W. and Boswell, E., Records of the Court of the Stationers' Company 1576-1602, London, 1930.
- Greg, W.W., Some Aspects and Problems of London Publishing between 1550 and 1650, Oxford, 1956.
- Collected Papers, ed. J.C. Maxwell, Oxford, 1966.
- A Companion to Arber, Oxford, 1967.
- Hall, B., 'Puritanism: The Problem of definition', Studies in Church History, II (1965), 283-96.

Haller, W., The Rise of Puritanism, New York, 1938.

Hare, R.M., The Language of Morals, Oxford, 1952.

Haugaard, W.P., Elizabeth and the English Reformation, Cambridge, 1968.

Hill, J.E.C., Puritanism and Revolution, 1958.

Economic Problems of the Church, from Archbishop Whitgift to the Long Parliament, London, 1956.

Hill, W. Speed, Richard Hooker. A Descriptive Bibliography of the early editions 1593-1734, Cleveland, Ohio, 1970.

(ed.), Studies in Richard Hooker, Cleveland, Ohio and London, 1972.

Hillerbrand, H.J. (ed.), The Protestant Reformation (documents), New York, 1968.

Holden, W.P., Anti-Puritan Satire 1572-1642, New Haven and London, 1954.

Hoppe, H.R., 'John Wolfe, Printer and Stationer 1579-1601', Library, 4th Series, vol.XIV (1933-4), 241-87.

Howell, W.S., Logic and Rhetoric in England 1500-1700, Princeton, 1956.

Poetics, Rhetoric and Logic: Studies in the basic disciplines of criticism, Cornell, 1975.

Huizinga, J., Men and Ideas; History, the Middle Ages, the Renaissance, London, 1960.

Johnson, A.F., 'Books printed at Heidelberg for Thomas Cartwright', Library, 5th Series, vol.II (1948), 284-5.

Jones, R.F., The Triumph of the English Language, Stanford, 1966.

Kneale, W.C. and M., The Development of Logic, Oxford, 1962.

Knox, S.J., Walter Travers: Paragon of Elizabethan Puritanism, London, 1962.

Lake, P., 'Puritan identities [review article]', Journal of Ecclesiastical History, 35 (1984), 112-23.

'The dilemma of the Establishment Puritan: The Cambridge heads and the case of Francis Johnson and Cuthbert Bainbrigg', Journal of Ecclesiastical History, vol.29 (1978), 23-35.

Moderate Puritans and the Elizabethan Church, Cambridge, 1982.

- Leishman, J.B. (ed.), The Three Parnassus Plays, London, 1949.
- Lewis, C.S., English Literature in the sixteenth century, excluding drama, Oxford, 1954.
- Loades, D.M., 'The Press under the early Tudors. A Study in Censorship and Sedition', Transactions of the Cambridge Bibliographical Society, vol.IV (1964), 29-50.
- The Oxford Martyrs, London, 1970.
- 'The Theory and Practice of Censorship in sixteenth-century England', Transactions of the Royal Historical Society, 5th Series, vol.24 (1974), 141-57.
- Luce, A.A., Teach Yourself Logic, London, 1958.
- Lukacs, G., The Historical Novel, London, 1976.
- McGinn, D.J., The Admonition Controversy, New Brunswick, 1949.
- John Penry and the Marprelate Controversy, New Brunswick, 1966.
- 'The real Martin Marprelate', Publications of the Modern Languages Association, vol.LVIII, 1 (March 1943), 84-107.
- 'Nashe's Share in the Marprelate Controversy', Publications of the Modern Languages Association, vol.LIX, 4 (Dec. 1944), 952-84.
- Maclure, M., The Paul's Cross Sermons 1534-1642, Toronto, 1958.
- Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels: Selected Works, New York, Moscow and London, 1968.
- Mews, S. (ed.), Religion and National Identity (Studies in Church History, 18), Oxford, 1982.
- Milton, John, Areopagitica and Of Education, ed. K.M. Lea, Oxford, 1973.
- Moody, E., Studies in Medieval Philosophy, Science and Logic, Los Angeles, 1975.
- Morris, John, 'Restrictive Practices in the Elizabethan Book Trade: The Stationers' Company v. Thomas Thomas 1583-88', Transactions of the Cambridge Bibliographical Society, vol.IV (1964-8), 276-90.
- Mozley, J.F., John Foxe and his Book, London, 1940.

