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Studies in the anticatholic origins of the Anglo-American self

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STUDIES IN THE ANTICATHOLIC ORIGINS OF THE ANGLO-AMERICAN SELF

A Dissertation

Presented to

The Faculty of the Department of History
The College of William and Mary in Virginia

In Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

by

John Patrick Thaddeus Barrington

1997

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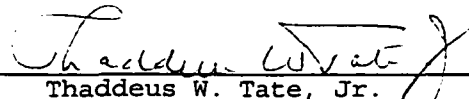
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ABSTRACT

Anticatholicism in the early modern, English-speaking world was far more than a crude prejudice. Instead, anticatholic ideas and rhetoric provided an important stimulus for public discussion of a wide range of theological, political, economic, and social issues. The question of English, Protestant identity was central to much of this discussion, and from the sixteenth century on, competing groups in the English-speaking world manipulated the attack on "popery" in order to promote their own ideal vision of English Protestantism.

This dissertation explores the anticatholic rhetoric of certain individuals and sets of individuals in England and the English colonies between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries, in order to discover how these men used anticatholic rhetoric to promote their own agendas. This study is not an exhaustive survey of all variants of Anglo-American antipopery between the Reformation and the American Revolution. Rather, the intention here is to develop a new approach to the study of anticatholicism: anticatholic rhetoric can be analyzed to reveal the existence of competing discourses about Anglo-American identity.

The particular discourses analyzed in this dissertation reveal anxieties about the development of modern political and economic institutions in the English-speaking world. John Foxe represented the Catholic Church as an overpowerful, secular bureaucracy, intruding into the lives of private individuals. Many eighteenth-century authors portrayed Catholicism as a faith that fostered ruthless competition for material gain. These attacks on the Catholic Church as an institution that fostered modernization suggest that many English and colonial Protestants identified themselves with a traditional world of autonomous, local communities.

STUDIES IN THE ANTICATHOLIC ORIGINS OF THE ANGLO-AMERICAN SELF

CHAPTER I

THE PLACE OF ANTICATHOLICISM IN COLONIAL HISTORY

Anticatholicism occupies a strange place in the histories of colonial British America. On the one hand, many historians have acknowledged the prevalence and the importance of anticatholic sentiments and behavior among Protestant colonists, throughout the colonial period. Historians recognize, for example, that antipopery played an important role in the founding of certain, very different colonies, such as Virginia, Massachusetts, and Georgia.¹ Anticatholicism played an undeniable role in the Glorious Revolution, the most widespread political upheaval in America before the 1760s.² Hatred of Rome has also been acknowledged as a motive for the colonists' participation in eighteenth-century imperial wars, which profoundly affected many aspects of colonial society.³ Antipopery was entwined

¹. For anticatholicism and the founding of Massachusetts, see J.F. Maclear, "New England and the Fifth Monarchy: the Quest for the Millennium in Early American Puritanism" in The William and Mary Quarterly, 3d ser., vol XXXII (1975), 223-260. For anticatholicism's role in the English colonization of Virginia, see Edmund Morgan, American Slavery, American Freedom: The Ordeal of Colonial Virginia (New York: Norton, 1975), 3-24. For anticatholicism and the founding of Georgia, see Harold E. Davis, The Fledgling Province: Society and Cultural Life in Colonial Georgia, 1733-1776 (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 1976), 15, 194-198.

². Richard R. Johnson, "The Revolution of 1688-9 in the American Colonies" in Jonathan I. Israel, ed. The Anglo-Dutch Moment: Essays on the Glorious Revolution and its World Impact (New York: Cambridge University, 1991), 215-240; David S. Lovejoy, The Glorious Revolution in America (Middletown, Conn: Wesleyan University, 1972), 235-270.

³. Ian K. Steele, Warpaths: Invasions of North America (New York: Oxford University, 1994), 161-162; Gary Nash, The Urban Crucible: Social Change, Political Consciousness, and the Origins of the American Revolution (Cambridge: Harvard, 1979), 177, 243.

with white colonists' fears of other races, both African and Indian.⁴ Finally, a deeply-ingrained hatred of the Church of Rome, fanned to a fever by the Quebec Act of 1774, played a vital role in the American rejection of British rule.⁵ From the beginning to the end of the colonial period, and in almost every field of colonial historiography, there are scholars who believe that anticatholicism reinforced the major phobias and ignited many major events of British American history.

Yet despite this widespread recognition of anticatholicism's importance, few historians have attempted a detailed analysis of the content of antipopery, or have tried to pin down the precise relationships between anticatholicism and the various behaviors and ideologies it reinforced. One reason for this neglect may well lie in historians' understanding of antipopery as a set of prejudices with little intellectual content. Certainly, historians of anticatholicism in England, whose work has influenced the study of antipopery in America, have explicitly portrayed English Protestants' hatred of the Church as essentially irrational and therefore unworthy of extensive analysis. For example, John Miller argues that anticatholicism in Restoration England was "in no way a coherent ideology, but consisted of a succession of images, mostly lurid."⁶ Richard Ashcraft, after describing John Locke's violent hatred of the Church of Rome, avoids analysis of this hatred by claiming that none of Locke's "assumptions [about the Catholic Church] is considered in a framework in which it is

⁴. J. Leitch Wright, Jr., The Only Land They Knew: the Tragic Story of the American Indians in the Old South (London: the Free Press, 1981), 112-113; Peter H. Wood, Black Majority: Negroes in Colonial South Carolina from 1670 through the Stono Rebellion (New York: Norton, 1974), 303-306; James Axtell, The Invasion Within: the Contest of Cultures in Colonial North America (New York: Oxford University, 1985), 247-250.

⁵. Charles Royster, A Revolutionary People at War: the Continental Army and American Character, 1775-1783 (New York: Norton, 1979), 13-24; Bernard Bailyn, The Ideological Origins of the American Revolution, enl. ed. (Cambridge: Harvard, 1992), 119; and Gordon Wood, The Creation of the American Republic, 1776-1787 (New York: Norton, 1969), 42.

⁶. John Miller, Popery and Politics in England: 1660-1688 (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1973), 70-71.

necessary to advance intellectually convincing arguments on their [sic] behalf; they are simply taken for granted."⁷ Such arguments may well explain many colonial historians' readiness to dismiss anticatholicism as a crude prejudice, interesting only in so far as it interfered with or reinforced more rational and admirable elements of colonial Protestants' world view. As a crude prejudice, anticatholicism warrants a general description, but not serious investigation or integration with other beliefs and ideas.

Whatever the cause, colonial historians' reluctance to investigate anticatholicism has resulted in their being only one comprehensive study of antipopery in colonial America. Sr. Mary Augustina Ray's American Opinion of Roman Catholicism in the Eighteenth Century (1936), which, despite its title, covers colonial antipopery from its origins in sixteenth-century England until the American Revolution, is still the broadest and most detailed study of the instances and variety of anticatholic activity and rhetoric among colonists. Although useful, even essential, today as a source of information about antipopery, Ray's work is limited by its failure to treat anticatholicism as part of a larger intellectual culture, and by its publication long before the emergence of many important new currents in colonial historiography.⁸ Somewhat more recently, in 1965, John Tracy Ellis explored how anticatholicism affected Catholic populations in the New World in his Catholics in Colonial America. His work is comprehensive, covering the entire colonial period, and includes not only English-speaking America, but also those parts of the French and Spanish Empires that later came to be incorporated in the United States. His focus, however, is on Catholic experience, rather than on the anticatholic ideas and rhetoric

⁷. Richard Ashcraft, Revolutionary Politics & Locke's Two Treatises of Government (Princeton: Princeton University, 1986), 99-100.

⁸. Sr. Mary Augustina Ray, American Opinion of Roman Catholicism in the Eighteenth Century (New York: Columbia University, 1936).

of Protestant colonists.⁹ Although useful as a source of information on anticatholic legislation and on the persecutions of Catholics, Ellis only deals with certain, marginal aspects of antipopery. Most anticatholic rhetoric was not directed against specific Catholic populations in the colonies, but against the institutions of "popery" in the world outside the British Empire, and against supposedly "popish" beliefs and behavior among English-speaking Protestants. Ellis's study, therefore, by virtue of its focus, necessarily ignores most of the ways in which colonists expressed their antipathy to the Church of Rome. Ellis and Ray provide some useful foundations for the study of anticatholicism in colonial America, but these hardly amount to an adequate exploration of so important a subject.

While anticatholicism as a whole has received little attention, there is one particular aspect of antipopery's impact on colonial America that has been examined in some detail. Certain historians have convincingly argued that Protestant colonists' hatred of the Church of Rome provided them with a sense of identity. This sense of identity derived both from colonists' use of the Catholic Church as a model of all that they should avoid in their beliefs and behavior, and also from the colonists' sense they had a mission to contain or overthrow the power of Catholicism throughout the world. The seminal work for historians who have argued that antipopery was an important source of identity is William Haller's The Elect Nation (1963).¹⁰ This study argues that John Foxe created a nationalist history for the English

⁹. John Tracy Ellis, Catholics in Colonial America (Baltimore: Helicon, 1965).

¹⁰. Haller's study of anticatholicism and identity deals only with England, but his thesis has been used as the starting point for discussions of antipopery and identity in the colonies, too. Contemporary scholars who are engaged in examining the relationship between anticatholicism and identity on both sides of the Atlantic still cite Haller's arguments as authoritative. See Ruth Bloch, Visionary Republic: Millennial Themes in American Thought, 1756-1800 (New York: Cambridge University, 1985), 7, 8, 12; Linda Colley, Britons: Forging the Nation, 1707-1837 (New Haven: Yale University, 1992), 25; and Francis Cogliano, No King, No Popery: Anti-Catholicism in Revolutionary New England (Westport, Conn: Greenwood Press, 1995), 5-6.

people in his Acts and Monuments, and that the English thereafter believed themselves endowed by God with a mission to protect true, Protestant Christianity against the Catholic Church. According to Haller, Foxe portrayed this struggle in apocalyptic terms, promising the English a glorious future during a millennium that would begin with "popery's" final defeat. Thanks to this intense hatred of the Church of Rome, Englishmen developed a strong sense of national identity long before most other nations did."¹¹

Peter Gay and Christopher Hill took up Haller's idea that anticatholicism provided members of the English-speaking world with a strong sense of identity, but argued that it was the Puritans who appropriated the rhetoric of antipopery and used that rhetoric to promote their particular vision of what English Protestantism should be. As the Puritans became more and more marginalized in the English-speaking world, the anticatholic ideas and identity that they had championed came to be seen as dangerously radical and increasingly obsolete. Hill argues that in England, Puritanism and anticatholicism came into disrepute as early as the Restoration, when men of property began to regard anticatholic agitation as a specious pretext for social revolution. Gay traces a longer history for antipopery in New England, where Cotton Mather and Jonathan Edwards continued to argue into the eighteenth century for a special, New England mission based on the struggle with Rome. Enlightenment historiography, Gay argues, then discredited apocalyptic ideas, allowing new concepts of history to shape New Englanders' sense of their identity and purpose. Thus, both Gay and Hill stress that the anticatholic identity that arose in Elizabethan England had largely run its course by the beginning or

¹¹. William Haller, The Elect Nation: The Meaning and Relevance of Foxe's Book of Martyrs (New York: Harper and Row, 1963).

middle of the eighteenth century.¹²

Earnest Lee Tuveson and Ruth Bloch concurred with the argument advanced by Hill, that apocalyptic antipopery, and its concomitant sense of identity, died out in England after 1660, but they do not accept that such ideas also perished in New England. Rather, they argue that a sense of identity and mission, associated with the struggle against the Church of Rome, revived during the Great Awakening, and spread from New England throughout the rest of the American colonies. Tuveson associates this revival with the post-millennialism of Jonathan Edwards, who argued for a gradual progress towards a thousand-year period of earthly bliss that would precede Christ's Second Coming. According to Tuveson, such ideas of progress, derived from millennialism, evolved into the liberal, capitalist ethic that came to dominate the United States in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The millennialist roots of this liberalism provided Americans with the sense that they belonged to a "Redeemer Nation", whose mission was to spread the pursuit of happiness throughout the globe.¹³

Bloch argues that the revived, anticatholic millennialism of the Great Awakening had quite different effects. Denying that post-millennialist ideas were particularly important, she argues that the Calvinist background of a large proportion of the colonists made them receptive to the apocalyptic visions that emanated from New England during the Awakening. Millennialist rhetoric shared many elements with

¹². Peter Gay, A Loss of Mastery: Puritan Historians in Colonial America (Berkeley: University of California, 1966). For his views on Haller's The Elect Nation see 6, 9-10. Christopher Hill, Antichrist in Seventeenth-Century England (London: Verso, 1990; first published 1971). For his use of Haller's thesis, see 14.

¹³. Earnest Lee Tuveson, Redeemer Nation: The Idea of America's Millennial Role (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1968). Alan Heimert also argued that post-millennialist ideas, propagated from New England throughout America during the Great Awakening, provided Americans with a sense of mission and identity. However, he argues that anticatholicism was not an important element in this new millennialism, which focused instead on the positive ideals of unity, peace, and prosperity. Religion and the American Mind from the Great Awakening to the Revolution (Cambridge: Harvard University, 1966), 85-87.

real Whig ideology, which sprang from the same Calvinist roots, and real Whig ideas spread alongside millennialism during the Awakening. This association of millennialism and real Whig ideology changed the latter in one vital respect: the real Whigs' cyclical concept of history was replaced with the progressive, linear scheme of millennialism. Millennialism thus turned real Whig thought into a revolutionary ideology, capable of founding a new society. In contrast to Tuveson's stress on the connection between millennialism and capitalism, Bloch emphasizes the ascetic nature of millennialism and of the American Revolution, whose inspiration came, via the Real Whigs, from classical republicanism.¹⁴

While Tuveson and Bloch have argued for the continuing vitality of apocalyptic antipopery as a source of identity for colonial Calvinists in the middle and late eighteenth century, David Shields and Linda Colley have stressed the importance of anticatholicism as a source of identity among the merchant elite of the British Empire between the Glorious and American Revolutions. Colley argues that antipathy to the Church of Rome played a crucial role in uniting the extraordinarily diverse population of the mother country, where national, regional, sectarian, and class differences bedevilled the new United Kingdom of 1707. Shields examines the literature produced by elite colonists who imitated the styles and genres of Augustan Age Britain, and who shared many of the cultural, economic, and political views of the empire's rulers. He finds that this literature contained, among other elements, a pronounced hatred of "popery", and a sense of identity that portrayed British and colonial Protestantism as the direct opposite of Catholicism. Both Colley and Shields argue that the subjects of their study portrayed the Catholic Church as economically backward and authoritarian. By contrast, Britons and colonists celebrated their own identity in terms of political liberty and rising prosperity, based on

¹⁴. Bloch, Visionary Republic, 3-21, 75-93.

mercantile wealth. Like Tuveson, but unlike Bloch, these historians see anticatholicism as one source of an individualistic, capitalist ethic in the English-speaking world.¹⁵

Francis Cogliano has recently published a study of antipopery in New England that differs, in its local focus, from all those discussed above. His single-region study does, however, contain many of the same themes articulated by historians who have examined anticatholicism in the wider, English-speaking world. Cogliano argues that the Puritan migrants who settled New England derived a sense of mission and identity from antipopery. Their anticatholic identity derived originally from Foxe and other English writers, but the New Englanders adapted English anticatholicism to suit the circumstances of their experimental, Puritan societies. Cogliano contends, like Tuveson and Bloch, that antipopery remained a potent source of identity in eighteenth-century New England, but he ignores millennialist strains of anticatholicism, and instead focuses on the mercantile elite's use of antipopery to win support from other social classes, who rallied behind the establishment in the face of threats from French Canada. The elite, he argues, were able to manipulate antipopery so effectively, that they could suppress versions of anticatholic rhetoric that threatened to undermine their rule, such as those that associated Catholicism with material luxury. Ultimately, members of New England's upper classes were able to suppress all expressions of anticatholicism, when the alliance with France during the Revolutionary War made it expedient to do so. Anticatholicism was therefore chiefly significant as a means by which a commercial and political elite imposed its own vision of New England on the population at large.¹⁶

All of these historians have argued, in a number of different

¹⁵. Colley, Britons, 11-100; David S. Shields, Oracles of Empire: Poetry, Politics, and Commerce in British America, 1690-1750 (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1990), 33-35, 175-220.

¹⁶. Cogliano, No King, No Popery, passim., esp. 3.

ways, for the importance of anticatholicism as a source of identity for American colonists, and/or for English-speaking Protestants in general. The evidence presented by these historians demonstrates that hatred of the Church of Rome was a widespread phenomenon in the early modern, English-speaking world, and that many of the ingredients of this hatred were common to Protestants of different time periods, regions, and sectarian backgrounds. The above authors provide two of the basic, starting assumptions of this study: that antipopery was virtually universal among English-speaking Protestants from the Reformation to the American Revolution, and that these same Protestants derived an important sense of identity from their hatred of Catholicism.

From that starting point, I proceeded to examine a problem that emerges from the work of the above historians on the relationship of antipopery and identity. Examined individually, each of the above accounts of the role of antipopery is convincing, to a greater or lesser extent. Taken in aggregate, however, these discussions demonstrate that there was considerable variety in the anticatholic beliefs of members of the English and British Empires.¹⁷ None of the above historians takes account of that variety in his or her portrayal of the way in which anticatholicism created a sense of identity within the English-speaking world.¹⁸ Each treats anticatholicism as a monolithic set of ideas, shared (depending on the historian's particular focus) by all Englishmen, all Britons, all colonists, or all the members of a particular subgroup of one of the above. From the assumption that each group of English-speaking Protestants encountered only one variant of

¹⁷. Ray's comprehensive survey of anticatholicism in the colonial period is particularly useful for setting studies of antipopery and identity in context. From her work, it becomes clear that there was considerable variation in the way that different colonists, especially those of different religious backgrounds, looked at the Catholic Church. American Opinion, 63-113.

¹⁸. Cogliano recognizes that there were competing views of the Church of Rome in eighteenth-century New England, but he avoids dealing with the implications of such variation by his assumption that members of the elite were able to silence all attacks on Rome but their own. No King, No Popery, 23-39.

antipopery, these historians have argued, to use Colley's terms, that the Catholic Church was perceived as an "Other", in contrast to which Britons or colonists arrived at a single sense of "Self". Yet in fact, members of the English and British Empires encountered not one, but many significantly different attacks on the Catholic Church. Each of these attacks drew on a common pool of anticatholic ideas, but, by emphasizing different aspects of "popery's" evils, each presented different implications about the identity of those who opposed "popery". The shared content of the various types of anticatholic discourse facilitated the propagation of many different variants of anticatholicism, for different accounts of "popery's" evils were intelligible across barriers of time, region, and religious belief. Common ideas and understandings about Rome ensured that no subsection of the Empire's population was isolated from the anticatholic ideas generated by other groups. Therefore, the notion of a simple contrast between a Catholic "Other" and a British or colonial or New England "Self", employed by all the above scholars, simply does not fit the actual complexity of anticatholicism in the early modern period.

In this dissertation, I have taken a different approach to the study of the relationship between anticatholicism and identity in the early modern English and British Empire. I argue that antipopery is best understood as an important category of discourse in the public sphere that was emerging in the English-speaking world between the Reformation and the mid-eighteenth century. The public sphere contained three essential elements: first, the concept of a "public", consisting of those individuals whom contemporaries defined as the political part of the nation; second, the idea of the "public good" or the "public interest", a set of actions and policies that benefitted the political public as a whole, and that were distinct from the interests of any individual member of that public; and third, the existence of opportunities for individuals, as members of the "public", to air their views on the precise nature of the "public interest", and on the best

means of serving that interest.¹⁹ Anticatholicism contributed to the emergence of all three of these constituent elements of the public sphere. Anticatholic writers designated any true Protestant who hated "popery" as a member of a public, political community. Further, these writers defined a public interest, in terms of the avoidance or destruction of Catholicism. Finally, since English and British governments from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries supported anticatholicism as an official policy of the state, anticatholic writers enjoyed unusually broad opportunities for engaging in rational discourse about the public interest.

Published attacks on the Catholic Church were, of course, only one factor in the emergence of a public sphere in the early modern, English-speaking world. The broader history of the development of the public sphere therefore provides an essential context for evaluating the particular contribution of anticatholic texts towards that development. Jürgen Habermas outlines that broader history as follows. In the middle ages, he argues, there was no true public sphere, because the ruling authorities (monarchy, church, and aristocracy) who controlled publicity, presented themselves to the people as the representatives of God, not as the servants of a human public. The concept of such a public, whose interests the government served, first emerged in the early modern period in the Italian city states of the Renaissance, where the classical Greek and Roman concepts of the res publica were revived. The concept of the public good was then adopted by certain western European monarchs, including the Tudors, during the sixteenth century, because kings and queens found the idea to be a useful way of reducing the status of the clergy and aristocracy, who now became, in court propaganda, the servants of a public interest, not the representatives of God. In England and in other countries where such propaganda was

¹⁹. Jürgen Habermas, The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society, tr. Thomas Burger (Cambridge, Mass.: Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1993), 1-4, 27-31.

effective, monarchs were then left as the only divinely-ordained authorities, and their power was enhanced. Meanwhile, the concepts associated with the public sphere had become firmly established, though only within the confines of the court.²⁰

An expansion of the public sphere occurred during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, as monarchies sought to raise taxes and loans from the wealthier merchants, whose financial resources were becoming vital to meet the rapidly expanding military expenses of western European states. Monarchs began to publicize the idea of an abstract public, consisting of merchants, whose interest lay in the protection and expansion of commerce. Rulers began to present reasoned arguments, in government-sponsored journals and other publications, demonstrating that their policies most effectively served this mercantile public interest, in order to win the support of the merchant classes. In England, this type of publicity first appeared under Charles II. In many European countries, the merchants proved responsive to these overtures. They began to read the government's publicity, and to identify with the notional public presented in those publications. Convinced that the public interest coincided with their own, private interests, they began to vote taxes and make loans more readily than before. Thus did the concepts associated with the public sphere first escape the narrow circles of court, and become rooted in the population at large, albeit only among a small proportion of that population.²¹

The next stage of development occurred when governments then lost control of discussion of the public interest. The commercial classes who had come to identify themselves with the notional public of government journals became, in effect, a real public, with ideas of its own on the best way to serve the public interest. Governments' reasoned presentation of public policy met counter-arguments from the mercantile

²⁰. Ibid., 6-12.

²¹. Ibid., 14-22.

public, members of which began to found their own journals, and to create other venues for discussion of public policy, such as salons and coffee houses. Soon, the government's voice was but one among many, and a truly autonomous, bourgeois public sphere had been born.²² This development occurred in the English-speaking world in the aftermath of the Glorious Revolution, when the creation of new institutions such as the Bank of England, and the relaxation of censorship empowered the commercial classes, and freed them to engage in extensive public debate.²³

Once a bourgeois public sphere had been created, it steadily expanded, both in terms of the scope of its discussions, and in terms of the numbers of people who identified with the notional public presented in the media. Initially presented as a gathering of men interested in commerce, the idea of the public in the media soon gained other attributes, as politicians, especially those in opposition, sought to make their policies appealing to more and more of the population, or as writers and publishers sought to sell their output to a larger and larger market. In the English-speaking world, the eighteenth century witnessed this steady expansion of the public sphere, whose outer edges included retailers, artisans, and rural gentry, along with their wives and adolescent children, by the second half of the century.²⁴

I argue that this development of the public sphere between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries provides the best context for understanding the significance of anticatholic rhetoric and its impact on the formation of identity. Anticatholic publications, and the concepts of the public and the public interest that these publications conveyed, in some ways anticipated the development of the public sphere as Habermas outlined it, in other ways complicated such development, and

²². Ibid., 22-26, 31-43.

²³. Ibid., 57-59.

²⁴. Ibid., 43-56, 59-67.

in yet others, reinforced the expansion of the public sphere. Far from presenting a simple portrait of "popery", and creating a single identity for members of the English-speaking world that stood in contrast and opposition to the Catholic Church, anticatholic writers competed with each other to shape the general understanding of "popery" and of Protestantism according to each writer's particular point of view. Complicating the emergence of an anticatholic identity still further, debates over the nature of "popery" overlapped with debates over other issues that were defined as part of the public interest, including, in the eighteenth century, issues concerning the growth of commerce, and the impact of that growth on Anglo-American society. In the midst of this competition to define the public and its interests, particular visions of a shared, Protestant identity managed to dominate particular segments of imperial society for limited periods of time. Yet no concept of identity was safe from challenge, and Britons' and colonists' sense of who they were constantly evolved.

Clearly, it is impossible to examine every voice in this centuries-long debate about the evils of "popery", especially within the confines of a dissertation. I have therefore adopted a selective approach to the study of anticatholicism, in the belief that even a selection can sufficiently demonstrate the value of approaching the study of antipopery as an aspect of the development of the public sphere. The selection of a small number of sources out of a vast pool must always, of course, be carefully made, for by excluding certain sources one might miss material that is vital for an understanding of the subject. I have decided, therefore, that although this dissertation is chiefly concerned with illuminating the impact of anticatholicism on identity formation in the colonies, I cannot safely exclude any region of the English-speaking world from my selection. Both the sources I have examined, and the studies by the historians discussed above, make it clear that specific anticatholic texts and particular ideas about the Catholic Church moved freely from one region to another. I feel

therefore that the English-speaking world should constitute the basic, geographical parameter of this study, for a more localized scrutiny would necessarily miss the important, broader context in which anticatholic ideas were generated and propagated.²⁵ Within the English-speaking world, no single region was more influential than England itself, since more anticatholic texts emanated from the mother country than from any other region, and since English texts were generally more widely disseminated throughout the colonies than texts from other regions. The mother country's influence on anticatholicism in the colonies was not limited to the ideas that the original colonists brought with them, but was continuous, through the eighteenth century, thanks to the importation of documents into America from England, and to American reprints of original English texts. English anticatholic documents therefore play an important, even predominant role in this preliminary study of anticatholicism in the colonies, reflecting the real influence of such documents on the Empire as a whole.

In order to reduce the scope of this study to manageable proportions while maintaining the integrity of the imperial context in which anticatholic discourse took place, I have focused on four authors or groups of authors whose attacks on Rome reached large numbers of readers on both sides of the Atlantic. The first of these four selections, discussed in chapter two, consists of one influential work, John Foxe's Acts and Monuments, a seminal text with regard to both anticatholicism and to the development of the public sphere in the English-speaking world. Foxe became one of the first inventors of the concept of an English public, a body he broadly defined to include

²⁵. For example, Francis Cogliano's recent work on anticatholicism in revolutionary New England fails to recognize the continuing influence of new anticatholic ideas from the mother country, after the original migration of the Puritans. His failure to examine the imperial context of New England antipopery in the eighteenth century has some serious consequences for his interpretation; for instance, he fails to realize that certain sources he cites to illustrate New Englanders' distinctive views on Rome were actually reprintings of contemporary British anticatholic works. Cogliano, No King, No Popery, 10-13.

English men and women of all social classes. The interest of this English public lay in avoiding the errors and persecutions of "popery". Almost any member of the English populace could potentially identify with Foxe's public, and could understand that this public's interest coincided with the interests of every non-Catholic individual in the country. Foxe's innovative vision of a public consisting of all English men and women successfully established itself among many thousands of readers partly because he had the backing of Elizabeth I's government, which sought to broaden its support by posing as the chief champion of the anticatholic public interest. In many ways, the publication of the Acts and Monuments, by creating a shared identity for large numbers of English men and women, anticipated by over a century some aspects of the development of a public sphere outside court circles, as described by Habermas. The concepts of the public and public interest introduced by the Acts and Monuments, however, were at the same time significantly different from the equivalent concepts associated with Habermas's bourgeois public sphere. Foxe defined the membership of his public more broadly, and the interests of that public more narrowly, than the later creators of the bourgeois public did. More importantly, Foxe portrayed public life in thoroughly negative terms, suggesting that, while his readers needed to be concerned about public affairs, such concern was a regrettable necessity.

After examining Foxe's Acts and Monuments and the origins of an anticatholic discourse in the public sphere, I have leaped forward to the years after the Glorious Revolution. Clearly, many writers in England and in the colonies published attacks on the Catholic Church during the years between the appearance of the Acts and Monuments and 1689. A study of how the anticatholic texts published in this period affected the development of the public sphere would no doubt be a worthwhile undertaking, but such a study, because of time and space constraints, forms no part of this dissertation. Instead, I have chosen a set of later sources that serves to demonstrate one of my essential

contentions, that anticatholicism provided a framework around which different groups could shape their own visions of "popery" and, by implication, of their own society. By focusing on one particular period, I have been able to study the relationship and interplay between three different strains of anticatholicism that were propagated simultaneously. All three strains belong to the period between the Glorious Revolution and the mid-eighteenth century; all three originated in the mother country and wielded great influence in the American colonies. Despite the leap of years, there is much continuity between Foxe's antipopery and the anticatholicism of these texts, for Foxe's influence endured well into the eighteenth, indeed even into the nineteenth century. The chapter on Foxe in this dissertation therefore not only explores the origins of a public sphere centered on antipopery, but also provides an essential introduction to the three chapters on anticatholicism after the Glorious Revolution.

One reason for choosing the period 1689-1763 as a special focus for the bulk of this dissertation is that these years coincide with the development in England and Britain of the bourgeois public sphere delineated by Habermas.²⁶ During these years, discussion of commerce and of the effects of commerce on society and on politics became well established on both sides of the Atlantic. The post-1689 anticatholic writings here studied also dealt with issues of commerce, politics, and society, for many discussions of "popery" became an important way of studying the relationship of economics, politics, and religion in contemporary European societies. By examining anticatholicism during the decades after the Glorious Revolution, I have been able to show how a public sphere centered on anticatholicism overlapped with the bourgeois public sphere, and thus relate this study more closely to Habermas's model of early modern development.

Chapter three examines the first of the three strains of post-

²⁶. Habermas, Public Sphere, 57-67.

Glorious Revolution anticatholicism that I have isolated, one developed by Gilbert Burnet and John Locke. Both men were intimately connected with the "moderate" Whigs, who dominated British politics after the Glorious Revolution. Burnet and Locke influenced later Whig spokesmen in England, and also influenced at least one group of colonists, members of the "court" faction in Massachusetts, who shared many political, religious, and economic goals with the moderate Whigs in Britain. These writers stressed the importance of the doctrine of infallibility as the foundation of Catholic thought and behavior, and argued that this doctrine enabled Catholics to believe themselves free from laws of reason and morality. Catholic societies, argued the British and American Protestants who wrote the documents examined in this chapter, were realms where the indulgence of appetite reigned supreme, and where the laws and traditions of the Church enabled individuals to pursue their own selfish ends, without regard to the general good. Such a characterization of "popery", I argue, enabled these writers to justify anticatholic war to British and Bay Colony readers who were suspicious of the effects of such warfare, particularly heavy taxation, growing central government power, and the enrichment of the commercial classes. Thus there arose an apparent paradox, whereby men connected with parties whose policies favored the wealthiest merchants in Britain and Massachusetts, vehemently denounced societies based on materialism and selfishness.

The second strain of anticatholicism that I examine (in chapter four) is what I have termed "popular anticatholicism": the anticatholic publications of authors who sought primarily to reach wide audiences, usually with the purpose of entertaining their readers, although religious, political, and economic messages also found their way into these texts. All of the writings I examine in this category originated in Great Britain, but were either republished in or directly imported into the colonies, so that they reached English-speaking Protestants across the Empire. These authors demonstrate the enduring influence of

Foxe and of Foxe's general emphasis on the violence and cruelty of the Catholic Church. These works also contain clear echoes of the ideas stressed by Burnet, Locke, and their adherents, especially the theme of "popish" licentiousness. In these anticatholic publications, however, themes of cruelty and license are made to serve a new purpose. These lurid tales of murder, seduction, and intrigue were clearly expected to amuse, titillate, or satisfy the fantasies of readers. The entertaining aspects of these works does not mean they were not true attacks on the Church of Rome, for clear, even heavy-handed moral messages accompanied the lighter material. However, the significance of these anticatholic works lies not in any particular political message that their authors were attempting to publicize (the authors, even when their names are known, came from a variety of political backgrounds). Rather, these works are interesting because they bridged the formal discourse on economic, religious, and political issues conducted by the bourgeoisie, and the more sensational narratives favored by the less educated, or the less seriously-minded. The great variety of themes associated with "popery" meant that anticatholic texts were peculiarly able to embrace subjects that contravened canons of propriety and good taste, while simultaneously posing as serious discussions of social, moral, and political evils. These anticatholic works constitute one important way in which the public sphere was expanded, in the content of its discourse and in its readership, during the eighteenth century.

The third strain of antipopery that I examine was developed by opposition politicians in Britain, specifically writers who belonged to the "Real Whig" and "patriot" camps. These men objected to many of the policies of the ruling or "moderate" Whigs, especially those policies that enriched the commercial elite and threatened the dominance of the landed gentry. These British writers, like those of the previous chapter, were men whose works were influential in the colonies, where many of these texts were reprinted. The anticatholicism of these writers displays an evolution over the early and mid-eighteenth century.

At first, such authors as John Trenchard and Thomas Gordon, like Burnet and Locke, identified "popery" as a religion that fostered rampant materialism and selfishness. Unlike the moderate Whigs, however, Trenchard and Gordon used this theme to attack the ruling elite in Britain, suggesting that values equivalent to those of "popery" were making headway in the nation's most powerful circles. Britain, they warned, would inevitably decline if addiction to material luxury and selfishness prevailed over self-disciplined public service.

Over time, this opposition rhetoric changed. Later writers such as Viscount Bolingbroke, James Burgh, and John Brown deplored the addiction to luxury and self-interest that was widespread among members of the political and social establishment, but they abandoned the idea that such behaviors would inevitably lead to decline. Looking at the power and endurance of the contemporary Catholic world, especially France, these authors argued that, contrary to traditional understanding, selfishness and luxury could actually stimulate a nation to achieve and sustain great power. To survive against such wealthy, powerful enemies, Britain also had to pursue wealth, however corrupting such wealth might prove. Given the prospect of a thoroughly corrupted and unreformable public life, the only hope for the survival of virtue was in the private sphere, whose good principles might occasionally influence even a degenerate public world. "Popery" thus served these later real Whig and patriot authors as a model for a society which survived and even grew strong under the dominance of an ethic of self-seeking. Anticatholicism thus helped these men to arrive at the formulation of a new ideal vision for the British Empire, one which significantly, if reluctantly, broke with traditional shibboleths, such as the importance of a stable social order, and of the need for the public good to take precedence over private interests.

One striking feature that emerges from all the strains of anticatholicism examined in this study is the ambiguous relationship between the Catholic world and English or British Protestant identity.

On the one hand, the writers I have examined hold up "popish" societies as a negative model that displays characteristics opposite to those that prevail in the English-speaking world. Yet on the other hand, all these authors couch their denunciation of Catholicism as admonitions to their readers: these men use the Catholic world to supply a second identity that English-speaking Protestants might acquire if they do not behave in certain, recommended ways. The distinction between "popery" and English, British, or colonial Protestantism is far from absolute, for all these writers suggest situations in which the Catholic "Other" and the Anglo-American "Self" might merge.

In the Acts and Monuments, Foxe argues that England has long been under the atrocious and violent rule of Catholic authorities, and he warns that such rule might well return in the future. Far from positing a stark contrast, as Haller argues, between an English, Protestant and a foreign, Catholic identity, Foxe makes it clear that Englishmen normally had to contend with "popery" at home, in their own institutions of government, law, and church. Burnet and the authors considered in chapter three outlined a different, but still ambiguous set of identities for their readers. On the one hand, they attacked the license that dominated Catholic societies, where supposedly infallible pronouncements, rather than reason, determined truth. These attacks were certainly meant to suggest that English and colonial Protestants should eschew such "popish" behavior, and live moderate, self-restrained lives. At the same time, since Catholic infallibility and license were rooted in a universal human psychology, these writers made it clear that English-speaking Protestants could potentially end up mired in the same errors and immoral behavior as Catholics. If such indeed were to be the fate of Protestants in the British Empire, then the Catholic "Other", delineated at length by these authors, would be found at home.

The authors of popular anticatholic tracts generated an ambiguous identity in a rather different manner. Their tales of violence and lust in Catholic countries were in part meant as descriptions of behaviors

that Anglo-American Protestants should abhor. Yet these narratives were also meant to be enjoyed; and, in midst of the pleasure generated by such accounts, the reader vicariously shared in the evil appetites of his nation's and religion's foes. The Catholic "Other" was thus at once repellant and attractive, a negative image and a reflection of the English-speaking Protestant.

Finally, the real Whig and "patriot" authors, in their attacks upon "popery" at home, simultaneously preached a message about what the British Empire ideally should be, while emphasizing how much the Empire had become like its "popish" foe. As the eighteenth century wore on, and writers in these opposition factions became less and less convinced about the possibility of real reform, the identities they constructed for their readers became increasingly equivocal. Readers of these later works might well identify themselves with the portrait of an actual, decadent nation, drawn in great detail, rather than with the more nebulous picture of past, lost virtue. When mid-century writers began to argue that even with a corrupted public sphere, the British Empire might achieve a great future, then the nature of the identity urged by these writers became confused, indeed.

