

DEFINING THE JACOBAN CHURCH

The Politics of Religious Controversy, 1603–1625

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Introduction: defining the Church

ECCLESIOLOGY AND HISTORY

In 1699, Gilbert Burnet, then Bishop of Salisbury, published *An exposition of the Thirty-nine articles of the Church of England*. The work purported to trace the roots of the English confession from the Reformation forward, and in the preface Burnet lamented that a quarrel over ceremonies and worship, ‘and about things that were of their own nature indifferent’, had been raging for ‘above an Hundred Years’. Burnet certainly knew his subject, having been guided through Elizabethan controversies by Andrew Maunsell’s bibliography, and by reading widely in the controversial literature published during the reigns of the early Stuarts.¹ This literature gave him a sense that the general tone and quality of the debate had shifted as the Elizabethan period gave way to the controversies over clerical subscription and ceremonial practice in the early years of James VI and I:

Our divines were much diverted in the end of that Reign from better Enquiries, by the *Disciplinarian Controversies*; and though what *Whitgift* and *Hooker* writ on those Heads, was much better than all that came after them; yet they neither satisfied those against whom they writ, nor stopt the Writings of their own side. But as *Waters* gush in, when the Banks are once broken, so the breach that these had made, proved fruitful. Parties were formed, Secular Interests were grafted upon them, and new Quarrels followed those that first begun the Dispute.²

It turns out that Burnet was largely right. The religious controversies of the Jacobean age were indeed carried on by lesser lights than Whitgift and Hooker, and as the reign went along we find evidence not only that positions began to harden on matters of doctrine and discipline, but also that these positions had implications for politics. Yet it is also the case that Jacobean controversies took place on a broad scope, which saw the traffic

¹ Andrew Maunsell, *The first part of the catalogue of English printed bookes* (London, 1595).

² Gilbert Burnet, *An exposition of the Thirty-nine articles of the Church of England* (London, 1699), pp. iii, x.

in ideas move beyond massive treatises governed by the strictures of formal controversy – this was the age of the pamphlet, and the genre expanded in the period that this book surveys.³ Burnet's reference to gushing water and broken banks reveals the impact of the expansion of print on the process of religious polemic. The premise that justifies the present study, therefore, is the existence of a large body of sources whose contribution to and role in ecclesiological debates has not been fully explored. Burnet's accurate but austere assessment of the Jacobean controversial scene deserves to be revisited.

This book is about religious controversies among English Protestants in the reign of James VI and I. It seeks to address, in part, J. C. D. Clark's call for a 'theoretically articulate history of the Church of England, including its ecclesiology, ecclesiastical polity, and political theory'.⁴ Contemporaries regarded these themes as being closely linked, and used phrases like the 'regiment of the Church' or the 'definition of the Church' to refer to a process of deliberation between defenders of the Church and their critics.⁵ Regardless of their position on aspects of doctrine and discipline, writers conceived of the English Church as partaking in the history of early Christianity; these perceptions shaped arguments concerning its doctrine and governance, as well as the political implications that attended its status

³ Three genres of religious print have been well studied: sermons, devotional literature, and 'popular print'. For sermons, see Lori Anne Ferrell, *Government by polemic: James I, the King's preachers, and the rhetorics of conformity, 1603–25* (Stanford, 1998); Peter McCullough, *Sermons at court: politics and religion in Elizabethan and Jacobean preaching* (Cambridge, 1998); Mary Morrissey, 'Interdisciplinarity and the study of early modern sermons', *Historical Journal*, 42 (1999), 1111–23. For devotional literature, see Ian Green's studies: *The Christian's ABC: catechisms and catechizing in England c. 1530–1740* (Oxford, 1986), and *Print and Protestantism in early modern England* (Oxford, 2000). For 'popular' literature, see Tessa Watt, *Cheap print and popular piety, 1550–1640* (Cambridge, 1991). For an interesting treatment of a range of cheap print and seventeenth-century religious culture, see Peter Lake and Michael Questier, *The Antichrist's lewd hat: Protestants, Papists & players in post-Reformation England* (New Haven, 2002). For consumption and readership, see Margaret Spufford, *Small books and pleasant histories: popular fiction and its readership in seventeenth-century England* (London, 1981); Kevin Sharpe, *Sir Robert Cotton, 1586–1631: history and politics in early modern England* (Oxford, 1979); and, more recently, Kevin Sharpe, 'Re-writing Sir Robert Cotton: politics and history in early Stuart England', in his *Remapping early modern England: the culture of seventeenth-century politics* (Cambridge, 2000), pp.294–341, and *Reading revolutions: the politics of reading in early modern England* (New Haven, 2000). For a summary of the field, see R. C. Richardson, 'History and the early modern communications circuit', *Clio*, 31 (2002), 167–77. With respect to the history of print, while collection and reading are well studied, the production of books has been largely overlooked. Joad Raymond's fascinating study of pamphlets addresses this lack, and is a valuable contribution to the study of a fourth and crucial genre of early modern print. See his, *Pamphlets and pamphleteering in early modern Britain* (Cambridge, 2003), chs. 1, 3.

⁴ J. C. D. Clark, 'Protestantism, nationalism and national identity, 1660–1832', *Historical Journal*, 43 (2000), 249–76, at 272.

⁵ Henry Jacob, *The divine beginning and institution of Christs true visible or ministeriall church* (Leiden, 1610), sig. B^{2v}.

as a visible church 'of the realm'. Many works published during the period addressed this theme: Richard Field's *Of the Church*, and Josias Nichols' *Abrahams faith* are typical of the conformist and reformist branches of the literature. Common to all was an interest in how the doctrine, discipline, and governance of the Apostolic church could be carried forth and established in post-Reformation England. In fact, a debate on ecclesiology formed a central theme in pamphlets, sermons, and longer works by writers both famous and unknown.

The context for the debates to be examined here was the introduction of new ecclesiastical Canons in 1604, and the subsequent deprivation of some eighty-five ministers who refused to 'subscribe to' – that is, to affirm by swearing an oath – the directives concerning doctrine and governance contained in them. Similarly, the Perth Articles, which set forth kneeling at communion as part of the 'official' ceremonial practice of the Kirk of Scotland, led to debates between Presbyterians and conformists, and to a deepening of religious tensions in the two kingdoms. In both settings, the introduction of new Canons served as the impetus for a series of debates on ecclesiastical sovereignty, ceremonies, episcopacy, the common law, and the patristic heritage of the Apostolic church. These debates and the literature in which they are preserved help to clarify the political, theological, and historical elements of religious controversy, and are therefore a crucial source for understanding the nature of Jacobean religious conflict.