- Munz, P., The Place of Hooker in the History of Thought, London, 1952.
- Neale, J.E., 'Elizabethan Acts of Supremacy and Uniformity', English Historical Review, vol.LX (1950), 304-32.
- Elizabeth I and her Parliaments, 2 vols., London, 1953/57.
- Nijenhuis, W., 'Adrianus Saravia as an eirenical churchman in England and the Netherlands', in D. Baker (ed.), Reform and Reformation: England and the Continent c. 1500-c. 1750 (Studies in Church History, Subsidia 2), Oxford, 1979.
- Ong, W., Ramus, Method and the Decay of Dialogue: From the Art of Discourse to the Art of Reason, Harvard, 1958.
- Pearson, A.F.S., Thomas Cartwright and Elizabethan Puritanism, 1925.
- Church and State: Political Aspects of sixteenth-century Puritanism, Cambridge, 1928.
- Pepper, R.D., Four Tudor Books on Education, Gainesville, Florida, 1966.
- Pierce, W., An Historical Introduction to the Marprelate Tracts, London, 1908.
- Pollard, A.W., 'The Regulation of the English Book Trade in the sixteenth century', Library, 3rd Series, vol.VII (1916), 26-30.
- Pollard, Graham, 'The Company of Stationers before 1557', Library, 4th Series, vol.XVIII (1938), 1-38.
- Porter, H.C., Reformation and Reaction in Tudor Cambridge, Cambridge, 1958.
- Price, F.D., 'The Abuses of Excommunication and the decline of Ecclesiastical Discipline under Queen Elizabeth', English Historical Review, vol.LVII (1942), 106-15.
- Ramsey, I.T., Religious Language. An Empirical Placing of Theological Phrases, London, 1957.
- (ed.), Words about God: The Philosophy of religion, London, 1971.
- Rashdall, H., The Universities of Europe in the Middle Ages, rev. and ed. Powicke and Emden, 3 vols., 1936.
- Ringler, W., Stephen Gosson: A Biographical and Critical Study, Princeton, 1942.

- Robinson, Ian, The New Grammarian's Funeral: A Critique of Noam Chomsky's Linguistics, Cambridge, 1975.
- Ross, Sir David, Aristotle, 1st edn., London, 1923.
- Rostenberg, L., The Minority Press and the English Crown 1558-1625, Nieuwkoop, 1971.
- Simpson, R., Edmund Campion. A Biography, London, 1896.
- Shaaber, M., Some Forerunners of the Newspaper in England 1476-1622, Philadelphia and London, 1929.
- Sisson, C.J., The Judicious Marriage of Mr. Hooker and the Birth of the "Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity", Cambridge, 1940.
- Stone, L., The causes of the English revolution, London, 1972.
- Strawson, P.F. (ed.), Philosophical Logic, Oxford, 1967.
- Swingewood, A., The Novel and Revolution, London, 1975.
- Sykes, N., Old Priest and New Presbyter, London, 1956.
- Trotsky, Leon, Literature and Revolution, Ann Arbor, 1960.
- Usher, R.G., The Rise and Fall of the High Commission, Oxford, 1913.
- Wallace, D.D., 'George Gifford, Puritan Propaganda and Popular Religion in Elizabethan England', Sixteenth Century Journal, vol.9 (1978), 27-50.
- Walzer, M., The Revolution of the Saints. A Study in the Origins of Radical Politics, London, 1966.
- Wendel, F., Calvin: The Origins and Development of his religious thought, trans. P. Mairet, London, 1965.
- Wilson, J.D., 'Richard Schilders and the English Puritans', Transactions of the Bibliographical Society of London, vol.XI (1909-11), 65-134.
- 'The Marprelate Controversy', Cambridge History of English Literature, vol.III, 425-52.
- White, B.R., The English Separatist Tradition - from the Marian Martyrs to the Pilgrim Fathers, Oxford, 1971.
- Wittgenstein, L., Philosophical Investigations, trans. G.E.M. Anscombe, Oxford, 1976.

Wood, A. D., Athenae Oxoniensis, 2nd edn., corrected and enlarged, London, 1721.

Ullman, S., Language and Style, Oxford, 1964.

Verger, J., Les Universités au Moyen Âge, Paris, 1973.

Vickers, B., Classical Rhetoric in English^{Poetry}, London, 1970.