The three strains of post-Glorious Revolution antipopery examined in chapters three to five, along with the anticatholicism of Foxe, do not, of course, represent all the expressions of anticatholic feeling that appeared in English during the early modern period. I have not covered all the possible variants of anticatholicism that appeared in the 1689-1763 period, and have not touched the rich output of anticatholic works that appeared between the time of Foxe and the Glorious Revolution. This dissertation is not meant to be a comprehensive account of the history of anticatholic rhetoric in the English-speaking world, but rather a preliminary study that develops certain approaches to the subject of antipopery. I hope that this initial foray will demonstrate the value of treating anticatholicism as a type of public discourse employed by competing interest groups in the

English and British Empires. So treated, anticatholicism can yield important insights into the different ideological camps within the Empire, and into the relationships between them. I hope, too, that this study suggests a new way in which anticatholicism's effect on British and colonial development can be considered: rather than regarding antipopery as a universal set of ideas that helped unite Britain, the Empire as a whole, or the American revolutionaries, historians might better see the hatred of the Catholic Church as the source of a series of uncertain identities, whose internal contradictions helped to spur historical change.

CHAPTER II

JOHN FOXE AND THE ORIGINS OF THE ANTICATHOLIC PUBLIC SPHERE

Although many attacks on the Church of Rome were published between the time of Henry VIII's break with Rome and the reign of Elizabeth I, none was so widely read, or so enduringly influential, as John Foxe's Acts and Monuments. That work propagated the concept of an English public, locked in conflict with the Catholic Church. Since no other English-language text had before this time defined the identity and interests of the English nation to so large a readership, the Acts and Monuments became a founding work of the public sphere in the English-speaking world. Foxe's English public was not only defined by its contest with "popery", but was also made up largely of obscure, private men and women who faced the powerful, bureaucratic institutions of church and state. Both ingredients of Foxe's portrait of public life, the conflict between Protestant and Catholic and the tension between private individuals and governing authority, derived in large part from the personal experience and political context in which Foxe wrote the Acts and Monuments. An account of the author's life and times therefore proceeds and provides the background for my analysis of how Foxe defined a public identity for his readers.

1. The Life and Times of John Foxe

John Foxe was born in Boston, Lincolnshire in 1517, to a moderately prosperous family. His pious and studious nature attracted the attention of John Hawarden, the Principal of Brasenose College, Oxford, who happened also to be rector of a parish just outside Boston.

With Hawarden's support, Foxe entered Brasenose in 1534, receiving his bachelor's degree three years later. In 1538, still in Oxford, Foxe witnessed the burning of the heretic William Cowbridge, an event which very likely sparked Foxe's lifelong aversion to capital punishment for religious offenses of any kind.¹ Foxe was at least outwardly a Henrician Catholic at this stage of his life, for in 1539 he was awarded a fellowship at Magdalen College, a post that would not have been granted to anyone suspected of Protestant leanings. Soon after this date, however, Foxe became attracted to the Protestant ideas of certain friends, among them Hugh Latimer, whom he had met at the university, and his long conflict with the religious establishment began.²

Foxe's conversion to the reformed faith came only after considerable inward struggle. He fell into the habit of walking at night in a grove near Magdalen, where with "sighs and groans and tears" he gave vent to his private feelings. His troubled nighttime walking came to the notice of the authorities, who began to suspect Foxe's orthodoxy. Foxe dissembled when questioned, and successfully completed his Master of Arts degree in 1545, but he felt unable to accept ordination as a priest, the inevitable next step if he was to continue at Magdalen. Foxe therefore resigned his fellowship and took a post as tutor in the household of a Protestant sympathizer, William Lucy, marrying Agnes Randall, a fellow member of Lucy's household, in 1547. However, Foxe was under increasing danger of being brought before the authorities for questioning about his beliefs, and in 1547 he had to leave Lucy's employment, and keep moving from one friend's house to another, in order to avoid detection.³

Foxe's fortunes improved with the accession of Edward VI. The

¹. J. F. Mozley, John Foxe and his Book (New York: Macmillan, 1940), 12, 14-17, 21-22.

². Warren W. Wooden, John Foxe (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1983), 2.

³. Mozley, Foxe and his Book, 22-28.

government was now encouraging Protestant reform, and Foxe was able to hold a post as tutor without fear of persecution. Foxe found employment with the duchess of Richmond, a convinced Lutheran, who set Foxe to teaching her niece and two nephews, among whom was Thomas, heir to the duchy of Norfolk, and later one of Foxe's most important friends and patrons. While employed by the duchess, Foxe met a number of other Protestants, including John Bale, whose ideas on history and the millennium came to have a profound influence on Foxe's Acts and Monuments. Nicholas Ridley ordained Foxe deacon in 1550, and for a short period of his life, Foxe enjoyed the unqualified approval and support of the ecclesiastical establishment.⁴

With the accession of Mary in 1553, Foxe and his fellow Protestants fell from favor into danger. Foxe's pupils were removed from the duchess of Richmond's household, and placed with good Catholics to ensure their orthodoxy. Thomas, Foxe's favorite student, was put in the household of Stephen Gardiner, bishop of Winchester, and Chancellor to Queen Mary. Foxe considered immediate flight to the Continent, but on Thomas's urging, he stayed in England and continued to visit his former pupil in secret, even though such visits brought him inside Bishop Gardiner's residence. On one such visit, in 1554, Gardiner entered the room where Thomas and Foxe were engaged in conversation. Foxe pretended to be Thomas's physician, and escaped from the bishop's home, but Gardiner was suspicious, and Foxe felt it unsafe to remain in England any longer. According to an account later written by Foxe's son, Simeon, who presumably had heard the story from his father, Foxe and his wife escaped from England under the very noses of agents sent after Foxe by Gardiner.⁵ John and Simeon Foxe attributed this lucky escape to God's providence; a more likely explanation is that Gardiner ordered his agents to let Foxe leave, for the bishop wanted all stubborn

⁴. Ibid., 29-30.

⁵. Wooden, John Foxe, 5-6.

Protestants to flee the country, to save the government the embarrassment of bringing them to trial.⁶

Foxe joined other exiles in Frankfurt, where he became involved in a controversy over what form of liturgy the exile community should adopt. The majority, led by Richard Coxe, desired to retain the Prayer Book that the Church of England had adopted in 1552. A minority, headed by John Knox, demanded that the exiles embrace a pure Calvinist liturgy, based on the rites then in use at Geneva. Foxe did not play a prominent role in these disputes, but when he did participate he sided with Knox. When Knox was expelled in 1555, Foxe also left Frankfurt, finally settling at Basel.⁷ There, Foxe supported himself and his family by working as a proof-reader for the printers John Froben and John Oporinus, though he also received financial support from some of the wealthier members of the English exile community.⁸

When Foxe first settled in Basel, the outlook for English Protestantism was bleak. One challenge the exiles faced was the passivity of the bulk of the English clergy and people. Mary had successfully restored first the Henrician Church, during 1553 and early 1554, and then the authority of the Pope, in January 1555. Few Englishmen relished the idea of seeing papal authority restored, but at the same time, few were committed Protestants, and the rituals, festivals, and images of the Catholic tradition still enjoyed great popularity. The most important factor working in Mary's favor was that virtually all of her subjects, whether Catholic, Henrician, or Protestant by inclination, accepted the changes she imposed because of their respect for the law, which gave the queen both the right to rule, and the right to establish whatever form of church she desired.⁹ Thanks

⁶. David Loades, The Mid-Tudor Crisis, 1545-1565 (New York: St. Martin's, 1992), 153.

⁷. Mozley, Foxe and his Book, 45-50.

⁸. Wooden, John Foxe, 5-6.

⁹. Loades, Mid-Tudor Crisis, 15.

to this respect for the law, the duke of Northumberland and Lady Jane Grey had failed to win significant support, even from Protestant London, in their bid to supplant Mary at the start of her reign.¹⁰ The Protestant bishops of the Edwardian Church made no attempt to lead a resistance to Mary, even though many of them did refuse to conform to her restored Catholic church. Although 100 members of the clergy fled abroad, and a further 30 were burned for stubborn adherence to Protestantism, the vast majority of the clergy quietly conformed, at least outwardly, to the Marian settlement.¹¹ Mary was able to impose her will on her subjects in large part because she accepted, albeit unwillingly, the need to use Parliamentary statute to restore papal authority in England. Rather than treating, as was her first inclination, the reformation legislation of her father's and brother's reigns as ultra vires and therefore of no authority, Mary agreed that each stage in the restoration of Catholic ritual and papal power should be achieved by repealing previous, and enacting new statutes. She thus harnessed her subjects' respect for statute law to her religious program, and defused much potential resistance.¹² Thus, chances of a mass uprising in favor of either Edwardian or Genevan Protestantism were virtually non-existent.

If the exiles could hope for little from the general public or the clergy, their expectations of support from the nation's political leaders in Parliament were no better. Although Protestant propagandists and historians later represented Mary's Parliaments as a series of pitched battles between faithful Protestants and timid or corrupt lackeys of the court, the reality was very different.¹³ On rare occasions there was some expression of opposition to Mary's legislative

¹⁰. Ibid., 145-146; Jennifer Loach, Parliament and the Crown in the Reign of Mary Tudor (New York: Oxford University, 1986), 7.

¹¹. Loades, Mid-Tudor Crisis, 174.

¹². Ibid., 50, 146-148.

¹³. Ibid., 49.

program on religious grounds, as when someone threw into the Commons' meeting place a dog whose head had been tonsured like a Catholic priest's.¹⁴ In general, however, most members of Parliament were willing to accept the monarch's lead on religion, and "it would be a mistake to see either House as an arena which was regularly used for the gladiatorial combats of politics."¹⁵ Recent research has disproved earlier assertions that the practice of division in the Commons originated with contentious religious debates in Mary's reign, and that there were unusually low attendance rates in both Lords and Commons, reflecting a general hostility to Marian reforms.¹⁶ Nor was parliamentary compliance the result of the court's manipulation or bribery of members: no Tudor monarch could control more than a small proportion of seats in the Commons, and under Mary, "the crown.... seems to have exploited only rarely the managerial devices available to it."¹⁷ The exiles could not look to Parliament as the champion of the Protestant interest, or to the English constitution as a safeguard against "popish" tyranny.

While England's compliance with Mary's religious program offered Foxe and the other exiles little hope of a Protestant restoration, other, non-religious issues did make Mary's government increasingly unpopular with many of her subjects. One major question that troubled politically influential Englishmen was the fear that the restoration of Catholicism might involve the return of confiscated monastic and chantry property to the Church: "Mary's council passed almost every measure of importance which it brought to parliament, and when it failed the issue was invariably one of property rather than policy or ideology."¹⁸ Even

¹⁴. Loach, Parliament and Crown, 59.

¹⁵. Loades, Mid-Tudor Crisis, 53-54.

¹⁶. Loach, Parliament and Crown, 46-50, 55-59.

¹⁷. Ibid., 21; Loades, Mid-Tudor Crisis, 53.

¹⁸. Loades, Mid-Tudor Crisis, 49.

the Catholic aristocracy and gentry were concerned about the possibility that purchasers of confiscated church lands might lose their property, for Catholics had enjoyed the benefits of the confiscation to the same degree as Protestants.¹⁹ Mary came to the throne believing that the dissolution of the monasteries and chantries had been illegal, and that by right, all former ecclesiastical property should be returned to the Church without compensation to lay owners. However, her advisors in England, her cousin, the emperor Charles V, and her husband, Philip all persuaded her against so politically disastrous a policy. Mary agreed to let Parliament include statutory protections for property holders among the conditions it imposed on the restoration of papal rule. Meanwhile, Charles and Philip used their influence at Rome to obtain from Pope Julius III a dispensation for holders of confiscated church property.²⁰ Satisfied that their lands were safe, the Lords and Commons accepted both the reconciliation with Rome, and the reestablishment of ecclesiastical courts under the papal legate, Cardinal Reginald Pole, early in 1555.

The property question, however, continued to raise its head over the rest of Mary's reign. Julius III's dispensation was not binding on his successors, and when Paul V succeeded Julius in 1555, the new Pope came close to revoking his predecessor's grant. Although the Hapsburgs persuaded Paul to renew the dispensation, it was clear that the status of confiscated ecclesiastical property was precarious.²¹ Further difficulty arose in the last two years of Mary's reign, because of a gathering crisis in relations between England's Catholic monarchs and the Papacy, an antagonism that endangered England's ability to obtain favors from Rome. This crisis stemmed in part from a war between Philip and Pope Paul over Italian lands, and in part from ideological

¹⁹. Loach, Parliament and Crown, 101.

²⁰. Loades, Mid-Tudor Crisis, 147-148; Loades, Mary Tudor: A Life (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1989), 235-237.

²¹. Loades, Mary Tudor, 238-241.

differences between supporters of the Counter-Reformation, including Pope Paul, and the humanist leaders of English Catholicism, especially Cardinal Pole.²² A second problem was that the enactment of parliamentary statutes to protect church property holders increasingly seemed to provide insufficient legal protection. The supremacy of statute and common law over canon law depended on the doctrine of royal supremacy in the church. Since Mary had persuaded Parliament to put an end to royal supremacy, canon law arguably had more force than parliamentary statute, giving the Pope the right to order the restoration of church property at any time. Continuing concern over property undermined the aristocracy's and gentry's support for Marian Catholicism, and played into the hands of the committed Protestant minority in England and abroad.²³

Xenophobia also played an important role in alienating many Englishmen from Mary, and opening the way for a Protestant restoration. Mary's marriage to Philip was unpopular with Parliament and the country, despite the limitations on Philip's power incorporated in the marriage treaty. English hatred of the Spanish was clear from street brawls between Londoners and members of Philip's entourage, from innkeepers' refusal to accommodate Spaniards, and from bold thefts of Spanish property that went unpunished by local magistrates.²⁴ Even before Philip's arrival, news of the marriage had provoked the most serious challenge faced by Mary, the rebellion by Sir Thomas Wyatt of January-February 1554. During this uprising, London militia units sent against Wyatt joined him, and a general desertion of the London populace to the rebels was averted only by Mary's bold and courageous address to Londoners at the Guildhall, when she persuaded them to remain loyal to her regime. Wyatt's rebellion was not seeking to reinstate

²². Ibid., 290-291.

²³. John Guy, Tudor England (New York: Oxford University, 1990), 264.

²⁴. Loades, Mary Tudor, 229-231.

Protestantism, and the impetus behind it was primarily xenophobia, not anticatholicism.²⁵ The rebellion acquired Protestant overtones after it had run its course, thanks to Mary's Chancellor, Stephen Gardiner, who instituted a vigorous propaganda campaign, aimed at presenting Wyatt and his followers as heretics. The unintended result of this campaign was that Englishmen who had hitherto seen Protestantism as a foreign import from Germany and Switzerland, began to identify the reformed religion with opposition to foreign rule.²⁶ Further identification between "popery" and foreign domination came near the end of Mary's reign, when England lost Calais, its last possession in France, in a war that Philip had urged on England.²⁷ It is important not to exaggerate the hostility of the English to Spain: Philip was cheered by crowds when the rumor spread that Mary was pregnant, since the succession seemed more secure, and even the war against France initially stirred some enthusiasm among Protestant noblemen, who hoped for jobs and plunder from an alliance with powerful Spain.²⁸ However, by the time of Mary's death in 1558, English dislike of the queen's pro-Spanish tendencies had sapped enthusiasm for Mary and for her church.²⁹

Although concern over ecclesiastical property and anti-Spanish feeling were the most important reasons for English disillusionment with Mary, the burning of 275 Protestants also inflicted some damage on the government's popularity. Burning as a punishment for heresy was of course not new, nor had such executions ceased with the Reformation. Henry VIII had burned Protestant heretics, and under Edward VI

²⁵. Ibid., 211-215.

²⁶. Loades, Mid-Tudor Crisis, 149, 187-188.

²⁷. Loades, Mary Tudor, 299-301.

²⁸. Ibid., 232, 275-281.

²⁹. Ibid., 209; Loades, Mid-Tudor Crisis, 187-189; Guy, Tudor England, 250.

Anabaptists had met the same fate.³⁰ Under Mary, Parliament restored the heresy laws against Protestants at the end of 1554 with no opposition in the Lords, and only minor debates in the Commons.³¹ The social and political evils of heresy made the burning of heretics quite acceptable to the ruling classes. What made Mary's burnings unpopular was their scale. Originally, Gardiner had hoped that most convicted Protestants would quail before the stake, and would either flee into exile abroad, ridding the country of religious dissenters, or would publicly recant, providing the government with a propaganda victory.³² Memory of the persecution of the Lollards by pre-Reformation regimes supported Gardiner's assumption that few men would face death by burning for the sake of their beliefs; only a handful of crazed or fanatic individuals would stand firm, and the burning of a few recalcitrants would offend nobody. However, Gardiner found the Edwardian Protestants far more stubborn than the Lollards had been. Although only a minority of Englishmen were committed to the reformed faith, that minority, unlike the Lollards, was well organized into congregations who could stiffen the morale of individual members. Printed devotional and anticatholic literature also helped to make these scattered congregations feel more closely in contact with the wider Protestant world.³³ The unexpected stubbornness of the heretics turned into a disaster for Mary and her advisors. Although some did recant, many stood firm and went to the stake. Gardiner realized, by the summer of 1555, that the persecution was serving as Protestant rather than Catholic propaganda, and he wished instead to impose civil penalties on the heretics. Mary and Pole, however, saw no reason why the traditional penalties should be relaxed, and, since the queen and the legate had all

³⁰. Mozley, Foxe and his Book, 21-22, 86-89.

³¹. Loach, Parliament and Crown, 115.

³². Haller, Elect Nation, 27.

³³. Loades, Mid-Tudor Crisis, 178-179.

the necessary legal machinery in place, they simply continued with what had clearly become an ill-advised policy.³⁴ Since most of the burnings were concentrated in a few areas where Protestants were especially numerous, particularly London, Kent, and East Anglia, the sheer quantity of deaths by burning came to offend many who had no inclination towards Protestant beliefs. By 1557, sheriffs and other local officials in the heavily affected areas were dragging their feet over bringing heretics to justice, and there were popular protests at some of the burnings.³⁵ For the Protestants, the burnings were a boon. Not only did the brave resistance of the martyrs strengthen Protestants' belief in the worth of their cause, but the non-Protestant majority became sufficiently disgusted with the persecution to look upon the Protestants with more respect and sympathy than had previously been the case.³⁶ Even those Englishmen who remained loyal to Catholicism after Mary's death came to reject the burnings, as both inhumane and impolitic.³⁷

The exiles, looking for ways to discredit Mary's regime, seized the fortuitous opportunity presented by the burnings. Naturally, too, they took a great interest in what was happening to fellow Protestants. By the end of 1555, the exiles had turned their Rhineland cities into bases for anti-Marian propaganda. Edmund Grindal became the chief collector of information about the burnings in England, and he planned a large-scale work that would relate in detail every martyrdom that had occurred under the Catholic queen. Grindal believed this work should be in English, so that it could serve the purpose of propaganda.³⁸ Foxe got involved in this project because he had already researched and written a Latin martyrology, the Commentarii rerum in ecclesia gestarum,

³⁴. Loades, Mary Tudor, 324.

³⁵. Ibid., 305.

³⁶. Loades, Mid-Tudor Crisis, 153.

³⁷. John Bossy, The English Catholic Community (New York: Oxford University, 1976), 21.

³⁸. Wooden, John Foxe, 8-9.

published in Strasbourg in 1554. In this work Foxe examined chiefly English but also some Continental figures who had suffered at the hands of the Catholic Church, from the time of Wycliffe until the death of Savonarola.³⁹ Foxe wished to extend his Latin work to include the Marian martyrs, and he received both information and financial support from Grindal, who envisaged Foxe's Latin work as a useful companion to the English martyrology that Grindal was planning. Grindal's English martyrology was unfinished when the exiles returned to England, but Foxe succeeded in publishing an updated version of his Commentarii, including much information about the Marian persecutions. This work, published in Basel early in 1559 before Foxe left for England, was also in Latin, but it served as the basis for the later Acts and Monuments.⁴⁰

Foxe and the other exiles were therefore prepared, by the time of Mary's death, to present their own version of Catholic misrule, a version that would emphasize the martyrdoms. If their attitudes to Mary were clearly articulated, however, their relationship with the new queen was less certain. Elizabeth inherited a kingdom in which respect for the monarchy and for other institutions of government was strong, while religious convictions were malleable. The vast majority of Englishmen in 1558 were neither Roman Catholic nor Protestant, and were willing to accept the government's lead in religion, just as they had done in 1553.⁴¹ Elizabeth, like Mary, was prepared to use Parliament to bring about religious change, in order to ensure an orderly transition. Although heresy trials stopped abruptly when Elizabeth came to the throne, she also commanded adherence to Marian rites, and banned preaching until Parliament could be summoned.⁴² When Parliament met in 1559, Elizabeth was "largely free to choose her own way" in religious

³⁹. Ibid., 6.

⁴⁰. Ibid., 9.

⁴¹. Loades, Mid-Tudor Crisis, 4-5, 182.

⁴². Guy, Tudor England, 258.

matters, despite opposition from Mary's bishops, and pressure from Protestants in London.⁴³ Elizabeth's preferences were for an episcopal church that used Edwardian rites, but with the priests wearing vestments, and the congregations bowing and kneeling at appropriate points in the liturgy. On altars and images she was flexible, allowing congregations to decide for themselves. She disapproved of clerical marriage, though the shortage of unmarried Protestant clergy forced her to make exceptions on this point, also.⁴⁴ Most of all she wanted a church that was subservient to the government, and that could be pressured to give up further ecclesiastical property to improve the crown's finances.⁴⁵ All of this Elizabeth was able to get from Parliament in 1559, without help from the exiles or other hard-line Protestants.⁴⁶

Elizabeth's religious preferences strained her relationship with the exiles after their return. The refusal of all but one of the Marian bishops to take the Oath of Supremacy forced the queen to turn to the Edwardian clergy as the only other experienced church leaders, but Elizabeth "refused to adjust the religious settlement even in detail" in order to satisfy the hopes of those who favored either the Edwardian or Genevan churches. The exiles who were given ecclesiastical office found themselves forced to implement royal policy, or to suffer the fate of Grindal, the most outspoken of the former exiles, who found his functions as archbishop of Canterbury suspended in 1577 because of his refusal to cooperate with the government's demands.⁴⁷ One common cause of friction was the requirement that the clergy wear surplices during services, a practice that seemed "popish" to the exiles. In 1566,

⁴³. Ibid., 250-251; Loades, Mid-Tudor Crisis, 158-159.

⁴⁴. Guy, Tudor England, 252.

⁴⁵. Ibid., 261-263.

⁴⁶. Ibid., 259.

⁴⁷. Ibid., 290-291, 306-307; Loades, Mid-Tudor Crisis, 56.

Elizabeth's first archbishop of Canterbury, the non-exile Matthew Parker, ordered all ministers in his province to wear appropriate vestments, or lose their livings. Several refused, and were deprived, despite the shortage of able, educated clergy.⁴⁸ Elizabeth also attempted to control the content of sermons, forbidding those which attacked Catholic elements still remaining in the Church of England, and encouraging the use of standard homilies, issued by church authorities.⁴⁹ The government's opposition to the exiles' demands, and its crack-down on any disobedience, turned some of the exiles and their spiritual heirs into the beginnings of a distinct, Puritan faction by the 1580s.⁵⁰

The friction between the queen and the more extreme Protestants was kept in check in large part because of the increasing threat from their common enemy, the Catholic church. Initially, that threat had seemed minor. Philip had hopes of marrying Elizabeth, or at least of keeping her as a firm ally in his rivalry with France. For Philip, a Protestant Elizabeth on the English throne was preferable to a Catholic Mary, Queen of Scots, the next heir, and a client of the French. Once the Protestant uprising in the Netherlands began, in 1567, Philip had further reason for English friendship, since he hoped to protect the sea route between Spain and his rebellious northern provinces. For the first twelve years of Elizabeth's reign, Philip, whose influence in Rome had been restored with the death of Paul IV in 1559, dissuaded the papacy from excommunicating Elizabeth.⁵¹ Lacking papal leadership, Catholics in England mounted little resistance to Elizabeth's reformation. Mary's bishops refused the Oath of Supremacy and were simply replaced, only 200 clergy were deprived for refusing to accept

⁴⁸. Mozley, Foxe and his Book, 73-74.

⁴⁹. Ray, American Opinion of Catholicism, 16.

⁵⁰. Guy, Tudor England, 306-307.

⁵¹. Ibid., 260.

the new establishment on religious grounds, and the 100 or more academics who found the prospect of a return to Protestantism intolerable went into a comfortable and non-militant exile, chiefly at the University of Louvain.⁵² Some of the Marian clergy continued to celebrate clandestine masses, but Elizabeth turned a blind eye, even rejecting proposed legislation to force her subjects to take communion in Anglican Churches, lest secret Catholics be forced into open confrontation with the government.⁵³

The relatively good relations between Elizabeth and the Catholic world changed dramatically after the queen's first decade on the throne. In 1569 Foxe's former pupil and current patron, Thomas, now duke of Norfolk, conspired to marry Mary, Queen of Scots, who had fled to England and become Elizabeth's prisoner the previous year. Norfolk's co-conspirators were ill-assorted. Among them were Protestant courtiers, who hoped that such a marriage would secure for the kingdom a future free of Catholic and foreign domination, by providing the heir to the English throne with a Protestant, English husband. Norfolk also drew support from the Catholic nobility of the north, particularly the Percy and Neville families, who hoped to improve the position of Catholics by promoting the candidacy of the Scottish queen. Elizabeth discovered the plot, and placed Norfolk in the Tower, but the northern Catholic nobles felt that they had compromised themselves too much to hope for forgiveness, and took what seemed the safer course, that of rebellion. Elizabeth was ruthless in her response. She suppressed the uprising, executed the rebellion's leaders, and ordered that lesser participants in the rising be hanged in every village to warn the populace against future disloyalty.⁵⁴

The Northern Rising was the first of many events that created an

⁵². Ibid., 293; Loades, Mid-Tudor Crisis, 174-175; Bossy, English Catholic Community, 12-13.

⁵³. Guy, Tudor England, 295-301; Loades, Mid-Tudor Crisis, 181.

⁵⁴. Guy, Tudor England, 274-275.

association between Catholicism and treason in Elizabeth's and other Protestants' minds. In 1570 Pope Pius V finally excommunicated Elizabeth in the bull Regnans in excelsis, an action precipitated in part by a belated papal desire to give encouragement to the northern rebels, and in part by Philip II's new conviction that he might be more successful against the Protestant rebels of the Netherlands with Mary of Scotland (who was no longer attached to the French interest), instead of Elizabeth, on the throne. In 1571 Philip plotted with Norfolk and others to land 6,000 Spanish troops in England to place Mary on the English throne. This "Ridolfi Plot", so named after the Italian banker who was to finance the military operation, infuriated the Parliament that met in that same year. With Elizabeth's support, legislation was passed that tightened the definition of treason, that forbade Catholics to receive or publish papal documents, and that confiscated the estates of all Catholics in exile. News of the treacherous "Massacre of St. Bartholomew's Eve", when some 13,000 Huguenots were killed by French Catholics over a three-week period in August and September, 1572, confirmed Englishmen in their terror of Catholic conspiracy.⁵⁵

A new movement within English Catholicism added to the English government's concern about the "popish" threat. Initially, English Catholics seemed to accept passively the return of Protestantism, wanting only to worship in secret. During the 1560s, Elizabeth could safely assume that Catholicism would dwindle to nothing as those members of the Marian church who remained loyal to the old faith aged and died. By 1570, however, a new generation of ardent Catholics was appearing. Men like Edmund Campion and Robert Parsons were not content to let Catholicism die a natural death, but were determined to promote missionary work in England that would sustain existing Catholics and make new converts. These energetic proselytizers entered and took over two important centers of English Catholicism on the Continent, the

⁵⁵. Ibid., 277-278, 298.

colleges at Douai, in the Netherlands, and at Rome during the 1570s. Under their influence, these institutions became, in part, training centers for Jesuits and other representatives of the Counter-Reformation, who, from 1574 onwards, returned to England with the ultimate goal of restoring their homeland to the Catholic Church.⁵⁶ What was particularly alarming about these new missionaries was that they were new converts to Catholicism, not former members of the Marian Church. Appalled by the low status of the clergy and by the lack of spiritual life in Elizabeth's Church of England, these new Catholics were, like the Puritans, a movement originating inside the Church of England. Their vision for a restored Catholic Church was mildly revolutionary: Parsons called for a total reorganization of dioceses, for a tax on former ecclesiastical property, and for representation for the lower clergy in the House of Commons.⁵⁷ With hindsight, it is easy to see that the threat of these missionaries to England or to Protestantism was never very great. Ultimately, they did less to keep Catholicism alive than did the Marian clergy, many of whom continued to perform Catholic rites illegally. Moreover, the new missionaries were opposed by many of the Catholic aristocracy and gentry in England, who found the newcomers' proposals for the future English Catholic church offensive.⁵⁸ Yet in the 1570s, this new, vigorous movement within English Catholicism, coupled with the foreign Catholic threat, made Elizabeth take the idea of Catholic conspiracy very seriously indeed.

The queen used the dangerous foreign situation that she faced to promote an image of herself as a thoroughly English monarch, and to associate the Church of England with the nation in her subjects' minds. In part, the connection between Elizabeth, England, and Protestantism had already been forged by Mary's Spanish marriage, and by Gardiner's

⁵⁶. Bossy, English Catholic Community, 18, 25-26.

⁵⁷. Ibid., 15-16, 21-22.

⁵⁸. Ibid., 32-33; Guy, Tudor England, 300.

efforts to brand Wyatt's anti-Spanish rebels as Protestant heretics.⁵⁹ Elizabeth and her closest advisor, William Cecil, built on this fortuitous inheritance by launching the biggest propaganda campaign yet seen in England.⁶⁰ They presented Mary's rule in the worst possible light: they claimed, with no basis in truth, that she had intended to hand England over to Philip's sole control, and that she had bankrupted the government in order to lavish wealth upon the Catholic Church.⁶¹ Elizabeth and her council made use of traditional means of publicity, such as masques and tournaments that presented, in allegorical form, the message that Elizabeth had saved the English Church from foreign, Catholic rule. The stage also served as an important outlet for the court's propaganda, with several members of the council, as well as the queen, employing their own troupes of players who presented their productions to the people of London in England's first permanent theaters, and who went on tour so that the provinces, too, would hear about the glories of the queen who reigned over them.⁶²

While Elizabeth promoted her own propaganda, she also tried to control the publicity of rival messages by requiring licenses for preaching, by retaining all of Mary's censorship measures, and by allowing no printing presses, except for those at Oxford and Cambridge, outside London. The bishops were responsible for licensing preachers, while the Stationers' Company, the archbishop of Canterbury, and the bishop of London were given the tasks of policing the printers and licensing all publications.⁶³ Even so, groups like the extreme Protestants, whose agendas were not the same as the court's, managed to

⁵⁹. Loades, Mid-Tudor Crisis, 160, 189-190.

⁶⁰. R. Malcolm Smuts, Court Culture and the Origins of a Royalist Tradition in Early Stuart England (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 1987), 18-21.

⁶¹. Loades, Mid-Tudor Crisis, 51, 68.

⁶². Guy, Tudor England, 427-431.

⁶³. Ibid., 416.

broadcast their ideas both orally and in print. Elizabeth faced chronic financial problems, and could not afford all the publicity that the Catholic threat seemed to warrant. The government therefore relied on individuals outside court circles to promote the theme of Protestant nationalism, because they would do so at no expense to the treasury.⁶⁴ The Marian exiles and their protegés were eager to serve as carriers of the anticatholic message, and Elizabeth gave them permission to preach and print, although they also frequently took the opportunity to spread Calvinist ideas on the liturgy, vestments, and salvation.

This awkward alliance between the Elizabethan Church and the extremists had an interesting effect: the former exiles failed to persuade the great majority of Englishmen about the virtues of Bible reading and predestination, but they did succeed in disillusioning the laity with many of the Church of England's "popish" elements, especially the cult of saints, which had initially formed a part of the Elizabethan Church. As a result, Englishmen became strongly anticatholic without necessarily acquiring firm, Protestant convictions. During most of Elizabeth's reign, there was a decline in religious ardor: a lack of bequests to the church, the failure to build new churches or to keep old ones in repair, increasing disputes over tithes, and a lack of willingness to serve as churchwardens demonstrate falling enthusiasm for a church whose medieval survivals had been ruthlessly exposed as frauds. While attendance at church fell off, places of amusement were full. Over time, this trend to irreligion was reversed, and Elizabeth's sheer longevity allowed her Church of England to gain the venerable status of an established tradition before 1603. However, the use of a "puritan" clergy to spread the government's propaganda led to a clash of messages that left the laity sure of only one thing: the errors and evils of "popery".⁶⁵

⁶⁴. Smuts, Court Culture, 16-19.

⁶⁵. Guy, Tudor England, 291-297, 302-305.

It was in the context of government use of the exiles' propaganda that Foxe's martyrology was printed and gained great popularity. Foxe was encouraged by Grindal, whom Elizabeth initially made bishop of London, to take over the task of producing the English-language martyrology that Grindal had been working on while in exile. Foxe translated his Latin account and added new information about the Marian martyrs, publishing the new work, now entitled the Actes and Monumentes of these latter and perillous dayes in London in 1563.⁶⁶ Foxe continued to research and receive information about the Marian and earlier martyrs, and in 1570 he brought out an extended, second edition, in two volumes. The increasing threat from Catholicism abroad and at home led the government to order in 1571 that a copy of Foxe's work be placed in every cathedral church, and in "other public places", thus awarding the Acts and Monumentes an official stature.⁶⁷ A third, only lightly revised edition appeared in 1576, and then a fourth edition with some new material was published in 1583.⁶⁸ Men of learning acclaimed Foxe as a great and careful scholar, whose martyrology was all the more powerful, because he refused to include reports for which there was no good evidence.⁶⁹ The less learned turned to Foxe not only for accurate history, but also as a very holy man: by the 1570s this lambaster of "popery" was ironically being called upon to cast out demons and to heal the sick through prayer.⁷⁰ When Foxe died on April 18, 1587, Londoners turned out in huge numbers to mourn and honor him.⁷¹

Foxe's popularity continued long after his death. Throughout the

⁶⁶. Mozley, Foxe and his Book, 66-67.

⁶⁷. Smuts, Court Culture, 21-22.

⁶⁸. Mozley, Foxe and his Book, 92; Wooden, John Foxe, 15.

⁶⁹. Michael McKeon, The Origins of the English Novel, 1600-1740 (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 1987), 91-94.

⁷⁰. Mozley, Foxe and his Book, 85-86.

⁷¹. Wooden, John Foxe, 16.

seventeenth century, further complete editions of the Acts and Monuments, based closely on the fourth edition of 1583, were published, usually in a three-volume format.⁷² Up until 1700, Foxe's martyrology clearly outsold all other English-language texts of a similar size, except for the Bible.⁷³ During the eighteenth century, too, Foxe's work continued to sell, thanks to new, cheaper, multi-volume editions that brought the work within the reach of poorer pockets, and to abridgements, such as John Wesley's, that enabled readers to skip much of the background information and focus on the stories of martyrdoms.⁷⁴ English America, too, felt the influence of Foxe. For example, during the seventeenth-century the town of Concord, Massachusetts made a copy of the Acts and Monuments available for anyone to borrow, and the work "turns up frequently" in wills throughout the region, the subject of specific and carefully thought-out bequests.⁷⁵ Eighteenth-century colonists had access to Foxe not only via imports from the mother country, but also from a selection of Foxe's material edited by Thomas Mall, published in Boston in 1747.⁷⁶ Few sixteenth-century texts wielded so broad and enduring an influence on the English-speaking world. One significant aspect of that influence lay in the conditions under which the Acts and Monuments had been written: Foxe, who had known only outright conflict or uneasy coexistence with his country's government for much of his life, bequeathed this sense of discord to the countless men and women who reverentially read his martyrology.

⁷². The dates of publication were 1596, 1610, 1632, 1641, 1676, and 1684. Foxe, Book of Martyrs, ed. G.A. Williamson (Boston: Little, Brown, 1965), xxvi; New York State Library Catalogue.

⁷³. Haller, Elect Nation, 13-14.

⁷⁴. A 31 volume edition appeared in 1732, 60 volume editions in 1761 and 1776, and 80 volume editions in 1784 and 1795. Colley, Britons, 25-26; Foxe, Book of Martyrs, ed. Williamson, x.

⁷⁵. David D. Hall, Worlds of Wonder, Days of Judgment: Popular Religious Beliefs in Early New England (Cambridge: Harvard University, 1989), 50-51.

⁷⁶. Charles Evans, American Bibliography.