Since English Protestant thought was based on elements derived from sacred and historical sources, it was inevitable that religious conflict would occur along similar lines. Controversial literature, first examined in studies by Roland Usher and Stuart Barton Babbage, has since become peripheral to the interests of those who study early Stuart religion.⁶ This is unfortunate, because the literature of religious controversy sheds important light on the issues and arguments that divided Protestants in the reign of James VI and I, and also points to divisions that would persist into the reign of his successor. One premise of this book is that Jacobean ecclesiology did not consist of pure theology: in both the Henrician and Elizabethan settlements defenders of the Church argued that it was 'dually established', a partly spiritual and partly temporal association that had its being in the Word and in the world. The debates that this book surveys reveal tensions within this blend of spiritual and political elements, and these tensions help us to discern contrasting approaches to ecclesiology and church polity in the writings of those controversialists who participated in printed polemical exchanges. It becomes apparent that writers on both sides were struggling to come to terms with

⁶ See R. G. Usher, *The reconstruction of the English Church*, 2 vols. (London, 1910); Stuart Barton Babbage, *Puritanism and Richard Bancroft* (London, 1962).

both the nature of early Christian history and their own place within it, for the institution of the Christian Church in which they all claimed communion was distinguished by a contested history and hence the business of religious polemic was always firmly rooted within a vast and complex historiographical tradition. Where writers divided was on the interpretation of that tradition and its implications for post-Reformation ecclesiology.⁷ The debates that this book examines were based upon distinct views of the Church's past, which in turn shaped positions on how it should be ordered and governed, as well as the 'language' in which the dispute was carried on.⁸ It was a language suited to the examination of the nature of an institution through time, and it served to legitimise aspects of the Church by locating them in the past, or to criticise them by searching into the past to discover alternative modes of doctrine and discipline. This search proceeded in the course of debate, and as time goes on one becomes aware of the development of at least two Protestant historiographical traditions, each with its canon of writers, and each putting forth an argument for how the Church should be ordered and governed.

For example, conformists argued that the English Church was both a spiritual and a political association: a state church founded on a mingling of doctrine and law, and hence able to enjoin conformity among its members.⁹ It was also a 'true' and 'ancient' church, not separated from the institution founded by Christ – the church described in the letters of the Apostles, and in the works of the Fathers of the Christian historical tradition. In short, it was a reformed continuation of the Apostolic church, which retained ceremonial practices and episcopal governance, and reserved the right to interpret 'custom' and to establish elements of worship that it deemed 'comely' and 'edifying'. The concept of *adiaphora* – which defined aspects of worship that were essential to salvation as against those that were not – lay at the core of the conformist programme, and on this basis conformists justified the ceremonialism and episcopal governance of the English Church. Disputes over these propositions were central to debates about many aspects of ecclesiology. In defending the Church against their Protestant critics, therefore, conformist controversialists sought to establish

⁷ See Arthur Ferguson, *Clio unbound: perception of the social and cultural past in Renaissance England* (Durham, NC, 1979).

⁸ For the concept of languages, see J. G. A. Pocock, 'Languages and their implications: the transformation of the study of political thought', in *Politics, language and time* (New York, 1971), pp. 3–41, and his, 'The concept of language and the *métier d'historien*: some considerations on practice', in *The languages of political theory in early modern Europe*, ed. Anthony Pagden (Cambridge, 1987), pp. 19–38.

⁹ Elsewhere, I have traced these issues into the eighteenth century. See Charles W. A. Prior, "'Then Leave Complaints': Mandeville, anti-Catholicism, and English orthodoxy', in *Mandeville and Augustan ideas: new essays*, ed. Charles W. A. Prior, English Literary Studies Monograph Series, 83 (Victoria, BC, 2000), pp. 51–70.

a sound historical pedigree for doctrine and discipline, and to employ this interpretation to justify ceremonies and governance in the national Church. In doing so, they looked to the record of early Christianity in search of historical precedents, and bolstered these where necessary with testimony from patristic sources and even civil and pagan histories of the Roman and post-Roman polities. The burden of the conformist position, evident in the work of Hooker and many of those who succeeded him, was to establish a usable account of the mingling of sacred and human history, and therefore the mingling of sacred and human authority.

Those Protestants who sought further reformation of the Church grounded their arguments on alternate versions of the history of Christianity, some emphasising Presbyterian government within an established church, and others calling for gathered congregations of free Christians governed by their own 'consent'. They argued that the liturgy, rites, and governance of the Church had to derive from the *iure divino* authority of scripture, and receive confirmation from the sound and uncorrupted testimony of ecclesiastical historians, the Fathers, and contemporary reformed divines. The visible church had to emulate the precepts of true doctrine, and this premise shaped a range of ecclesiological positions from ceremonial practice to governance and discipline. Reformists looked to history in order to discover the point at which the church existed in its purest form, and treated the advent of the Roman church as the beginning of a decline. It was through this lens that they scrutinised the Church of England, arguing that it had not proceeded far enough along the path of reform. From a doctrinal point of view, they argued that ceremonialism and governance by bishops had no pedigree either in scripture or in what the testimony of Christian authorities indicated about the worship and governance of the ancient church. These arguments were based upon painstaking scriptural exegesis, and backed up by a great variety of other theological texts; the use of scholastic methods was not limited to conformists, and William Prynne's catalogue of 'testimonies' exemplifies an abiding interest among reformists in the study of ancient and reformed sources.¹⁰

There were political implications to these ecclesiological arguments. Conformists emphasised the visible institution of the Church that blended essential and indifferent elements of doctrine, and argued that since the Church was in some sense domiciled within the channels of civil authority, the uniformity of its public doctrine would be maintained by civil measures. This led them to link episcopal government with political stability, and therefore to condemn Presbyterian discipline as a threat to the sovereignty

¹⁰ William Prynne, *A catalogue of such testimonies in all ages as plainly evidence bishops and presbyters to be both one, equall and the same in jurisdiction, office, dignity, order, and degree* ([Leiden?], 1637).

of the Crown. By contrast, reformists sought to defend the continuity of a doctrinally 'pure' church over which the Word was sovereign; with respect to human involvement in the Church, they insisted that since the locus of ecclesiastical authority lay with the Crown in parliament, these bodies were charged with the promotion of true doctrine, and hence true governance and ceremonial practice. Yet they also put forth political arguments against the established Church, most notably by suggesting that the deprivation of non-conformist ministers violated the common law and the sovereignty of parliament. Scots writers went a step further, and suggested that the imposition of English worship and governance on the Kirk was both doctrinally indefensible and an assault on the legal and national independence of the Scottish confession. In all cases, a distinct vision of church polity was underpinned by assumptions about the relationship between civil and ecclesiastical authority. Hence, the broad theme that this book seeks to trace is how polemical debates on a range of ecclesiological issues and involving a wide sample of writers led to the development of narratives that sought to strike a balance between civil and ecclesiastical authority. Defining the Church was no easy task, and the question accounted for a profound division among Protestant writers in both the English and Scottish settings, which in turn reveals the first stirrings of the religious conflicts that would emerge in the reign of Charles I.

MODELS OF JACOBAN PROTESTANT CONFLICT

Polemical debates on ecclesiology and history have haunted the edges of scholarship on early Stuart religion, but have remained largely unstudied.¹¹ This is despite the fact that a number of direct references to the theme have been made, often by those central to the broad scholarly debate on the nature of religious conflict in early Stuart England. In the late 1980s Peter Lake observed that disagreement about the visible church 'was arguably the crucial divide in English Protestant opinion during this period'.¹² Since then, Lake's work on Stephen Denison and the struggle among London's godly community in the years before the Civil War has supplied a powerful lesson on the importance of polemical sources for our understanding of disputes within English Protestantism.¹³ Similarly,

¹¹ Roland Usher correctly identified the principal source of tension inherent in the Jacobean settlement: 'The ultimate object in 1603 was, as before, unity of belief and observance, but it was now to be attained by making the church strong as an institution.' See Usher, *The reconstruction of the English Church*, vol. I, p. 6.

¹² Peter Lake, 'Calvinism and the English Church, 1570–1635', *Past and Present*, 114 (1987), 32–76, at 39. The importance of Lake's message may have been lost in the controversy over Arminianism that dominated the pages of *Past and Present*.

¹³ Peter Lake, *The boxmaker's revenge: 'orthodoxy', 'heterodoxy' and the politics of the parish in early Stuart London* (Manchester, 2001).

Conrad Russell has observed that religious conflict resembled ‘a custody battle’ for control of the Church. Yet, where others have described this contest as one waged between ‘Anglicans’ and ‘puritans’, Russell suggested that a sounder approach was to assess the positions of ‘rival claimants to the title of orthodox, and therefore between rival criteria of orthodoxy’.¹⁴ J. G. A. Pocock pursued this theme in essays on the nature of ‘English orthodoxy’ and its relation to politics. The Reformation settlement opened up a tension between an invisible association and the Crown that claimed an admixture of spiritual and secular power over it.¹⁵ Owing to this uneasy balance between spirituals and temporals, neither of which was confined to its own sphere, the history of the Church was dominated by episodes of disruption.¹⁶

The chapters that follow offer a new interpretation of this disruption in the Jacobean Church, and point to its continuation in early Stuart religious thought. At the heart of the argument is the suggestion that the custody battle over the nature of ‘orthodoxy’ was more complex than has thus far been shown. However, ‘orthodoxy’ was not a word that Jacobean writers used with sufficient frequency or consistency to justify its adoption in a study of their theological attitudes. This instability of categories explains why a search for useful terms to describe parties to the dispute has occupied historians of religion since S. R. Gardiner threw down the ‘puritan’ gauntlet.¹⁷ In writing of ‘conformists’ and ‘reformists’, I mean simply to point to a tension between two broad groups, one of which was satisfied with the Church as it stood, and the other anxious to put forth detailed reasons for

¹⁴ Conrad Russell, *The causes of the English Civil War* (Oxford, 1990), p. 84.

¹⁵ J. G. A. Pocock, ‘The history of British political thought: the creation of a Center’, *Journal of British Studies*, 24 (1985), 283–310, at 287–9.

¹⁶ J. G. A. Pocock, ‘Within the margins: the definitions of orthodoxy’, in *The margins of orthodoxy: heterodox writing and cultural response, 1660–1750*, ed. Roger Lund (Cambridge, 1995), pp. 33–53, at p. 37.

¹⁷ See T. R. Clancy, ‘Papist-Protestant-Puritan: English religious taxonomy, 1565–1665’, *Recusant History*, 13 (1975–6), 227–53. As was mentioned in ‘note on the text’, the term ‘puritan’ has been strenuously avoided in this book. The historiographical scuffle over the term ‘puritan’ seems to have done little to diminish its place in the conceptual toolbox of the historian of religion, and so the Elizabethan Church as the site of the ‘puritan ethos’ is now a well-established scholarly convention. Yet ‘puritan’ has come to mean a group possessed of a shared religious experience, which in turn was transformed into a revolutionary ideology; after all, one could not have the ‘Puritan revolution’ without ‘puritans’, and the term has had the unfortunate consequence of eliding the ideas and actions of two groups of people separated by nearly eighty years. See Paul Christianson, ‘Reformers and the Church of England under Elizabeth and the early Stuarts’, *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 31 (October 1980), 463–82, and the response by Patrick Collinson, ‘A comment: Concerning the name Puritan’, 483–8, in the same volume. Like ‘puritanism’, the ‘Puritan revolution’ has consumed a good deal of paper and ink. For a synthesis, see Michael Finlayson, *Historians, puritans and the English Revolution* (Toronto, 1983).

why it should be reformed.¹⁸ It must be stressed that these groups were not uniform as to the specific elements of their case, and that I do not intend to replace one set of binary categories with another. For example, there were variations among conformist defenders of episcopacy: some argued that the office was Apostolic and independent of the Crown, while others regarded bishops in legal and constitutional terms, as ‘inferior magistrates’. Further, while their positions may have clashed, writers on both sides of the issue were, on the whole, members of the same theological and intellectual elite, schooled in theology and history at either Oxford or Cambridge, and occupying positions in the English Church, from preachers to bishops; with a few exceptions, all the writers discussed were churchmen when James VI assumed the English throne. This would seem to confirm the aptness of Russell’s suggestion that debates between them were part of a contest for control of one Church, and it is this premise that guides the present work.

This book seeks to situate itself within an emerging trend among scholars of early Stuart religion that rejects a ‘narrow’ interpretation of religious conflict dominated by predestination, Arminianism, and the attack on Calvinist soteriology. The principal focus of scholarly debate has been Nicholas Tyacke’s discussion of soteriology and its role in the religious and political conflicts of early Stuart England. Rather than the visible church or problems of conformity, Tyacke focussed on doctrinal debates, on University curricula in divinity, and on evidence of popular attachment to Calvinist teaching on salvation. This led him to suggest that ‘by the end of the sixteenth century the church of England was largely Calvinist in doctrine’, and that Calvinism ‘remained dominant in England throughout the first two decades of the seventeenth century’.¹⁹ Since the doctrinal posture of the English Church was defined predominately by Calvinism, the argument ran, its disruption would result from challenges to this doctrinal ‘consensus’. Tyacke’s *Anti-Calvinists* was published in 1987, but elements of the thesis were already well established, and remain at the centre of the ‘revisionist’ interpretation of political and religious conflict before the English Civil War.²⁰ As early as

¹⁸ Again, see my ‘note on the text’ for an explanation of these terms, and a justification for their use.

¹⁹ Nicholas Tyacke, *Anti-Calvinists: the rise of English Arminianism, c. 1590–1640* (Oxford, 1987; paperback edition, 1990), pp. 3, 5. All citations are from the paperback edition.

²⁰ See Conrad Russell’s *Causes of the English Civil War*, passim; his *Unrevolutionary England* (London, 1990); and his *The fall of the British Monarchies, 1637–1642* (Oxford, 1991). For an endorsement of the spirit, if not the letter, of Tyacke’s thesis, see John Morrill’s ‘The religious context of the English Civil War’, *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 5th series, 34 (1984), 155–78; his ‘The attack on the Church of England in the Long Parliament, 1640–1642’, in *History, society and the churches: essays in honour of Owen Chadwick*, ed. Derek Beales and Geoffrey Best (Cambridge, 1985), pp. 105–24, esp. p. 108 n. 14; the introduction to his *The nature of the English Revolution: essays* (London and New York,

1973, Tyacke sought to challenge the explanatory model of the 'Puritan revolution' with what he termed the 'rise of Arminianism'; this doctrine set aside the Calvinist notion of predestination and stressed salvation by works, and Tyacke argued that it signalled the erosion of a Calvinist 'consensus' after 1620.²¹ The connection with political life lay in a coterie of Arminian bishops, among them William Laud, who came to enjoy the support of Charles I. This and other issues contributed to the alienation of the House of Commons and a deepening polarisation over the Church, the nature of monarchical rule, and the sovereignty of parliament.²²