2. Interpreting Foxe's Impact

William Haller has produced what is still the most influential explanation of how the Acts and Monuments affected the English-speaking world.⁷⁷ In The Elect Nation, Haller argues that Elizabeth, threatened by Catholic adversaries, was forced, right from the beginning of her reign, into a close relationship with the Marian exiles and other Puritan groups. These men used the power of print to convince English readers of the evils of Mary's regime, and to paint a glorious picture of the future of England under Elizabeth. The literature that these extreme Protestants produced provided the English with a standardized vernacular, a shared literary tradition, and a common set of images and symbols. These elements provided the ingredients for a "folk movement" that generated a national culture and identity for the English.⁷⁸ Foxe's martyrology was, after the English translations of the Bible, the most important of all the works in this new folk culture, for he provided a scheme of history that linked true, Protestant Christianity to the fortunes of the English nation. In this historical scheme, England was the first nation to embrace Christianity, when Joseph of Arimathea brought the new faith to Glastonbury in the first century A.D., and it was the first nation to promote the Reformation, in the person of John Wycliffe. Haller argues that Foxe portrayed Catholicism's attacks on the Reformation, especially the persecutions carried out by Mary Tudor, as part of an apocalyptic struggle between the forces of Christ and Antichrist, a struggle whose outcome was the glorious reign of Elizabeth. Foxe emphasized that God's favor to his chosen nation would ensure England a prosperous future in the years to

⁷⁷. For examples of recent historians who have embraced Haller's interpretation of Foxe's impact, see Loades, Mid-Tudor Crisis, 189-190, Guy, Tudor England, 303, and Wooden, John Foxe, 34-36, and note 8, chapter one.

⁷⁸. Haller, Elect Nation, 15-18, 48-51.

come. According to Haller, the most important legacy of the Acts and Monuments was a sense of national mission that inspired the English to pursue power and wealth over the next two or three centuries.⁷⁹

Despite its enduring influence, Haller's interpretation of the impact of the Acts and Monuments contains a number of weaknesses. One problem is that he fails to recognize the serious tensions that existed in the relationship between Elizabeth and the more puritanical Marian exiles, including John Foxe. For instance, though Foxe's friend Grindal ordained him a priest in 1560, Foxe did not immediately receive a living in the Church of England. There was a shortage of qualified clergy, but Foxe's dislike of the vestments that the Elizabethan church required of its ministers prevented him from taking charge of a parish.⁸⁰ Foxe continued to make clear his views on the wearing of "popish" garments when he joined a group of London clergy who in 1564 petitioned for permission not to wear the hated vestments. Instead of receiving the requested dispensation, Foxe and other petitioners were summoned to Lambeth Palace by Archbishop Parker in 1565, and rebuked for their stubbornness on the vestiarian question.⁸¹ Foxe's intransigence prevented him from pursuing a career within the Church of England. Instead, he had to depend on the patronage of his old pupil, Norfolk, and of the more extreme Protestants among the aristocracy and gentry.⁸² The one position that Foxe did receive from the government illustrates the tensions that lay between him and the religious establishment. After Foxe dedicated the first edition of the Acts and Monuments to the queen, and the book had proved successful, he was awarded the prebend of Shipton, attached to the diocese of Salisbury. This modest reward from the government was insufficient to support the martyrologist,

⁷⁹. Haller, Elect Nation, 83-86.

⁸⁰. Mozley, Foxe and his Book, 63.

⁸¹. Wooden, John Foxe, 10-11.

⁸². Mozley, Foxe and his Book, 103.

however, especially as he had to pay a vicar, who would comply with vestimentary regulations, to perform parish duties at Shipton. Furthermore, Foxe was involved in a number of conflicts with the cathedral chapter at Salisbury over his failures to attend required functions in the diocese, and to contribute towards the upkeep of the cathedral. Foxe's scruples over vestments may have contributed to his non-attendance. Certainly, Foxe treated his private patrons with more consideration and respect than he did his superiors in the established church.⁸³

The martyrologist's uneasy relationship with the establishment continued for much of the rest of his life. In 1571 two Calvinist members of the House of Commons, Walter Strickland and Thomas Norton, introduced a bill to reform the canon law, and they enlisted Foxe's aid in preparing the new code. Some of Foxe's notes from this project survive, and show him unhappy with many aspects of the Church of England, including the Book of Common Prayer. Elizabeth rejected the revised law code as too Calvinistic, and Foxe found himself once again at odds with the queen and her religious views.⁸⁴ Even Foxe's anticatholicism got him into trouble. In 1577, in a sermon that he preached outside St. Paul's cathedral, Foxe argued that the Huguenots were justified in their rebellion against the French monarchy, since the current ruler of France was a Catholic. The Privy Council, outraged at this justification for resistance to a lawful monarch, called on Foxe to explain himself. Since Elizabeth was at least pretending to consider marriage to a prince of the French royal family at the time, Foxe's comments were especially out of place.⁸⁵ Foxe avoided trouble by claiming that he had only been explaining the Huguenots' motivation, not justifying their rebellion. Whether or not Foxe's defense was true, he

⁸³. Mozley, Foxe and his Book, 68-69.

⁸⁴. Mozley, Foxe and his Book, 79-80; John T. McNeill, "John Foxe: Historiographer, Disciplinarian, Tolerationist" in Church History, vol. 43, no. 2 (1974), 219.

⁸⁵. On Elizabeth's negotiations for marriage to Francis, duc d'Alençon, see Guy, Tudor England, 282-285.

was clearly close to having overstepped the bounds of orthodoxy.⁸⁶ Therefore, although Foxe cannot be called an extreme Puritan, and indeed, near the end of his life found himself involved in controversy with a puritanical faction at Oxford, the martyrologist had enough puritan leanings to put himself well outside the mainstream of the Church of England.⁸⁷

Haller's portrayal of Foxe as an ally of the government, and of the Acts and Monuments as a work of propaganda for Elizabeth, thus does not accord with the real divergence between Foxe's views and the creed of the Church of England. Peter Gay has built upon the evidence for Foxe's Puritan leanings to offer an alternative interpretation of the Acts and Monuments' importance. Gay argues that Foxe's extreme religious views, which are clearly set out in the martyrology, ensured that his influence on the mainstream supporters of the Church of England was negligible. The Puritans, however, who shared many of Foxe's beliefs, found evidence in the Acts and Monuments for the idea that they alone, not the English nation as a whole, were God's chosen people, with an historical mission to establish God's kingdom on earth. The Acts and Monuments fortified those Puritans who overthrew the monarchy in the English Civil War, and inspired generations of New Englanders. William Bradford drew on Foxe for his history of Plymouth, and both Cotton Mather and Jonathan Edwards were deeply influenced by the martyrologist's portrayal of history as a struggle between the Catholic Church and God's chosen people. The eventual failure of the Puritans to establish their millennial kingdom discredited Foxe's ideas of history, and the Acts and Monuments ceased to wield significant influence in the English-speaking world after the middle of the eighteenth century.⁸⁸

⁸⁶. Mozley, Foxe and his Book, 93-94.

⁸⁷. Mozley, Foxe and his Book, 108-112; McNeill, "John Foxe", 220-221.

⁸⁸. Gay, Loss of Mastery, 13-16, 32, 97-98.

If Gay usefully draws attention to Foxe's connection to Puritanism, he goes too far by denying that Foxe also had considerable influence on non-Puritan members of the Church of England. Any explanation of Foxe's impact must avoid labelling the martyrologist as exclusively Anglican or exclusively Puritan, for clearly the reality of Foxe's position was more complex: he was a man with considerable Puritan leanings whose account of history was nevertheless given official recognition by the Anglican establishment. Foxe was not alone in this ambiguous situation, for many other Puritan writers and preachers worked in an awkward alliance with the court through much of Elizabeth's reign. The impact of those other writers and preachers on English public opinion has been discussed above: the clash between Anglican orthodoxy and Puritan propagandists led to a general disillusionment with both reformed and unreformed religion. The message that did reach the people of England was the one theme that both the establishment and the Puritans promoted: the attack on the Church of Rome. If Foxe's Acts and Monuments was typical, in all but its extreme popularity, of the other exiles' writings and preachings, then it most likely influenced the English by persuading them to hate Catholicism, rather than convincing them of impending glories under Elizabeth's or under Puritan rule.

Turning to Foxe's text itself, one finds plenty of evidence that the author intended his history to say more about past conflicts with "popery" than about the glories of the future. First, the Acts and Monuments ends with Elizabeth's accession. Beyond a brief statement that her reign would bring a respite from persecution and a restoration of Protestantism, Foxe says nothing of the years after 1558. This silence might well have resulted, at least in part, from his objections to many aspects of the Elizabethan settlement. Foxe found it easy to praise Elizabeth's actions when she was a princess, and he commended her

courage and resolve in the face of humiliation and threats from Mary.⁸⁹ Yet about Elizabeth the queen, Foxe found it wiser to pass over what he could not wholeheartedly approve. A second reason for ending the Acts and Monuments in 1558 was that Foxe believed that the historian's task was to record "lamentable matter" arising from the ways in which "Satan rageth" against the saints. Since Elizabeth had put an end to her sister's mass executions of heretics, there was no material from her reign that fitted into Foxe's concept of what his history was all about. He did promise that if persecution of the saints were again to arise in England, he would renew his account of history.⁹⁰ None of Foxe's statements about England after Mary's death suggest that he held, or wished to convey to his readers, the idea of a glorious future, whether Elizabethan or Puritan.

Foxe's understanding of history was based upon millenarian ideas that also precluded any vision of a glorious future. Foxe's millenarianism derived from John Bale, a fellow member of the duchess of Richmond's household after 1548, and a fellow exile in Basel. Bale's The Image of Both Churches (1550) set forth a scheme of history that adapted the ideas of St. Augustine of Hippo to the struggle between the Protestants and the Catholic Church.⁹¹ Augustine had argued that the central theme of history was the struggle between the servants of Satan, embodied by such institutions as the Babylonian and Roman Empires, and God's chosen people. Bale urged that the Catholic Church was the Antichrist, the latest manifestation of Satan's power in the world, and that the Church's persecution of Protestants was the continuation of the ancient struggle between the followers of Satan and the followers of God. For Bale, as for Augustine, the conflict between good and evil was

⁸⁹. John Foxe, Acts and Monuments of matters most special and memorable, happening in the church 9th ed. (London: Company of Stationers, 1684), vol. 3, 792-800.

⁹⁰. Ibid., 861.

⁹¹. Haller, Elect Nation, 58-60, 63-64.

perennial, sometimes rising to a climax and at other times falling off, but never absent from history; the saints found their reward, a life of complete bliss, in heaven only. According to this reading of history, the millennium promised by Revelation was a thousand-year period in which the sufferings of the saints were mitigated, but not entirely brought to an end.⁹² For Bale, the millennium began when Constantine made Christianity the official religion of the Roman Empire, in 324, and ended with the sudden invasion of Christian lands by the Ottoman Turks a thousand years later. Foxe accepted Bale's understanding of both the nature and timing of the millennium, and incorporated his friend's ideas into the Acts and Monuments.⁹³

Foxe therefore had no reason to believe that an age of earthly happiness was just over the horizon, for the millennium was past, and the future held out only the prospect of further outbursts of persecution, which would be brought finally to an end only by the Last Judgment at the end of history. Foxe's description of the historian's task as the relation of the "lamentable matter" of the persecution of the saints by Satan's agents entirely accords with this Augustinian understanding of the millennium.⁹⁴ Any supporters of Elizabeth who believed that Foxe was predicting a glorious future for the English nation, and any Puritans who thought that the Acts and Monuments pointed towards a Calvinist kingdom of God on earth, were not only adding their own agendas to Foxe's work, but were contradicting Foxe's interpretation of history.⁹⁵

⁹². Stephen J. Stein, "Editor's Introduction" in Works of Jonathan Edwards vol. 5 (New Haven: Yale University, 1977), 4-5; Tuveson, Redeemer Nation, ix.

⁹³. Foxe, Acts and Monuments, 9th ed., vol. 1, 35-36, 452, 484.

⁹⁴. Ibid., 861.

⁹⁵. Besides the idea of the millennium, Foxe also drew upon Revelation 13:5 to divide history since the time of Christ into a series of 300-year periods, each of which represented a particular chapter in the fortunes of God's people. These cycles of three centuries did not fit neatly with Foxe's concept of the millennium, which began after the second cycle had started, and ended in the middle of the fifth. John

Haller's argument that Foxe portrayed England as an "Elect Nation" with a wonderful future rests not only on the erroneous ideas that Foxe extensively praised Elizabeth's rule and believed in an imminent millennium, but also on the notion that Foxe was peculiarly Anglocentric in his history. Certainly Foxe dealt with English events more thoroughly than with those on the Continent, but it is a leap to say that Foxe therefore intended his history to proclaim a nationalistic message. Foxe's most Anglocentric history was his first martyrology, the Latin Commentarii of 1554. This work emphasized the origins of Protestantism in Wycliffe and the Lollards, but it was aimed at educating non-English readers on the Continent about English events, and one of the work's intentions was to win patronage for the exiles from Continental Protestants, and especially from the duke of Württemberg, to whom the Commentarii was dedicated.⁹⁶ The second edition of Foxe's Commentarii, published in 1559, focused on Scotland as well as England, and described itself as the first part of a larger, projected work that would include persecutions on the Continent as well.⁹⁷ Although Foxe never extended his Latin martyrology to include the Continent, he did fulfill his promise in his English-language Acts and Monuments. The first edition of 1563 focused on the persecutions in England since Wycliffe's time, but the later, expanded editions of 1570, 1576, and 1583 set English events within a larger framework of persecutions all

McNeill makes the point that "it is possible...to overstress the importance of all this apocalyptic apparatus for Foxe himself. We may say, I think, that he never allows it to determine the dates or sequences of events furnished through documented sources. He respects the latter as much as any historian, and does not juggle with facts to force them under his scriptural scheme." The 300-year cycles were more important for the early centuries covered by the Acts and Monuments than for Foxe's own time, and Foxe drops virtually all mention of them from his text when he discusses the sixteenth century. McNeill, "John Foxe", 224-225. In no sense do these three-century periods point to a future age of glory, any more than does Foxe's idea of a millennium.

⁹⁶. Mozley, Foxe and his Book, 42; Wooden, John Foxe, 6.

⁹⁷. Wooden, John Foxe, 9.

across Christendom, going back to the time of Christ.⁹⁸ Foxe's stated intentions with regard to his plans for the Commentarii and the evolution of the Acts and Monuments suggest that, far from seeking to write a nationalistic history, Foxe aimed at a far more comprehensive account of events. Indeed, Foxe himself explicitly said that he did not want his martyrology to be seen as just English history.⁹⁹ The high proportion of English events in the later editions of the Acts and Monuments is better explained, perhaps, simply as the result of the greater availability of documents about English events to an historian who was always anxious for reliable, first-hand accounts. If the Acts and Monuments did inspire some Englishmen to believe that God had chosen England for a special mission, as Haller suggests, or if some Puritans felt that their English nationality was added proof of God's favor towards them, as Gay suggests, then such ideas must have originated from sources other than Foxe's text. Given the outpouring of propaganda from the Elizabethan court about the glorious future awaiting the English nation under Protestant rule, it seems likely that some readers conflated the message of the Acts and Monuments with an officially-sponsored set of pro-Elizabeth and pro-Anglican ideas.¹⁰⁰ There are certainly no grounds for arguing that Foxe's martyrology was a significant source of English nationalism; when compared to the overt celebrations of English glory emanating from the court, the Acts and Monuments comes across as both cosmopolitan and pessimistic.

In order to understand the impact of the Acts and Monuments it is necessary not only to reject Haller's arguments that the text was pro-Elizabeth, apocalyptic, and peculiarly Anglocentric, but also to examine the assumptions that Haller employs about the effects of the printed

⁹⁸. Foxe, Book of Martyrs, ed. Williamson, xxi-xxvi; Haller, Elect Nation, 121-123, 129-131.

⁹⁹. Foxe, Acts and Monuments, 9th ed., vol. 3, 861.

¹⁰⁰. On the intense publicity campaign of the Elizabethan court, see Guy, Tudor England, 428-433.

word on early modern societies. Haller sees Foxe as one of many sixteenth-century Protestant publicists, in England and on the Continent, who used the relatively new technology of printing to spread their views to an unprecedentedly broad audience; for Haller, Foxe's medium is more important than his message, as an explanation of his popularity.¹⁰¹ At first glance, Haller's assumption about the impact of the Acts and Monuments seems well grounded. The argument that a "printing revolution" was transforming Europe in the early modern period is well established. Print allowed writers to reach out to readers on an unprecedented scale.¹⁰² Print also had the potential to change readers' sense of group and of individual identity, since mass-produced documents put early modern Europeans in touch with ideas and events beyond their familiar local worlds.¹⁰³ One important innovation brought about by print was the rise of standardized vernaculars, and therefore printing seems connected to one of the essential elements of national identity, a national language.¹⁰⁴ Although printing presses were also active in Catholic countries, the Protestant Reformation was particularly closely associated with printing, for the reformers' insistence on Bible-reading encouraged the rise of literacy and of vernacular literatures.¹⁰⁵ The general association between Protestantism, print, and nationalism in early modern Europe might lend

¹⁰¹. Haller, Elect Nation, 50-54.

¹⁰². Estimates of the numbers of books produced in the first century of print vary widely, but there is no doubt that printing produced more books in the first few decades of its existence, than all the scribes of Europe had produced since the beginning of writing. Elizabeth L. Eisenstein, The Printing Revolution in Early Modern Europe (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1983), 13, 16; Peter Burke, Popular Culture in Early Modern Europe (New York: Harper and Row, 1978), 250.

¹⁰³. Eisenstein, Printing Revolution, 94-95, 126.

¹⁰⁴. Ibid., 81-82. For the triumph of the vernacular over French and Latin in official circles in sixteenth-century England, see Guy, Tudor England, 417.

¹⁰⁵. Eisenstein, Printing Revolution, 145-148, 157, 162; Benedict Anderson, Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism (London: Verso, 1983), 41-49.

credence to Haller's argument that Foxe used print to create a new national identity for the English.

However, though an approximate connection between the new religion, the new medium, and the new type of identity seems easy to accept, it is clear that the Reformation and printing did not immediately or universally give rise to nationalism, and that the "cultural metamorphosis produced by printing was really much more complicated than any single formula can possibly express."¹⁰⁶ In Germany, for instance, Luther's writings were spreading a standardized vernacular and a degree of political awareness among the lower orders as early as the 1520s, yet German nationalism did not gather strength until the nineteenth century.¹⁰⁷ Low levels of literacy and the high cost of books can only partly explain the failure of print to effect an immediate and universal transformation of identity, for even those who could read and who did buy books often preferred traditional texts to new ideas and information that challenged their familiar worlds.¹⁰⁸ After all, printed texts that glorified the nation did not enter a vacuum; such texts had to compete with well-entrenched local, occupational, and family allegiances, and readers had to have some good reason either to abandon those local attachments, or to assimilate them to a new sense of belonging to a larger, abstract, national community.¹⁰⁹ Clearly, there are weaknesses in Haller's assumption that Foxe and other Protestant writers could create a new and enduring identity for Englishmen simply by bombarding them with propaganda.

All in all, there are many reasons why Haller's interpretation of Foxe's impact on identity in the English-speaking world needs revision. I contend that a better way of understanding the importance of the Acts

¹⁰⁶. Eisenstein, Printing Revolution, 35.

¹⁰⁷. Burke, Popular Culture, 259-270.

¹⁰⁸. Ibid., 256-257.

¹⁰⁹. Ibid., 31-58.

and Monuments, one that reflects more closely the context of the period as well as the textual evidence, is to examine the precise nature of the larger, abstract community that Foxe described, and then to define what type of identity could exist between the members of that abstract community, and Foxe's readers. The only community clearly portrayed by Foxe was the community of martyrs, who constitute the chief focus of his narrative. Virtually any English reader could identify with the victims of "popish" persecution, who came from all social classes and included women and children as well as adult males. This community was not a national community, for it included only a minority of English men and women, and it embraced many who were not English at all. Furthermore, Foxe did not draw a connection between these martyrs in linguistic or cultural terms, the usual elements of a national identity. To a certain extent, religion linked the individuals who figured in Foxe's text, although the community of martyrs was narrower than the community of all true primitive or Protestant Christians, and wider than any particular sect of Protestantism. Neither the concept of a "church" nor the concept of a "nation" serves to clarify the nature of the community of martyrs in the Acts and Monuments.

Foxe's community of martyrs bears a greater resemblance to the notion of a "public", than to any other concept of an abstract community.¹¹⁰ Members of a public are defined chiefly by a close relationship with political institutions and authorities, and it was precisely such a relationship that distinguished the individuals who figure prominently in the Acts and Monuments from those who do not. Some of these martyrs, for example Cranmer, Latimer, and Ridley, were already public men by virtue of their ecclesiastical offices; but all of the martyrs, most of whom were originally obscure individuals, became public figures both by reason of their involvement with church and state authorities during their trials and executions, and also by virtue of

¹¹⁰. See chapter one, pages 13-17 below, for a detailed account of Habermas's idea of a "public".

their commemoration in the Acts and Monuments, a published work that enjoyed official, government backing.

In this company of martyrs, Foxe conveyed to his readers the idea of "private people, come together to form a public", to use Habermas's words.¹¹¹ By identifying with this public of largely obscure men and women, Foxe's readers could conceive of themselves as private individuals with a potential public identity. That potential public identity provided a conceptual connection between Foxe's readers and the institutions of government; since the fortunes of this public of martyrs depended on what took place in the inner circles of court and Parliament, affairs of government suddenly became relevant to any reader who identified with the martyrs.

The nature of the connection between subject, public, and government in the Acts and Monuments was entirely different from the connection based on nationalism urged by Haller. If the relationship between reader and martyr was broadly positive, one of sympathy and emulation, the relationship between martyr and government was essentially a negative one. Public life for the virtuous private citizen might be glorious, but it was hardly desirable: Foxe's public existed only because men and women were dragged into the public world by secular and ecclesiastical authorities in order to suffer interrogation, humiliation, and punishment. Although Foxe's narrative stimulated readers to take an interest in the affairs of church and state, they did so not in order to share in the glories of a successful nation, but so that they might know whether and when persecution might be renewed. The Acts and Monuments did indeed lay the foundation of a larger, abstract identity for the people of sixteenth-century England, but it was an identity riven by inner tensions, at once compelling and loathsome.

When Foxe's readers identified with the public of martyrs and

¹¹¹. Habermas, Public Sphere, 25.

accepted that there was a connection between their own personal interests and the affairs of church and state, those readers foreshadowed, though only to a certain extent, the later, bourgeois public delineated by Habermas. On the one hand, Foxe's ability to establish a connection, via a notional public, between obscure men and women and public authorities anticipated the development of a public sphere outside the English court by over a century. Indeed, the readers whose interest in public matters was piqued by Foxe's martyrology included a far broader cross-section of the public than did the bourgeois public sphere of the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. In some ways, therefore, the public sphere born of the Acts and Monuments was extremely precocious. Yet at the same time, that public sphere was in other ways underdeveloped. Foxe created a public identity for his readers, and established a connection between them and their government, but he gave no guidance as to what actions his readers should take in the public arena, beyond praying for good government and suffering martyrdom if the prayers failed.

For all its lack of directives for action, Foxe did present his readers with an extraordinarily detailed picture of what interactions between public authorities and private subjects might look like in a polity where the public sphere was well developed. Foxe's portrayal of the power of government was anachronistic, in the sense that the all-pervasive and powerful church and secular authorities in the Acts and Monuments were nothing like the weaker bodies of his own day. Foxe's focus on persecution served to create this distorted picture, for he dealt only with the occasions on which public institutions intruded or tried to intrude on the lives of ordinary individuals. He had nothing to say about non-Catholics whose lack of orthodoxy went undetected, or about the many aspects of life in sixteenth-century England that were beyond the ken and control of the central government and higher church authorities. Another factor that contributed to the impression Foxe gave of all-powerful public authorities was his narrative device. Foxe

did not merely advance abstract arguments about the tyranny of the state or the evils of persecution. The bulk of his account consists of dramatic recreations of clashes between ruler and subject. In these clashes, persecutors and victims occupy the entire attention of the reader; everything else disappears but these two poles. Unintentionally, such presentation of his material enabled Foxe to anticipate a time when "public" and "private" categories had come to dominate every aspect of existence, and the area of individual experience that fell into neither classification had largely disappeared.

The rest of this chapter explores Foxe's portrayal of the relationship between public authorities and ordinary subjects. Since Foxe inadvertently introduced his readers to certain aspects of public life as it later developed in England, I have compared Foxe's account of Protestant experience under Catholic rule to Habermas's description of the structure of the public sphere during and after the end of the seventeenth century. When Foxe's account of persecutions and the bourgeois public sphere are set side by side, both similarities and differences emerge. If the similarities meant that Foxe's readers, in his own and later times, had a glimpse of developments after the martyrologist's death, the differences meant that they might well misunderstand what was happening when increasingly powerful public authorities later intruded upon more and more areas of private life.

One of the striking similarities between the Church of Rome, as Foxe portrayed it, and public authorities in early modern states, was the bureaucratic nature of both. Indeed, for Habermas, the development of bureaucracy is one of the most important features separating an early modern state from its medieval predecessors.¹¹² In this context, a bureaucracy is an institution that is blind to all considerations except the will of the government it serves. It operates according to abstract

¹¹². Habermas, Public Sphere, 17.

rules and procedures that seek to prevent any private interests from interfering with the interests of the government. Such rules and procedures are essentially amoral: they are not justified in terms of God's will, or of notions of justice, or of considerations of humanity. Foxe's portrait of the Catholic Church and its operations fits this description of bureaucracy, and he gives detailed descriptions of bureaucratic procedure a high profile throughout the Acts and Monuments.

A good example of Foxe's fascination with the bureaucratic procedures of the Church and of those who served its interests occurs in his account of the public debate at Oxford in April, 1554 between Cranmer, Ridley, and Latimer on the Protestant side, and a number of Oxford and Cambridge doctors on the Catholic. Foxe begins his account by announcing his subject, first in a heading, then in a couple of brief paragraphs summing up the individuals and issues involved. Before proceeding to the debates themselves, however, Foxe provides an elaborately detailed account of the process involved in getting the debates started. The account begins with Lord Chancellor Gardiner's dispatch of letters to the two universities, asking for scholars who will debate with the Protestant leaders. Foxe then describes the reading of these letters, the votes of approval as to their contents, and the choosing of the debaters. The official welcome given by the Oxford faculty to the representatives from Cambridge, including gifts of "a dish of apples and a gallon of wine" follows next, with the formal presentation of the letters commissioning the Cambridge doctors to represent their university. On the next day, all the scholars on the Catholic side attend mass at Lincoln College chapel, and then the Cambridge men are admitted, amidst much ceremony, to the Oxford convocation. Foxe notes the scarlet robes that all had to wear during the convocation's proceedings, and even records the fact that two of the Cambridge visitors had to borrow such robes from their hosts in order to perform the ceremonies correctly. Mass is then celebrated, and all present process in a set order, described by Foxe, to the chapel at

Christ Church. After further religious services, the day ended with a formal dinner to which the mayor and certain aldermen of the city of Oxford were invited. On the next morning, two separate consultations between the Oxford and Cambridge representatives finalized the arrangements, including the setting out of precisely thirty-three seats in St. Mary's for the more prestigious members of the audience. With that done, the dispute with Cranmer, Ridley, and Latimer could begin.¹¹³

A probable reason for this detailed account is the dramatic effect it imparts to Foxe's narrative. If Foxe had merely recorded the debate over doctrine between Protestants and Catholics, both sides would have appeared on a more or less equal footing; indeed, since according to Foxe, the Protestants got the better of the debate, the readers might have come to see Cranmer, Latimer, and Ridley as the stronger, victorious party, at least in this particular context. These elaborate preparations for the debates, however, give the reader the inescapable impression of a contest between unequals. On the one hand, there is the Church and its allies in the government and universities: four large, powerful organizations, slow but deliberate, and united in their proceedings. On the other hand, when Cranmer, Ridley, and Latimer are finally brought in to start the disputation, they appear as isolated individuals, bravely facing the representatives of four mighty institutions. In the context of the preparations, the debates themselves become another instance of bureaucratic procedure, for they begin with set ceremonies and legal formalities, and their outcome - an official victory for Catholicism, whatever the true strength of the arguments on each side - appears as predetermined as the formal preliminaries.

There are different ways of explaining the significance of the elaborate preparations and of the hearings themselves. Modern historians attribute these hearings to a genuine wish on the part of

¹¹³. Foxe, Acts and Monuments, ed. Cattle (London: Seeley and Burnside, 1837-1841), vol. 6, 439-441.

Mary and her advisors to convert through argument and persuasion, rather than by condemnation and execution, if at all possible. The careful preparations, also, accord with what today's historians regard as Mary's general desire to keep her persecutions within the law.¹¹⁴ Yet Foxe, who denies Mary and her advisors any but the worst of motives, was clearly not trying to convey the impression of mildness or legality in his detailed narration of bureaucratic processes. Instead, Foxe was drawing parallels between the procedures of the government and of the universities, and the Catholic ceremonies and rituals that in his account were inextricably mixed up with those secular procedures. For Foxe, a Protestant of Puritan leanings, all ecclesiastical ritual not found in Scripture was devoid of any spiritual meaning. By presenting secular and ecclesiastical procedures as parts of a single whole, Foxe in all probability was suggesting that under the influence of "popery", even those procedures designed to safeguard legality and reinforce the dignity of government became as meaningless as the ceremonies of the Church. Foxe, clearly no anarchist or leveller, was not opposed to legal forms and institutional procedures per se.¹¹⁵ His strong detestation of Catholicism, however, impelled him to mock all such niceties and procedures that served the "popish" interest. His focus on the instances where bureaucracy served the Catholic Church meant that he appeared in the Acts and Monuments as more of an opponent of bureaucracy in general than he was in reality.

Foxe's message that "popery's" non-scriptural practices had generated complex and pointless procedures surfaces clearly in his accounts of the treatment of dead and buried Protestants. One such case of posthumous condemnation recorded in the Acts and Monuments involves John Tooly, a humble poulterer, who has died before the Catholic

¹¹⁴. Loades, Mid-Tudor Crisis, 151; Haller, Elect Nation, 40-44.

¹¹⁵. Foxe demonstrated his concern for correct legal form with his involvement in an attempt to reform the canon law, which he wished to simplify and purify, but not abolish. Mozley, Foxe and his Book, 79-80.

authorities realize he was a heretic. Despite his unavailability, full processes for condemning and punishing him are instituted. First, Tooly is ordered to present himself before the authorities to explain why he should not be excommunicated for heresy. When, as Foxe drily explains, "the time of the citation was expired, and Tooly...did not appear," the chicken-monger is duly suspended from participation in the Church's rites, and then, in proper form, excommunicated. Excommunication, explains Foxe, means "that no man should eat and drink with him; if any [should] meet him by the way he should not bid him good morrow," and generally, no member of the church is to associate with the excommunicate.¹¹⁶ In this incident, Foxe conveys very effectively his belief that the doctrinal errors of the Catholic Church turned it into a body addicted to procedure for its own sake, however purposeless and ludicrous such procedure may be.

Foxe again demonstrates how Catholic religious beliefs could generate ridiculous and meaningless procedure in his accounts of the burning of Protestant ministers who had once been Catholic priests. In such cases, the persecutors believe they must first defrock the condemned men in an elaborate ceremony. John Hooper, John Rogers, and Rowland Taylor are examples of such ex-priests turned heretic. Although these Protestants have long since repudiated their Catholic orders, the ecclesiastical officers in charge of their cases feel it necessary to dress these men in full priestly regalia, then to scrape their fingers and heads in order symbolically to remove the holy oil of ordination, and finally to remove the vestments in a precise order. Once this ritual has been performed, the men are no longer Catholic priests, no longer entitled to benefit of clergy, and therefore legally subject to the death penalty.¹¹⁷ For Foxe, the entire ritual was a matter for ridicule, like other Catholic procedures that served no practical

¹¹⁶. Foxe, Acts and Monuments, 9th ed., vol. 3, 210.

¹¹⁷. Ibid., vol. 3, 125, 143.

purpose. By recounting such acts that lay on the borderline between administrative and liturgical activity, Foxe reinforces the point that there is a particularly close connection between Catholicism and meaningless bureaucratic procedure; the latter is not simply a useful tool for the former, but springs from the most basic characteristics of "popish" belief.

Habermas argues that one important corollary of the development of impersonal public authorities served by bureaucracies is that all members of the government become "split into private elements, on the one hand, and public ones, on the other."¹¹⁸ As public servants, officials in the early modern state, from the monarch on down, had to operate by the rules, suppressing their individual desires and ambitions for the sake of the state organization. The bureaucrats' personal goals did not disappear altogether, but were banished from the public world, becoming the central features of a distinct private life that servants of the state led alongside their public one. This compartmentalization of individual experience set up tensions between public and private aspects of the lives of government officials, who sometimes found their private desires in conflict with their public duties.¹¹⁹ Foxe emphasizes a similar distinction between the personal motivation and official functions of the Church's servants, clearly showing that beneath the elaborate procedures and rituals of the Church lay a world of individual greed and bitterness. Foxe claims that Wycliffe's attack on the Catholic clergy's sacerdotal functions made "the whole glut of monks and begging friars" fight both "for their altars and their bellies."¹²⁰ Mary's Catholic clergymen are concerned with private gain, also, as in the case of John Averth, "a very money mammonist", who took over the parish of Hadley from Rowland Taylor, a Protestant minister

¹¹⁸. Habermas, Public Sphere, 11.

¹¹⁹. Ibid., 9-12, 17.

¹²⁰. Foxe, Acts and Monuments, 9th ed., vol. 1, 485.

much renowned for almsgiving.¹²¹ Foxe depicts the chaplain of Edmund Bonner, Mary's bishop of London, gambling in the prelate's residence, while lowly officers of the church rob the martyrs of virtually all their clothing, adding the indignity of nudity to the pain of the pyre.¹²² Bonner himself is torn between private feelings and the procedures he must follow when dealing with heretics. When Thomas Hawkes, a former courtier of Edward VI, was brought before Bonner for heresy, the bishop engaged in a series of debates with the prisoner, spread over several days, designed to convince the Protestant of his errors. Church procedures forced Bonner to engage in this course of persuasion, but the bishop was privately impatient, and his personal feelings occasionally intruded into the formal discussions of theology. When Hawkes suggested that a Christian should be merciful, Bonner burst out, "We will show such mercy unto you, as ye showed unto us; for my benefice or bishopric was taken away from me, so that I had not one penny to live upon."¹²³ Foxe clearly conveys the personal motivations of officials in the church, and the frustrations that arose when public duty conflicted with private inclinations.

Habermas describes the bureaucratic regimes of the early modern period as "permanent administrations" capable of exerting "continuous state activity". Unlike medieval governments, whose effectiveness varied with the capabilities of the individual monarch, and whose operations were always finite, limited by the personal nature of kingly rule, early modern states exerted authority evenly over the whole national territory, and were potentially able to expand in an open-ended fashion, their power confined not by their internal limitations, but by the opposition of other states.¹²⁴ These qualities of permanence,

¹²¹. Ibid., vol. 3, 137.

¹²². Ibid., 110, 127.

¹²³. Foxe, Acts and Monuments, ed. Cattley, vol. 7, 105.

¹²⁴. Habermas, Public Sphere, 17-18.

ubiquity, and expansiveness, which Habermas attributes to early modern states, also appear in Foxe's portrayal of the Catholic Church and of other institutions. Foxe best conveys the permanent nature of these institutions in the table of chronological events that opens his martyrology. Occupying fifty-three pages, this table covers fifteen centuries of European and Mediterranean history with no significant gaps in the time-line. Years are numbered down the left-hand side of each page in the table, and events in those years are distributed across columns that position events according to the institution in which they occurred: columns represent the Roman and Holy Roman Empires, the Papacy, the English state, and the English church, with a final, broad column for commentary and for events relating to other places and institutions.¹²⁵ The appearance of such tables as this in printed works during the second half of the sixteenth century had a profound effect on the spatio-temporal imaginations of readers. Manuscripts and oral transmission of knowledge had been incapable of organizing large expanses of space and time in the way that printed documents could. Foxe's Acts and Monuments was one of many works that created new, standardized conceptualizations of the overall structure of human experience.¹²⁶ For readers of the Acts and Monuments who had not before seen history presented in a clearly-visualizable manner, the table that opens the martyrology must have conveyed a powerful impression that enduring institutions were one of the fundamental determinants of historical development.

An important similarity between Habermas's portrait of the early modern state and Foxe's portrayal of the Catholic Church is that both seek to manipulate public opinion on a large scale, as an important basis for their power.¹²⁷ Foxe, himself a publicist, was keenly aware

¹²⁵. Foxe, Acts and Monuments, 9th ed., vol. 1, 2-54.

¹²⁶. Eisenstein, Printing Revolution, 51, 117.

¹²⁷. Habermas, Public Sphere, 18, 20-25.

of the Church of Rome's efforts to shape public opinion. This interest in publicity is reflected in the details that Foxe frequently provides about how the Church managed to get its words before the public eye. For instance, Urban VI's bull of 1383, empowering his legate, Henry Spenser, to raise troops in England to fight the antipope Clement, was published in Parliament, with manuscript copies posted on monastery and church doors.¹²⁸ Pronouncements of excommunication against Wycliffe's ally Nicholas Hereford or against some of Mary's victims were similarly displayed on the doors of religious buildings.¹²⁹ By thus describing the mechanisms used by the Catholic Church to publicize its orders, Foxe conveys the effectiveness of the propaganda effort in which the Church was continually engaged, and the extensive means at its disposal for attracting public attention, even before the invention of printing.¹³⁰

The publication of documents is only one way in which Foxe portrays the Catholic bureaucracy as operating at the center of a sphere of publicity. The most common way in which the Church of Rome molds public opinion is by holding many of its formal proceedings, from theological debates and judicial hearings to the burnings of the martyrs, before large audiences. Rather than enacting rituals behind screens or closed doors, the Church, in Foxe's portrait, seeks as wide an audience as possible. Cathedrals or large churches are the preferred venue for debates with accused heretics, so that large crowds could witness the proceedings.¹³¹ The burnings of prominent martyrs are often

¹²⁸. Foxe, Acts and Monuments, 9th ed., vol. 1, 509, 591.