Given the historiographical terrain – the advent of revisionism and the subsequent controversy over the 'origins' of the English Civil War – it was no surprise that Tyacke's thesis came under attack from historians of religion.²³ In a 1983 article, Peter White challenged Tyacke's contention that there was a sudden 'rise' of Arminianism, contended that some measure of debate on the issue could be found in the Elizabethan setting, and denied the presence of a 'doctrinal high road to civil war'.²⁴ In the following years the pages of *Past and Present* were the site of a series of exchanges between White and Tyacke, and a number of other articles on the issue by scholars such as William Lamont and Peter Lake.²⁵ Despite this criticism, Tyacke held fast to his argument that the rise of Arminianism after 1620 supplanted Calvinist 'egalitarianism' with a notion of a church and state conceived in 'hierarchical' terms, and that herein lay the challenge to the Calvinist 'world picture'.²⁶ *Anti-Calvinists* also met with vigorous criticism from G. W. Bernard, who argued that Tyacke had based his analysis upon a poorly developed account of what the English Reformation meant for politics. Bernard therefore stressed the point that any discussion of post-Reformation religion had to be set in the context of a

1993), pp. 33–44; and his 'The causes of the British Civil Wars', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 43 (1992), 624–33. See also Mark Fissel, *The Bishops' wars: Charles I's campaigns against Scotland, 1638–49* (Cambridge, 1994).

²¹ Nicholas Tyacke, 'Puritanism, Arminianism, and counter-revolution', in *The origins of the English Civil War*, ed. Conrad Russell (London, 1973), pp. 119–43.

²² Tyacke, *Anti-Calvinists*, ch. 8.

²³ For an assessment of revisionism in its early days, see the editors' essay, 'Introduction: after revisionism', in *Conflict in early Stuart England: studies in religion and politics, 1603–1642*, ed. Richard Cust and Anne Hughes (London, 1989), pp. 1–46. See also Glenn Burgess, 'On revisionism: an analysis of early Stuart historiography in the 1970s and 1980s', *Historical Journal*, 33 (1990), 609–27; and Kevin Sharpe, 'Remapping early modern England: from revisionism to the culture of politics', in his *Remapping early modern England*, pp. 3–37, esp. 15–18.

²⁴ Peter White, 'The rise of Arminianism reconsidered', *Past and Present*, 101 (1983), 34–54.

²⁵ William Lamont, 'Comment: The rise of Arminianism reconsidered', *Past and Present*, 107 (1985), 227–31; Peter Lake, 'Calvinism and the English Church'; Nicholas Tyacke and Peter White, 'Debate: The rise of Arminianism reconsidered', *Past and Present*, 115 (1987), 201–29.

²⁶ Tyacke, *Anti-Calvinists*, pp. 246, 247.

'monarchical' Church, wherein the Crown exercised sovereignty in the interest of preventing religious conflict.²⁷ Finally, Peter White's full-length study of predestination from the Reformation to the Civil War reprised the argument of his earlier article; that is, that Calvinism and Arminianism were not clearly defined positions set one against the other, but rather that there existed a 'spectrum' of belief on the doctrine of predestination.²⁸

This study suggests that critics of the Tyacke thesis have not yet provided the definitive case against it, particularly as it applies to the Jacobean Church.²⁹ Central to Tyacke's case was the proposition that a Calvinist consensus is what defined the post-Reformation Church, when there is a stronger case to be made for a deeply rooted conflict on the very nature of the visible church itself. This is not to say that the conflict traced by Tyacke is irrelevant – certainly different opinions on the way to salvation entailed different visions of the Church – but rather, the debate over subscription suggests a more broadly based conflict than that described in *Anti-Calvinists*.³⁰ The debates in question probed a range of topics, from the ecclesiastical sovereignty of the Crown in parliament, the tension between episcopal power and the common law, and the problem of religion in the three kingdoms – the very conflicts that dominated the pamphlet literature of the 1640s.³¹ In short, English 'ecclesiastical polity' (as contemporaries called it) was knitted together in a manner whose complexity is not adequately captured by the notion of a Calvinist consensus. In a society where the union of Church and state was a matter of constitutional precept, religious conflict did not turn on the question of doctrine alone, but on the nature of the visible institution in which that doctrine was professed and the links between this institution and other elements of the Tudor and early Stuart political complex. This was the point that Bernard sought to make; however, there is reason to believe that it was overstated. As we shall see, the English Church *did* reflect a strong monarchical component, but just how it was to be used in the service of religion was a source of great tension. In other words, Bernard

²⁷ G. W. Bernard, 'The Church of England c.1529–c.1642', *History*, 75 (1990), 183–206, at 192.

²⁸ Peter White, *Predestination, policy, and polemic: conflict and consensus in the English Church from the Reformation to the Civil War* (Cambridge, 1992), p. xiii.

²⁹ Nicholas Tyacke, 'Anglican attitudes: some recent writings on English religious history, from the Reformation to the Civil War', *Journal of British Studies*, 35 (April 1996), 139–67.

³⁰ Indeed, Tyacke's critics have tended to overlook the fact that he purported to examine 'a particular thread running through the often labyrinthine religious history of the period'. *Anti-Calvinists*, p. xiv.

³¹ While Conrad Russell is aware of all of these tensions, his preference has been to side with Tyacke's view that a central plank in English 'orthodoxy' was doctrinal Calvinism, and that the attack on this orthodoxy presaged the Civil War; as Russell put it, 'Charles's abandonment of Calvinist doctrine removed the coping-stone from this edifice.' See *Causes of the English Civil War*, pp. 51–2.

emphasised ‘policy’ but failed to link it with complex theological debates over points of doctrine and governance, all of which shed light on contemporary perceptions of the Crown’s ecclesiastical sovereignty. Here again, what comprised English ecclesiastical polity was a mingling of doctrine and law, and thus an arrangement that was open to attack from either political or theological directions. Peter White’s criticism of Tyacke merely rejected the latter’s case for a rise of Arminianism, and posited instead a long-term tension over soteriology as a trigger of the English Civil War. Neither Tyacke nor White made a sufficient case for predestinarian doctrine that situated it within other doctrinal issues, namely ceremonial practice and the objections to the Canons of 1604. This study suggests that the political and theological problem was more complex than either proponents or opponents of the Arminian thesis have noted.

In the attempt to skirt the impasse over Arminianism a number of scholars have sought to re-examine religious conflict in the early Stuart Church from the point of view of monarchy, doctrinal history, and conformity. In an influential article, Kenneth Fincham and Peter Lake argued that James VI and I was a deft and subtle ‘manipulator’ of competing religious factions, and that the English Church under his watch managed to harmonise these potentially divisive groups. The article emphasised statements contained in court sermons, and by James himself, that described him as a ‘rex pacificus’ dedicated to the imposition of ‘peace and unity’.³² This analytical model served as the impetus for a collection of essays edited by Fincham. In the introductory essay, he noted that ‘The search for the causes of the English Civil War has always dominated early Stuart religious history.’ The editorial mandate was to re-focus attention on the Church as an institution, on the laity, on the clerical corporation, and on relations between the Church and the Crown. Fincham argued that the Church was so powerful that it became a ‘battleground for rival visions of English society’.³³ Hence, an uneasy harmony maintained by a judicious prince rapidly deteriorated, and left the post-Jacobean Church ‘riven with friction and disagreement’.³⁴ The collection also included essays by Nicholas Tyacke and Peter White that clung to the view of a Jacobean peace shattered after 1625, and in fact Fincham conceded the point that ‘many of the forces promoting unity in the Jacobean church were dissolved in the 1630s’.³⁵ *The early Stuart Church*, therefore, retained elements of the model of conflict that it sought to supplant: that the Jacobean Church, while home to conflict, was nevertheless

³² Kenneth Fincham and Peter Lake, ‘The ecclesiastical policy of King James I’, *Journal of British Studies*, 24 (1985), 169–207, at 169, 206.

³³ *The early Stuart Church, 1603–1642*, ed. Kenneth Fincham (Stanford, 1993), p. 1.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 11. ³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 16.

held together by a consensus that was abruptly shattered in the 1630s and which ultimately contributed to the outbreak of war in the 1640s.

The collection provided a venue for an early version of Anthony Milton's important interpretation of early Stuart religious conflict.³⁶ In his essay, Milton argued that contemporary perceptions of the past shed important light on the nature of Jacobean religious thought, and proposed the thesis that the early Stuart period witnessed a 'demise' of a 'Jacobean consensus in understandings of the nature of the church'.³⁷ Much the same sort of analytical model lay at the centre of Milton's *Catholic and reformed*, perhaps the most comprehensive treatment of printed religious controversies in the early Stuart Church. Milton examined how English conformists sought to carve out a confessional identity which rested somewhere between Geneva and Rome, and showed as well how the positions of Protestant controversialists were shaped by their engagement with Catholic writers.³⁸ It is perhaps this which explains why two-thirds of Milton's book is taken up by Catholic-Protestant controversies.³⁹ What of the remaining third? In two substantial chapters Milton examined links between the English and Continental reformed churches from the point of view of Calvinism, and portrayed 'Laudianism' as the impetus for the doctrinal alienation of English Protestants from their co-religionists on the Continent. From doctrine, Milton moved to governance and, following Lake's statement noted previously, argued that a 'new emphasis attached to the role of the visible, institutional church in the attainment of salvation, meant that differences over external ecclesiastical polity were more likely to become the main focus of inter-Protestant relations'.⁴⁰ As promising as this sounded, Milton's attention was overwhelmingly focussed on tracing the impact of 'Laudian' policy on ceremonies, soteriology, and governance, and the pairing of this impact with the 'demise' of the Jacobean consensus posited in the earlier essay. The problem with this interpretation is that conformists from Whitgift onward were occupied with the task of defining and defending a visible, hierarchical, and ceremonial church, a process which involved stressing its particularly 'English' characteristics; hence, the 'novelty' of Laudianism has to be assessed against the continuity of conformist theories of ceremonies and governance.

³⁶ Anthony Milton, 'The Church of England, Rome and the true church: the demise of a Jacobean consensus', in *Early Stuart Church*, ed. Fincham, pp. 187–210.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 187, 210.

³⁸ This stance was not unique to Milton's work. See Timothy Wadkins, 'Theological polemic and religious culture in early Stuart England: the Percy/"Fisher" controversies, 1605–41' (Ph.D. diss., Graduate Theological Union, Berkeley, CA, 1988).

³⁹ Anthony Milton, *Catholic and reformed: the Roman and Protestant churches in English Protestant thought, 1600–1640* (Cambridge, 1995), pp. 31–373.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 449.

Milton's argument may be situated in a broader trend among scholars who seek to draw links between the Jacobean Church and its successor, and who do so by supplanting the 'Arminian' thesis with one emphasising 'Laudianism' or 'Carolinism'. However, a persistent weakness in much of the scholarship on Caroline politics and religion is that the Jacobean Church is treated as a kind of caricature. For example, Julian Davies noted that: 'The religious peace of Jacobean England rested on the promotion of a popular Anglican conformity.' He argued that a distinct 'Caroline' ecclesiology 'undermined a Jacobean consensus' and made 'radicals' out of critics of the Church.⁴¹ Moreover, as some Jacobean scholars have been absorbed with the virulent proponents of 'Anglicanism', Caroline scholars have unduly focussed on William Laud and his circle.⁴² Anthony Milton suggested that 'Laudianism' represented a 'gradual movement' away from an earlier 'coherent' view of the Church of England.⁴³ Here again, the argument emphasised consensus in the Jacobean Church, a condition which in turn gave way to conflict spurred by Laudian policy. In a later essay Milton revised his conception of Laudianism, arguing that, instead of being a movement, it was a 'process' through which English Protestants moved.⁴⁴ Yet this transition was examined from the point of view of Peter Heylyn, arguably the most atypical of Caroline divines, whose recollections of the period were coloured either by nostalgia or by harsh indictments of moderate churchmen.⁴⁵ What all of these interpretations overlook is that some aspects of churchmanship that appear 'new' in the Laudian context were, as we shall see, deeply entrenched in conformist thought.

The roots of 'Laudian' churchmanship have been probed by a number of scholars, but the effort has resembled a reading of Laudianism back into the Jacobean Church, rather than a study of early conformists in their own setting. For example, Kenneth Fincham and Peter Lake employed a Laudian and 'Arminian' perspective to characterise the positions of

⁴¹ Julian Davies, *The Caroline captivity of the Church: Charles I and the remoulding of Anglicanism, 1625–1641* (Oxford, 1992), pp. 10, 288.

⁴² See Peter Lake, 'Lancelot Andrewes, John Buckeridge, and avant-garde conformity at the court of James I', in *The mental world of the Jacobean court*, ed. Linda Levy Peck (Cambridge, 1991), pp. 113–33; Nicholas Tyacke, 'Archbishop Laud', and Peter Lake, 'The Laudian style: order, uniformity and the pursuit of the beauty of holiness in the 1630s', both in *Early Stuart church*, ed. Fincham, pp. 51–70 and 161–85; Nicholas Tyacke, 'Lancelot Andrewes and the myth of Anglicanism', in *Conformity and orthodoxy in the English Church, c. 1560–1660*, ed. Peter Lake and Michael Questier (Woodbridge, Suffolk, 2000), pp. 5–33.

⁴³ Milton, *Catholic and reformed*, p. 529.

⁴⁴ Anthony Milton, 'The creation of Laudianism: a new approach', in *Politics, religion and popularity in early Stuart Britain*, ed. Thomas Cogswell, Richard Cust, and Peter Lake (Cambridge, 2002), pp. 162–84.

⁴⁵ Heylyn's verdict on George Abbot, Archbishop of Canterbury from 1611 to 1633, is a case in point; see Susan Holland, 'Archbishop Abbot and the problem of "Puritanism"', *Historical Journal*, 37 (1994), 23–43.

Jacobean clerics such as John Buckeridge and Lancelot Andrewes.⁴⁶ In the 1990s, Peter Lake developed this analysis, arguing that in the work of Buckeridge and Andrewes one could detect a ‘link in the chain of avant-garde conformist thought which runs between Hooker and Laud’.⁴⁷ Finally, Nicholas Tyacke has suggested that, to ‘Laudians’, Lancelot Andrewes was a ‘founding father’.⁴⁸ All of these scholars have, on the one hand, sought to establish the roots of Laudianism in the Jacobean Church, while on the other hand emphasising Laudianism’s unique character. For example, Peter Lake has claimed that the use of the writings of Doctors, Fathers, and Councils was peculiar to the Laudian episcopate.⁴⁹ Julian Davies, who suggested that an interest in the patristic history of the visible church was ‘revived’ by Caroline divines, has also advanced this notion.⁵⁰ Scholars working on the sixteenth-century Church have shown that this was not the case; these studies reveal that scholastic method, patristic scholarship, and engagement with the Fathers permeated learned theological dispute, and was a tactic common to *both* defenders and critics of the Church.⁵¹ As with Laudian ‘ceremonialism’, the supposedly ‘unique’ or ‘novel’ aspects of Laudian or Caroline ecclesiology have to be reassessed in conjunction with a sound portrait of Jacobean theological scholarship.