¹²⁹. Ibid., vol. 3, 210, 491.

¹³⁰. Although Protestant publicists in England and elsewhere used many of the same means as the Catholic Church for putting their message before the public, Foxe portrays the manipulation of public opinion as a solely Catholic attribute, in order to enhance his portrait of an overmighty institution. At issue here is not the accuracy of Foxe's portrayal of the Catholic Church's use of publicity, but the association he helped to forge in the English-speaking world between Catholicism and propaganda.

¹³¹. Foxe, Acts and Monuments, 9th ed., vol. 1, 487, 505, vol. 3, 36.

held in those martyrs' home towns, on days such as market day when there would be the largest potential audience.¹³² Foxe's detailed descriptions of such events makes his readers acutely aware of the deliberately public aspect of so many of the Church of Rome's activities, and of that Church's realization that public opinion could not be taken for granted.

Foxe's emphasis on the Catholic Church's anxiety for publicity does not of course mean that he was arguing that "popery" was trying to be as open and as honest as possible. Printed propaganda and public spectacles were carefully edited and stage-managed to create precisely the impression the Church of Rome desired. For instance, when Queen Mary orders the execution of the Duke of Suffolk, father of Lady Jane Grey, Mary wishes it to appear that Suffolk has been reconciled both to her and to the Catholic Church before he dies. A Catholic priest is sent to accompany Suffolk to the scaffold, so that the public can have visual evidence of the duke's submission. The impression that Mary seeks to give is false, and Suffolk does his best to dispel it, trying to kick the priest off the ladder while showering the cleric with curses.¹³³ "Popish" publicity efforts are aimed at spreading misinformation, according to Foxe.

The Catholic Church's efforts to create a favorable public opinion included the censorship of Protestant publicity. For example, Mary's councillors threaten prominent martyrs that "they would cut their tongues out of their heads, [unless] they would promise that at their deaths they would not speak to the people."¹³⁴ The persecutors do their utmost to remove pens and paper from the accused, to prevent them from leaving contradictory statements.¹³⁵ When Mary has the princess

¹³². Ibid., vol. 3, 126-7, 144-6.

¹³³. Ibid., 79.

¹³⁴. Ibid., 146.

¹³⁵. Ibid., 123.

Elizabeth brought to the Tower of London, the young heir is taken to the capital at night, and finally reaches her prison by river, to avoid the gathering of a sympathetic crowd.¹³⁶ Foxe's recital of the Church of Rome's efforts to prevent free speech, writing, and assembly, far from indicating that Foxe believed "popery" is antagonistic to publicity, instead demonstrates how acutely aware he considers Catholic authorities are of the dangers as well as of the value of every public word or deed. The Church of Rome's concern with the minute details of its public image adumbrates that of early modern governments, who worked to create the kind of public opinion they desired, while suppressing all expressions of opposition.

Foxe's portrait of the Catholic Church thus shares many essential characteristics with Habermas's description of the early modern state. Foxe's Protestant martyrs, on the other hand, resemble the private individuals whom, Habermas argues, were brought into public life by the state's intrusive regulations and publicity. The martyrs in the Acts and Monuments contrast with the Catholic Church in ways that strongly suggest the distinction between public and private: while the Church's servants are bureaucrats who execute the Church's rules with machine-like impersonality, the Protestant martyrs are emotional beings, characterized by intimate attachments, and by sorrow and humor. While the Church organizes propaganda campaigns and choreographs public executions, Protestants are weak individuals whose power is limited to symbolic defiance of the Catholic system and to clogging the gears of the bureaucratic machine. Foxe says little about any alternative, benevolent, Protestant public sphere that might replace the evil Catholic world. Instead he dwells on the contrast between the public nature of "popery" and the private virtues of Protestantism.

An important example of the private Protestant in the Acts and Monuments is Wycliffe. This pioneer of the reformed faith prefers to

¹³⁶. Ibid., 793.

spread his message among a circle of personal acquaintances, according to Foxe. Far from being a hero who deliberately seeks to publicize his criticisms of Rome as widely as possible, Wycliffe avoids confrontation and is praised by Foxe for doing so.¹³⁷ Under Mary, prominent Protestants are willing to hide their beliefs in order to avoid a clash with the authorities. Lawrence Sanders, for instance, makes an offer to one of Mary's councillors, Sir John Mordaunt, saying that he will refrain from preaching if Mordaunt orders him to keep quiet. Rather than accept this Protestant's offer of retirement into privacy, Mary's minion gives Sanders equivocal encouragement to preach, tempting Sanders into public statements, on the basis of which he can be condemned for heresy.¹³⁸ Thomas Hawkes retires from court on Mary's accession, and tries to keep his Protestant beliefs to himself, until his failure to baptize a child because of his dislike of Catholic ceremony brings him to the notice of the authorities.¹³⁹ Even Hugh Latimer, a man respected by English Protestants for his pioneering use of the vernacular, is portrayed by Foxe as a retiring man, unwilling to debate his beliefs before the public.¹⁴⁰ Repeatedly, Protestants in the Acts and Monuments are brought into the public sphere not by their own preaching or publishing, but by the entrapment of the Catholic authorities.¹⁴¹

Of course, not all of the Protestants in Foxe's history are so retiring and so willing to hide from the authorities in the obscurity of privacy. Many Protestants are defiant, ready to strike back at a Church they regard as evil. Yet even in retaliation, Foxe's Protestants appear as the disrupters of the machinery of church and government, as

¹³⁷. Ibid., vol. 1, 509-510.

¹³⁸. Ibid., vol. 3, 109.

¹³⁹. Foxe, Acts and Monuments, ed. Cattley, vol. 7, 97-98.

¹⁴⁰. Foxe, Acts and Monuments, 9th ed., vol. 3, 426-427; Haller, Elect Nation, 37.

¹⁴¹. Foxe, Acts and Monuments, 9th ed., vol. 1, 487, vol. 3, 65, 109.

attackers of public institutions, not as advocates for a public order of their own. For example, when the parish of Hadley is invaded by a Catholic priest and by an armed guard who forces mass to be celebrated there, the parishioners retreat outside the church and express their disgust by throwing stones through the windows at the celebrant.¹⁴² When John Taylor is being formally deprived of benefit of clergy, he first resists being clothed in priestly robes and then plays the fool when the vestments have been forced on him. At one part of the ceremony, in which the bishop is about to strike Taylor symbolically on the chest with his crozier, Taylor threatens to hit the bishop back. By pretending that he does not understand the ceremony as anything but play-acting and brawling, Taylor renders the ritual ridiculous.¹⁴³ At other points in the Acts and Monuments, even powerful Protestant sympathizers like Lord Henry Percy, Lord Marshall of London, resort to petty disruption of hearings as their best means of defense against the mighty bureaucracy of the Church.¹⁴⁴ Foxe frequently reduces Protestant resistance to incidents of vandalism, prank-playing, and minor disturbances; he portrays the Catholic-Protestant clash as a struggle between pompous authority and the child-like mischief of its brave victims.

Perhaps the most poignant way in which Foxe draws a contrast between the public power of Catholicism and the private character of the martyrs is in his many evocations of how the persecutions disrupt family life. The family was the most important institution for the majority of the population of sixteenth-century England. Individuals who were not living with their own blood relations were invariably attached to another household, where they occupied positions vis-à-vis the head of the household analagous to those of his sons and daughters. These

¹⁴². Ibid., vol. 3, 138.

¹⁴³. Ibid., 143.

¹⁴⁴. Ibid., vol. 1, 486-7.

households were important economic entities, being the basic units of production and consumption in a society where the place of residence and place of work had not yet become separated. Yet, "what most preoccupied contemporaries was less the manifold practical significance of the family, than the family as a set of relationships."¹⁴⁵ Family relationships were emotionally charged, either with love or hatred, and in sixteenth-century England, where virtually everyone lived their entire lives within the ambit of one family or another, emotional tensions were the constant, dominating feature of life.¹⁴⁶

In themselves, these families were neither public nor private entities, but instead provided their members with an uncompartimentalized existence. The only other institutions that generally affected the lives of pre-modern Englishmen, the local community and the parish church, simply reinforced the importance of family ties for each individual, and therefore did not provide family members with an alternative set of norms for organizing life. Families became the central focus of a private sphere that was distinguished from the public world only when the world outside the local community began to intrude. When families took part of what they produced in the household for exchange in a market that stretched beyond the local community, then the family member who moved from home to marketplace, usually the head of household, experienced the distinction between an outside world based on rational and material considerations, and a distinct family circle where emotional relationships dominated. When governments began issuing regulations and propaganda that sought to control household activities in the name of an impersonal public interest, then again, family members became aware of a difference between the nature of existence in the family, and the nature of existence in the wider sphere of the nation

¹⁴⁵. Keith Wrightson, English Society, 1580-1680 (Rutgers University, 1984), 66.

¹⁴⁶. Peter Laslett, The World We Have Lost (New York: Scribner, 1966), 5, 12.

state.¹⁴⁷

The sixteenth-century family did not, therefore, need to change its nature in order to become the central institution of the early modern private sphere. All that was necessary for this development was the growth of the state-sponsored public sphere until it clashed with the family in a sustained fashion. Foxe could not, of course, foresee the massive growth of the public sphere, but he did have before him records of occasions when the English government had intruded upon particular families. Foxe could not help but see the contrast between the ruthless, inhuman bureaucracy of the Catholic Church, and the warm intimacy of family life, and he conveyed the contrast to his readers. Since Foxe's martyrology was primarily concerned with occasions when tyrannical institutions had persecuted weak individuals, his work gives the impression of a continuous, widespread conflict between distinct modes of existence that anticipates, partly by accident but partly through logic, the development of tensions between the public sphere and the private family over the next century.

Foxe explores the contrast between the ruthless abuse of power by Catholic authorities, and the gentle, human relationships of the family, in his account of the first of Mary's victims, John Rogers. Rogers meets his wife and eleven children in the street, as he is led to Smithfield for burning. The incident evokes sympathy by setting off the complex and impersonal proceedings Rogers has just endured in his heresy trial, against the sudden and unexpected appearance of his family, with all their warm sympathy and acute distress.¹⁴⁸ Catholicism's war against the family reaches a climax in Foxe's account when the eight- or nine-year-old son of John Fetty, a tailor imprisoned for heresy, becomes involved in his father's punishment. The boy asks Bishop Bonner's chaplain if he can visit his father in jail. When the chaplain

¹⁴⁷. Habermas, Public Sphere, 11, 19-20.

¹⁴⁸. Foxe, Acts and Monuments, 9th ed., vol. 3, 108.

refers to Fetty senior as a heretic, his son loyally affirms the truth of his father's beliefs. For this indiscrete outburst, the lad is stripped and scourged until he is "all in a gore blood." Then, to add insult to injury, the torturers present the child in that sorry state to his father, "in a jolly brag of their Catholic tyranny," a tyranny that can turn private affections into a means of inflicting pain. The boy dies of his injuries, a martyr who stands for family loyalty as much as for the Protestant faith.¹⁴⁹

The persecution's disruption of family life is integral to the theological issues separating "popery" from Protestantism. Foxe records debates between Catholic authorities and Protestant ministers that center on the question of whether a clergyman can be married. Often, Foxe represents the issue of marriage and family as the most important reason for the victim's condemnation. When John Taylor is called before Stephen Gardiner, Bishop of Winchester, their debate on religious matters remains even-tempered until the question of whether Taylor is married comes up. Taylor then becomes emphatic and defiant, exclaiming, "Thank God I am, and have had nine children, all in lawful matrimony. Blessed be God that ordained matrimony..." At that point, Gardiner loses his temper, and the empty procedure of formal questions and answers on theological issues breaks down to reveal the intense, personal feelings of the interrogator on this issue.¹⁵⁰ Lawrence Sanders similarly makes his family a central reason for adhering to his Protestant beliefs. "What man," he asks, "would not lose his life rather than by prolonging it adjudge [his son] to be a bastard, his wife a whore, and himself a whoremonger? If there were no other cause for which a man of my estate should lose his life, who would not give it to avouch [his] child to be legitimate, and his marriage lawful and

¹⁴⁹. Ibid., 753-4.

¹⁵⁰. Ibid., 138, 140-143.

holy?"¹⁵¹ For Foxe, the family is an important cause, as well as an important victim, of the Marian persecutions. Both as the destroyer of fathers, and as the denier of rightful instincts to found families, "popery" was in profound conflict with the institution that, even in the sixteenth century, contained so many of the qualities later attributed to the modern private sphere.

Even more than the contrast between distinct public and private spheres, Habermas focuses on the interface between them: on the process by which public authorities draw private individuals into the public sphere, forcing private men to become engaged in reasoned disputation about public policy. In the Acts and Monuments, the interface between Catholic authorities and individual Protestants consists of the long debates about religious issues that precede the final sentence and execution. Foxe follows humanist convention by presenting these debates in dramatized form.¹⁵² He provides reconstructions of extensive dialogues in which the narrator's only interventions are to prefix each sentence with the name of the speaker, and occasionally to interject comments on the tone of the speaker's voice or the appearance of his countenance. For example, the dialogue between Bishop Bonner's assistant, Archdeacon Nicholas Harpsfield and the martyr Nicholas Sheterden, begins as follows:

First, the archdeacon and commissary affirmed, that the very bare words of Christ, when he said, 'This is my body,' did change the substance, without any other interpretation or spiritual meaning of the words.

Sheterden: "Then, belike when Christ said, 'This cup is my blood', the substance of the cup was changed, and not the wine."

Harpsfield: "Not so: for when Christ said, 'This cup is my blood' he meant not the cup, but the wine in the cup."

Sheterden: "If Christ spake one thing, and meant another, then the bare words did not change the substance; but there must be a meaning sought as well of the bread, as of the cup."¹⁵³

¹⁵¹. Ibid., 113.

¹⁵². For the humanist practice of presenting political debates in dramatized form, see Guy, Tudor England, 408-409.

¹⁵³. Foxe, Acts and Monuments, ed. Cattle, vol. 7, 306.

This particular discussion continues, in this same format, over two further pages of Foxe's text. Such dialogues often constitute the majority of the interaction between the Church of Rome and its victims, making reasoned discourse one of the primary forms of confrontation between public institutions and private subjects.¹⁵⁴

Although the above was a conventional format for presenting debates on weighty, academic issues, in the context of Foxe's larger narrative these dialogues acquired new significance. First, the participants are not necessarily scholars, whose chief purpose in life is to engage in such disputation. More often than not, the Protestant participants are obscure men and women, forced to engage in a rational discourse on issues of public concern, discourses that were normally reserved for an elite in the universities and at court. In these dialogues, Foxe presented humanist discourse, the earliest incarnation of the public sphere in early modern Europe, as though it were the activity of a large cross-section of the population.¹⁵⁵ Readers of the Acts and Monuments could witness, in Foxe's narrative, an entire people, from the highest to the lowest, engaged in the public sphere, for these dialogues were "public" both because of the subject matter they embraced, and because they were conducted before audiences of various sizes.

These debates, which constitute a dramatized interface between private individuals and public institutions, are initiated and dominated by the Church and its secular allies, reflecting Foxe's general portrayal of Protestants as primarily private people, who did not seek

¹⁵⁴. For example, Foxe's account of the persecution of Richard Woodman, an iron-founder of Sussex, takes up forty-five pages in total. Of those forty-five pages, forty consist of a dramatic dialogue between Woodman and his persecutors. The other five contain the narratives of Woodman's arrest and burning, and a letter from Woodman to a fellow Protestant. Foxe's account of Thomas Hawkes covers twenty-one pages, of which fourteen are taken up with a religious debate in dramatic form. Ibid., vol. 7, 97-118 and vol. 8, 332-377.

¹⁵⁵. On humanism as the earliest embodiment of reasoned debate on public issues, see Habermas, Public Sphere, 9.

to publicize their views or to intrude upon public affairs. In the Acts and Monuments, it is the Church of Rome, not the Protestants, that promotes reasoned, public discourse, albeit with the goal of imposing its views through persuasion, rather than seeking truth in an open-minded fashion. Church officials set the dialogues in motion and shape their content by posing questions for the Protestants to answer. When the accused heretic gives the wrong response, according to Catholic doctrine, church officials attempt to persuade the Protestant to change his answer, offering elaborate reasons for making the change. The dialogues are not crude interrogations, but debates with a significant intellectual content. The response of the Protestants who have been dragged into this public arena varies to a certain extent, depending on each individual's background and intellectual capacity. Yet, although certain of the accused use reasoned argument to refute the Catholic Church's reasonings, ultimately, the "heretics" are distinguished from their persecutors by their constant appeal to scripture.

For example, the Protestant Thomas Hawkes, a former courtier, is willing to demonstrate his command of theological reasoning, up to a certain point. When Hawkes's opponent in debate, the same Nicholas Harpsfield mentioned above, admits that he does not know his own Church's justification for the rood-screen that hides the mysteries of the altar from the congregation, Hawkes provides the Catholic Church's answer. The rood screen stands where it does, he explains, because the nave represents the Church Militant, the chancel the Church Triumphant, and only a bearer of the cross of Christ, ie. a priest, can pass from the former to the latter. The Catholic commends the Protestant for the latter's command of Catholic arguments:

Harpsfield: "This is well and clerkly concluded."
 Hawkes: "As all the rest of your doctrine is."

Yet Hawkes remains firm in his Protestant beliefs, putting simple affirmations of scriptural truth above all the reasoning the Catholic

Church can advance for its doctrines.¹⁵⁶

When the Protestant is not an educated person, the distinction between "popery's" love of elaborate, reasoned debate, and Protestantism's essentially simple, Bible-based faith, becomes still clearer. One individual brought before the Church authorities is an illiterate woman from the diocese of Exeter, whom Foxe knows only as "Prest's wife". The Church's representatives attempt to persuade this "silly creature", as Foxe calls her, that the eucharist is transformed into Christ's body and blood in the mass. Prest's wife retorts again and again that the Catholic eucharist is a "foul idol", until her examiners grow exasperated, exclaiming, "Why, thou foolish woman...we come to thee for thy profit and soul's health." Steadfastly refusing all their reasoning, she meets her death, Foxe concluding "that albeit she was of such simplicity, and without learning, yet you could declare no place of Scripture, but she would tell you the chapter; yea, she would recite you the names of all the books of the Bible." Prest's wife, dragged into a rational debate by the Church authorities, stays loyal to her beliefs by opposing simple faith to sophisticated reason.¹⁵⁷

Foxe's effective portrayal of the Catholic Church as the central institution of a public sphere provided an important context for his stories of "popish" cruelty towards the martyrs, almost certainly the part of his narrative that proved most memorable, and attracted the Acts and Monuments wide readership.¹⁵⁸ In part, these stories of cruelty

¹⁵⁶. Foxe, Acts and Monuments, ed. Cattley, vol. 7, 110.

¹⁵⁷. Ibid., vol. 8, 498-501.

¹⁵⁸. One indication that the public perceived the Acts and Monuments largely in terms of the cruel treatment of holy men and women is the nickname, the Book of Martyrs, a moniker which the work acquired from the time of its first English edition. Foxe, Book of Martyrs, ed. Williamson, xxiv. Another indication is the tendency for seventeenth- and eighteenth-century versions of the Book of Martyrs to omit Foxe's theological and political material, and even at times to abandon his broadly chronological organization, and to focus solely on the conflict between persecuting public authorities and their vulnerable victims. For example, see Martyrologia Alphabetika (London: R. Butler, 1677) and

were indictments of particular Catholics for inhumanity and sadism. When Catholic clergymen "thirst after the blood of the living," disinter bodies, jeer at sick old men, beat children to death, and address their adversaries "with a furious countenance," Foxe attributes some of the cruelty of the Church to the individuals who hold power within it.¹⁵⁹ Accusations of barbarous inhumanity help on occasion to satisfy Foxe's personal desire for revenge against particular persecutors, such as Bishop Gardiner.¹⁶⁰ Foxe's tales of cruelty are more than attacks on individuals, however. His accusations have a cumulative effect; when Foxe presents case after case of violent individuals holding power in the Church, the impression develops that it is the institution, rather than individual human nature, that is ultimately at fault. Foxe sometimes makes explicit the idea that the Church corrupts individuals and turns them into inhuman monsters, as when he calls the prison keepers in the bishops' employment merciless men who "were even cruel like their masters."¹⁶¹ By empowering those who are already vicious, and by corrupting those who are not, the Church of Rome, Foxe emphasizes, has become a safe haven for the sadist.

Yet the institutional cruelty of Catholicism in the Acts and Monuments amounts to more than its fostering of vicious men. Certain

Thomas Mall, The History of the Martyrs Epitomized (Boston, Mass.: Rogers and Fowle, 1747), both martyrologies that drew material from Foxe, but arranged that material with the martyrs' names in alphabetical order. Foxe's great work became so synonymous with tales of violent clashes between "popery" and Protestantism, that later editors felt free to add additional stories of persecution and other atrocities to Foxe's original accounts, as though the Acts and Monuments were an encyclopedia of religious conflict that required updating as knowledge increased. For example, the ninth edition of the Acts and Monuments of 1684 was extended by "certain additions of like persecutions which have happened in these later times." The added section took up the story where Foxe had left off, ie. from the reign of Queen Elizabeth onwards. Perennial conflict, rather than any specific solution to that conflict, was the message that Foxe had communicated to later generations. Foxe, Acts and Monuments, 9th ed., title page and vol. 3, 865-959.

¹⁵⁹. Ibid., vol. 1, 529, vol. 3, 138, 210, 426-7, 753-4.

¹⁶⁰. Haller, Elect Nation, 185.

¹⁶¹. Foxe, Acts and Monuments, 9th ed., vol. 3, 143.

incidents that Foxe records suggest that the nature of the Church's bureaucratic machinery makes it inevitably cruel in its behavior towards individual victims, whether such cruelty is intended or not. In such accounts, the violence becomes a measure of the distinct nature of public and private worlds, rather than a product of evil personalities.

The best illustration of this inevitable, systematic cruelty is the burning of John Hooper. In Foxe's account, a sympathetic prison guard has allowed Hooper to obtain three bladders full of gunpowder. On the day of the burning, the condemned man ties one bladder under each armpit, and one between his legs, in the hope that the fire will detonate the gunpowder and despatch him speedily. Unfortunately, the damp weather frustrates this attempt to mitigate the bishop's suffering. Hooper's fire sputters and smokes, twice going out altogether, so that he is singed to death with agonizing slowness. The insufficient heat causes the bladders to crack open, scattering the powder down Hooper's body before it explodes, thus adding to his pain without killing him or even rendering him unconscious. The slow fire gradually dissolves his arms into liquid fat, blood, and water, which drip into the inadequate flames beneath. Foxe spares no detail of Hooper's suffering, but the point of the story is not the deliberate cruelty of the Church; in this instance, prison guards, executioners, spectators, all want Hooper to enjoy a merciful end. Rather, this tale conveys the horror of a process that has escaped anyone's control, of a relentless machine set in motion and now gone awry, perpetrating inhumanities its makers have not conceived. Hooper's story graphically conveys a point Foxe urges throughout his work: Catholicism is cruel because of its bureaucratic character, so that even well-meaning individuals within its ranks can not alter its course of torture and destruction.¹⁶² Tales of violence in the Acts and Monuments convey more than a moral failing on the part of Catholicism. Such tales suggest that the fundamentally different

¹⁶². Ibid., 127-8.

mentalities and structures that distinguish bureaucracy from personal, individual relationships put "popery" and Protestants inevitably at war.

Foxe's popular martyrology thus sets forth the history of England and of Christendom as a constant clash between two very different entities, evil, "popish", public institutions, and virtuous, Protestant individuals. Many of the basic elements of the "popish" public world, as Foxe portrays it, especially its bureaucratic nature and its extensive use of publicity, reflect important characteristics of the public sphere that developed in England a century or more after Foxe's time. The distinction between public and private spheres that arose as a concomitant of the former's growth was also delineated in the Acts and Monuments. Foxe arrived at this outline of the future in large part by accident: his choice of subject, the clash between the Church of Rome and saintly individuals, plus his dramatic narrative style caused him to examine the interactions between mighty institutions and weak individuals, and to exaggerate the role that such interactions played in his own society. Yet logic, as well as accident, also explains Foxe's anticipation of the future development of the public sphere. Habermas argues that the essential difference between medieval and early modern governments is that the former claim to represent God, while the latter justify their authority in terms of human communities, "publics", whose existence is in this world. Foxe's hatred of the Church of Rome convinced him that that institution in no sense represented eternal righteousness, and instead stood for the interests of a human community, the Catholic clergy. Foxe's desacralization of the Catholic Church, and of all governments under "popery's" influence, precisely paralleled the process by which medieval monarchies turned themselves into a new kind of authority during the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries. A church or government that ceases to represent God, immediately acquires many of the characteristics of a bureaucracy: it becomes a body that serves human interests, and acts according to rules derived from no authority but its own. Similarly, a desacralized

institution no longer expresses an eternal reality when it addresses the people it rules: instead, it has become a self-serving publicist, manufacturing its own truths and generating an artificial, public sphere. Foxe's anticipation of some aspects of the future public sphere derives therefore in part from the logic of Protestantism, that could accept no sacred basis for any part of "popery".

If there is a connection between Protestantism and modernization, as Weber and generations of his adherents have argued, perhaps Foxe's Acts and Monuments can suggest one possibility for where such a connection lay. Foxe arrived at his portrait of what we, with hindsight, can see as an early modern form of government not because he was ahead of his time, but for quite the opposite reason: Foxe, like most Protestant reformers, desired to restore an ancient Christianity, in which every element purely and precisely represented God's design for his church. Foxe's love for an ideal church based on eternal truths caused him to attribute contrary characteristics to Protestantism's enemy. Thus did a man, whose goals were entirely pre-modern, conceive and publicize the idea of a Catholic Church, to which he attributed a secular spirit that foreshadowed the direction of early modern European development.

The Elizabethans who read the Acts and Monuments of course had no more idea than Foxe that there were parallels between the public world they were encountering in the text, and the public world that would develop in their kingdom. Yet over the next century or more, as England's monarchs began to claim that they represented a notional public interest, as bureaucratic institutions grew larger and more complex, as government officials began to intrude more and more into the lives of ordinary Englishmen, the parallels explored in this chapter between Foxe's "popery" and early modern societies became more visible. Since the Acts and Monuments lamented the negative effects of powerful public authorities, it presented the prospect of a frightening future to later generations of its readers who were experiencing the growth of

government in their own time. Early and mid-seventeenth-century Englishmen were possibly the first to draw disturbing parallels between the vision of "popery" derived from Foxe, and developments in government taking place in their own day. Yet the English public sphere did not become significantly developed until after the Glorious Revolution, when the problems created by Foxe's association of "popery" with powerful public institutions became urgent. The next three chapters explore how three different groups of Englishmen and English colonists after 1689 coped with the legacy of anticatholicism inherited from the author of the Acts and Monuments.

CHAPTER III
"POPERY", INFALLIBILITY, AND LUXURY

In the decade after the Glorious Revolution, two leading Whig statesmen, Gilbert Burnet and John Locke, formulated a new type of attack on the Catholic Church. This new attack considerably changed the emphasis of the anticatholicism inherited from John Foxe, who had portrayed the Church of Rome as an overpowerful, intrusive bureaucracy bent on destroying God's chosen people. Instead, Burnet and Locke stressed the licentiousness, selfishness, worldliness, and changeable character of Catholic societies. They tied together the various characteristics that they attributed to the Church of Rome by insisting on the centrality of the doctrine of infallibility to Catholic belief, and by contrasting "popery's" conviction of its infallibility with the empirical philosophy that was gaining popularity in certain circles in the eighteenth-century British Empire. This new formulation of anticatholicism influenced many writers from the 1690s until the middle of the eighteenth century, both in Britain and in at least one colony, Massachusetts, where a group of theologians and politicians adopted the anticatholic ideas of Burnet and Locke, and formulated similar attacks against the Catholic Church.

The British and colonial writers examined in this chapter, all of whom followed the lead of Burnet and Locke in their views of the Church of Rome, were members either of the Whig party in the mother country, or of the "court" or "prerogative" faction in Massachusetts. Members of these two political groups shared many goals and faced some of the same challenges from opponents, despite the different political contexts in which each operated. Generally, all the writers examined in this

chapter wished to minimize the distinction and conflict between Anglicans and Dissenters, and wanted to promote the interests of a financial and mercantile elite. Their similar political goals explain to a large extent the substantial common content of the anticatholic arguments they propounded.

Four British authors are considered here. Burnet and Locke were both actively involved in William of Orange's invasion, and wrote in support of Whig principles during the 1690s and later.¹ Benjamin Hoadly and John Douglas, whose writings especially reflected the influence of Burnet, were spokesmen for later Whig administrations during the reigns of George I and George II.² The Whig governments and principles supported by these men fell into what recent historians have labelled the "moderate" Whig category. Moderates were those members of the Whig party who were broadly satisfied with the gains of the Glorious Revolution and its aftermath. They were pleased with the constitutional balance between Parliament and executive that evolved between 1689 and 1716, they were content to have won toleration for Dissenters, and they were strong supporters of new financial institutions, such as the Bank of England and the chartered, joint-stock trading companies, that favored the interests of overseas merchants.³ Unlike the Radical Whigs, who wanted stronger checks on the executive and civil rights for Dissenters, and who were suspicious of the power of the new financial institutions, moderates believed that further reform would be both

¹. John Kenyon, Stuart England (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin, 1978), 284; Ashcraft, Revolutionary Politics, 14, 81-86.

². Caroline Robbins, The Eighteenth-Century Commonwealthman: Studies in the Transmission, Development, and Circumstance of English Liberal Thought from the Restoration of Charles II until the War with the Thirteen Colonies (Cambridge: Harvard University, 1959), 84-87; Dictionary of National Biography, s.v. "Douglas, John" and "Hoadly, Benjamin".

³. John Brewer, The Sinews of Power: War, Money, and the English State, 1688-1783 (Cambridge: Harvard, 1988), xiii-xv, 13-14, 27-42, 64-69; D.W. Jones, War and Economy in the Age of William III and Marlborough (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1988), 249-307; Jonathan I. Israel, "General Introduction" in The Anglo-Dutch Moment, 7-8, 22-23.

detrimental to Britain's interests, and politically impossible.⁴ Different factions of the moderate Whigs competed with Tory and "country" politicians for power in the period 1689-1714, and then enjoyed an uninterrupted, though not unchallenged, control of all ministries from 1714 until the accession of George III in 1760.⁵ Such were the political affiliations of the British authors whose anticatholic writings are analysed below.

In Massachusetts, the court or prerogative faction emerged in the aftermath of the Glorious Revolution, and enjoyed a continuous existence as a well-defined political group until the American Revolution. Members of this faction generally supported the strengthening of imperial control over the colony's affairs, welcomed the religious toleration and full civil rights granted to all Protestants by the charter of 1691, and stood to gain from the wars against France and Spain, which expanded imperial commerce and provided members of this faction with lucrative supply contracts.⁶ These men enjoyed a virtual monopoly of hard currency in the province, and fought to preserve the financial power that such a monopoly gave them.⁷ The four Massachusetts authors considered in this chapter were all closely connected to this court party. William Brattle introduced the latitudinarian and ecumenical ideas favored by this faction to Harvard.⁸ Paul Dudley, son of the faction's founder, Joseph, was himself a leading figure in this

⁴. Robbins, Commonwealthman, 3-21, 56-87; Kenyon, Stuart England, 290-294.

⁵. Kenyon, Stuart England, 284-350; J.H. Plumb, The Origins of Political Stability in England, 1675-1725 (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1967), 159-189.

⁶. Nash, The Urban Crucible, 80-84, 136-140; William Pencak, War, Politics, and Revolution in Provincial Massachusetts (Boston: Northeastern University, 1981), xiii, 19-26; Lovejoy, Glorious Revolution, 146, 245.

⁷. Nash, Urban Crucible, 55-65; Pencak, War, Politics, and Revolution, 62-64.

⁸. Perry Miller, The New England Mind: From Colony to Province (Cambridge: Harvard University, 1953), 237-244.

party from the 1710s until his death in 1751.⁹ Edward Wigglesworth, who wrote a number of tracts supporting the prerogative faction's financial policies, was also a leading theologian at Harvard, in the latitudinarian tradition established by Brattle.¹⁰ Cotton Mather, who had opposed the court party during the first two decades after the Glorious Revolution, moved decisively into the prerogative camp in 1709, and adopted many of that faction's religious and philosophical ideas.¹¹ All of these authors were heavily influenced by Burnet or Locke or both, an influence that shows in their anticatholic writing.

The best starting point for understanding the new anticatholicism of this selection of writers is the work of Gilbert Burnet (1643-1715). Born a Scottish Presbyterian, Burnet gravitated to London and to the Church of England in the 1670s, when he gained fame for the vehemently anticatholic tracts that he wrote during the Exclusion Crisis. He became an early adherent of William of Orange, who rewarded Burnet with the bishopric of Salisbury in 1689.¹² After the Glorious Revolution, Burnet became well-known for his justification of the Whig resistance to James II, and for his support of the Hanoverian succession. His influence spread throughout the English-speaking world, especially to New England. In addition to the fame of the bishop's writings, his strong support for the restoration of many of Massachusetts' lost liberties helped to consolidate an early and particularly close relationship between Burnet and certain of that colony's political and intellectual leaders.¹³ In many of his post-revolutionary historical and political tracts Burnet created an anticatholicism with a new

⁹. Pencak, War, Politics, and Revolution, 53.

¹⁰. Ibid., 74. Miller, Colony to Province, 315-320, 456-460.

¹¹. Pencak, War, Politics, and Revolution, 51; Robert Middlekauff, The Mathers: Three Generations of Puritan Intellectuals, 1596-1728 (New York: Oxford University, 1971), 222-230.

¹². Kenyon, Stuart England, 284; Dictionary of National Biography, s.v. "Burnet, Gilbert".

¹³. Lovejoy, Glorious Revolution, 230.

central focus for his allies in England and America.

Burnet explained the evils of the Catholic Church in the following terms. What made "popery" so perfect a system of error and of malice, he argued, was its flawed epistemology. Instead of drawing knowledge empirically from scripture, which was, like nature, God's direct way of communicating truth rationally to humankind, the Church of Rome preferred to rely on the supernatural guidance of the Holy Spirit. Believing that it continually received such guidance, the Church of Rome constructed the doctrine of infallibility, arguing that the Church could not be wrong because it was simply expressing the Holy Spirit's wisdom. When questioned about the basis of its claim to direct guidance from the Holy Spirit, and therefore to infallible knowledge, the Church marshalled arguments from scripture. When questioned about its interpretation of scripture, which Protestants believed contained no clear arguments for Catholic infallibility, the Church claimed infallible knowledge of what scripture really meant. For Burnet, these Catholic arguments made the Church of Rome "guilty of a manifest circle" of flawed reasoning. "Nothing," Burnet argued, "can be proved by another authority, till that authority is first fixed and proved," yet the Catholic Church proved its infallibility through the authority of scripture, and its interpretation of scripture through its infallible knowledge. In Burnet's eyes, this whole argument amounted simply to the fact that the Church of Rome manufactured its own truth, interposing its own ideas before the objective truth of scripture. On the basis of its arbitrary, internal promptings, Catholicism erected a vast, elaborate, and impressive system of theology, law, and morality that had no foundation in empirical or scriptural reality.¹⁴

For Burnet, the question of infallibility was so important in deciding what divided Catholics from Protestants, that he equated the Reformation itself with "the shaking off [of] the doctrine of the

¹⁴. Gilbert Burnet, An Exposition of the Thirty-Nine Articles of the Church of England (London, 1699; London: William Tegg, 1850), 243-244.

infallibility of the Church."¹⁵ In a review of the history of religious thought among English Protestants, he demonstrated how important he regarded the infallibility question by dismissing as of little account the copious writings of earlier seventeenth-century Protestants on issues such as Arminianism and Antinomianism. These controversies, Burnet urged, were tedious distractions from Protestants' main task, which was attacking the Catholic Church and its doctrine of infallibility. Certain earlier writers had dealt with what Burnet regarded as the all-important religious issue, and he recommended that Protestants focus their attention on these authors alone. Of these writers, Burnet singled out William Chillingworth's A Discourse Against the Infallibility of the Roman Church (1660) for particular praise, calling that work "the best book that has been writ in our language," because it stated clearly that infallibility was "the nicest point in Popery, [and the one] by which they had made the most proselytes." Burnet, who had collected a virtually complete library of English divinity, thus offered eighteenth-century theologians an interpretation of English Protestant thought that gave anticatholicism and the infallibility question a dominant place.¹⁶

Burnet was careful to educate his readers in the exact terms of the Catholic Church's claim to infallibility. Too many Protestants, he warned, thought that Catholicism argued simply for Papal infallibility. In fact, Burnet pointed out, the Church of Rome argued for the infallibility of the Church as a whole, and disagreed within itself whether the Pope or General Councils of the Church best expressed this infallible guidance. Burnet's emphasis on the Church's general infallibility made it clear that it was not just one official within the Church who was the source of this corruption of knowledge, and that Catholicism's evil was not simply attributable to a faulty

¹⁵. Ibid., 5

¹⁶. Ibid., x-xii.

ecclesiastical organization that had erected a tyrannical ruler over other Catholics' consciences. Rather, Catholicism as a whole was corrupted by a conviction that it had an infallible knowledge of truth. Every member of that faith was guilty of the arrogant claim of possessing special guidance. The individual Catholic was not an oppressed victim of a powerful hierarchy, but a willing participant in a Church that defied the truths of God and nature.¹⁷

Burnet's emphasis on the infallibility question enjoyed an enduring, central place in the anticatholicism of English Whigs and of writers who belonged to the prerogative party in Massachusetts, at least until the middle of the eighteenth century. Another Whig clergyman, John Douglas (1721-1807), who later succeeded to Burnet's see of Salisbury, attacked the Catholic Church in terms similar to his predecessor's. Douglas, originally a Scots Presbyterian who became an Anglican and pursued a career within the Church of England, was a client of William Pulteney, earl of Bath. Douglas served his patron as a publicist, and wrote in support of the policies pursued by the ministries of the 1740s and 1750s, in which Bath played a prominent role.¹⁸ Douglas was known to the colonists of Massachusetts, since one of his most important pamphlets, which denounced French and "popish" perfidy during the Seven Years' War, was published in Boston.¹⁹ During the 1750s, Douglas engaged in a pamphlet war with Archibald Bower, a celebrated convert from Catholicism to the Church of England. In this pamphlet war, Douglas, who distrusted Bower's conversion, and believed him to be a secret agent of the Jesuit order, set out many of Burnet's basic arguments against the Catholic Church, urging especially that a correct understanding of the infallibility issue was a matter of life and death for the Protestant religion. In 1757 Douglas took issue with

¹⁷. Ibid., 243, 245-255.

¹⁸. Dictionary of National Biography, s.v. "Douglas, John".

¹⁹. John Douglas, A Letter Addressed to Two Great Men (Boston: B. Mecom, 1760).

a purportedly anticatholic history that Bower had recently published. Douglas argued that Bower was deliberately presenting flawed arguments against Catholic infallibility in this history. Bower's worst failing, according to Douglas, was that he ignored a long tradition of Protestant writing on the infallibility question, and argued only against the infallibility of the Pope, instead of against the infallibility of the Church of Rome as a whole. Douglas refused to believe that Bower had committed an innocent mistake in formulating such arguments. Instead, he contended that Bower was trying to undermine the reputation of Protestant polemic, and to weaken Britons' understanding of the precise evils of Catholicism. Douglas even claimed that these deceitful writings on the all-important subject of infallibility proved what Douglas had long believed, that Bower was a disguised Jesuit who was attempting to undermine the Protestant cause by the most subtle of means. By deliberately diluting and confusing the infallibility issue, Bower "was taking an effectual way to serve Popery, and to betray that cause which he pretended to defend."²⁰ The Douglas-Bower controversy provided a good example of the central role that infallibility continued to play in the anticatholic thought of those who supported the Whig political establishment, as late as the Seven Years' War.

Burnet's views on infallibility also proved influential on the anticatholic thought of members of the prerogative party in Massachusetts. Paul Dudley (1675-1751), son of the prerogative party's early leader, Joseph, and himself a virulently anticatholic writer, provided, in his will, a forum for articulating anticatholic ideas. In that will, Dudley funded an annual "Dudleian Lecture" at Harvard, specifying four subjects for the lectures, which were to run in a regular, quadrennial cycle. The will required that the third lecture in each cycle concentrate on the evils and errors of Catholicism, or,

²⁰. John Douglas, Bower and Tillemont Compared: On the First Volume of the Pretended Original and Protestant History of the Popes, Shown to Be Chiefly a Translation from a Popish One (London: J. Morgan, 1757), 54-55.

as the testator's will put it, the lecture was

to be for the detecting, and convicting and exposing the Idolatry of the Romish Church, their Tyranny, Usurpations, damnable Heresies, fatal Errors, abominable Superstitions, and other crying Wickednesses in their High Places; and finally to prove, that the Church of Rome is that mystical Babylon, that Man of Sin, that apostate Church, spoken of in the New-Testament.²¹

The first lecturer whose task it was to deal with "popery" was Edward Wigglesworth (1693-1765), long an associate of Dudley and of the prerogative party. Wigglesworth was Hollis Professor of Divinity at Harvard, a position to which he had been appointed in 1721, thanks to the support of Benjamin Colman, the first minister of the Brattle Street Church, to which many of the prerogative party's mercantile supporters belonged. Wigglesworth had also been an ardent supporter of Joseph Dudley against Elisha Cooke, Jr. in the controversies over the issue of paper money and the creation of a Land Bank.²² Wigglesworth rose to the challenge of discussing the long list of "popish" evils set out in the text of Dudley's will, by avoiding the multitude of arguments over particular, relatively minor errors of the Church, and by focusing on what he believed to be at the heart of "popery's" evil, infallibility. Catholicism's claim to infallibility, explained Wigglesworth, quoting Burnet, was "the main fundamental Point in Debate between us and the Papists, . . . upon which, in a manner, all other Points of Difference do depend."²³ This issue was so vital, Wigglesworth claimed, that if a Protestant could not find convincing arguments against the infallibility of the Church of Rome, then he "had nothing to do, but believe as [the Catholic] Church believes; to receive all their Dictates with implicit

²¹. Edward Wigglesworth, Some Thoughts Upon the Spirit of Infallibility, Claimed by the Church of Rome: Offered at the Anniversary Dudleian Lecture, at Harvard-College, in Cambridge, May 11, 1757 (Boston: John Draper, 1757), 6.

²². Miller, Colony to Province, 315-316, 456. For an example of Wigglesworth's fiscal views, see his A Project for the Emission of an Hundred Thousand Pounds of Province Bills, in such a Manner as to keep their Credit up Equal to Silver (Boston: S. Kneeland, 1720).

²³. Wigglesworth, Spirit of Infallibility, 28-29.

Faith, and follow them with blind Obedience." The entire distinction between Protestantism and "popery", between truth and falsehood, thus hung on this single question.²⁴

Wigglesworth presented a number of Burnet's arguments against infallibility to his audience. He was careful to explain that Catholic infallibility rested in the Church as a whole, rather than in the Pope alone, and he referred to Burnet on the question of conflicting debates among Catholics about whether the Church's infallibility was expressed chiefly through the Pope or through Church councils.²⁵ Wigglesworth carefully demolished a number of Scriptural arguments that Catholics used to support the idea of the Church's infallibility, and showed himself well versed in the chief British writers on the subject.²⁶ In the process of attacking infallibility, the Harvard professor referred to Burnet's central, epistemological refutation of that doctrine. Wigglesworth argued that

according to their [Catholic] Principles, we can neither be assured that the Scriptures are the Word of God, nor be certain what is the Meaning of the Promises of them, unless we first believe the Infallibility of their Church, in testifying the divine Authority of the Scriptures and ascertaining the Sense of them. And yet when we enquire, how we shall be assured of the pretended infallibility of their Church, it is evident...that they can never prove it, unless they find some Promise of it in the Scriptures.

The Catholic Church, according to Wigglesworth, provided no sure epistemological anchor for its claim to infallibility, and therefore ran into "wretched Contradiction, Confusion, and Circulation."²⁷

Thus Wigglesworth joined Burnet and Douglas in emphasizing the doctrine of infallibility, because they believed that doctrine to be the source of all the Catholic Church's errors and evils. It was not only theologians, however, who stressed the fundamental problems with

²⁴. Ibid., 6.

²⁵. Ibid., 8.

²⁶. Ibid., 18-28.

²⁷. Ibid., 13-14.

Catholic reasoning. John Locke (1632-1704), who had been associated with the Whigs since their first emergence as a distinct political faction under the earl of Shaftesbury, and who had gone into exile in the Netherlands with many of the leading Whigs, after being implicated in the Rye House Plot, addressed the issue of Catholic epistemology in his philosophical and political writings.²⁸ Locke set out the basis of his epistemological ideas in the Essay Concerning Human Understanding (1690). In that work, Locke argued that there were two main theories about the sources of human knowledge. The traditional theory, incorrect according to Locke, urged the existence of certain basic, innate ideas about philosophy and morality, from which all other knowledge stemmed. Locke spent the first book of his Essay refuting with exhaustive thoroughness the existence of such innate ideas. The alternative viewpoint, Locke's own, was that all knowledge sprang from sense data the human mind received. Locke thus proposed the existence of two possible worlds of knowledge, one originating in the truth of sense perception, the other relying on false or uncertain truths that were taken on faith to be innate and unchallengeable.²⁹

Although Locke had more on his mind than attacking the Church of Rome when he wrote his Essay, he clearly related the distinction he was making between true, empirical epistemology, and the false beliefs of those who insisted on innate ideas, to the differences between "popery" and Protestantism. One of the evil consequences of the belief in innate ideas was that individuals could begin mistaking their own "private persuasions" for universal truths, and feel justified in suppressing the views of all who disagreed with them. This intellectual arrogance

²⁸. For Locke's intimate involvement with the Whigs, see Ashcraft, Revolutionary Politics, passim, esp. 78-79, 371-383.

²⁹. The whole of the Essay deals with these two systems of knowledge; for encapsulations of the distinction between the two see John Locke, An Essay Concerning Human Understanding (New York: Dover, 1959), vol. 1, 13-14, 37-38, 112-114.

showed that belief in innate ideas was "a short cut to infallibility."³⁰ The infallibility effectively claimed by all those who insisted on the existence of innate ideas was identical with the infallibility asserted by Catholic doctrine; Locke argued that any man who insisted on the real existence of innate ideas essentially "agrees with the Romanists."³¹ Since Locke wrote or formulated most of the Essay as well as his other important works while actively involved in political and armed conspiracies against the Catholic James II, the close association that he posited between "popery" and epistemological error is unsurprising.³²

Locke articulated, in what became a classic form, a philosophical basis for the arguments of the anticatholic writers who, from the 1690s to the middle of the eighteenth century, emphasized that the belief in infallibility was the central fault of the Catholic Church. The processes of reasoning that Burnet, Douglas, and Wigglesworth complained of in the Church of Rome - the circular logic, the failure to derive truths from an objective reality, the invention of whatever beliefs and practices suited the Church's convenience - all were problems that Locke associated with the belief in innate ideas.³³ The post-revolutionary emphasis on Catholics' belief in infallibility enabled the Whigs and the adherents of the prerogative faction to regard the Catholic-Protestant distinction as broadly comparable to the distinction between self-delusion and scientific or philosophical reason.

In America, William Brattle (1662-1717) similarly stressed the absolute contradiction between "popery's" methods of arriving at truth, and the methods of true philosophy. Brattle, who was a fellow at Harvard from 1696 until 1700, during the very years that he and his

³⁰. Ibid., 84-86.

³¹. Ibid., 101-102.

³². See Ashcraft, Revolutionary Politics, 6-13, 99-101 for the influence of Locke's political activities on the development of his philosophy.

³³. Locke, Essay, vol. 1, 14, 84-86, 101-102.

brother Thomas were setting up the Brattle Street Church, wrote a textbook on logic, the Compendium Logicae, that educated Harvard students from the end of the seventeenth century until 1765.³⁴ The text drew heavily on René Descartes' ideas about logic. Although Brattle made it clear that he was an adherent of Locke's philosophy above all others, he argued that in the field of logic Descartes had much to offer the student.³⁵ Despite this assertion of loyalty to the Protestant Locke, Brattle was still obviously uneasy about accepting that a Catholic thinker like Descartes could have any true or valuable ideas at all. One of the first points that Brattle settled, therefore, before proceeding to communicate Descartes' logic to his readers, was that Descartes, far from being a true Catholic, had been profoundly at odds with his Church. To prove this antagonism, Brattle strangely chose to examine a statement of Descartes that was thoroughly orthodox in Catholic terms, about the relationship between philosophy and religion. The manner in which Brattle managed to reverse Descartes' meaning demonstrates the deep-rooted assumption among the spokesmen of the prerogative faction that Catholicism and true philosophy could only coexist in a state of absolute contrariety.

Anxious to reconcile his philosophy with the teachings of Catholicism, Descartes had argued that there were two distinct truths, philosophy and religion, and that his skeptical reasoning "applied only to philosophy and to matters of nature, and in no way to the mysteries of the [Catholic] faith." Brattle explained away this qualification first of all by assuming that Descartes was simply "acting with caution, lest he feel the harsh authority of the Church." The idea that Descartes was too wise to be taken in by "popery", yet too prudent to confront Catholic authorities directly, explained how a respected

³⁴. Miller, Colony to Province, 237-244; Dictionary of American Biography, s.v. "Brattle, William".

³⁵. William Brattle, Compendium Logicae Secundum Principia, D. Renati Cartesii Plerumque Eformatum et Catechistice Propositum (Boston, 1735; John Draper, 1758), 34.

philosopher could have lived as a professed Catholic. Yet Brattle was not content to leave Descartes as a timid compromiser. Instead, the Harvard professor argued that Descartes had intended his statement to be read by Protestants as a direct condemnation of the Church of Rome. Brattle achieved such a reading by assuming that Descartes, as a good philosopher, must have believed that there was only one truth in the cosmos. By pointing to a discrepancy between philosophy and Catholic teachings, Brattle urged, Descartes meant to condemn the latter. The Frenchman's apparent statement of orthodoxy was thus "a snake in the grass," visible to Protestants, but an invisible and lethal enemy to Catholics, whose faulty epistemology encouraged belief in more than one truth, and blinded them to Descartes' real meaning.³⁶ By this argument, Brattle succeeded in turning Descartes' statement entirely on its head, and in demonstrating that he shared Locke's conviction that there could be no common ground between true philosophy and "popery" with its false epistemology.

Thus English Whigs and leaders of the prerogative faction in Massachusetts believed that there was an essential contradiction between Roman Catholicism and the principles of true philosophy and religion. Exposing that contradiction was, however, merely the first, most important step in a larger denunciation of "popery". Having laid bare "popery's" fundamental error, these writers went on to portray a wide range of what they thought to be typical characteristics of Catholic societies and of individual Catholics, all of which were corollaries of "popery's" reliance on a non-existent, supposedly infallible guidance from above. Superstition, innovation, deceit, licentiousness, and selfishness were chief among the attributes of the Church of Rome that Whig and prerogative party writers derived from the fundamental doctrine of infallibility.

³⁶. Ibid., 6-7. The original quotations read: "Eam Res naturales et Philosophiam tantum respicere et nullo modo fidei mysteria", "caute agit ne diram Ecclesiae auctoritatem sentiat," and "anguis in herba."

The connection between infallibility and superstition was logical and straightforward. On the strength of its claims to a broad, infallible knowledge, the Catholic Church was able to imbue with spiritual value a host of beliefs and practices that had no foundation either in scripture or in common sense. From infallibility, Burnet wrote, there emerged the Church's insistence on Latin as the language of the Bible and the mass, the claims of the Pope to wield authority over temporal rulers, the understanding of the mass as a miracle, and, most importantly, the power of the clergy "to pardon sins, and to redeem sinners out of the miseries of a future state."³⁷ Paul Dudley also traced certain specific Catholic doctrines to infallible pronouncements by the Pope or by Church Councils: the canonization of saints, a practice, he lamented, that continued even in the eighteenth century, and the declaration of "privileged altars" where the celebration of mass was especially effective in releasing souls from Purgatory.³⁸ Wigglesworth cited Catholics' belief that miracles still occurred in their church as one of the doctrines derived from infallibility.³⁹ Other, similarly derived, "popish" beliefs and practices singled out for special mention by these authors included: touching or kissing relics, vows to saints, pilgrimages to shrines and holy cities, the identification of bones as those of early Christian martyrs on scant evidence, the prohibition of burials during certain times and in certain places, flagellation and other mortifications of the body, the frequent making of the sign of the cross, and transubstantiation.⁴⁰

What made Catholicism a particularly noteworthy system of

³⁷. Burnet, The History of the Reformation of the Church of England (London, 1715; New York: D. Appleton, 1843), vol. 3, xxxviii.

³⁸. Paul Dudley, An Essay on the Merchandize of Slaves and Souls of Men, Revel. XVIII, 13, with an Application thereof to the Church of Rome (Boston: B. Green, 1731), 21, 22, 30.

³⁹. Wigglesworth, Infallibility, 13.

⁴⁰. Dudley, Merchandize, 5, 9, 10, 12, 15, 18, 23; Brattle, Compendium, 55; Locke, A Letter Concerning Toleration (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1937), 205.

superstition for these authors, and for the Whigs and prerogative men who followed their lead, was its sophistication and specious intellectuality. For example, Wigglesworth warned that Catholic interpretations of scripture were extraordinarily intricate, making it difficult to refute them, false as they were, quickly or easily.⁴¹ Catholic apologists could be subtle in advancing their Church's claims: with disarming modesty, the Church of Rome set limits to what its power and infallible knowledge could achieve, disclaiming any power, for example, to control or predict the future, a self-imposed limitation that made its other claims seem more credible.⁴² Catholic doctrine was complex and formidable in part because its intellectual champions were never complacent. Dudley copiously cited documents produced by various Councils of the Catholic Church to demonstrate that scholars in the Church of Rome continually questioned their own church's beliefs, not with the effect of escaping error, but rather of generating more and more elaborate mechanisms for safeguarding superstitious practices against criticism. For instance, doubts about the validity of some of the saints had induced the Council of Milan to create more complex procedures for authenticating these holy men and women in the future, while Catholic theologians had developed many subtle distinctions between the act of worshipping God and that of paying reverence to the saints, in an attempt to avoid charges of idolatry.⁴³ The church recognized that it might make mistakes where relics were concerned, and wrongly identify bones or scraps of garment as belonging to a particular saint. "Popish" scholars therefore constructed elaborate arguments to prove that anyone who paid reverence to a relic in the full belief that it belonged to a particular holy man or woman was innocent of sin, even

⁴¹. Wigglesworth, Infallibility, 29-30.

⁴². Ibid., 25.

⁴³. Dudley, Merchandize, 11, 17.

if the relic later proved to be false.⁴⁴ Douglas stressed that Catholic scholars were ready to question traditional accounts of their church's history, and that the Catholic establishment had, from time to time, altered certain details of its interpretation of the past.⁴⁵ The writers discussed in this chapter thus did not present Catholics as a set of crass, mindless worshippers of idols. They admitted the intellectual weight of Catholic thought, and deplored Protestant writers who failed to do justice to the complexity and subtlety of "popish" apologists.⁴⁶ For the anticatholic writers of the moderate Whigs and prerogative party, the system of superstition erected on the foundation of infallibility was unequalled among other systems of error, and was thus quite capable of convincing even intelligent people.⁴⁷

Since they recognized that the Catholic Church employed reason to critique its own beliefs and practices, the Protestant writers discussed in this chapter attributed the elaborate superstitions of "popery" to two related intellectual processes operating in that institution. First, infallibility enabled church authorities to introduce innovations, by legitimating new dogmas and new practices of worship.⁴⁸ Second, because those innovations were vulnerable to criticisms based on scripture and on reason, criticisms that were made by Catholics and non-Catholics alike, Church authorities were forced to innovate further, adding refinements and distinctions to original beliefs, in an attempt

⁴⁴. Ibid., 20.

⁴⁵. Douglas, Bower, 23.

⁴⁶. Ibid., 23.

⁴⁷. Burnet, Reformation, vol. 3, xxv. My argument that leading New Englanders regarded "popery's" superstition and idolatry as part of a highly sophisticated system of error, which incorporated but distorted Scripture, does not accord with Francis Cogliano's recent characterization of anticatholicism in New England. Cogliano argues that the political and intellectual elite of that region, including Paul Dudley, regarded Catholicism simply as a set of gross errors promoted by a Church that was ignorant of scripture. No King, No Popery, 8-10.

⁴⁸. Wigglesworth, Infallibility, 8; Dudley, Merchandize, 13-14, 24. See also notes 37 to 40 above.

to reconcile the two types of knowledge, infallible and rational. Burnet made it clear that infallibility not only enabled the Church to introduce new ideas and practices, but compelled the Church to continue to change, in order to protect the original innovations. The bishop used the example of Catholics' purchase of indulgences to free the souls of the dead from Purgatory to illustrate this point. On the one hand, once the innovation of the doctrine of indulgences had been infallibly laid down, the doctrine had to be preserved, otherwise the notion of infallibility would be weakened. Burnet argued that "as far as any changes that might be made in popery, it is certain, infallibility is their basis, so nothing can be altered where a decision is once made."⁴⁹

Yet, the bishop maintained, "writers of the popish side" had ended up admitting, after the Reformation, that the "sale of pardons and indulgences...was a great abuse." As a result, the current situation was that "the proclaiming a sale is forbid by a bull: but there is a commissary in every place, who manages the sale with the most infamous circumstances imaginable."⁵⁰ In this manner, criticism of a Catholic practice, coupled with the Church's determination to maintain the essence of a doctrine based on infallible pronouncements, had led the Church to adopt a system of complicated subterfuges with regard to the sale of indulgences.

Burnet thus argued that the doctrine of infallibility, far from imprisoning the Catholic Church within a fixed, inflexible system of belief, actually necessitated constant change. Other writers similarly emphasized the innovative nature of "popery", and linked innovations to infallible pronouncements. Dudley traced the evolution of Catholic belief in the saints and in Purgatory through a succession of papal and conciliar pronouncements.⁵¹ Wigglesworth, more generally, ascribed all

⁴⁹. Burnet, Reformation, vol. 3, xl.

⁵⁰. Ibid., xxxix.

⁵¹. Dudley, Merchandize, 13-14, 24.

the traditions of the Church of Rome to its basic belief in its infallible guidance.⁵² Burnet and Dudley, who attributed these innovations to the Church's attempt to defend its traditions in the face of rational criticism, made it clear that "popery" was incapable of real reform or improvement; reason, building on a foundation of delusions derived from infallibility, only produced more error. Catholics "may hide or disown some scandalous practices, where heretics dare look into their proceedings and lay them open," admitted Burnet, but "popery is popery still."⁵³

The innovations based on the doctrine of the Church's infallibility, together with the elaborations adopted over time in order to sustain those innovations, underpinned one of the most common complaints levelled by these Whig and prerogative party authors against "popery": its complete untrustworthiness. Burnet hoped that in considering any promise made by Rome, "the spirit of the church...will be preferred to the word of all transactions", and he urged Protestants to believe that the spirit of Catholicism was thoroughly perfidious.⁵⁴ In A Letter Concerning Toleration (1689) Locke argued that, while governments could safely tolerate all Protestant sects, even the nonconformists, governments could never trust Catholics with freedom of worship. The problem with Catholicism was not its specific doctrines, such as transubstantiation, however wrong such doctrines might be, for "if a Roman Catholic believe that to be really the body of Christ, which another man calls bread, he does no injustice thereby to his neighbour."⁵⁵ Nor did the problem with the "popery" lie in its overt denial of the state's political authority, for, according to Locke, no sect, not even the Catholic Church had arrived at "such a degree of

⁵². Wigglesworth, Infallibility, 8.

⁵³. Burnet, Reformation, vol. 3, xli.

⁵⁴. Ibid., xxxi.

⁵⁵. Locke, Toleration, 205.

madness that it should think fit to teach, for doctrines of religion, such things as manifestly undermine the foundations of society."⁵⁶ Locke's chief objection to Catholicism was "another, more secret evil," or Catholics' belief that they possessed a "peculiar prerogative," in their unique guidance from God. Such privileged knowledge made Catholics believe themselves justified in breaking their word, betraying their civic duties, and seizing others' property. Catholics did not assert these perceived rights "nakedly and plainly," for they feared to "draw on them[selves] the eye and hand of the magistrate", but nevertheless, such antisocial and illegal behavior was the undeniable corollary of their basic belief in a special, supernatural guidance. Thus Catholics had to be excluded from civil liberties, because "papists" could never be trusted, whatever undertakings they might give.⁵⁷

Locke's warning about tolerating Catholics contained an important element that was common to Whig and prerogative party denunciations of Catholic perfidy. Just as these authors did not accuse "papists" of crude superstition, but acknowledged the complexity and sophistication of "popish" practices, so these writers did not accuse Catholics of lying and breaking agreements in a simple, dishonest manner, as any less-than-perfect human being might do. Rather, the problem with "popery", according to these particular Protestant authors, was that Catholics could always find some kind of justification for their breaches of promise. One such justification was that a Catholic "thinks himself under no obligation to speak truth, at least to us Hereticks," as Douglas warned his readers.⁵⁸ Similarly, members of the Church of Rome found reasons for breaking the spirit, if not the letter, of agreements made amongst themselves. The canon law provided many

⁵⁶. Ibid., 210.

⁵⁷. Ibid., 210-212.

⁵⁸. Douglas, Bower, 6.

opportunities for cunning men to find loopholes so that they might evade previous obligations.⁵⁹ Reformers within the Catholic Church always found their reforms frustrated by new, complicated means of achieving old ends, as in the case of indulgences, discussed above.⁶⁰ The church's habitual casuistry made Catholics far more dangerous than mere dishonesty would have done, for neither conscience nor logic could effectively restrain a casuist, who was capable of justifying anything.

These charges of superstition, innovation, and deceitfulness levelled against the Catholic Church constituted one group of faults that supposedly derived from the doctrine of infallibility and the epistemological errors it generated. Locke's understanding of human psychology provided a basis for drawing a further set of corollaries from the central doctrine of infallibility. Locke argued that any intellectual system that was not derived from empirical principles necessarily underpinned a licentious way of life, in which the pursuit of pleasure and the avoidance of pain were the only motivations that mattered. For writers influenced by Locke in their anticatholic tracts, the Catholic Church, preeminent in building a belief system on non-empirical foundations, was also the most accomplished of all institutions at satisfying the licentious impulses of its members.

The connection between infallibility and license derived from a fundamental distinction that Locke drew between true knowledge and appetites: the former could only be acquired by empirical means, while the latter were innate in all humans. Men were born without knowledge of speculative or of moral principles, Locke argued, but were able to attain such knowledge through the proper use of their senses. People who did not employ their own senses to understand speculative and moral laws tended to be swayed instead by the impulses with which they were born, most importantly, the desires to be happy, and to avoid misery.

⁵⁹. Burnet, Reformation, vol. 3, xxxi.

⁶⁰. Ibid., xxxix.

These fundamental passions, Locke argued, were powerful enough to become "principles of action", but he warned that such appetite-based principles more often than not acted against moral laws.⁶¹ As proof of his argument that men who did not use their reason were dominated by desires and aversions, Locke pointed to general types of people who, he believed, were without any strong reasoning capacity: children, savages, "naturals" (the mentally handicapped), and the illiterate. Locke argued that "such people know only a little of what immediately concerns them - nurses and playthings, love and hunting. These inferior beings, especially naturals...have only love of pleasure and abhorrence of pain."⁶² These categories of humankind sufficiently demonstrated the basic appetites that motivated all those people who did not employ empirical reason to arrive at universal truths.

Burnet echoed Locke's idea that men who were not guided by true religious and rational principles were slaves to their desires. In his introduction to the third volume of his History of the Reformation (1715), Burnet lamented that his contemporary Britons were "tainted, some with atheism, others with superstition; both which, by different ways, prepare us for popery."⁶³ The reason for Burnet's belief that the growth of superstition would lead Britons back into Catholicism is plain enough, given the widespread association by Burnet and others of "popery" with superstitious beliefs. The reason why atheism would lead to a restoration of the old religion was less straightforward, and Burnet explained it in a later passage of the same work:

Can it be possible that any are so depraved as to wish we had no religion at all, or to be enemies to the Christian religion? Would these men reduce us to a sort of Hottentots? And yet this must grow to be the effect of our being without all [any] religion. Mankind is a creature, by his make and frame disposed to religion; and if this is not managed by true principles, all the jugglings of heathenism would again take possession of the world. If

⁶¹. Locke, Essay, vol. 1, 66-68, 76-77.

⁶². Ibid., 61.

⁶³. Burnet, Reformation, vol. 3, xxv.

the principles of truth, justice, temperance, and of universal love, do not govern men, they will soon grow curses and plagues to one another; and a crew of priests will grow up, who will teach them to compound for all crimes, and to expiate the blackest practices by some rituals.⁶⁴

Thus Burnet explained how atheists' attempts to discredit true, rational (which for him meant Church of England and Dissenting) Christianity would simply destroy men's reliable knowledge of God and of moral laws, and subject men to their innate, selfish, and depraved appetites, which superstitious religion would encourage and justify.

In the above passages, Locke and Burnet opposed a wide range of superstitious mentalities, including the beliefs of "savages", "heathens", and "naturals" to rational religion. While these writers did not argue that all superstitions were "popish", they did regard "popery" as the quintessential superstition. Burnet, in the passage just above, gave his heathen priests a "popish" flavor, while his earlier argument that atheism led to "popery" suggests that the heathen superstitions unleashed by atheistical attacks on Christianity would provide an ideal environment in which Catholicism could take hold of men's minds. Locke made a general association between all non-empirical thought systems and Roman Catholicism in his Essay, again suggesting that, though all superstitious men were not Catholics, "popery" epitomized all superstitions.⁶⁵

For all their elaboration, Catholic superstitions were still, these authors therefore believed, pursuing the basic goal of all other superstitious belief systems, the satisfaction of human appetites. The seizure of Protestant wealth was one of the Church's important goals: the Catholic Church hoped to regain power in England in large part so that it could repossess the monastic and other church property confiscated at the time of the Reformation. Locke and Burnet both reminded their readers that Catholics wanted to regain control of

⁶⁴. Ibid., xxxvi-xxxvii.

⁶⁵. Locke, Essay, 102.

England for the sake of this wealth.⁶⁶ Benjamin Hoadly (1675-1761) produced the most intricate argument for a plot by the Catholic powers of Europe to regain not only the church lands lost in the Reformation, but also other sources of British wealth. Hoadly, a latitudinarian Anglican whose loyal support of the moderate Whigs earned him steady promotion to richer and richer bishoprics throughout his career, became an ardent defender of the government's foreign policy during the 1720s.⁶⁷ In his Enquiry he explained to readers in England and in Massachusetts that all the complex maneuverings behind the Treaty of Vienna of 1725 and the marriage alliances among the Spanish, Austrian, and French royal houses were part of an elaborate, concerted design to extinguish Protestantism in Europe. The active measures taken by the Walpole administration to divide the Catholic powers were therefore entirely justifiable, even though such measures involved Britain in entangling alliances and military commitments on the Continent.⁶⁸

While these authors stressed the Catholic Church's designs on Protestant property, their main emphasis, when they discussed the material greed of "popery", was on the ways that the Church of Rome exploited its own members. The higher clergy used the Catholic faith primarily to enrich themselves, Burnet warned. "Popery" was a tyranny that reached "to men's worldly concerns" as well as to spiritual ones: the church enabled the "governing clergy" and the religious orders to live lives of "luxury and vanity."⁶⁹ To this end, infallibility and the superstitions it generated provided a practical means, as well as a psychological foundation for the pursuit of appetite. The scope and complexity of the Catholic Church's superstitions enabled it constantly

⁶⁶. Ibid., xxix-xxx; Locke, Toleration, 212.

⁶⁷. Robbins, Commonwealthman, 84-87, 117; Dictionary of National Biography, s.v. "Hoadly, Benjamin".

⁶⁸. Benjamin Hoadly, An Enquiry into the Reasons of the Conduct of Great Britain, with Relation to the Present State of Affairs in Europe (Boston: T. Fleet, 1727), 72.

⁶⁹. Burnet, Reformation, vol. 3, xxxii, xliii.

to invent new religious practices in order to get money from the public. Every new doctrine and practice was turned into a source of gain. For example, the church's rulers had elaborated many rules about when people could and could not be buried, "all of which they take care to make their market."⁷⁰ Dudley argued that the Catholic Church made huge sums out of the cult of the saints, by canonizing saints for money, by encouraging Catholics to donate money to the church in the saints' names, and by fostering pilgrimages to holy shrines, where the faithful could be milked dry. "Filthy lucre was at the bottom of all this" veneration of the saints, whatever spiritual reasons the Church might pretend.⁷¹ The Church encouraged its members to make vows to the saints, because "those [vows] that are not Originally for Money, may be changed into a Pecuniary Mulct, and so made Merchandize."⁷² Even the ascetic practices of the Church, the "unnatural Chastisings of the Body, by Shirts of Mail, Haircloth, Whippings, and other Bodily Penances" were means of satisfying the clergy's greed, for after encouraging the faithful to undertake courses of self-punishment, the Church commuted such physical penances into cash payments.⁷³ In general, the sale of forgiveness for sins was the Church's most lucrative operation. According to Burnet, "it is well known, that in practice, the necessity of auricular confession, and the priestly absolution, with the conceit of the sacrifice of the mass, are the most gainful parts of popery."⁷⁴ The doctrine of Purgatory similarly ended up as a means of making money. That doctrine evolved over a long period of time, reaching its final form only in 1439, but once in place, "the next Thing was to set up a Trade upon this Foundation, and to make Merchandize of it, for that was

⁷⁰. Dudley, Merchandize, 9.

⁷¹. Ibid., 10, 11, 22, 23.

⁷². Ibid., 23.

⁷³. Ibid., 5.

⁷⁴. Burnet, Reformation, vol. 3, xlii.

the Main thing designed all along."⁷⁵ So successful was the Church at making merchandize out of Purgatory, Dudley concluded, that the doctrine of Purgatory marked "the deepest Corruption, and the most profitable Invention that ever that Church was guilty of." Indeed, he argued, the concept of Purgatory enabled the Church to make even more money from the dead than it did from the living.⁷⁶ Moderate Whig and prerogative faction authors, especially Dudley, thus painted a detailed portrait of a church that was adept at turning every idea and practice into a commodity.

These writers were not only fascinated with the entrepreneurial ingenuity of the Church, but also with the scale of its operations. Burnet calculated that the 500 bales of blank indulgence forms captured from a Spanish galleon by Bristol privateers contained 3,840,000 individual indulgences. So much paper was contained in these bales, noted Burnet, that the captain of the privateering vessel had been able to use it to careen his ship.⁷⁷ Dudley, who cited Burnet on the size of the Church's trade in indulgences, also turned to the bishop of Salisbury for information on the scale of the exploitation of saints' relics. Dudley noted that thanks to recent discoveries, the Church had limitless possibilities of profit ahead, for the Popes "have Sprung such a Mine of Relicks in the Catacombs of Rome, as will supply that Church with an inexhaustible Magazine of Bones." So many potential relics lay in those ancient tombs, that "there are Men kept constantly at work in them" to sustain the supply.⁷⁸ The sale of spiritual wares was thus big business, encompassing mining and shipping in its global operations.

The sale of spiritual goods, especially of pardons for sin did not only satisfy the greed of the church hierarchy, but also pandered to the

⁷⁵. Dudley, Merchandize, 26.

⁷⁶. Ibid., 12, 24.

⁷⁷. Burnet, Reformation, vol. 3, xxxix.

⁷⁸. Dudley, Merchandize, 17-18.

appetites of the ordinary lay person. While the former gained monetary wealth from such sales, the latter gained the guarantee that happiness in the afterlife was assured, whatever the moral quality of his or her life on earth.⁷⁹ Assured by their church that they had bought protection from divine retribution, Catholics were so unrestrained by any morality that, Burnet believed, "there is nothing so impudent, that these men are ashamed to venture on."⁸⁰ Cotton Mather (1663-1728), who became an ally of the prerogative party in Massachusetts after 1709, when he finally realized that all attempts to reestablish himself as the leader of an independent, clerical faction were in vain, joined in the attack on "papists" as creatures of unbridled self-indulgence.⁸¹ In Adversus Libertinos, a published sermon that attacked antinomianism, Mather opened his discourse with an attack on the Church of Rome. The faith and practices of that church, he claimed, epitomized the error of all those who believed that they were immune from laws of morality because they were saved.⁸² Mather urged his readers to perform good works, and avoid following the hypocritical example of "the Papists and the Quakers," who confused the receipt of God's grace with holiness.⁸³ Mather, looking beyond questions of church organization and liturgy, was able to equate one of the most ritualistic Christian groups with one of the least ritualistic, on the grounds that both had found systematic means of evading the moral code of scripture. The licentiousness of Catholics manifested itself in a variety of ways. The principles and

⁷⁹. Ibid., 26.

⁸⁰. Burnet, Reformation, vol. 3, xxxix.

⁸¹. On Mather's change of political allegiance, and the accompanying shift in his religious and philosophical thought, see Pencak, War, Politics, and Revolution, 51; Middlekauff, The Mathers, 222-230; Miller, Colony to Province, 314-315, 378-386.

⁸². Cotton Mather, Adversus Libertinos, or Evangelical Obedience Described and Demanded; in an Essay to Establish the Holy Law of the Glorious God upon the Principles of Justification by the Faith in the Gospel (Boston: B. Green, 1713), 1-2.