In the late 1990s there was a renewed interest in theological disputes, which gave rise to an attempt to propose a new model for the study of early Stuart religious conflict. A collection edited by Peter Lake and Michael Questier (2000) promised to grasp the elusive nettle of how contemporaries sought to reconcile a tension between ‘outward government and practice’ and matters of ‘formal doctrinal profession and belief’. The editors announced that they sought to ‘problematise’ these categories in order to show how ‘contemporaries could and did try to gloss and appropriate

⁴⁶ Fincham and Lake, ‘The ecclesiastical policy of King James I’, 192–207.

⁴⁷ Lake, ‘Lancelot Andrewes, John Buckeridge, and avant-garde conformity’, p. 131.

⁴⁸ Tyacke, ‘Lancelot Andrewes and the myth of Anglicanism’, p. 32.

⁴⁹ Peter Lake, ‘The Laudians and the argument from authority’, in *Court, country, and culture: essays on early modern British history in honor of Perez Zagorin*, ed. Bonnelyn Kunze and Dwight Brautigam (Rochester, NY, 1992), pp. 149–75. Lake sought to identify the peculiarity of Laudianism by exploring ‘the broader ambiguity or tension in the Laudian appeal to the triad of church, scripture, and tradition and the way in which those authorities could be deployed to exalt and defend different aspects of the Laudian view of religion from attack’ (p. 171). Yet at no point did Lake seek to examine how pre-Laudian divines employed these sources of authority.

⁵⁰ Davies, *Caroline captivity*, ch. 2.

⁵¹ See William Haugaard, ‘Renaissance patristic scholarship and theology in sixteenth-century England’, *Sixteenth Century Journal*, 10 (1979), 37–60; John K. Luoma, ‘Who owns the Fathers?: Hooker and Cartwright on the authority of the primitive church’, *Sixteenth Century Journal*, 3 (1977), 45–59; and John Booty, *John Jewel as an apologist for the Church of England* (London, 1963).

them'.⁵² The collection therefore set aside nomenclature that described an Anglican/Puritan, Calvinist/anti-Calvinist conflict, and sought to 'penetrate the way contemporaries constructed and maintained their religious and political identities'. In some senses, the editorial introduction suggested that Lake had returned to his earlier insight about debate on the visible church and its importance to understanding early Stuart religion. At the root of the problem was a conflict over 'different versions of what the national church was or should be', a conflict located in a 'polemical struggle'.⁵³ Yet the success of this approach was limited by the fact that polemical sources did not figure prominently in the essays that followed (the footnotes point to some eleven titles), nor was there a treatment of the crucial competition over the 'national' Church as both a spiritual and political association. Instead, essays by Tyacke and David Como reprised the historiographical problem of whether the evaporation of consensus was caused by incipient Arminianism or 'Laudianism'.⁵⁴ Here again, the standard model of conflict prevailed.

The influence of the 'new British history' on recent scholarship has led to attempts to incorporate the Jacobean Church of Scotland (hereafter the Kirk) into models of conflict among English Protestants.⁵⁵ This makes good sense, since even a superficial glance at the literature of controversy reveals that arguments against episcopacy under Whitgift contained a detailed case in support of Presbyterian discipline, and frequent statements concerning the superior reformed character of the Kirk.⁵⁶ David Mullan's studies of the culture of Scottish 'Puritanism' and of the problem of episcopacy reveal a number of fault lines in the Kirk, as well as the existence of conformity and non-conformity.⁵⁷ This work built on a small but incisive historiography on the links between the Kirk and the law, and on the traffic in ideas between Presbyterians and Continental reformers.⁵⁸ Since the 1990s, following J. G. A. Pocock's dictum that the history of Britain is defined by the interconnected histories of England, Scotland, Ireland, and Wales, scholars have begun to develop perspectives on the unique 'historical consciousness' of the

⁵² *Conformity and orthodoxy*, ed. Lake and Questier, p. ix. ⁵³ *Ibid.*, pp. xviii, xix.

⁵⁴ Tyacke, 'Lancelot Andrewes and the myth of Anglicanism', and David Como, 'Puritans, predestination and the construction of orthodoxy in early seventeenth-century England', in *Conformity and orthodoxy*, ed. Lake and Questier, pp. 5–33, 64–87.

⁵⁵ See *The new British history: founding a modern state, 1603–1715*, ed. Glenn Burgess (London, 1999).

⁵⁶ Peter Lake, *Anglicans and Puritans? Presbyterianism and English conformist thought from Whitgift to Hooker* (London, 1988).

⁵⁷ David George Mullan, *Episcopacy in Scotland: the history of an idea, 1560–1638* (Edinburgh, 1986); Mullan, *Scottish Puritanism, 1590–1638* (Oxford, 2000).

⁵⁸ Francis Lyall, *Of presbyters and kings: church and state in the law of Scotland* (Aberdeen, 1980); Andrew Drummond, *The Kirk and the Continent* (Edinburgh, 1956).

peoples of the archipelago.⁵⁹ Work on the ‘British problem’ has now come to influence work on state formation, religious conflict, and the causes of the crisis that enveloped the three kingdoms at mid-century.⁶⁰ This new emphasis on the role of Scotland in particular has meant that emerging scholarship is obliged to incorporate itself within the existing paradigms that seek to identify the ‘causes’ of the conflict, and at this point we recall Kenneth Fincham’s statement about the implications of this for the study of religion. Work by John Morrill, John Ford, and David Mullan has set the study of Scottish religion within the context of existing historiography on the religious ‘causes’ of the breakdown of the 1640s.⁶¹ It remains to be seen how such perspectives may be reconciled with the Arminian paradigm; Mullan’s article on Calvinism in Scotland fell in step with the work of Tyacke, and as a result a range of other areas of conflict were overlooked in favour of Arminianism, evidence of which, he admitted, was difficult to find. Instead, Mullan concluded that Presbyterians divided over topics like ceremonies and the nature of the Apostolic church – suggestive to be sure, but themes too large to treat in a single article.⁶² As we shall see, there are strong connections between ecclesiological conflicts in the two kingdoms, connections which suggest refinements to the analyses put forth by Morrill and Ford, and which point to a pattern of religious and political conflict in England and Scotland in the years before the conflict of the 1640s. The emerging paradigm of the Civil War as a ‘war of religion’ depends on a fuller account of how a very public and broadly based conflict over doctrine and discipline could be a factor in driving Protestant kingdoms to war with each other.⁶³

⁵⁹ J. G. A. Pocock, ‘British History: a plea for a new subject’, *Journal of Modern History*, 47 (December 1975), 601–28.

⁶⁰ *The British problem, c. 1534–1707: state formation in the Atlantic archipelago*, ed. Brendan Bradshaw and John Morrill (Houndmills, Basingstoke, 1996); *The Scottish National Covenant in its British context, 1618–1651*, ed. John Morrill (Edinburgh, 1990); Russell, *Causes of the English Civil War*, chs. 2–5; Kevin Sharpe, *The personal rule of Charles I* (New Haven, 1992), chs. 6, 12, 13.