⁸³. Ibid., 25.

practices of "popery" enabled Catholics to break marriage engagements without guilt, and to justify the murder of private enemies.⁸⁴ The love of sensual self-indulgence even carried over into the worship of God, which Catholics "dress up as a splendid opera."⁸⁵ Burnet suggested that Catholic licentiousness was so inordinate that it would undermine "good health" and "long life", unlike the moderation imposed by true, Protestant Christianity, which preserved the bodies as well as the souls of men.⁸⁶

One necessary consequence of the prevailing licentiousness of "popery", according to the authors here considered, was that Catholic societies were arenas of competition, where each individual sought to satisfy his or her own appetites at the expense of others around them. For Burnet, this striving of man against man was a general consequence of any abandonment of the principles of rational religion. In such circumstances people "soon grow curses and plagues to one another," in contrast to societies governed by true, Protestant principles which alone were conducive to "all the interests of human society, to the order and peace of the world, and to the truth and love that are the cements of the body politic."⁸⁷

In Catholic countries, this selfish striving for wealth took many forms. Pope Leo X and King Francis I of France had cynically joined forces to destroy the liberties of local Catholic Churches in France, and to divide the resources of those churches between themselves.⁸⁸ The higher clergy of the Catholic Church kept the lower clergy poor, in order to satisfy a desire for pomp and easy living.⁸⁹ Rich clergymen,

⁸⁴. Douglas, Bower, 72, 76; Dudley, Merchandize, 9.

⁸⁵. Burnet, Reformation, vol. 3, xxxii, xlii.

⁸⁶. Ibid., xxxvii.

⁸⁷. Ibid., xxxvii.

⁸⁸. Ibid., xxxv.

⁸⁹. Ibid., xxxii.

however, were not themselves safe from the predatory atmosphere that prevailed inside the Catholic world:

for at the Death of Clergymen, the Pope challenged for himself All their Estates that were raised out of the Revenues of the Church; so that a rich Clergyman could no sooner fall Sick, but the Pope's Collectors were gaping about him for all his Goods, and set Guards presently about his House: that by this, Bishops have been deserted upon their Death Beds, and Famished for want of Meat to Eat.⁹⁰

Even at the most humble level of the church, among poor, lay villagers, the same spirit of fierce competition prevailed. Each village in Italy had formed a society specifically to safeguard the value of the relics that its local church possessed. So important were these relics to the material welfare of these communities, which profited from the pilgrims that came to seek favors from the saints to whom the relics belonged, that "long and sharp Quarrels and law-suits" arose between the villages that strove to gain or retain possession of the holy bones, or sought to authenticate their own, and discredit their neighbors' relics.⁹¹

One effect of this struggle for wealth was the disruption of the political and social order. In the desire to profit from the canonization of saints, Popes, in cooperation with self-interested local communities, had raised rebels, like Thomas à Becket, heretics, like St. Bonaventure, and other worthless individuals to positions of undeserved respect.⁹² Even within the family, the Church challenged the proper order, by encouraging women to make vows to the saints, under the church's special protection, so that "contrary to all Laws Divine and Humane, Husbands are deprived of the Power of hindering their Wives from making [such vows]." Since these vows were often commuted into monetary payments to the Church, wives were thus empowered to spend family property in pursuit of vain, self-promoting acts of false piety.⁹³

⁹⁰. Dudley, Merchandize, 28.

⁹¹. Ibid., 12.

⁹². Ibid., 23.

⁹³. Ibid., 23.

This world of self-seeking, where the powerful preyed upon the weak, and the weak fought each other for a share in the hierarchy's spoils, rested largely on the willing participation of the vast majority of Catholics. These authors considered in this chapter explained the eager loyalty of most rank and file Catholics in various ways. Burnet argued that the sacraments of confession and communion were the elements of "popery" that "do most effectually subdue the world to it." He compared the effects of Catholic doctrine on the ordinary "papist" to the effects of "charm and witchcraft."⁹⁴ Wigglesworth represented Catholics as immune from Protestant arguments, because they were intellectually convinced that "you might as well imagine that Christ and his Apostles have erred, as that she [the Church] hath or can."⁹⁵ Dudley, citing Burnet's Exposition on the Thirty-Nine Articles, argued that "popery's" power resulted from Catholic clergy's "subtilty and vile practices" which ensured that "there are Millions that continue, and it is to be feared willingly, to be imposed on and cheated" by the Church.⁹⁶ The "subtilties" of the Catholic clergy, for example, persuaded hundreds of thousands voluntarily to embark on arduous pilgrimages, some of which were hundreds of miles long, as Dudley noted with disgust.⁹⁷ These Whig and prerogative party writers were appalled by, but emphatic about the fact that most Catholics enthusiastically participated in their church's beliefs and practices.

Perhaps no general feature of Catholic societies illustrated the willing adherence of rank-and-file Catholics so much as the market basis on which "popery" supposedly rested. Catholicism remained a popular and even an expanding faith because the public was willing to buy its wares. Dudley complained that "the Merchants and Chapmen of Rome, like Locusts,

⁹⁴. Burnet, Reformation, vol. 3, xlvi, xxxviii.

⁹⁵. Wigglesworth, Infallibility, 6.

⁹⁶. Dudley, Merchandize, 28-29.

⁹⁷. Ibid., 15-16.

Swarmed all over the Christian World with the greatest Impudence, though under the Cloak of Piety and Compassion of Souls, [and] bartered away their Commodities [indulgences and masses for the dead] for...Money, Lands, or anything else of value they could get."⁹⁸ So successful was the Church at marketing "popery", that Catholicism was currently expanding in mainland Asia. Dudley warned that "the Merchants of Mystical Babylon are of late opening a Trade with these wretched Commodities in India, China, and other ends of the Earth."⁹⁹ Thus Catholicism could build a following even in areas where "popery" had no political power, simply because local people found the Catholic offer of salvation from eternal punishment attractive. Like any vendor, the Catholic Church had to price its wares according to market conditions. Thus, Burnet explained, the price of the same indulgence varied from 30 rials (20 English pence) to 50 pieces of eight (11 pounds sterling) depending on what the purchasers were willing and able to pay.¹⁰⁰

Not only was the Catholic public willing to buy "popish" products, but it also invested in church schemes that would bring a suitable return. Thus, the Pope was able to charge as much as 100,000 crowns for agreeing to canonize a particular saint, because the proprietors of the proposed saint's relics "don't stick at the Price; since, they are sure of making their Money again out of the Shrine, with great Advantage; for...a new Saint at first, and so for a considerable time, gets the better of all the rest."¹⁰¹ In the Catholic marketplace, as in any other, a new commodity created a new demand, justifying even heavy investment from those in a position to exploit the new commodity.¹⁰² Another profitable investment for any local community was to endow a

⁹⁸. Ibid., 26.

⁹⁹. Ibid., 31.

¹⁰⁰. Burnet, Reformation, vol. 3, xxxix.

¹⁰¹. Dudley, Merchandize, 22.

¹⁰². Ibid., 12.

"privileged altar." Originally, such altars had been purchased by paying money to monastic orders. A mass said at a privileged altar was worth a hundred said elsewhere, in terms of delivering souls from Purgatory, and such an altar therefore attracted a comparably greater volume of offerings and legacies. More recently, the Pope had created a larger investment opportunity, by selling his own privileged altars. "Celebrating a Mass or two, at a [Papal] Privileged Altar...as Infallibly delivers a Soul out of Purgatory, as a Thousand at any other."¹⁰³ Ordinary Catholics thus supported the church as eager suppliers, as well as eager purchasers, of the commodities that "popery" was able to invent.

If "popery's" pandering to appetite won support from ordinary Catholics and from non-Christians in Asia, it might also seduce Protestants within the British Empire. In 1715 Burnet lamented that Englishmen were "much more depraved in all respects" than they had been at the time of the Glorious Revolution, and that to "support a luxurious and brutal course of irregular and voluptuous practices", they might be ready to submit to "popery" and the Catholic Stuarts again.¹⁰⁴ If "popery" did return to Britain, it would soon enrich itself, without necessarily having to use violent or oppressive means. Suppose, Burnet suggested, that the Pope's sixteenth-century guarantee of the titles of possessors of former church property in England were trustworthy. Even in this unlikely event, such property would find its way back into the possession of the Church's hands, for many "a dexterous confessor" would persuade the heirs of the purchasers of the confiscated lands that holding such property was a sin, and by working on their consciences, such men would achieve a restoration without force.¹⁰⁵ The persuasive power of "popery" meant that nothing was safe.

¹⁰³. Ibid., 30.

¹⁰⁴. Burnet, Reformation, vol. 3, xxv, xxxiii.

¹⁰⁵. Ibid., xxix.

Logically enough, while these Whig and prerogative party authors made much of "popery's" many seductive qualities, they placed less emphasis than Foxe had done on Catholicism's tyranny and cruelty. Burnet did remind his readers of Mary Tudor's harsh reign, while he and Dudley both referred to Foxe when discussing the savage treatment meted out to Protestants by Catholic authorities.¹⁰⁶ The harrying of the Huguenots after the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685 provided these writers with a more recent example of "popery's" persecuting spirit.¹⁰⁷ The ruthlessness of the Inquisition and of the Jesuits came under attack from Burnet, Brattle, and Douglas, while other writers made more general references to the Catholic Church's abuse of power.¹⁰⁸ Yet none of these writers made Catholic tyranny and persecution the organizing theme of their texts, which dealt chiefly with the epistemological consequences of infallibility, and with the corollaries of such errors, particularly rampant licentiousness. The relative unimportance of the theme of cruelty and persecution constitutes the most marked difference between these texts and Foxe's Acts and Monuments.

One reason for the shift in emphasis may be these later authors' belief that greed was the most fundamental and powerful motivation of human behavior, more so than sadism or the love of power. Such ordering of human impulses appeared in Dudley's argument that the Catholic clergy's "insatiable Avarice...inspired them with that inhuman Cruelty and Barbarity that made them desire the Death of all Men."¹⁰⁹ Similarly Burnet, when considering the impact of various anticatholic arguments on his readers, concluded that exposure of the Church of Rome's lust for

¹⁰⁶. Ibid., xxv-xxvi; Dudley, Merchandize, 9.

¹⁰⁷. Burnet, Reformation, vol. 3, xxi, xl; Dudley, Merchandize, ii.

¹⁰⁸. Brattle, Compendium, 7, 54; Douglas, Bower, 72; Burnet, Reformation, vol. 3, xxvii, xli; Wigglesworth, Infallibility, 6; Hoadly, Enquiry, 72.

¹⁰⁹. Dudley, Merchandize, 27.

property would be more effective than denunciations of that church for its tyrannical violence. Having recalled Mary Tudor's persecutions, Burnet admitted:

All this will make little impression on those who have no fixed belief of anything in religion themselves, and so may reckon it a small matter to be of any religion that comes to have the law and government on its side; and resolve to change with any wind and tide, rather than put anything to hazard by struggling against it...Yet, since that set of men is so impiously corrupted in the point of religion, that no scene of cruelty can fright them from leaping into it, and perhaps from acting such a part in it as may be assigned them, there are other considerations...that may perhaps affect them deeper, because they touch in a more sensible part.¹¹⁰

Burnet then proceeded to discuss the Catholic Church's insatiable greed for property. Unlike Foxe, Burnet believed that threats to property, rather than threats to life and limb, were more likely to persuade weak-principled possessors of former church lands to repudiate "popery".

Such was the view of "popery" articulated by these authors. The significance of these anticatholic statements lies, of course, not only in what these men wrote, but also in why they developed this particular set of ideas, so different in its emphases from the earlier anticatholicism of Foxe. None of these writers provides a thorough, explicit account of why they formulated their antipopery in the way they did. They were no doubt themselves unaware of many of the factors that influenced their formulation, as they unconsciously adapted their statements to appeal to the political views of some of their readers. There are, however, plenty of scattered indications in their texts as to why they arrived at their views of the Catholic Church. By placing these indications in the context of contemporary British and Massachusetts politics, it is possible to reach some reliable conclusions about the influences that forged these texts.¹¹¹

¹¹⁰. Burnet, Reformation, vol. 3, xxviii-xxix.

¹¹¹. See Frederic Jameson, The Political Unconscious: Narrative as a Socially Symbolic Act (Ithaca: Cornell University, 1981), 74-85 for the idea that texts are not simple expressions of the writer's point of

The goals of the political groups with which these authors were associated, the moderate Whigs in Britain and the prerogative faction in Massachusetts have been outlined above.¹¹² In brief, these groups wished to foster unity between Anglicans and Dissenters, to promote transatlantic commerce, and to protect the privileged position of financial elites in London and Boston. In order to achieve these goals, these politicians had to persuade their respective political publics that their policies were to the advantage of the generality of Britons and Bay Colonists. The nature of the publics these writers addressed helps to explain the content of their published attacks on "popery".

Both the moderate Whigs and the prerogative party faced severe political challenges over the period 1689-1760. In Britain, opposition came from two related sources. One source was the Tory party, who differed from the Whigs on many issues, of which one of the most important was religious toleration: Tories believed that the toleration granted to Dissenters was weakening the Church of England, and they wished to restrict Dissenters' freedom of action as much as possible. The second opposition group was the "country" interest, an unorganized group of independent members of Parliament who were deeply suspicious of the Whigs' new financial institutions, which, they believed, threatened both the economic and political interests of rural voters. Since rural districts were overrepresented in Parliament during this period, and since "country" members and Tories often joined forces, the moderate Whigs faced significant challenges when it came to promoting and defending their program.¹¹³

In Massachusetts, the prerogative faction never embraced more than

view, but attempts to reconcile contradictions between what the writer believes, and the viewpoints expressed by other members of the writer's society. Ashcraft, Revolutionary Politics, 3-9 employs a similar interpretive method to relate the texts produced by Locke and other Whig writers to late seventeenth-century English politics.

¹¹². See pp. 107-110 above.

¹¹³. Kenyon, Stuart England, 282-312.

a minority of the representatives in the lower house. This faction faced opposition from two major sources. One was a group of Boston-based politicians headed by Elisha Cooke, from the 1690s until 1715, and then by his son of the same name. When the younger Cooke organized the Boston Caucus in 1719, the prerogative party was confronting perhaps the most efficient political machine in America.¹¹⁴ The elder Cooke's initial goal was to restore conditions under the old, 1629 charter as far as possible, including the monopoly of worship and provincial office enjoyed by Congregationalists of the New England Way. After it became clear, by the first decade of the eighteenth century, that attempts to recover any lost rights from the old charter were doomed to failure, the Cooke faction changed its focus. In the first decades of the eighteenth century, this faction concentrated on reducing the power of the royal governors and other imperial officials who usually supported the prerogative faction's interests, and on destroying the prerogative faction's domination of provincial finance by obtaining a charter for a Land Bank. Beside the Cooke faction, prerogative men faced opposition from rural representatives, unorganized and local in their outlook, but suspicious of strong imperial or provincial government, and convinced that the colony's wealthiest men were responsible for the economic backwardness of rural regions. When the Cooke faction and the rural towns joined forces, as was frequently the case, the prerogative party was powerless in promoting or defending its programs in the General Court.¹¹⁵

Both Whigs and prerogative party members had a range of means at their disposal for dealing with opposition. Relying on the power of a sympathetic executive was one important means, especially in Britain after 1716, when growing government patronage and the decreased

¹¹⁴. Pencak, War, Politics, and Revolution, 68; Nash, Urban Crucible, 87.

¹¹⁵. Nash, Urban Crucible, 80-86; Pencak, War, Politics, and Revolution, 18, 68-74.

frequency of elections enabled the executive to wield extensive influence among members of Parliament. Executive influence, however, was much more limited in Britain before 1716, and was never very extensive in Massachusetts. Another, very important means of influencing legislative bodies was by making an appeal to public opinion in the newly vitalized medium of print. The Glorious Revolution constituted a watershed in the scale of printed debate. 1689 saw a sudden leap in the number of political publications in England, and the new level was broadly sustained thereafter.¹¹⁶ With the lapsing of the Press Licensing Act in 1695, most restrictions on publishing were removed, encouraging the continuance of a high output of political tracts.¹¹⁷ Even after elections became less frequent, and patronage more pervasive, under the Hanoverians, spirited criticism of public measures continued on a large scale; it was in the 1720s that there appeared the first periodicals, permanently dedicated to detached, critical observation of the administration, making the press, in the words of Habermas, into "the fourth estate".¹¹⁸ In Massachusetts, the volume of political publishing was lower, but still the early eighteenth century marked a new level of printed, public debate on political issues, with the appearance of the first newspapers, including James Franklin's New-England Courant, an organ sympathetic to the Cooke interest.¹¹⁹

In the political contexts of Britain and Massachusetts, emphasis on the threat posed by external, Catholic enemies proved very useful to moderate Whigs and prerogative men, who wished to persuade independently-minded, rural voters that high taxes, large armed forces, and greater powers for the executive branch of government were necessary

¹¹⁶. Israel, "General Introduction" in The Anglo-Dutch Moment, 6-7.

¹¹⁷. Kenyon, Stuart England, 291-293, 311-312.

¹¹⁸. Habermas, Public Sphere, 60.

¹¹⁹. Nash, Urban Crucible, 85-87, 140; Miller, Colony to Province, 395.

for the good of the whole community. Anticatholic rhetoric was effective in part because the possibility of invasion and conquest by Catholic enemies was quite real. In late seventeenth-century Europe, developments in military transportation and administration caught up with the growth in the size and the equipment requirements of armies, suddenly enabling the largest Continental forces to be shipped across bodies of water the size of the English Channel. For the first time since the fifteenth century, the British Isles were in serious danger of successful invasion from abroad, especially from France. When moderate Whigs argued that Britain's survival as a truly independent and Protestant nation depended on tax increases, sophisticated financial institutions, an army and navy of unprecedented size, and a host of new tax collectors and civil servants, they were speaking important truths. Anticatholic rhetoric stressed the evil consequences of French conquest, and thus served the moderate Whigs' goals of persuading voters and representatives of the English counties to support one of the most significant revolutions that ever took place in the size and scope of the British government's operations. That revolution advanced the political, financial, and commercial power of the moderate Whigs.¹²⁰

The power of France abroad was even more threatening, given the existence of Catholic majorities in Ireland and the Scottish Highlands, who proved willing to rise in support of foreign, Catholic invaders.¹²¹ The danger of domestic insurrection was enhanced by the existence of Catholic monarchs, James II and his heirs, with a claim to be the legitimate rulers of England, Scotland, and Ireland. The exiled Stuarts provided the focus and inspiration for rebellion in Ireland in 1689-1690, and in Scotland in 1715 and 1745-1746. The moderate Whigs were able to use the real threat of internal revolt in support of the Stuarts

¹²⁰. Brewer, Sinews of Power, xiii-xv, 7-14, 27-42, 64-69.

¹²¹. There were Catholics in England, also, but they constituted only 1-2% of the entire population, and they generally avoided political activity, fearing to provoke the authorities into rigid enforcement of the penal laws. Bossy, Catholic Community, 187-188, 404-406.

and "popery" in order to alter the constitution in ways that favored their continuance in power. Two particularly important constitutional developments stemmed in large part from the British political nation's fear of Catholicism. The first was the Act of Settlement of 1701, when Parliament provided that the Protestant Electors of Hanover, instead of the Catholic Stuarts, were to succeed to the throne on the death of Anne. The second was the Septennial Act of 1716, passed in the aftermath of the 1715 revolt that sought to put James II's son on the throne. Both measures benefitted the moderate Whigs tremendously. The first established on the throne a dynasty whose first two rulers invariably chose Whigs as ministers. The second measure, by reducing the frequency of parliamentary elections from every three years to every seven, enormously increased the influence that Whig-dominated ministries could wield in Parliament. Anticatholic rhetoric, as many historians have pointed out, helped to consolidate the constitutional, as well as the financial and economic position of the moderate Whigs between 1689 and 1760.¹²²

The population of Massachusetts had no internal Catholics to fear, but the experience of the Dominion of New England had taught them that the lack of Catholics in their own province was no protection, for church and government in the Bay Colony could be severely threatened by the rise of "popery" in the mother country. At the time of the Glorious Revolution, Massachusetts, like England, also faced a sudden increase in the menace of Catholicism abroad. The French in Quebec used trade and missionaries to win allies among native Americans in northern New England, and from the winter of 1689-1690 these natives were conducting frightening and devastating raids on frontier settlements. These surprise raids continued through both the War of the League of Augsburg (1689-97) and the War of the Spanish Succession (1702-1713), and spurred Massachusetts to wage its own local conflict against the Indian allies

¹²². Miller, Popery and Politics, 79-80; Plumb, Political Stability, 63-64; Kenyon, Stuart England, 276-277, 282.

of France, when in 1722-1724 Bay Colony forces destroyed the Jesuits' missionary center of Norridgewalk among the Abenaki, killing the leading Jesuit missionary, Fr. Sebastian Rale. As international tensions between Great Britain and the Catholic powers revived in the middle of the eighteenth century, so did local conflict along the New England-New France border. Thus in Massachusetts as in the mother country, the reality of the "popish" threat in the period 1689-1763 ensured that anticatholic rhetoric retained its long-standing ability to win the attention and rouse the passions of the political public. The prerogative faction owed much of its political success to Massachusetts voters' fear of French and Indian invasion. During times of war, the prerogative faction, who stood for cooperation with imperial authorities, tended to win more support from the General Court than did the Cooke faction and the Boston Caucus. As lenders to the provincial government, as recipients of supply contracts for the armed forces, and as beneficiaries of expanded opportunities for land speculation and commerce, members of the prerogative faction also benefitted materially from warfare. Though war never enabled the prerogative group to gain in Massachusetts the type of entrenched political, financial, and constitutional position enjoyed by the moderate Whigs in Britain, nevertheless, war with Catholic foes served the interests of the prerogative party considerably.¹²³

Given the many benefits that war with foreign, Catholic nations brought to the moderate Whigs and the prerogative faction, it is not surprising that many of the authors considered in this chapter emphasized, among the many evils of "popery", Catholic nations' ambitions to conquer the British Empire. Wigglesworth warned that Catholicism was "a restless, incroaching, and implacable Enemy to Protestants of every Denomination" and that "the Protestant Interest, both in Europe and America, is at this Day threatened by the Sword of

¹²³. Pencak, War, Politics, and Revolution, 4-7.

its Popish Enemies."¹²⁴ Other authors made brief but clear reference to the determination of Catholics, at home and abroad, to extinguish Protestantism in the British Empire.¹²⁵ Hoadly's Enquiry provides the best evidence that these references to Catholic threats from abroad were part of an attempt to persuade readers of the value of Whig war measures. This author spent the hundred or so pages of his text stressing the existence of an international conspiracy on the part of Catholic nations to restore Catholicism in Great Britain. He then used this purported conspiracy to argue strenuously, to British and Massachusetts readers, that the national debt had been incurred in a worthwhile cause, and that debtholders' rights must be strictly respected, in order to maintain the government's credit in preparation for the next onslaught by the Catholic powers.¹²⁶ While only Hoadly makes an explicit plea for Whig policies, it is probable that many of the references to Catholic threats that pepper the documents examined in this chapter, implied a similar political message.

The political effectiveness of these threats of Catholic invasion and insurrection depended in large part on the horrific nature of Catholic rule, as perceived by the readers of these documents. An emphasis on the violent persecutions carried out by "popish" governments, along the lines of Foxe's Acts and Monuments, would seem, at first glance, to have been the best means of scaring readers into supporting vigorous war measures. Why then, was the theme of Catholic tyranny given so much less emphasis by these post-Glorious Revolution authors than by Foxe? Why did these later texts stress infallibility and license instead?

Certain of the authors here considered clearly felt that some of their readers were skeptical about the true extent of the danger and

¹²⁴. Wigglesworth, Infallibility, 31.

¹²⁵. Dudley, Merchandize, i-ii; Burnet, Reformation, xli; Douglas, Bower, 69; Locke, Toleration, 211-212.

¹²⁶. Hoadly, Enquiry, passim., esp. 73-79.

evils of "popery". Hoadly expressed this fear most plainly:

I know very well how easy and how common it is, to laugh at the Name of the Pretender, whenever it is mentioned upon such Occasions, as a Political Bugbear or Scare-crow; a mere Word of Alarm; or a Puppet to be play'd by Statesmen at their pleasures, and whenever their Designs require it.¹²⁷

Burnet, too, believed that warnings about the Catholic Church were not always taken sufficiently seriously:

I know some, who are apt to deceive themselves, or hope to deceive others, have this in their mouths - popery is not what it was before the Reformation; things are much mended, many abuses are detected, and things are not so gross as they were then: and they tell us, further corrections might be expected, if we would enter into a treaty with them...¹²⁸

Dudley also began his attack on "popish" luxury and license by answering a hypothetical skeptic:

If any should inquire what occasion there is at this time of the Day for an Oration against Popery; is the Protestant Interest in any hazard from that Quarter? I answer, the Church Militant will never be out of danger...¹²⁹

Clearly, these writers did not feel that their attacks on the Catholic Church would automatically carry weight with all their readers.

In the face of such doubt, the authors here considered needed carefully to avoid making any charges against "popery" that might seem extravagant or unconvincing. One charge that was becoming unconvincing to some English-speaking Protestants by the start of the eighteenth century was the claim that the Catholic Church was bent on the sadistic torture and burning of all opponents. One reason for Protestant skepticism on this head was that the Church of Rome was in fact ameliorating its treatment of heretics. John Miller argues that by the second half of the seventeenth century, Catholicism had ceased to persecute heretics with anything like its previous energy. The harrying of the Huguenots of France after the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes

¹²⁷. Ibid., 40.

¹²⁸. Burnet, Reformation, xxxix.

¹²⁹. Dudley, Merchandize, i.

in 1685 was one exception in a general pattern of greater toleration. As a result of the broader relaxation of persecution, Foxe's account of Catholic rule as one bloody martyrdom after another had become somewhat anachronistic.¹³⁰ Although, as Miller rightly argues, most Englishmen continued to believe in the bloodthirsty nature of "popery", even after much of the original basis for such a charge had disappeared, Burnet provides evidence that some of his readers were reacting to the changing reality of Catholic behavior. In response to unnamed proponents of entente with Rome, Burnet has to admit that the Catholic Church had indeed appeared milder in its behavior towards heretics, from the time of "Odischalci" (Pope Innocent XI, 1676-1689).¹³¹

It appears, therefore, that some Englishmen were arguing that Catholicism was in the process of reforming and that the old, stubborn distrust of "popery" was now unnecessary. In such a context, the traditional, Foxe-style rhetoric against Catholic tyranny might well have worked against the authors considered in this chapter, especially when there was some cynicism, as Hoadly suggested, about the political motivations of anticatholic rhetoric.¹³² By emphasizing the issue of

¹³⁰. Miller, Popery and Politics, 79-80, 89.

¹³¹. Burnet, Reformation, xli.

¹³². See note 127, above. Burnet and Locke had concrete experience, in the decades immediately preceding the Glorious Revolution, of how damaging traditional attacks on "popery" for tyranny could be for the Whig cause. By the 1660s, propertied members of the Church of England had grown suspicious of Dissenters and radical sectarians when the latter groups lashed out against the Catholic Church, because all too often in the recent past, such attacks had been preludes to sectarian attempts to overturn the social and political order in England. Hill, Antichrist, 149. Two events in Restoration England demonstrated the problems that traditional anticatholic rhetoric presented for non-Anglican Protestants. During the Great Fire of London in 1667, spontaneous rumors had spread, charging Catholics with deliberately setting the blaze as part of a plot to reimpose "popery". Once such rumors had run their course, Anglican voters and members of Parliament then began to accuse Dissenters of originating such tales, in order to create an anticatholic backlash that would give Dissenters a chance to seize power. Miller, Popery and Politics, 103-104. A similar pattern occurred during and after the "Popish Plot" crisis of 1678-1679. At first, apparent evidence given by Titus Oates, who accused James, duke of York, of plotting to murder his brother the king, ascend the throne, and reimpose "popery", led to widespread anticatholic hysteria, and to support for the Whigs in their attempt to exclude James from the

Catholic infallibility, these authors avoided looking like devious scare-mongers, while they proposed a plausible argument for continuing to distrust "popery". A church that believed itself infallible was utterly untrustworthy. Such a church might easily pretend to reform itself in order to deceive Protestant critics. Therefore, Protestants were justified in refusing to believe in the reality of Catholic reform, whatever measures that Church took to rectify its faults. Thus, in response to those who argued that Catholicism was mitigating its persecutions of heretics, Burnet warned that Protestants should not be lulled by such appearances into a false sense of security, for "howsoever we may let the fears of popery wear out from our thoughts, they [Catholics] are never asleep, but go on steadily, prosecuting their designs against us."¹³³ By centering criticisms of "popery" on infallibility instead of tyranny and persecution, the writers considered in this chapter had arrived at an argument for perpetual conflict with Rome.

The emphasis on infallibility in these anticatholic works served another purpose, by promoting these authors' goal of promoting harmony between Anglicans and Dissenters.¹³⁴ Wigglesworth, indeed, explicitly told his readers that concentrating on the question of infallibility

succession to the throne. Once the credibility of Oates had been challenged, however, a backlash set in. Many Anglicans who had voted for Whig candidates and policies at the start of the Exclusion Crisis in 1679 swung over to Tory candidates during the 1680s, for now Dissenters, the allies of the Whigs, stood accused of fomenting panic over the "Popish Plot" in order to overturn the religious and political establishments. The subsequent swing towards the Tory Party and James almost extinguished the Whigs during the 1680s; only James's attacks on the Church of England and on the local political power of the Anglican gentry revived Whig fortunes after 1687. Richard L. Greaves, Secrets of the Kingdom: British Radicals from the Popish Plot to the Revolution of 1688-1689 (Stanford: Stanford University, 1992), 5, 17-18, 20. After the Glorious Revolution, Burnet and Locke thus had every reason to arrive at a new formulation of anticatholicism, since traditional antipopery sounded too reminiscent of sectarian radicalism, and was bound to antagonize the Anglican majority of England.

¹³³. Burnet, Reformation, xli.

¹³⁴. Burnet was so disturbed by inter-denominational conflict, that he claimed that agents of the Catholic Church were responsible for stirring such strife. Ibid., xxv.

would help different Protestant denominations to resolve some of their controversies with each other.¹³⁵ Adherence to Foxe's focus on the Church of Rome as an immense bureaucracy, concerned with forcing its members to accept its complex and erroneous rituals and rules, would have endangered such understanding, for any discussion of liturgy, church organization, the theology of the sacraments, or the doctrine of salvation, was likely to revive the very issues that had separated Dissenters from the Church of England during the course of the seventeenth century. By stressing Catholic infallibility, these authors of the Whig and prerogative parties brought to the forefront an issue that clearly demarcated Catholics from both Anglicans and Dissenters. It is very possible, therefore, that Burnet and Locke developed, and other authors adopted the focus on infallibility, because such a focus, better than any other, enabled anticatholicism to unite, rather than divide, different Protestant sects.

One of the corollaries of infallibility that these authors emphasized most strongly, Catholics' selfish pursuit of material wealth and luxury, also served the political purposes of the moderate Whigs and the prerogative party. Both groups were closely connected to the richest merchants in their respective societies. Both pursued policies that enhanced the wealth and political power of men engaged in large-scale, transoceanic commerce, and in speculative ventures in finance and land. Presenting the Catholic world as a place where materialism ran wild, and denouncing the individual pursuit of luxury at the expense of the public good, that supposedly prevailed in "popish" societies, made political sense for the authors considered in this chapter. To be persuasive in the context of post-Glorious Revolution Britain or Massachusetts, any text had to take into account the concerns of the rural and small-town voters and representatives who made up much of the political public at that time. Such men were suspicious of commerce,

¹³⁵. Wigglesworth, Spirit of Infallibility, 31.

high finance, and the sophisticated lifestyles of the wealthy. By presenting "popery" as the epitome of a society consumed by greed for luxury, spokesmen for the moderate Whigs and prerogative party presented the implicit argument that, offensive and dangerous as the wealth of British and Bay Colony merchants might seem to be, support of the imperial establishment was vital if an even worse society was to be kept at bay. Antipopery enabled the champions of commerce in the British Empire to make common cause with a political majority that was suspicious of commerce and of its social effects.

Dudley demonstrated another political use of the association of anticatholicism with luxury. Throughout the first half of the eighteenth century, certain wealthy men associated with the Cooke faction, including Elisha Cooke, Jr., put proposals before the public and before the General Court for the establishment of a Land Bank in the colony. The men who consistently supported such an institution were in general those whose often considerable wealth lay in real estate and other non-liquid forms. Supporters of the Land Bank, unlike the overseas merchants associated with the prerogative faction, did not have ready access to hard money, which was generally available only through overseas trade. A Land Bank would have enabled men rich in land, but poor in specie, to invest their wealth in an institution that had the power to issue paper money as legal tender within the colony. These land bank investors would then have had access to liquid capital on a scale similar to the overseas merchants. Supporters of the Land Bank tried to win support for their proposal among the rural voters and representatives of Massachusetts by arguing that the Land Bank would make currency more generally available in the cash-strapped interior.¹³⁶

Dudley, like Mather, Wigglesworth, and other allies of the prerogative party, was opposed to the Land Bank, and to the rival set of capitalists that such a Bank would create. Unable to deny that such

¹³⁶. Pencak, War, Politics, and Revolution, 61-65.

a bank would generate a plentiful paper currency, these prerogative party men resorted to arguments that would appeal to the ordinary voters of the colony. Prerogative faction writers explained that the currency shortage in Massachusetts was the result of luxurious living by the lower orders. The best cure for the currency problems was self-restraint and strict personal economy. A Land Bank and an even more plentiful currency would only encourage the further development of these vices.¹³⁷ Dudley reinforced the general association that prerogative authors sought to make between the Land Bank and a pernicious love of luxury, by comparing the methods of self-enrichment employed by the Catholic Church to the Land Bank scheme. The Catholic Church, he charged, attempted "to make a Land Bank of these new Bills" when it exchanged indulgences and other documents of spurious spiritual value for more tangible, worldly wealth.¹³⁸ Thus did Dudley demonstrate how attacks on "popish" materialism could make the prerogative faction appear as the guardians of simplicity and virtue, not only against the Catholic foe outside the Empire, but also against internal political rivals with supposedly "popish" principles.

Clearly, the writers studied in this chapter felt it both necessary and useful to appeal to "country" sentiment in order to defend the early capitalist institutions that emerged in the British Empire after 1689. One way in which these writers launched such an appeal was by describing the hated Church of Rome as the source of a system of belief that facilitated ambitious individuals' pursuit of selfish gain at the expense of the common good. This aspect of the antipopery of the English Whig and Massachusetts mercantile establishments has been overlooked by recent scholars, but these anti-luxury elements in anticatholicism are important: they demonstrate that anticatholic rhetoric not only attacked the purported beliefs and behavior of

¹³⁷. Nash, Urban Crucible, 84-85.

¹³⁸. Dudley, Merchandize, 28.

Britain's Catholic enemies, but also addressed concerns that arose from the modernization of government and economy in the eighteenth-century British Empire. The identity that arose from antipopery was therefore fraught with internal contradictions. Anticatholicism helped to justify warfare and the growth of the military, financial, and commercial institutions that facilitated war. These institutions, meanwhile, helped foster the ambitious wealth-seeking that, according to the writers considered in this chapter, was an integral characteristic of "popery". These authors' shift of emphasis away from Foxe's portrait of bureaucratic tyranny, towards a Catholic "Other" based on infallibility and license may have given antipopery a new, short-term usefulness for the post-Glorious Revolution establishment, but the new emphasis brought with it long-term problems of its own. The emergence of some of these problems forms the subject of the next two chapters.

CHAPTER IV

POPULAR ANTICATHOLICISM IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

While certain authors connected to the moderate Whig and prerogative parties were developing and propagating their particular strain of antipopery, other writers were making the Catholic Church the subject of a literature that was aimed at a less sophisticated and serious readership. These popular anticatholic texts varied in genre and in their precise emphases on the evils of "popery", but all the documents examined in this chapter had two important characteristics in common. First, these works portrayed ordinary Catholics as men and women whose passions and fantasies were unrestrained by either morality or reason. Second, these texts sought in part to entertain their readers, and used the inordinate appetites and irrational behavior of Catholic characters to provide the ingredients for sensational tales full of violence, lust, and preternatural wonders. Although certain elements in these popular narratives were derived from or were reminiscent of the Acts and Monuments and of the documents considered in the last chapter, nevertheless, the total portrait of "popery" contained in these texts places them in a category of their own.

Five different documents, or groups of documents, representing a range of genres, are examined in this chapter. First, there are historical accounts of Catholic persecutions of Protestants. These works draw much of their material from texts published in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and focus on the cruelty and bloodthirsty nature of "popery's" treatment of Protestants. Next is a romance, The French Convert, which tells the story of a French Huguenot woman and of her sufferings at the hands of Catholic tormentors. "Popish" lust and

deceit provide most of the sensational substance of this narrative, while Catholic violence takes the form not of officially-sanctioned persecution, but of privately-motivated murder. My third example of popular anticatholicism is the spiritual autobiography of Nicholas Mooney, a condemned criminal who converted to Protestantism days before he was hanged. This highwayman and former Jacobite reflects on his misspent life, attributing his sins in part to a Catholic upbringing.

Fourth, I examine some of William Hogarth's prints. Some pillory foreign enemies, and others vice at home, but they all equate "popery" with inordinate passion and appetite. This chapter concludes with a look at Henry Fielding's novel, Tom Jones, where "popery" frequently exemplifies the self-indulgent and irrational aspects of human nature. All of these texts reached readers across the British Empire. Though they originated in the mother country, all were either reprinted in America, or imported there from Britain.

Foxe's Acts and Monuments still figured prominently in the first category of document considered here, historical accounts of the persecution of Protestants. New editions of the sixteenth-century martyrology were published on both sides of the Atlantic after 1689, but these editions were significantly different from those issued previously. In the century before the Glorious Revolution, almost all editions of the Acts and Monuments had been based on the fourth edition of 1583, the last version published by Foxe himself. These editions of the martyrology appeared in three large volumes, and they presented the stories of individual martyrs' sufferings as part of a long, chronologically-organized history that covered political and diplomatic affairs, and included weighty debates on theological issues. This traditional presentation continued almost without exception as late as the ninth edition of 1684, but ceased abruptly after the Glorious Revolution. Three new formats became the norm thereafter. The first involved cutting material out of the Acts and Monuments in order to focus almost entirely on the stories of martyrdom. John Wesley, for

example, prepared an abridged version of the martyrology that was little more than a series of stories of brave victims suffering persecution, unconnected by any significant historical narrative.¹ With the exclusion of most of the political and theological material supplied by Foxe, readers can hardly have been aware of one of the important themes of the original Acts and Monuments: the development over time of powerful, sophisticated institutions, epitomized by the Catholic Church, whose bureaucratic methods and mentality brought about the suffering of ordinary individuals.

Thomas Mall's The History of the Martyrs Epitomized represents a second format for historical accounts of persecution. Mall took stories of individual martyrs' suffering from Foxe and other authors, and extracted some brief biographical details of each martyr, along with an account of the martyr's interrogation, torment, and death. Mall arranged the stories in alphabetical, rather than chronological order, according to the name of the victim. This arrangement entirely banished the historical context that was so important in Foxe's accounts of the martyrs. Anyone who read Mall's martyr stories in the order presented would leap from period to period, and place to place. For example, Mall's first volume begins with three victims of persecution in ancient Rome, then proceeds via an account of a Marian martyr to the story of a sixteenth-century Italian Protestant. Another Marian victim is then followed by a medieval French heretic, a sixteenth-century Flemish martyr, and three more Christians who met their deaths during the Roman Empire, the last of these being the apostle, Andrew. In some cases, only the name of the martyr is given, and the time and place of the martyr's life and death must be inferred.² Mall's arrangement of the

¹. Foxe, Acts and Monuments, ed. Williamson, x.

². Thomas Mall, The History of the Martyrs Epitomized: A Cloud of Witnesses; or, the Sufferers Mirrour, Made up of the Swanlike Songs, and other Choice Passages of a great Number of Martyrs and Confessors, to the End of the Sixteenth Century, in their Treatises, Speeches, Letters, Prayers, etc. in their Prisons or Exiles; at the Bar, or Stake, etc. Collected out of the Ecclesiastical Histories of Eusebius, Fox, Fuller,

material made his martyrology useful as a reference work: his New England readers could satisfy their curiosity about any individual martyr quickly and easily. However, such readers would learn little about history, politics, theological debate, or details about the functioning of powerful institutions. Mall turned Foxe's and other, older church histories into a collection of tales of torment, in which the persecutors, like their victims, appear as bloodthirsty individuals, devoid of all but the barest historical or institutional context.

The third format for the Acts and Monuments during the post-Glorious Revolution period entailed the publication of the complete text of Foxe's martyrology, arranged according to the author's chronological scheme, but divided into thirty-one, sixty, or eighty volumes. As Linda Colley points out, such editions made each individual volume fairly cheap and accessible to more readers. It is important, however, to qualify her argument that Foxe's work therefore "came to be one of the few books that one might plausibly expect to find in even a working-class household."³ It seems unlikely that many "working-class" Britons studiously purchased every one of the volumes of these popular editions of Foxe. More likely, the true impact of the multi-volume format was that it enabled the less prosperous to purchase one, or a handful of volumes only, and thus to gain some acquaintance with the famous Foxe, without the expense of buying a full edition.⁴ If such selective buying was indeed typical, then the effect on readers of these multi-volume complete editions was similar to the effects of the abridgements and reference works discussed above: many Britons were reading Foxe's

Clark, Petrie, Scotland, and Mr. Samuel Ward's Life of Faith in Death etc. The whole Alphabetically disposed (Boston: Rogers & Fowle, 1747), 1-6.

³. Colley, Britons, 25-26. Multi-volume editions of the Acts and Monuments appeared in Britain in 1732, 1761, 1776, 1784, and 1795.

⁴. Through much of eighteenth-century Western Europe there was a significant increase in the sale of cheap books, many of which were produced as parts of large series, but sold as individual items. Burke, Popular Culture, 250-259.

accounts of the persecution of Protestants in fragments, out of their full historical context.

All these new formats for the Acts and Monuments brought the cruelty of persecutors and the suffering of victims into the foreground, and either pushed the political and institutional history into the distance, or obscured it altogether. Such treatment not only made church history more sensational, and therefore more palatable to a popular readership, but also changed the nature of the persecutors' cruelty, as Foxe had presented it. No longer do persecutors treat true Christians with great cruelty chiefly because they are bidden to do so by the rules of institution they serve. No longer are there intelligent and sensitive men forced, against their will, to torment innocent individuals; no longer are there sadistic individuals who are forced to reign in their violent passions, and conduct their persecution by established rules and procedures. The inhumanity of "papists" and other persecutors in these post-Glorious Revolution accounts, given the absence of any well-delineated institutional context, appears to spring entirely from their own, internal impulses. The shift in emphasis from Catholics as servants of an institution to "papists" as bloodthirsty individuals made these later accounts of persecution significantly different from Foxe's Acts and Monuments.

Popish Cruelty Displayed was another account of Catholic persecution of Protestants, where the emphasis shifted away from the evils of an institution towards the personal depravity of individual "papists". This text presented an account of the Irish uprising of 1641, an event that had been much publicized in the seventeenth-century English-speaking world, but that was now conveyed in a new way to eighteenth-century readers. Seventeenth-century accounts of this rebellion by Irish Catholics against their English Protestant landlords and neighbors had placed it in the context of other contemporary Catholic-Protestant struggles in Europe: Anne Bradstreet, for example, had linked the Irish troubles to the fall of the Huguenot stronghold of

La Rochelle, and to the English Civil War, a conflict for which she blamed Catholic plotters. Her purpose for placing the Irish massacre in a precise historical context was to use it to reveal God's providential plan for his chosen people of England and New England.⁵ Eighteenth-century Britons and colonists, however, learned about the Irish uprising in a very different manner. Popish Cruelty Displayed was first published in London at the time of the 1745-1746 Jacobite invasion, presumably in order to suggest the horrors that would follow if Catholic forces were to succeed in restoring the Stuarts. Colonial readers gained direct access to this account of "popish" violence in 1753, in an edition published in Boston. Except for providing the date of the events described, this eighteenth-century version supplies no historical context for the uprising. Although readers might have been expected to make their own connections between this rebellion and other events in English and European history, the author clearly has no particular desire to emphasize the place of the uprising within a larger historical structure. Instead, the text serves as a detailed study of the motivation and mentality of individual members of the Church of Rome.

The story of the uprising begins with an account of Catholics attending mass all over Ireland on an unspecified Sunday in 1641. Before administering communion to their congregations, the priests insist that their flocks agree to rise up and to kill their Protestant neighbors. Anyone who refuses is denied the sacrament, and threatened with excommunication. Friars then exhort the congregations "with Tears" not to spare any of the English settlers. These clergymen argue that it is as lawful to kill a Protestant as to kill a dog, and, indeed, that such a murder is "a meritorious act, and a rare Preservative against the Pains of Purgatory." Most encouraging to the congregations is the

⁵. Ann Dudley Bradstreet, Several Poems, Compiled with great Variety of Wit and Learning, full of Delight, 3rd ed. (Boston, 1758), 181-186.

information that any who should die while killing a heretic will go straight to heaven. Thus instructed, the congregations are dismissed, and the massacre begins.⁶

This introduction to the uprising immediately makes an important point about the motivation behind Catholic behavior. The Church holds no political power in Ireland, and cannot simply command its members to make war on heretics. Instead, the clergy win over the rank and file by offering incentives. By conjointly threatening exclusion from the church community, and promising rewards in the afterlife, the Church receives a willing response to its murderous call. Underpinning both the threats and the promises of the Church is the clergy's claimed ability to manipulate the supernatural: the clergy's influence in this account is intimately associated with its asserted power to change bread and wine to body and blood, and to remit divine punishments for sinners. The opening of this account of the Irish rebellion thus encapsulates one of the central themes of this entire text: ordinary Catholics enthusiastically serve their Church, not because they are helpless tools of a powerful organization, but because the Church offers rewards that goad the faithful to commit excesses.

The introduction to Popish Cruelty Displayed also conveys a second important theme. "Popery" was at the heart of a systematically abnormal world, according to this text, a world where reason and ethics existed, but in thoroughly perverted forms. The initial rituals and clerical exhortations, which turn reason and decency on their heads, invite the reader to suspend his own sense of the probable so that he can accept the truth of the grotesque and unreal events that follow. While the priests celebrate sacraments that claim to distort physical and supernatural reality, the friars' arguments precisely invert the scheme

⁶. Popish Cruelty Displayed: Being a full and true Account of the Bloody and Hellish Massacre in Ireland, Perpetuated by the Instigation of the Jesuits, Priests, and Fryars, who were the chief Promoters of those horrible Murthers, unheard of Cruelties, barbarous Villanies, and inhuman Practices, executed by the Irish Papists upon the English Protestants, in the Year 1641 (Boston: Thomas Fleet, 1753), 5-6.

of reward and punishment to which Protestant readers were accustomed. Murder, in the Catholic moral order, becomes not sin but virtue. The most poignant aspect of this inversion is that death in the act of murder becomes a parody of Protestant martyrdom: just as Protestants who died professing their faith were guaranteed eternal life, so Catholics who died while killing heretics went straight to heaven, cleansed of all their human imperfections. The reader is encountering the familiar theme of Protestants meeting death at the hands of Catholics, but this time that theme takes an unusual form, since the central figures are Catholics seeking heaven by inflicting, instead of Protestants seeking heaven by suffering, martyrdom.

As soon as the clergy have incited their congregations to rise up against their neighbors, the revolt begins. As the narrative progresses, it continues to emphasize the two introductory themes: ordinary Catholics' willing subservience to their Church, and "popery's" inversion of reason and morality. The autonomy of the rebellious Catholics conveys the first of these themes. Church rituals and the exhortations of the clergy play an important role in the opening of this narrative, but once the rebellion is in progress, the Church as an institution disappears from the account. Instead, the entire action is performed by rank-and-file Catholics, whose passions have been unleashed and given direction by the institutional Church. Even more than in the eighteenth-century martyrologies discussed above, Popish Cruelty Displayed marks a shift away from Foxe's focus on a mighty bureaucracy destroying virtuous, private individuals, towards an emphasis on the unrestrained appetites that lurk in the ordinary Catholic's breast. Although the institutional Church of Rome is clearly responsible for failing to curb, and indeed for encouraging, these passions, this account of the 1641 Irish rebellion focuses the reader's hatred on every member of the Catholic faith, not just on the hierarchy.

This willing and wholehearted participation of ordinary Catholics in the errors and crimes of their Church is stressed also in Catholics'

attitudes to scripture. Protestant writers had emphasized since the Reformation that one of the major sources of error in "popery" was its failure to adhere strictly to scripture as the most reliable source of objective, religious truth. Popish Cruelty Displayed portrays rank-and-file Catholics enforcing their Church's rejection of scripture and of those who preached scriptural truths. During the revolt, a minister's severed head is set on top of the cross that stands in a market-place, while six other Protestant heads are placed around him, representing his congregation. Once this gathering is assembled, the rebels gag the minister. Then, they slit his cheeks so that his mouth extends from ear to ear. A leaf from the Bible is placed on his head, and the rebels stand around bidding the minister to preach, since his mouth is wide enough.⁷

This gruesome ceremony vividly expresses the idea that ordinary Catholics' shared their Church's rejection of scripture. Here, there were no Catholic authorities preventing ordinary Catholics from reading the Bible. Rather, the rebels clearly knew that Protestants believed in preaching the word of God as revealed in the Bible, since they mocked both the preacher and the holy text. Instead of embracing the chance of obtaining this sure means to truth, the rebels construct an elaborate and ghastly parody, in which a minister that can not speak addresses a congregation that can not hear. The enactment of this ritual at the market cross adds to the poignancy of the message. The market cross was a forum within a public space that could have been used for beneficial, educative purposes; instead, this public platform is used here in order to spread a message that disparages the propagation of truth. This incident illustrates not censorship by an overpowerful bureaucracy, but self-censorship by ordinary Catholics. The careful assembling of the heads around the market cross can be seen as a public, religious ceremony in which Catholics celebrate the emptiness of their Church's

⁷. Ibid., 14.

publicity, and their safe isolation from a truth that would have shattered "popery's" pleasing illusions.

The story of the revolt emphasizes the second major theme of this text, Catholicism's systematic distortion of reason and morality, by presenting the reader with a cruelty that is thoroughly revolting, and yet strangely thoughtful and intelligent in its inspiration. All Catholic actions in Popish Cruelty Displayed are marked by a deliberative quality. Sometimes the basis of this deliberation is explicit, and Catholic atrocities are shown to be the logical result of particular Catholic doctrines. At other times, "papists" are simply shown to have committed some shocking deed after careful consideration, though the narrative omits the details of the thought-process involved. In all cases, Catholics are remarkably blind to the reality around them as they pursue their Church's doctrine to its logical conclusions. The entire story demonstrates that ordinary Catholics are devoid of common sense, common decency, and common morality, although ingenious and consistent in their own way. Much of the horrific quality of Popish Cruelty Displayed derives from incidents where intelligent beings conduct calm discussions, or make careful decisions, in the midst of appalling bloodshed and upheaval.

One example of the supposedly deliberative quality of Catholic actions is their multifarious contrivances for despatching their victims. The Catholics are creative in dealing death to Protestants in a variety of ways, by "sword, famine, fire, water, and all other cruel deaths that rage and malice could invent."⁸ Instead of murdering with mindless savagery, the rebels on occasion delay the final punishment so that they have time to experiment with different killing methods. At Casel, for example, Protestants are kept in a loathsome dungeon for twelve weeks, and then made to suffer death in various leisurely and distinctive ways: "some they barbarously mangled, and left languishing;

⁸. Ibid., 7.

some they hanged up twice or thrice, others they buried alive."⁹ One man was buried with his head sticking out of the ground, and left to perish.¹⁰ A scientific curiosity informed one of the deaths. The Irish opened a Scotsman's belly, and tied an end of his intestine to a tree, making him walk round the trunk until the whole organ was unravelled. This cruel study enabled the watching Catholics to determine "whether a Dogs or a Scottish Man's Guts were the longest." The corpses could even be made to serve a utilitarian purpose, for "one fat man they murdered, and made candles of his Grease."¹¹ The cruelty attributed to the Catholics was inhuman, but in various ways, ingenious. The account of this massacre revealed not an absence, but a thorough perversion of the human intellect.

If the talents of the human mind are distorted by "popery's" reasoning, so are the qualities of the human soul. In Popish Cruelty Displayed, Catholics are acquainted with ideas of kindness and mercy, but these impulses become monstrous in the Catholic mentality. For instance, the rebels "brake the back bones of a Youth, and left him in the Fields; some days after, he was found, having eaten the grass round about him: neither then would they kill him outright, but removed him to better Pasture." This act of kindness, shown to a victim in the midst of his agony, reverses the effects of kindness in a normal, Protestant world; instead of relieving the recipient's suffering, "popish" mercy prolongs the torment.¹² Another incident demonstrates more precisely the manner in which Catholic doctrine had made mankind's generous impulses into a destructive force. The Irish rebels have persuaded some forty Protestants to convert to the Catholic faith, by promising to show them mercy. Since Catholic doctrine teaches that

⁹. Ibid., 9.

¹⁰. Ibid., 12.

¹¹. Ibid., 16, 17.

¹². Ibid., 18.

anyone who leaves the Church is doomed to eternal punishment, the Irish then put their promises of mercy into practice by killing the recent converts. The rebels fear that the former Protestants, who have been forced into embracing Catholicism, will later return to their original faith, and by do so will incur inescapable torment in the afterlife. By killing them before they can apostatize, the "papists" are improving their victims' chances of heaven.¹³

Alongside the perverse mercy of these incidents was another type of "popish" killing that provides evidence of careful thought on the part of the rebels. Many deaths are organized to demonstrate Catholic defiance of the normal social and familial order. In Popish Cruelty Displayed, children are forced to drown their aged parents, before suffering death themselves. In a similar inversion of normal relationships, wives are compelled to hang their husbands, and to drown their children. In one especially cruel example of Catholic ingenuity, a girl is hanged from a noose made out of her mother's hair.¹⁴ Catholic outrages against normal family relationships extend to the unborn, also. On a number of occasions, the rebels parody the act of delivering children, by ripping open pregnant women. In an especially poignant incident, one violently delivered newborn is placed, still alive, on its murdered mother's breast, recalling the action of the midwife, who hands the infant to its mother for nourishment.¹⁵ In another mockery of the family, the rebels position the dead, naked bodies of men on their wives, "in a most immodest Posture."¹⁶ This imposing catalogue of Catholic atrocities against the family conveys a clear impression that the killers were consciously showing their scorn for an institution ordained by both God and nature.

¹³. Ibid., 14.

¹⁴. Ibid., 12.

¹⁵. Ibid., 10, 16, 17.

¹⁶. Ibid., 16.

The contrast between Popish Cruelty Displayed and Foxe's history of persecution becomes clear when one compares the two documents' portrayal of Catholic attitudes towards the family. In the Acts and Monuments, the brutality of the Church's officials is contrasted with the sweet, innocent joys of family life. On occasion, those officials take direct action against the martyrs' families with physical punishments and cruel jokes. Protestant family men fight back, denouncing the Catholic clergy's celibacy. In general, Foxe uses the family to underline his larger contrast between impersonal, Catholic bureaucrats and the loving, private lives of the martyrs.¹⁷ Popish Cruelty Displayed conveys a different idea of Catholic opposition to the family, for in this later text it is ordinary Catholics who perpetrate the attacks on Protestant families. Although initially set to their murderous work by their clergy, the rebels prove themselves wholehearted and inventive in showing their scorn for family relationships. In the eighteenth-century tale, private Catholic individuals are as devoid of any human feeling as the Church's public institutions.

The rebels' carefully expressed disdain for the family extends to the social hierarchy, also. Though Protestants of any rank are cruelly killed, gentlemen, clergymen, and their families are singled out for especially disrespectful treatment. Sir Barclay Dunstan, a Protestant, is forced to witness the rape of his wife, and the deaths of his servants and children, before he himself is dispatched.¹⁸ Protestant ministers are also forced to watch the torment of their families before they themselves are killed. The rebels put thought into the degradation of these respected figures, deliberately finding "the basest villains they could pick out" to perform the rapes, making what is usually an act of unrestrained lust into a careful, even ceremonial overturning of

¹⁷. See above, ch. 2.

¹⁸. Popish Cruelty, 23.

social hierarchy, since the rapes are organized, public performances.¹⁹ In another act of disrespect, ministers are disinterred, reversing the normal respect shown to the dead.²⁰ The disinterment of Protestant preachers recalls incidents from the Acts and Monuments, although in the sixteenth-century work, such acts are ordered and executed by the Catholic bureaucracy, in a war against weak and humble Protestants. Here, the disinterments are spontaneous expressions of hatred and disrespect by the rebels, who actively participate in the evils of their Church.

Overall, Popish Cruelty Displayed communicated a strong sense of identity to its readers, by painting a portrait of a "popish" world that contravened every basic principle of reason and decency. The political and diplomatic contexts in which this document was published suggest that the anonymous author was in part trying to provoke a sense of disgust and outrage against "popery" in order to reinforce English-speaking Protestants' commitment to anticatholic war: this document appeared in London when the British government was fighting France and Spain abroad, and dealing with the Young Pretender at home, and the publication of this text in Boston in 1753 coincided with rising tensions between British and French colonists along the frontier from Nova Scotia to the Ohio Valley.²¹ The shift in this document away from the Church of Rome as a persecuting institution, and towards the idea that all Catholics were responsible for "popery's" evils, fitted contemporary circumstances well. In both Britain and New England, Protestants were more concerned about being pillaged and massacred by invaders from abroad than about the possibility of persecution by legally instituted authorities in the Empire.

¹⁹. Ibid., 22.

²⁰. Ibid., 13.

²¹. Although fighting between French and British forces did not begin until 1754, both sides were preparing for war from as early as 1749. Steele, Warpaths, 179-184, 194-195.

Yet, for all the clear denunciation of Catholics as monsters in this text, there was a certain ambiguity about the sense of identity conveyed to readers by Popish Cruelty Displayed. Protestants in this text are ciphers. A few have names and most are described in terms of their gender and age, but otherwise, few details are provided that would help a reader to achieve more than the barest, most abstract sympathy with the victims. While Foxe made his martyrs into fully delineated human beings, with whom a reader can easily identify, the Protestant martyrs here are shadows. They set no examples of noble behavior, and they make no memorable speeches. So sketchily are they drawn, that it is not possible to experience the events described through Protestant eyes. Instead, it is the Catholics who provide the cast of memorable characters in this work, and it is through Catholic eyes that the reader lives through the revolt. Therefore, even though the Catholics are portrayed as utter fiends, this text serves to place the reader in the shoes of the rebels, enabling him to feel their lusts and hatreds. Indeed, the main appeal of this document lies in the vicarious experience of unrestrained passion that it offers. For all its clearly implied political message, against the Jacobites, France's Indian allies, and the French themselves, this text is certainly intended to provide a grim but real entertainment for its readers. In total, therefore, the sense of identity generated by this document is ambiguous: on the one hand, it suggests that English-speaking Protestants should hate Catholics, go to war against them, and despise their behavior. On the other hand, the reader is capable of taking unavowed pleasure in "popish" crimes through reading the narrative. Although the first type of identity is certainly the stronger, it is blurred and complicated to a certain extent by the second type.

The potential for a reader to identify with evil characters and sinful passions also appears in The French Convert, a tale in the tradition of the romance, about the sufferings of a French noblewoman who became a Huguenot. This narrative was written soon after the

Glorious Revolution, perhaps in 1696, and it was published at least a dozen times in England during the eighteenth century. The first colonial edition appeared in New York in 1724, followed by a Boston printing the following year. Further editions appeared at Boston in 1744, 1745, 1749, 1769, and in the 1790s, at Philadelphia in 1748 and 1751, and at New York in 1761.²² The perennial and widespread popularity of this tale suggests that it both shaped and reflected anticatholic ideas that were broadcast in the English-speaking world.

The introduction to The French Convert demonstrates again, like Popish Cruelty Displayed and the new versions of Foxe's martyrology, the lack of interest in political and institutional history in popular, eighteenth-century, anticatholic texts. The narrative contains virtually no information about the larger historical context of events. The tale takes place during one of Louis XIV's many wars, but the author uses this information to create a vague stereotype of France as a martial society that was continuously at war, rather than to provide a solid anchoring for his tale in a specific historical time.²³ Instead of elaborating on the events of the public world, the author concentrates almost entirely on the private lives of one noble household, so that royal courts and European wars become the most distant of backgrounds for the action of the tale. Readers of The French Convert would not have been able to make any precise temporal link between themselves and the narrative before them, or to discern in the tale some part of an overarching historical pattern that comprehended both the reader and the events of the narrative.

The link between the reader and the private world of the narrative is not historical, but testimonial. John Gwillim, the original printer,

²². The publication information for The French Convert is from Charles Evans, American Bibliography, and from The British Museum Catalogue of Printed Books.

²³. A. D'Auborn, The French Convert; Being a True Relation of the Happy Conversion of a Noble French Lady, from the Errors and Superstitions of Popery to the Reformed Religion, by Means of a Protestant Gardener, her Servant (Boston: S. Hall, 1793), 10.

claims to have translated this story from a letter sent to him by a Huguenot exile in London, who had in turn received the missive from a colleague imprisoned in France. That colleague supposedly knew at first hand the individuals whose stories are related in this tale. Gwillim reproduces the correspondence between the two Huguenot ministers, and between the minister in exile and himself, to corroborate his account of the origins of this narrative. In contrast to the vagueness of historical information in the tale itself, the letters that form the testimonial chain are all precisely dated, to give the impression that these letters and the events they describe are hard, indisputable facts.²⁴

The chain of testimony that seeks to authenticate The French Convert is hardly unique; both seventeenth-century romances and eighteenth-century novels quoted documents and letters that purported to be from eye witnesses. The French Convert was unusual, not in its possession of validating testimony, but in the intention of its author that the testimony and the events in the narrative itself be taken as literally true. Such claims to truth made this work an anachronism in the eighteenth century. Seventeenth-century romances had frequently asserted the literal truth of their testimonial basis, but those assertions had largely been discredited by the time of the Glorious Revolution. In the new genre of the novel, which largely supplanted romance in the English-speaking world during the eighteenth century, the testimonial chain was understood to be fictive, and its purpose was to help the reader accept the realism rather than the actuality of persons and events described.²⁵ In the case of The French Convert, however, the author's purpose is literal truth rather than mere verisimilitude. No doubt some of the more sophisticated readers of The French Convert,

²⁴. Ibid., iii-vi.

²⁵. McKeon, English Novel, 52-64; Ian P. Watt, The Rise of the Novel: Studies in Defoe, Richardson, and Fielding (Berkeley: University of California, 1957), 25; Victor Sage, Horror Fiction in the Protestant Tradition (New York: St. Martin's, 1988), 127-186.

especially in the middle and later parts of the eighteenth-century, when openly fictional literature had become commonplace, may have taken the tale with a pinch of salt. Yet the correlation of the dates of this story's publication with times of war or other tensions between the British Empire and foreign Catholic nations suggests that many readers were taking this tale seriously, as an historically accurate account of the mentality of nations who posed a serious threat to Protestant interests. The French Convert, therefore, represents a survival not only of an obsolete genre, but of a discredited practice of asserting that the marvelous and romantic could be literally true.²⁶ The popularity of this anticatholic work throughout the eighteenth century attests the effectiveness of "popery" at rendering the extraordinary credible.

Victor Sage has suggested that the particularly elaborate testimonial chains that linked the reader to the narrative in gothic novels of the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries perform a dual function: on the one hand, they affirm the accuracy of the events described, but on the other, they create a sense of distance between the reader and the story. By forcing the reader to approach the tale through a labyrinth of testimony, the world in which the story takes place becomes more exotic, and the ability of the reader to accept the improbable is facilitated.²⁷ The same effect is achieved by the complex testimonial chain that introduces The French Convert, which shares the anticatholic basis of the later gothic fiction. The distance created between the reader and the characters of the narrative by the testimonial labyrinth helps the reader to escape the epistemological laws that govern his own society, and to enter a distant world where truth has to be gauged by different rules.

²⁶. Hall argues that colonists in New England ceased to believe in the literal truth of printed works that contained improbable and sensational events at the start of the eighteenth century, and therefore ceased purchasing them. Worlds of Wonder, 110-114.

²⁷. Sage, Protestant Tradition, 150-186.

The story that the reader encounters in the world beyond the labyrinth centers on Deidamia, a French woman married to the nobleman Alanson. Called to serve his country in war, Alanson leaves Deidamia in the care of his chaplain, the Franciscan friar Antonio, and of his trusted steward, Fronovius. Both men, the tale emphasizes, "faithfully promised" to protect and obey their mistress.²⁸ Yet no sooner is their master gone, than Antonio begins to lust after Deidamia, whose natural virtue is so strong that he has to proceed cautiously, using the Mass and confession to insinuate corrupting ideas, and comparing her beauty to that of the saints, angels, and cherubim. Later, this "grey-bearded satan" hopes to "corrupt her judgement and persuade her, that, seeing her husband was absent, and could not enjoy her, it was no sin to communicate those embraces to another, till he returned."²⁹

Deidamia meanwhile discovers that her gardener, Bernard, is a Huguenot. In subsequent discussions with him, the mistress's natural virtue leads her to incline towards the Protestant faith. Loyalty to her own church means that Deidamia at first resists Bernard's arguments, despite their compelling cogency, but she is finally persuaded to convert when Antonio's seduction attempts become too obvious to ignore. Convinced that all Bernard's arguments against the Catholic Church are true, Deidamia becomes a Protestant.³⁰ Her conversion fortifies her natural virtue, and makes her steadfast in her opposition to Antonio's other schemes, such as his attempt to place her in a nunnery, where he might intimidate or force her into compliance with his desires. Faced with her pious stubbornness, Antonio finally despairs of seducing Deidamia and thinks only of ensuring that Alanson will not discover his treachery. Entering into a conspiracy with Fronovius, the steward, who has also made a rather more clumsy attempt to seduce his mistress,

²⁸. D'Auborn, The French Convert, 12.

²⁹. Ibid., 15.

³⁰. Ibid., 25-26.

Antonio hires two assassins, who, pretending to be messengers from Alanson, request Deidamia's presence at her husband's death-bed. Entrusting herself to them, Deidamia is carried to a lonely wood, where they plan to murder her. Her tears excite their lust, and they fall out with each other over who will enjoy her first. One assassin is killed, the other wounded, and Deidamia escapes, sheltering first in a cave, and then with a Huguenot couple who have built a refuge in the forest.³¹

Alanson later returns home to be told that Deidamia has been put in a nunnery, but has run away, a story corroborated by an abbess bribed for that purpose. He travels far and wide in search of his wife, until he happens to meet the surviving assassin, who is about to be hanged for another crime. The assassin tells Alanson about the failed attempt at murder in the wood, enabling the nobleman to find Deidamia. Alanson tries to bring Antonio to justice, but the bishop of Rheims protects the friar. In disgust, Alanson and Deidamia's parents convert to Protestantism, and both parents and children flee to Holland with Bernard the gardener. All live happily ever after.³²

This often reprinted, highly entertaining tale communicates some important concepts about the fundamental differences between "popery" and Protestantism to a popular audience. Foremost among those ideas is the argument that different epistemologies are responsible for the different beliefs and behaviors of Protestants and Catholics. The French Convert conveys this epistemological lesson first of all by explaining in detail the thoughts and motives of the characters. Every act, both good and bad, and every twist and turn of the narrative, are the results of subjective processes of reasoning. The reader cannot escape the implicit message that all human behavior proceeds from the inner workings of individuals' minds.

On the reason for the different perceptions of truth that

³¹. Ibid., 43-45, 53.

³². Ibid., 56-66.

characterize Protestantism and "popery", The French Convert's text demonstrates either the influence of, or at least certain close parallels to, the anticatholic arguments set forth by Burnet, Locke, and the other authors discussed in the previous chapter. Infallibility is the essential belief that distinguishes Catholicism and Catholic reasoning from Protestantism. While Bernard is striving to convert Deidamia to the reformed faith, he and his mistress illustrate the very problem that certain academic anticatholic writers stressed: it is impossible to reason with Catholics over the main points of the Christian faith because, however many evils the Protestant might point to in Catholicism, a Catholic could say, as Deidamia does, "Can any such things be [true] in a church that is infallible?" This reaction demonstrates the chief argument of the moderate Whig and prerogative party writers already discussed: blind faith that the Church of Rome was directly guided by God imprisons Catholics inside a system of impenetrably erroneous reasoning.³³

According to Bernard, the fundamental falsehood of infallibility is responsible for a series of other, contingent errors. The Church uses infallibility as an excuse for preventing the laity from reading the Bible, on the grounds that the Bible is only true as the Church interprets it, not as the ordinary layman perceives it. Deprived of the Bible, with its clear guidance about true religious beliefs and practices, Catholics easily accept other unempirical doctrines, such as the duty to worship angels and saints, and beliefs in transubstantiation of the Eucharist, in Purgatory, and in miracles. In his impromptu debate with Deidamia, Bernard sets out the root cause of Catholic error and the resulting doctrinal effects in a manner that corresponds closely to the arguments of philosophers and theologians.³⁴

Bernard uses only theological and moral arguments against the

³³. Ibid., 21. Compare to Wigglesworth, Spirit of Infallibility, 6, 14, and Burnet, Reformation, xxxviii.

³⁴. D'Auborn, The French Convert, 21-24.

Catholic Church, and does not discuss science or nature with his mistress. However, the narrative does make an implicit link between true religion and the close observation of the natural world. Bernard is a gardener, and indeed is more often referred to as "the Gardener" than by his personal name during his debate with Deidamia. His skills at improving nature were formidable, and his garden "was ordered like another Paradise." Like the virtuosi who made their gardens into centers for botanical study, Bernard had stocked Deidamia's grounds with specimens not just from France, but from many countries of the world. Not only does the religious discussion between Bernard and Deidamia take place in this idealized natural environment, but Deidamia comes to know Bernard in the first place because of her love of nature: sensibly eschewing frivolous company, she seeks solace for Alanson's absence in the quiet solitude of the garden Bernard has created.³⁵

Deidamia's love of nature is part of an instinctive empiricism that helps her to see through the delusions of "popery" to the truth of Protestantism. Even before she has her conversation with Bernard, Deidamia had noted the bad lives of many Catholic clergy, and the good lives of many Huguenots. In the end, the same reliance on the evidence of her senses enables her to escape the circular logic of infallibility and to accept Bernard's arguments against the Church: when Antonio makes a blatant suggestion of adultery to Deidamia, the fundamentally sensible heroine suddenly sees the truth of all that Bernard has said. Thus, she makes her own experience the foundation for her new Huguenot faith.³⁶

While the intimate connection between Protestantism and empirical knowledge is illustrated by Deidamia's native common sense and by Bernard's horticultural profession and theological discourse, the false reason of "popery" is dramatized by the thoughts and words of The French Convert's villains. Antonio, for instance, persuades himself, and tries

³⁵. Ibid., 13-14.

³⁶. Ibid., 19, 28.

to persuade Deidamia, that it would be no sin for her to take a lover while Alanson is away, since she would not be depriving her husband of his marital rights.³⁷ Perhaps the best example of the distortion of "popish" reasoning is provided by the assassin who survives the scuffle over Deidamia's rape. Encountering Alanson during the nobleman's search for his wife, the assassin tells Alanson the story of Deidamia's abduction and attempted murder, but refuses to disclose the names of those who hired him. The ruffian says that he has sworn to keep their secret "upon the holy sacrament of the altar...and he feared damnation" if he broke his oath. Despite these scruples, the assassin deliberately gives Alanson enough oblique information to make the guilt of Antonio and Fronovius clear. The assassin thus shows that Catholics are not entirely amoral, but that their morality is extraordinarily misshapen: a man who does not think twice about rape and murder is ludicrously careful about not breaking his word. Even this strange scrupulousness reveals the pliable nature of Catholicism's moral rules, since the assassin feels virtuous as long as he infringes only the spirit, but leaves intact the letter of his promise to be silent.³⁸

The author of The French Convert indicates that the source of this flexible and self-serving morality is the Catholic Church's claim that it possesses the power to alter the moral order. The Church's claim to change bread and wine into flesh and blood underlies the assassin's scruples about breaking an oath "sworn upon the sacrament of the altar." Similarly, Antonio relies on the Church's power to bind and loose men's sins in his attempt to persuade Deidamia that the sin of adultery is not serious. He offers either to absolve each occasion of Deidamia's sin himself, promising an easy penance each time, or to obtain for his mistress a general dispensation from the Pope, that would free Deidamia from her marriage vows, and spare her the need for forgiveness after

³⁷. Ibid., 15.

³⁸. Ibid., 56.

each adulterous act.³⁹ Antonio's attempted justification of sexual immorality is not simply the product of one immoral individual's reasoning. Bernard has already made it clear that such twisted reasoning is a general characteristic of the entire Church of Rome. Popes, cardinals, and prelates, he says, frequently commit "whoredoms" and incest, often because licensed to do so by the "canons and decrees" of the Church.⁴⁰ Bernard's arguments, illustrated by the actions of The French Convert's villains, demonstrate the moderate Whigs' argument that the Church's belief in infallibility enables it to substitute a morality of convenience for the objective moral order ordained by God and by the law of nature, a substitution that has dire results.

Since the Church has laid down official mechanisms for cheating justice and morality, ordinary Catholics become accustomed to practicing deceptions of their own, even without promptings by the Church. Throughout The French Convert, the Catholic characters habitually deceive the Church and double-cross each other. Antonio and Fronovius both promise Alanson that they will protect and obey Deidamia during their master's absence, a promise they break without reflection or remorse. The surviving assassin lies to his employers about Deidamia's escape. Another pair of ruffians, whom Antonio hires to throw Bernard off a cliff, instead decide to make an additional profit by selling the gardener as an indentured servant to the captain of a ship bound for the West Indies. Antonio readily finds an abbess who will lie about Deidamia's escape from her convent, in return for money. Self-serving dishonesty is endemic among Catholics, because the Church is based on the principle that moral laws can be shaped to fit individuals' needs. The end result is essentially a state of moral anarchy, hidden beneath a veneer of conformity to church regulations.

Thus, The French Convert, like the stories of "popish" cruelty and

³⁹. Ibid., 28.