⁶¹ John Morrill, ‘A British patriarchy?: ecclesiastical imperialism under the early Stuarts’, in *Religion, culture, and society*, ed. Anthony Fletcher and Peter Roberts (Cambridge, 1994), pp. 209–37; John D. Ford, ‘The lawful bonds of Scottish society: the Five Articles of Perth, the Negative Confession and the National Covenant’, *Historical Journal*, 37 (1994), 45–64; Ford, ‘Conformity and conscience: the structure of the Perth Articles Debate in Scotland, 1618–1638’, *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 46 (1995), 256–77; David G. Mullan, ‘Theology in the Church of Scotland 1618–c. 1640: a Calvinist consensus?’, *Sixteenth Century Journal*, 26 (1995), 595–617.

⁶² Mullan, ‘Theology’, 617.

⁶³ See Russell, *Causes of the English Civil War*, chs. 3–5; *New British history*, ed. Burgess pp. 1–22; Conrad Russell, ‘The British problem and the English Civil War’, *History*, 75 (1987), 395–415; I. M. Green, “‘England’s wars of religion’?: Religious conflict and the

THE SCOPE OF THE WORK

A careful interpretation of debates among Jacobean divines allows us both to move beyond narrow interpretations of religious conflict and to lend perspective to the problem of civil and spiritual authority in the early Stuart kingdoms. Where others have frequently noted, but not systematically examined, a debate over the nature of the visible church, as well as debates on doctrine, governance, and ceremonial practice, the present study seeks to reconstruct the debates in which this conflict was played out. Rather than a Calvinist consensus, the Jacobean Church was founded upon a series of propositions that reflected the aspirations of building a national and monarchical Church, but that also invited criticism on a number of political, theological, and historical points. One can only understand the nature of both defences and criticisms of the Church through a measured examination of the texts in which the debate is preserved. The keys to the interpretation set forth here are that polemical exchanges between clerics and other commentators are central to our understanding of religious conflict, and that these exchanges were organised around a complex debate on the nature of the Apostolic church and its applicability as a fund of precept for the ordering of doctrine and governance in the post-Reformation Church of England. Since it is on this axis that the struggle to define the English Church turned, debates on governance and ceremonies are crucial to our understanding of Jacobean religious conflict in both the English and Scottish settings.

That said, it should also be established what this study does *not* aim to do. It makes no attempt to characterise popular religion, nor does it seek to comment on the variations among conforming clergy, or the impact of those variations at the diocesan level.⁶⁴ Those readers who are familiar with Richard Hooker's *Ecclesiasticall politie* will detect the dense shadow that work casts over conformist texts; there is not the space here to comment on the nature of their debt to him, or his influence in the debates this book surveys. By setting Hooker to one side and surveying a wider cast of writers, I hope that the reader will gain an appreciation of just how broad the debate

English Civil Wars', in *Church, change and revolution*, ed. J. van den Burg and P. G. Hoftijzer (Leiden, 1991), pp. 100–21; Glenn Burgess, 'Was the English Civil War a war of religion?: The Evidence of Political Propaganda', *Huntington Library Quarterly*, 61 (2000), 173–201.

⁶⁴ The seminal studies of these issues are Patrick Collinson, *The religion of Protestants: the Church in English society, 1559–1625* (Oxford, 1982), and Judith Maltby, *Prayer book and people in Elizabethan and early Stuart England* (Cambridge, 1998). See also Tom Webster, *Godly clergy in early Stuart England* (Cambridge, 1997); essays in *Religion and the English people, 1500–1640: new voices, new perspectives*, ed. Eric Josef Carlson, Sixteenth Century Essays and Studies, 45 (Kirksville, MO, 1998); and Patrick Collinson, 'The godly: aspects of popular Protestantism', in his *Godly people: essays on English Protestantism and Puritanism* (London, 1983), pp. 1–17.

was.⁶⁵ In fact, it was so broad as to necessitate two significant omissions: hence, I have opted not to include a discussion of debates that took place between Protestant and Catholic controversialists, or of those among English Protestant Separatists. In the case of the latter, such debates but rarely intersected with the exchanges on ceremonies and governance that took place between conformists and those writers who remained in the Church despite their misgivings about it. Murray Tolmie's work on the Separatist tradition and Keith Sprunger's on exiled English Protestants are complete studies whose conclusions this book does not seek to challenge.⁶⁶ With respect to the Protestant/Catholic debates, the work of Peter Holmes, Alexandra Walsham, Lucy Wooding, and especially Anthony Milton offers a more complete portrait than is possible without making the present book much longer.⁶⁷ Here again, with the possible exception of the Oath of Allegiance controversy⁶⁸ and scattered works on papal versus episcopal government, the debates that this study surveys were confined exclusively to Protestant writers. Therefore, I have proposed to examine the problem of the definition of the English Church from the point of view of its Protestant critics and defenders. Diocesan or consistory records, or other kinds of unpublished archival material, do not figure among the sources on which this study is based.⁶⁹ This is first and foremost a history of ideas, and of controversies whose central themes would have been little understood by the average person.⁷⁰ This literature was, for the most part, written and consumed by a narrow segment of English and Scottish society.⁷¹ However, its impact would

⁶⁵ I am grateful to Anthony Fletcher, whose comments on a draft of this book helped me to clarify this point of interpretation.

⁶⁶ Murray Tolmie, *The triumph of the saints: the separate churches of London, 1616–1649* (Cambridge, 1977); Keith Sprunger, *Dutch puritanism: a history of the English and Scottish churches of the Netherlands in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries* (Leiden, 1982). I should also mention Victoria Joy Gregory, 'Congregational puritanism and the radical puritan community' (Ph.D. diss., University of Cambridge, 2003).

⁶⁷ Peter Holmes, *Resistance and compromise: the political thought of the Elizabethan Catholics* (Cambridge, 1982); Alexandra Walsham, *Church papists: Catholicism, conformity, and confessional polemic in early modern England* (Woodbridge, Suffolk, 1993); Lucy E. C. Wooding, *Rethinking Catholicism in Reformation England* (Oxford, 2000); Milton, *Catholic and reformed*, esp. Part 1.

⁶⁸ J. P. Sommerville, 'Jacobean political thought and the controversy over the Oath of Allegiance' (Ph.D. diss., University of Cambridge, 1981).

⁶⁹ Kenneth Fincham's work has shown how fruitful these sources can be. In addition to his *Prelate as pastor: the episcopate of James I* (Oxford, 1990), see *Visitation articles and injunctions of the early Stuart Church*, ed. Kenneth Fincham, 2 vols. (Woodbridge, Suffolk, 1994–8).

⁷⁰ Many of the period's surviving sermons deal with themes that are relevant to this study. For while many were concerned, as they are still, with the wages of sin and the struggle between passion and Christian virtue, others delved deeper into the identity of the faith and how it could be defined.

⁷¹ The contents of the library of Richard Stonley, a Teller of the Elizabethan Exchequer of Receipt, reveal that he owned a great number of works of religious controversy, including works by conformists such as Hooker and Jewel, as well as by their critics Cartwright, Penry,

presumably have been felt among the parishes, for its authors represented the full range of the clergy, from groups of ministers clubbing together to protest their deprivations, to the authors of massive tomes making painstaking use of a range of scholarly sources, themselves the very foundation of the Christian historical tradition.

Very broadly, then, this book seeks to shift the focus of our understanding of religious conflict away from Arminianism and Laudianism, and toward the problem of ecclesiology and its impact on political theory, religious debate, and historical thought. This shift is made possible by the study of polemical sources, and it may emerge that these sources reveal – in a way other sources do not – the central fault lines of the debate among Jacobean Protestants. This is because ecclesiological argument was a dominant aspect of the intellectual culture in the period after the Reformation, in which biblical philology was combined with a humanist interest in the development of Christian history. A Protestant, but still very English, liturgy was grafted onto a visible church whose defenders needed to justify its existence as a reformed continuation of the Apostolic church, but which was nevertheless possessed of modes of doctrine and discipline to which the scripture did not give a clear warrant. The result was that Christian history and the nature of the Apostolic church bulked large in the literature of religious controversy.⁷² Rather than Anglican versus puritan, or Calvinist versus Arminian, the principal cleavages amounted to differing schools of thought on how the Apostolic tradition might be interpreted, and what implications these interpretations had for matters of practical ecclesiology. Arthur Ferguson noted as much in his seminal study of historical thought:

They turned for inspiration not so much to classical but to Christian antiquity. Though familiar enough with the standard classical authors ... contestants on both sides sought proof and precedent in the world of the Apostles and church fathers. How they interpreted that world and what relation they believed it bore to their own,

and a number of Catholic divines. See Leslie Hotson, 'The library of Elizabeth's embezzling Teller', *Studies in Bibliography*, 2 (1949–50), pp. 49–61, and Raymond, *Pamphlets and pamphleteering*, ch. 1.

⁷² Ferguson, *Clio unbound*, chs. 5–6; Patrick Collinson, 'If Constantine, then also Theodosius: St Ambrose and the integrity of the Elizabethan *ecclesia anglicana*', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 30 (1979), 205–29. See also Joseph H. Preston, 'English ecclesiastical historians and the problem of bias, 1559–1742', *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 32 (1971), 203–20; Rainer Pineas, 'William Turner's polemical use of ecclesiastical history and his controversy with Stephen Gardiner', *Renaissance Quarterly*, 33 (1980), 599–608; Robert Dodaro and Michael Questier, 'Strategies in Jacobean polemic: the use and abuse of St Augustine in English Theological Controversy', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 44 (1993), 432–49; M. E. C. Perrott, 'Richard Hooker and the problem of authority in the Elizabethan Church', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 49 (1998), 29–60; and Arthur G. Holder, 'Whitby and all that: the search for Anglican origins', *Anglican Theological Review*, 85 (2003), 231–2.

therefore, became questions of primary importance in estimating the character of Reformation historical thought.⁷³

Although the use of ecclesiastical history was a common element in the debate, this book does not attempt to dissect the various ways in which writers employed their sources. Rather, when they were used to attack or justify a particular position, I have noted what texts were employed in either case. One does not find that writers made programmatic statements about why they chose the sources they did; most often, one presumes, the choice was governed by the needs of a given argument. At other times, claims for the accuracy or reliability of historical sources were expressed in negative terms, by way of calling into question their use by an opponent. Instead, I wish simply to show that when matters of doctrine and ecclesiology were in dispute – as they were without interruption in the period the book treats – writers of all stripes appealed to the authority of history in pressing their claims. Those who study early Stuart religious conflict have, in the main, overlooked this aspect of the debate, and it may be that they have fundamentally underestimated their subject as a result.⁷⁴ Religious conflict was not driven simply by a debate over soteriology, but by debates about the nature of the Church, its place in Christian history, and its place in the realm. Only when one engages with the problem of ecclesiology in its historical, religious, polemical, and political contexts do the patterns of the problem emerge.

The work begins by examining the intellectual foundations of Jacobean conformity, and concentrates on four related issues: that the stability of Church and commonwealth was predicated upon religious uniformity; that this uniformity was justified owing to the organic conjunction of those bodies; that the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of the Crown was ancient; and finally that the Church itself was both ancient and reformed – which made it unique among Protestant churches. The next chapter examines the printed literature that emerged in the early years of James' reign, and explores a number of tensions that emerged in the wake of the Canons of 1604. Clerical subscription and deprivation led to debates over the jurisdiction of bishops, and over the relationship between ecclesiastical discipline and the common law. The theme of episcopacy is pursued in the fourth chapter, which looks at

⁷³ Ferguson, *Clio unbound*, p. 132.

⁷⁴ But see D. R. Woolf, *The idea of history in early Stuart England* (Toronto, 1990), pp. 37–44; and Patrick Collinson, 'Truth, lies, and fiction in sixteenth-century Protestant historiography', in *The historical imagination in early modern Britain: history, rhetoric, and fiction, 1500–1800*, ed. Donald Kelley and David Harris Sacks (Cambridge, 1997), pp. 37–68. J. G. A. Pocock has observed that the Church of England is the 'key' to early modern English history, but thus far we lack a study which shows how this was so. See Pocock, *Barbarism and religion, Vol. I: The Enlightenments of Edward Gibbon, 1737–1764* (Cambridge, 1999), p. 8.

debates on governance. Not only did contemporaries divide on the nature of government appropriate to the Church, but also on the extent of the power, or jurisdiction, of diocesan bishops. Conformists offered doctrinal and historical justifications for diocesan episcopacy, but varied on whether it was Apostolic or divinely ordained. Reformists put forth the case for variations on Presbyterian discipline, and also argued for its divine and Apostolic origins. Debates on governance were carried on alongside others that considered ceremonial practice, and so the fifth chapter presents debates on the doctrinal and historical elements of the ceremonies prescribed by the Canons of 1604. Like governance, ceremonies were crucial hallmarks used to establish how closely visible churches resembled the perfection of the ancient church. Reformists argued that, since Christ had not adopted a kneeling posture at the Last Supper, there was no justification for its continued use. Against this doctrinal and historical argument, conformists offered a case for the 'liberty' of the Church to institute ceremonies according to the standards of 'custom' and 'edification'. Yet they also sought a doctrinal and historical justification for the continued use of 'things indifferent'.

The study concludes by looking at an aspect of Jacobean ecclesiology that has not yet been properly investigated: that is, the conflicts that took place between the two churches over which James claimed sovereignty – the Kirk and the Church of England. The attempt to introduce diocesan episcopacy and kneeling at communion touched off a controversy which, in its latter stages, saw writers urging conformity to a Church of 'Great Britain' as a solution to the clamour over ceremonies and bishops in the churches of England and Scotland. Yet the rift between Protestants in England and Scotland was significant one, defined by controversies in which two historical narratives of the relationship between civil and spiritual authority were ranged against each other. Jacobean ecclesiology was not defined by consensus, but represented a continuation of post-Reformation debates that were animated by the problem of reconciling a definition of the Church as a spiritual association of free Christians with a Church 'established' by statute and annexed to the imperial Crown. Given the fact that the Church continued to draw fire from a range of Protestant critics, the whole enterprise of building, refining, and in some cases tearing down an historical ecclesiology lay at the very root of the problem, and furthermore the language in which it was built, refined, and torn down was central to the way in which contemporary political and religious discourse was carried on.