⁴⁰. Ibid., 26.

persecution discussed above, departs from Foxe's emphasis on the Catholic Church as a large and powerful institution, and focuses instead on "popery" as a facilitator of its members' unrestrained appetites. Catholic doctrine, this text makes clear, underpins the licentious reasoning of the Catholic characters in this tale, but the institution itself is virtually absent from the narrative. Antonio is a priest, but he serves as a private chaplain and is not closely connected to the Catholic hierarchy. Those elements of the institutional church that do make their appearance in the tale generally abet or ignore sin and crime.⁴¹ Indeed, even the persecution of Protestants, one of the quintessential activities of the institutional Church in the Acts and Monuments, is largely conducted by private individuals in this tale. The French Convert emphatically presents "popery" as a mentality and as a type of individual behavior, more than as a formal organization and body of doctrine.

The French Convert sets out an attractive identity for Protestants in the common sense and virtue of Deidamia, Alanson, and the Huguenot characters. English-speaking Protestants, reading this romance, might well have been inspired to make common cause with these noble figures against French and other "popish" enemies, whose societies appeared to be realms where the unscrupulous and immoral triumphed. Yet alongside this sense of identity, based on a stark contrast between noble Protestants and wicked Catholics, there were other, more understated, identities suggested by this text. One consisted of the ability of readers to stand in the shoes of the Catholic villains and to take vicarious pleasure in their lusts, if not in their conspiracies to murder. There is a prurient quality in this narrative, as in Popish Cruelty Displayed, manifested in a tendency to dwell on salacious details, as though the author hoped to add to the appeal of his work by encouraging his male readers to make a passing identification with

⁴¹. Ibid., 42, 63.

Antonio and the assassins. A second complication in the sense of identity communicated by this text derives in its emphasis on common sense and morality as the distinguishing characteristics of Protestants and "papists". Personal attributes, rather than nationality or formal membership in a church, ultimately determine which men and women in the tale are worthy of emulation. If members of the Catholic Church can demonstrate a natural virtue, as do Deidamia and Alanson before their conversion, then clearly it is possible for individuals to depart from the norms of their institutional environment. According to this text, English-speaking Protestants should regard some Catholics, at least, as potential allies who share Protestant values, although they are not formally Protestants. Therefore, while Popish Cruelty Displayed certainly directs its readers to regard France and Catholicism as "Other", it also creates possibilities for different, contrary identifications linking the reader to members of that "popish" world.⁴²

The French Convert would have had no significant impact on English-speaking Protestants' sense of identity, if its readers had not accepted that the tale was, if not literally true, at least a reasonably faithful account of what generally went on in Catholic countries. How seriously did subjects of the Empire take such stories? Were such tales simply light amusement, or did readers believe that they conveyed real knowledge about the Catholic world? Dr. Alexander Hamilton of Annapolis provides a partial answer to these questions, in his Itinerarium. While visiting Albany in 1744, just after the declaration of war between France and Britain, Hamilton hears that a French priest has recently arrived there as an exile from Canada. The priest explains that his order expelled him for having an illicit affair with a wealthy woman. The governor of the province, a tyrant originally raised to power by Louis XIV, has used this illicit affair as an excuse for a merciless

⁴². Francis Cogliano argues that New Englanders who read The French Convert encountered a world entirely opposite to their own, so that this text reinforced the religious and ethical values of that region of British America. No King, No Popery, 10-12.

prosecution of the woman, against whom the governor entertained a personal enmity. The woman and her lover fled to Albany, in order to escape persecution. They are still in danger, for the governor has offered a generous reward to anyone who will bring back the priest or the lady, dead or alive. Indian allies of the French are searching for the couple, seeking not only their scalps, but also the consecrated flesh from the thumb and forefinger of the priest.⁴³

Although the priest in the incident Hamilton records is a sympathetic figure, and the French woman a willing partner in the love affair, this supposedly true story bears certain similarities to The French Convert. The details of the two narratives differ, but both rest upon the same stereotypes of behavior in the "popish" world. Priestly lust, a seduced noblewoman, corrupt justice, public power serving private appetite, and attempts at brutal violence all figure prominently in the story Hamilton reports, as in The French Convert. There is of course no evidence that Hamilton or any of the residents of Albany who agreed to shelter the fugitive couple had read The French Convert, but the incident demonstrates how readily some British Americans accepted the tropes of anticatholic literature as fact.

Hamilton's account further demonstrates some of the conflicting senses of identity that emerge from the narrative of The French Convert. That text urges that sympathetic figures can exist, even in the "popish" world. Most of the residents of Albany seem prepared to accept the runaways as basically good people who deserve shelter and protection. Hamilton's host, Mr. Milne, however, is not so sure. Milne believes that the priest is really a French spy, who has told this tale in order to justify his presence in Albany, and to win sympathy.⁴⁴ For Milne, the nationality and religion of the fugitives outweighs their personal

⁴³. Alexander Hamilton, Itinerarium in Colonial American Travel Narratives, ed. Wendy Martin (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin, 1994), 221-222.

⁴⁴. Ibid., 222.

qualities and sufferings. This incident at Albany demonstrates clearly that antipopery could spur different English-speaking (and perhaps Dutch-speaking) Protestants to perceive the Catholic "Other" in very different ways.

Another popular work, The Life of Nicholas Mooney, reveals the other side of the problem created by the identification of "popery" with vice. Just as French Catholics might be essentially good, and therefore worthy of British Protestant sympathy, so members of the British Empire might be morally corrupt and therefore actually or essentially "popish" in their behavior and allegiance. The Life of Nicholas Mooney, first published in London in 1752, and twice reprinted in Philadelphia, in 1752 and 1753, claims to be the confession of a penitent criminal on the eve of his execution. Mooney begins his life story by explaining that he was born an Irish Catholic, and that his life-long criminal career began with his Catholic upbringing. Chief among the flaws of that upbringing, says the penitent criminal, were the notions of morality and truth the Church inculcated. The only guidance Mooney received as a boy was "a crude and confused set of notions" about religion, coupled with an idea that adhering to Christianity amounted to nothing more than the performance of a few external actions. No concept of "Experimental" religion was given to him. As a result, Mooney's faith, far from anchoring him in sound principles, provided a relaxed system of guidance that let him drift into a life of crime. Thus, by his own explicit statement, "popish" epistemology was the root cause of Mooney's many aberrations.⁴⁵ This point is reinforced by his account of Catholicism's misleading influence during his adult life: though he married in the Church, he feels no compulsion to obey civil or moral laws, and even when he attends confession, he performs the correct rituals without

⁴⁵. Nicholas Mooney, The Life of Nicholas Mooney, Wherein is contained his Parentage and Education (Philadelphia: William Bradford, 1752), 4.

being in any sense sorry for his sins.⁴⁶ Throughout the narrative, Mooney complains that "popery's" reliance on traditional forms and invented rites instead of on objective sources of truth makes the Catholic conscience unreliable and slippery.

Mooney's flexible conscience takes him instinctively into virtually every area of the eighteenth-century underworld. Starting as an escaped apprentice and a thief, he is eventually dishonorably discharged from the British army, and drifts into smuggling. At the time of the 1745 Jacobite invasion, Mooney first rejoined the British army, then deserted after being discovered stealing. Next, he enlisted with the rebels, among whom he masqueraded as a gentleman. Mooney denies that he joined the Jacobites because of any strong, pro-Stuart convictions derived from his Catholic upbringing. Rather, the link between his "popery" and his membership in the rebel cause was the general tendency to mischief engendered by his lack of fixed, moral principles.⁴⁷ This account of Mooney's behavior stresses that Catholicism was a system of philosophical and ethical error, rather than as a particular set of theological beliefs, liturgical practices, or dynastic loyalties.

Mooney does give a brief account of the political evils associated with the institutional Catholic Church, during his narrative of his participation in the Jacobite invasion. Had the rebels been successful, Catholic tyranny would have inflicted harsh measures on all loyal supporters of the Hanoverians, and against all who refused to abandon the Protestant faith. Mooney's predictions of wide use of "gibbets, fires, racking, and tortures" made it clear to eighteenth-century audiences that a Jacobite victory would have restored the type of Catholic rule the Acts and Monuments thoroughly excoriated. There was another side to Mooney's portrait of the restored Stuart regime,

⁴⁶. Ibid., 8, 16.

⁴⁷. Ibid., 10-12.

however, and that was the generous reward promised to all Britons who would deny their sovereign and their religion. Mooney emphasizes that Catholic authority, while harsh to those who reject the Church of Rome, is indulgent and inviting to those inside its ranks. The corrupting and seductive, as well as the cruel and terrifying, aspects of "popery" appear clearly in Mooney's account.⁴⁸

This discussion of Catholic society as a whole is relatively brief, since The Life of Nicholas Mooney is preoccupied with the subjective mentality of its criminal protagonist. With the failure of the rebellion, Mooney renews his natural drift through the underworld. Discharged by the rebels for brawling, Mooney becomes a gambler, a womanizer, and finally a highwayman.⁴⁹ It is for this last crime that he is finally arrested and condemned to die. While in prison, Mooney is so struck with fear of his impending death and with remorse for his sins, that he converts to Protestantism days before his execution. The complete change that has taken place in his life is signalled by his ability to detect a disguised "popish" priest who tries to administer communion to him in prison.⁵⁰ Mooney thus ends his life in full enjoyment of the clear perception of truth that he lacked at his life's beginning. As a boy, he was unable to distinguish truth from falsehood. In his last days, his keen perception enables him to see through the most subtle of impostures. Mooney's Life is unique in offering the English-speaking reader an inside view of both Catholicism and Protestantism, and of the types of perception and reasoning that belonged to each faith, presented by an individual who had crossed from one epistemological world to the other.

One of the most disturbing aspects of this text, from the point of view of a Protestant reader, might well have been the ease with which

⁴⁸. Ibid., 14.

⁴⁹. Ibid., 17-29.

⁵⁰. Ibid., 34-41.

Mooney moved physically between the British Isles and the Continent, and shifted his allegiance from Hanoverian to Jacobite causes. His Catholicism did not make him at all times a clearly identifiable member of enemy institutions. The self-serving, flexible conscience of the "papist" enabled Mooney sometimes to appear as a Briton, and even to serve in the British army. After reading Mooney's autobiography, no English-speaking Protestant could be sure that the Catholic "Other" did not lurk inside the Empire's own borders and institutions, either finding an amenable environment among the criminal classes, or even posing as a servant of the establishment.

Another author who was popular on both sides of the Atlantic, and who had a great deal to say about the Church of Rome, was William Hogarth. Although his prints attracted middle and upper class customers, they also sold widely enough to reach the lower ranks of society, and therefore may be accounted an expression of popular culture.⁵¹ Hogarth, like the authors of the documents discussed above, attacked the Catholic Church in two distinct ways in his prints. On the one hand, he assaulted the Church as a foreign institution that was determined to overrun Great Britain. On the other hand, Hogarth identified "popery" as an immoral and self-indulgent mentality that existed inside as well as outside the English-speaking world. His second type of attack on Catholicism often demonstrates how deeply the identification of "popery" with sin and luxury had penetrated the understanding of the general public, for Hogarth could often convey a wealth of associations by employing the most cryptic references to "popery".

Hogarth made his clearest attacks on Catholicism as an institution in a pair of prints he issued at the start of the Seven Years' War in Europe, when many Britons feared an invasion from France. One print of this pair, The Invasion: France, presents the Catholic Church as a

⁵¹. Burke, Popular Culture, 137.

tyrannical, persecuting institution, in the tradition of Foxe. This print shows the French preparing to invade the British Isles during the Seven Years' War. Prominent in the invading force is a friar, who is examining a cart loaded with the objects that the Church needs in order to impose its will on British Protestants. Some objects represent the new religion that will be forced on Britons by the French invaders: the blueprint of a projected monastery, to be built at Blackfriars, London, and a statue of St. Anthony show the type of institutions and beliefs that epitomized the Church of Rome in British eyes. For those who will not accept these elements of "popery", there are severe punishments in store: the friar is carefully testing the sharpness of an axe, while a rack-like torture device sits prominently among the many items in the cart. Hogarth's message is not simply that the Catholic Church treats Protestants cruelly, but that such cruelty is part and parcel of the Church's religious creed; the jumbling together of objects of worship and instruments of persecution in the cart suggests that these two aspects of "popery" are inextricably connected.⁵²

Alongside this portrayal of "popish" tyranny lies another theme, the idea of ordinary Catholics as creatures of passion and appetite. The friar looks cruel and self-satisfied, as though relishing the prospect of torturing and executing heretics. The ragged French soldiers in the print look terrified at the prospect of engaging brave British sailors and soldiers in battle, but Hogarth makes clear the greed that underlies their fear in the words on the banner that one of the soldiers holds: "Vengeance et le Bon Bier et Bon Boeuf de Angleterre." In the companion print, The Invasion: England, which shows Englishmen enjoying the hearty fare of their country outside a tavern, Hogarth again makes the point about the rapacity of even the most downtrodden Frenchmen. In verses which describe the sentiments of the brave Britons portrayed in the tavern scene, Hogarth writes:

⁵². William Hogarth, The Invasion: France (London, 1756).

"The Hungry Slaves have Smelt our Food,
They long to taste our Flesh and Blood,
Old England's Beef and Beer."

Clearly the French "slaves" who will fight and die for their country and church are not mere pawns, but have motives of their own for invasion. Hogarth's metaphorical reference to beef and beer as "Flesh and Blood" neatly links the traditional anticatholic theme of the institutional Church's torture and burning of English Protestants, to the idea of "popish" kingdoms as realms where rank-and-file Catholics seek to satisfy raging appetites. Thus, even in this straightforwardly patriotic print which identifies the Catholic Church and France as England's enemies, Hogarth defines "popery" also in terms of ordinary human lusts.⁵³

The combined attack on "popery" as an institution and "popery" as a set of disorderly passions also appears in Calais Gate or O, The Roast Beef of Old England. Here, a fat friar, standing at the entrance to the city of Calais, fondles a large piece of beef, while starving French soldiers and porters, wearing ragged clothes and eating gruel, look on with astonishment and envy. Hogarth's primary message in Calais Gate is the gross inequality of wealth in Catholic France. Tyranny is one means by which the French establishment sustained this inequality. The print is framed by a dark archway, from whose pillars heavy chains hang to the ground, proclaiming that anyone who arrives at Calais is entering a land of harsh rule. The portcullis in the old gate behind the friar, and the soldiers with their lances also emphasize the degree to which the French establishment relies on cruelty and brute force to maintain its power. Yet tyranny is only one of the legs on which the regime across the channel rests. The other leg, Calais Gate makes clear, is superstition. In the foreground, three nuns admire the image of Christ on the back of a broad, flat fish, cherishing a food that was despised in eighteenth-century England. Hogarth is recalling Catholic Lenten

⁵³. Hogarth, The Invasion: England (London, 1756).

practices in this grouping of religious Catholics around a fish, but he is also making the larger point that the superstitious delusions encouraged by "popery" make ordinary Catholics into willing servants of a system that rewards some with fine beef, and others with trash for sustenance. In the center background of the print, a religious procession, highlighted by Hogarth's use of sunshine and shadow, further reinforces his point that superstition blinds Catholics to the injustice of their society: the townspeople who kneel before the bishop at the procession's head are voluntarily sustaining the fat friar in the foreground.⁵⁴

Although deluded by superstition and oppressed by force, the humbler folk in Calais Gate are not presented as objects of pity or sympathy. Hogarth vehemently stresses the strength of appetite among all individuals in "popish" countries. He uses all the major figures of this print to portray a French population dominated by powerful desires. Acute appetite is communicated by the well-fed friar, whose right hand lies on his belly, while his face registers an expression close to lust as he fingers the meat with his left hand. Ravenous hunger is powerfully indicated on the faces of the ragged soldiers who stand around the friar, too; one soldier is so captivated by the prime rib before him that his mouth gapes open, while in his distraction he spills the gruel from his bowl in a thin, steady stream. Taken together, the open mouth and stream of gruel suggest a salivating animal, so that the soldier, far from being an object of pity, evokes disgust. The nuns grouped about the fish also leer at their food in a bestial manner. Altogether, Calais Gate conveys a society whose individual members have become creatures disfigured by the excess of their appetites. "Popery" does not create a society of mindless, apathetic slaves, according to Hogarth, but one where every individual is obsessed primarily with the satisfaction of his or her own desires,

⁵⁴. Hogarth, Calais Gate or O, The Roast Beef of Old England (London, 1749).

rather than with any common good.⁵⁵

Hogarth also brings out Catholicism's disordered view of the world and the passions of its members in Credulity, Superstition, and Fanaticism: A Medley. In this print, Hogarth attacks the beliefs and behavior of all those religious groups that, according to him, put emotion and imagination above reason as guides to truth. The Church of Rome is one such group, and symbols of that Church appear alongside representations of evangelical Christians, of believers in witchcraft, and of witnesses who claimed to have seen spiritual apparitions. All these superstitious groups are afflicted by "enthusiasm" in the pejorative, eighteenth-century sense of the word: Hogarth portrays them as tortured by excessive grief and despair, blinded by their irrational visions, and easily manipulated by powerful leaders. One of the most serious consequences of the fanatics' delusions is that they are inclined to bloody violence against those with whom they disagree: cruel persecution is presented as a natural corollary of epistemological fallacies. Again, Hogarth ties traditional themes of Catholicism as a persecuting institution to the notion of "popery" as a religion that allows and encourages passion over reason. In this instance, the two elements of antipopery do not merely stand side by side, but Catholicism's bloodthirsty cruelty is portrayed as the product of its adherents' enslavement to desire. Hogarth's focus on the mentality of Catholics, rather than on the institutions of the Church of Rome, constructs a more ambiguous concept of identity to Britons than that portrayed in The Invasion or Calais Gate. His equation of "popery" with other "enthusiastic" belief systems suggests that the essential qualities of "popery" exist inside the English Protestant world, not only among the adherents of obsolete beliefs, such as witchcraft, but also among religious sects of great contemporary importance, such as Methodism.⁵⁶

⁵⁵. Ibid..

⁵⁶. William Hogarth, Credulity, Superstition, and Fanaticism: A Medley (London, 1762).

Hogarth explores the existence of "popish" characteristics in another sector of English society, in two of his popular series of prints that attack the luxury and immorality of the wealthy. In A Rake's Progress, a series of six prints, Hogarth traces the descent of a vain, extravagant debauchee from prosperity to misery. In the final print, representing the final stage of the rake's ruin, the protagonist is in Bedlam, his reason shattered. Among the representatives of insanity in that mental hospital are two who are playing "popish" roles. One fancies himself a monk, and he sits in a cell-like room with an exaggerated, gloomy expression on his face, surrounded by pictures of Catholic saints. His self-imposed asceticism is a form of vain self-indulgence, since he seems to revel in his suffering, and clearly identifies himself with the proud, holy figures whose portraits decorate his cell. Another madman has dressed as a bishop. He is certainly representing a Catholic rather than a Church of England prelate, because he is holding a mock monstrance before him as he processes about the asylum. These two figures make it clear that Hogarth believed "popery" was a distorted perception of the world, akin to madness. Since the rake's debauchery brought him to this place where "popish" fantasies, as well as other madneses, thrive, this series of prints suggests a connection between the rampant, irresponsible self-indulgence of many privileged Britons, and the Catholic faith.⁵⁷

Further commentary on the similarities between "popery" and fashionable behavior appears in Hogarth's Marriage à la Mode. Here, another series of six prints records a marriage that is forced by greedy and ambitious parents upon unwilling partners, a groom of noble lineage, and a bride from a newly-monied family. The result of this forced match is moral decay and material ruin. "Popish" imagery is used by Hogarth on two occasions to convey the moral depravity into which the unhappy couple sinks. In the second print of the series, the man and his wife

⁵⁷. Hogarth, A Rake's Progress (London, 1735).

awake, fully dressed, after having fallen asleep on chairs in a room that shows signs of a wild party the previous night. The man looks depressed, while his wife smiles with a sly content. The reason for her self-satisfaction is in the room behind. There, another gentleman, in dishevelled clothes, but looking pleased with himself, also arises after sleeping on a chair. Above his impromptu bed hang portraits of three Catholic saints, two males and a female, all lavishly robed in medieval fashion, their heads surrounded by haloes, and with expressions of hypocritical sanctity on their faces. The use of the Catholic motif makes clear the sort of activities that have been taking place between the wife and the overnight guest.⁵⁸

Again, in the fourth print of this series, Hogarth uses "popish" motifs to convey sexual immorality. In this plate, the wife receives visitors as she performs her toilette in a private chamber. While entertainers distract the attention of most of her guests, this lady holds a whispered conversation with a male visitor. He hands his hostess a piece of paper on which the floor plan of a ballroom has been drawn, while his free hand points behind him, at a screen on which the scene of a masquerade is painted. Hogarth clearly intends the painting on the screen to convey the nature of the sotto voce conversation between these two conspirators. The man's digit points particularly to the figures of a man and woman dressed as a monk and a nun, perhaps suggesting the costumes that he and his lady should wear in order to recognize each other at the evening's ball, and certainly emphasizing that the purpose of their secret meeting is for an illicit sexual encounter. Once again, as in the second print in Marriage à la Mode, Hogarth associates "popery" with sexual immorality. Significantly, he makes this association not to deliver an anticatholic message, but to use an already widely-accepted trait of Catholicism as a shorthand for

⁵⁸. Hogarth, Marriage à la Mode (London, 1745).

communicating the idea of sexual indulgence.⁵⁹

Taken together, Hogarth's prints convey a mixed message about the nature of "popery", and of true, British, Protestant identity. Catholicism consists in part of an institutional church, and of secular governments, such as that of France, that support this church. Britons, Hogarth clearly suggests in The Invasion, should rally round their government to fight these clearly defined, foreign enemies. At the same time, "popery" lurks within the kingdom, both among the lower class adherents of Methodism, and among some of the most prosperous segments of society. Britons should stand firm against these manifestations of "popery", too, but in this case by fighting against the manners and beliefs of fellow-countrymen. There is more than a simple contrast between a foreign, Catholic "Other" and a British, Protestant "Self" in Hogarth's prints, as Linda Colley suggests in her discussion of Hogarth.⁶⁰ Rather, Hogarth presents "popery" as an external menace with a considerable foothold within the English, Protestant world.

Hogarth's friend, Henry Fielding, similarly explored the presence of "popery" within England in The History of Tom Jones. Like Hogarth's prints, Fielding's novels were known to English-speaking Protestants on both sides of the Atlantic.⁶¹ Set during the Jacobite invasion of 1745-1746, Fielding uses his narrative on occasion to attack the institutions of the Catholic Church and of Catholic monarchies. Tom Jones joins the forces marching against the Young Pretender because "he was a hearty well-wisher to the glorious cause of liberty, and of the Protestant

⁵⁹. Ibid.

⁶⁰. Colley, Britons, 33-35.

⁶¹. Alexander Hamilton, for instance, was able to obtain Fielding's earlier work, Joseph Andrews in America two years after that novel's publication in the mother country. Hamilton, Itinerarium, 194. Jay Fliegelman also argues that Fielding's work, including Tom Jones, was well known to the colonists. Prodigals and Pilgrims: the American revolution against patriarchal authority, 1750-1800 (New York: Cambridge University, 1982), 58, 60, 118.

religion."⁶² He meets an old man who remembers James II, a king that tried to establish an inquisition in England, and that "declared himself, in fact, as absolute as any tyrant ever was or can be."⁶³ Yet though Fielding makes clear his objections to the evils of Catholic political and ecclesiastical institutions, his chief focus, when he dealt with the issue of "popery", was on the mentality and morals of that religion.

Fielding uses one of his main characters, Partridge, as a mechanism for demonstrating how Catholics think and act. Partridge is a Catholic who, first mistakenly thought to be the father of Tom Jones, later becomes the hero's companion during his wanderings.⁶⁴ One of Partridge's major failings is that he cannot distinguish reality from illusion, and often fails to understand the obvious, common sense truth in front of him. Perhaps the best illustration of Partridge's "popish" perceptions of the world around him is his reaction to Hamlet, which he sees performed in a London theater. Partridge first thinks the scenery so real, that he becomes overexcited. He then becomes so convinced that the ghost of Hamlet's father is truly standing on the stage before him that this ludicrous "papist" is thrown into fits of terror, and cannot sleep afterwards, because he keeps thinking he sees the ghost in his room.⁶⁵ On many other occasions, he is misled by appearances, or led into error by placing implicit trust in the words of Catholic priests.⁶⁶ Fielding makes Partridge a living example of Catholicism's lack of common sense, and of the "enthusiasm" and terrors that result from such epistemological failure.

⁶². Henry Fielding, The History of Tom Jones (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin, 1985), 336.

⁶³. Ibid., 427.

⁶⁴. Partridge's Catholicism is apparent on many occasions. Ibid., 394-395, 561, 830.

⁶⁵. Ibid., 757-760.

⁶⁶. Ibid., 394-395, 397-398, 409-411, 575, 578, 590-592.

On occasion, Partridge's superstition enables Fielding to introduce an element of supernatural terror into his narrative, without infringing the convention of verisimilitude that was an important aspect of the novel form.⁶⁷ When Jones and Partridge approach an apparently empty house on the top of desolate Bredon Hill, Partridge becomes terrified that the edifice is haunted. He sees mysterious lights, and begs his companion not to knock on the door, lest the ghosts within should appear. Although Partridge's fears are clearly groundless, the reader experiences the climb up the hill, the approach to the house, and the wait after knocking at the door through the Catholic's eyes. Fielding uses the "papist's" perceptions to make his readers feel the thrill of fear, without ever suggesting that ghosts really exist.⁶⁸ Partridge plays a similar role later in the tale, when he and Jones become lost in a wood during a storm. Partridge is convinced that both forest and tempest are spells cast by an old woman to whom Jones and Partridge have denied alms. The reader can experience the fear of witchcraft, without losing faith in the author's truthfulness to life.⁶⁹ "Popery's" warped epistemology thus enabled Fielding successfully to incorporate elements of romance within his "history".

Fielding draws an association between Catholicism and sinful self-indulgence, as well as between "popery", superstition, and delusion. "Popery's" moral offenses result in part, the novelist makes clear, from its casuistical reasoning, which enables its members to justify any impulse or action. Catholic doctrine produces consummate hypocrites, who have no conscience about their wrongdoings, and cannot even understand why their behavior is flawed. "Your religion," Tom Jones says to Partridge, "serves you only for an excuse for your faults, but

⁶⁷. McKeon, English Novel, 118-128.

⁶⁸. Ibid., 397-398.

⁶⁹. Ibid., 588-590.

is no incentive to your virtue."⁷⁰ This hypocritical aspect of Catholicism not only made Partridge a man of malleable morals, but also provides Fielding with metaphors for describing the behavior of other, non-Catholic hypocrites. For instance, Bridget Allworthy, who conceived Jones in an extramarital affair, hid her pregnancy, abandoned her infant in the bed of her brother, Squire Allworthy, and then blamed Jenny Jones, the maid, for the unclaimed child, appeared to the world as the epitome of moral perfection. "Indeed," wrote Fielding of Bridget, "her conversation was so pure, her looks so sage, and her whole deportment so grave and solemn, that she seemed to deserve the name of saint equally with her namesake, or with any other female in the Roman kalendar."⁷¹ Later, Fielding compares this "saint's" legitimate son, Blifil, the novel's blackest villain and worst hypocrite, to an Inquisitor who expresses tender concern for the victims he has just condemned to death.⁷² The novelist also uses images of "popish" immorality and hypocrisy when discussing Tom Jones's sexual dalliance with Lady Bellaston.

In the evening, Jones met his lady again, and a long conversation again ensued between them; but as it consisted only of the same ordinary occurrences as before, we shall avoid mentioning particulars, which we despair of rendering agreeable to the reader; unless he is one whose devotion to the fair sex, like that of the Papists to their saints, wants to be raised by the help of pictures."

Here, the references to Catholicism mock his own and his readers' professed disapproval for such activities, a disapproval that hypocritically hides a real desire for much more detail than the author dares to give.⁷³ All these unexplicated uses of Catholic allusions in the context of immorality and hypocrisy suggest not only that Fielding regarded Catholics as sinners and hypocrites, but that he was able to

⁷⁰. Ibid., 561.

⁷¹. Ibid., 76.

⁷². Ibid., 316.

⁷³. Ibid., 639.

take his readers' association of "popery" and these character traits for granted.

All of the documents considered in this chapter communicate a complex message about the Church of Rome. "Popery" is portrayed both as a set of institutions outside the British Empire, and as a corruption of manners and morals taking place among many British Protestants. Catholicism is abhorrent and should be rejected, yet it is also fascinating and enjoyable for the imagination to dwell upon. These internal contradictions result in part from a characteristic that this anticatholic literature shared with much popular literature in eighteenth-century western Europe. During the early modern period, two traditions of culture coexisted and competed, the "little" tradition of the common folk, and the "great" tradition of the elite. The little tradition celebrated mythical countries such as the Land of Cockaigne, a place of supernatural wonders, whose inhabitants wallowed in unlimited luxury and were free of moral restraints. The great tradition prized order, self-discipline, and reason. In the eighteenth century, the elite's control of printing and of manufacturing processes enabled it to sell cheap cultural artifacts to the poorer members of society. These artifacts reflected the priorities of the great tradition, which came increasingly to dominate the culture of the lower ranks.⁷⁴ Popular anticatholic literature of the eighteenth century reflects this widespread, contemporary invasion of the little tradition by the elite. Certain of the genres employed by anticatholic writers, such as the romance and the confession narrative, were well established in the little tradition.⁷⁵ The "popish" world in this literature embodies the theme of a land of luxury and wonder. The intrusion of the elite is visible in this literature's denunciation of the self-indulgence, immorality, and superstition that prevailed in this land. Yet the

⁷⁴. Burke, Popular Culture, 178-199.

⁷⁵. Hall, Worlds of Wonder, 178-186.

influence of the little tradition in this literature is far from negligible. The desire to sell these works to a popular market meant that beneath the general denunciation of "popish" behavior there was a tendency to dwell on the sensational and salacious. Thus, the land of Cockaigne and the spirit of Carnival survived, in muted form, in these tales.

Alongside this tension between reason and wonder, self-denial and self-indulgence, there lay another set of conflicting voices, emanating from within the great or elite tradition. The latter, however united in its disapproval of many elements of popular culture, did not present a monolithic view of the world. Rather, different social strata and cultural subgroups within the elite competed to shape public discourse according to their own viewpoints. The great tradition in the eighteenth-century English-speaking world had become a tradition of reasoned disputation. As the great tradition spread its influence, more and more of the population was exposed to the major concerns aired in public debate.⁷⁶ The popular anticatholic literature considered in this chapter reflects contemporary discussion in the public sphere as well as surviving elements of traditional popular culture. One of the central debates in the public sphere during this period was over the effects that the British Empire's increasing prosperity would have on political liberty and on religion and morality. The texts considered in this chapter reflected this debate. On the one hand, these documents' identification of "popery" and self-indulgence, demonstrated the prevailing fear of luxury's corrupting effects. On the other hand, this popular anticatholicism urges English-speaking Protestants vigorously to support their government against the "popish" world outside, even though such support in practice increased the power, wealth, and luxury of the ruling classes. This public debate over the effects of wealth, along with the tensions between "little" and "great"

⁷⁶. Habermas, Public Sphere, 57-67.

traditions, helped to generate the conflicting views of "popery" conveyed by these popular texts.

The narrative format of this popular anticatholicism freed it from the necessity of reconciling its many internal contradictions; for narrative, in general, allows logical inconsistencies to be combined.⁷⁷ The value of these popular works, however trivial their subject matter might seem at times, is their ability to display a wider spectrum of their society's points of view than was possible in more formal types of discourse. In order to find contemporary attempts to reconcile some of the contradictions that exist in these texts, one must turn from historical or fictive narrative to political philosophy. The next chapter considers a group of writers who, unlike these popular authors, addressed and partially resolved the inconsistencies that surrounded the British Protestant view of "popery".

⁷⁷. Jameson, Political Unconscious, 75-85.

CHAPTER V
THE WORLD TURNED OUTSIDE IN

During the period 1689-1760, two factions within the political opposition in Great Britain, the "Real Whigs" and the "patriots", joined many of their countrymen in publishing criticisms of the Church of Rome. These factions operated in the mother country, but made successful appeals to "country" opinion - the dominating political philosophy among rural gentry, yeomen, and craftsmen - in the colonies as well as Great Britain.¹ Many of the themes these opposition writers stressed were the same as those that appeared in the works examined in the previous two chapters, but these Real Whigs and patriots combined and linked the tropes of anticatholic literature in ways that suited their particular ideological needs. More than either moderate Whig or popular authors, these opposition writers followed in Foxe's footsteps, and closely identified "popery" with sophisticated, tyrannical, bureaucratic institutions. Such institutions, these authors argued, were being built in Great Britain by the ruling, moderate Whigs and their merchant and financier partners. At the same time, the Real Whigs and the patriots accepted the moderate Whigs' and popular authors' portrayal of "popery" as a mentality that fostered passion and self-indulgence. Classical republican ideas on political economy provided the connection between "popish" bureaucracy and "popish" luxury for these opposition writers.

Although useful as a means of linking separate elements of the attack on Catholicism, classical republican ideas created difficulties

¹. On the Real Whigs, see Bailyn, Ideological Origins, 34-35, and Robbins, Eighteenth-Century Commonwealthman, 3-7. On the "patriots" see Isaac Kramnick, Bolingbroke and his Circle (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University, 1968), 17-19, and Habermas, Public Sphere, 60, 64.

for the Real Whigs and patriots, especially over the issue of how the British Empire could defend itself against its powerful, "popish" enemies without large armed forces, heavy taxation, and the booming trade that made such taxation possible. Over the sixty years after the Glorious Revolution, these writers gradually adapted their ideas to deal with the problems posed by contemporary diplomacy and war. By the end of the Seven Years' War, writers in the Real Whig and patriot traditions had formulated a new political economy that argued for the possible coexistence of virtue and national vitality with corrupt bureaucracy and excessive self-indulgence. At the end of this evolution in their ideas, these opposition thinkers had arrived at a vision of the future that permanently incorporated, within the structure of British government and society, institutions and behavior similar to those that supposedly prevailed in "popish" countries. These authors formulated an identity for their readers, in which elements of the Catholic "Other" had become an integral part of the British "Self".

The Real Whigs were the earlier of these two opposition factions. Originating in the decade after the Glorious Revolution, when Robert Molesworth sounded a warning about the possibility of renewed corruption even under the victorious Whig establishment, the Real Whigs' philosophy was perhaps most completely articulated by John Trenchard and Thomas Gordon during the 1720s.² In Cato's Letters (1720-1724), these skilled publicists point out how an overambitious executive can still pose a potential threat to the liberties of Britons, despite the constitutional guarantees of the revolutionary settlement. The greatest threat to liberty, they argue, comes from the executive's command of ever-increasing patronage, which is already, by the 1720s, destroying the independence of Parliament. The chief contribution of the Real Whigs to English political thought was their success at keeping the anti-executive concerns of the seventeenth century alive, by updating such

². Robbins, Eighteenth-Century Commonwealthman, 98-125.

concerns to fit eighteenth-century conditions.³

The influence of these writers in the mother country was limited, although they did present an important alternative viewpoint during the complacent years of the Walpole administration. In the American colonies, the Real Whigs had a much greater impact. From these opposition writers, many colonists absorbed a suspicion of constitutional innovations in Hanoverian Britain. The suspicion that all was not well in the mother country prepared the ground for the protests and the solutions adopted by Americans in their resistance to the imperial government after the Seven Years' War.⁴

While setting forth their political views, the Real Whigs frequently discuss the relationship of the British government and of individual Britons to "popery". In keeping with the seventeenth-century tone of much of their thought, these radical writers equate Catholicism not just with religious error, but also with absolute monarchy, with an excessively luxurious court, with standing armies, with large bureaucracies, and with heavy taxation. "The Pope's Yoke is more grievous than that of any Christian Prince upon Earth" wrote John Trenchard. "All [under his dominion] is Ignorance, Bigotry, Idolatry, Barbarity, Hunger, Chains, and every species of Misery."⁵ Arbitrary justice, religious persecution, and the censorship of anti-government publications are particular manifestations of such regimes.⁶ Yet "popery's" attributes exist not only in the tyrannies of the Continent, but also in the growing power of government at home. So insistent are Trenchard and Gordon about the essential "popishness" of large, intrusive government that they exhort their readers to forget the labels

³. Bailyn, Ideological Origins, 68-76.

⁴. Robbins, Eighteenth-Century Commonwealthman, 3-4.

⁵. John Trenchard and Thomas Gordon, Cato's Letters; or Essays on Liberty, Civil and Religious in The English Libertarian Heritage, ed. David L. Jacobson (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1965), 169.

⁶. Ibid., 163-4; Trenchard and Gordon, Cato's Letters (New York: Russell and Russell, 1969), 35-37.

"Whig" and "Tory", and make political decisions on the grounds that the only real battle lies between "Court and Country, Protestant and Papist, Freemen and Slaves."⁷ These authors draw many parallels between Catholic and contemporary British regimes, complaining, for example, that just as public spirit in Catholic countries consists of giving money to the Church, to the detriment of one's family and posterity, so in Britain have the devisers of new financial institutions been unjustly rewarded for their public service, which consists of finding ingenious means to divert wealth from ordinary families into the public coffers.⁸ The Real Whigs thus accentuate the very association that moderate Whig and popular writers tended to deemphasize: that of "popery" with all over-powerful government institutions, including those in Great Britain. The Real Whig attempt to brand the growing power of the post-revolutionary regime as "popish" constituted a serious attack on the early eighteenth-century establishment.

Yet the Real Whigs' anticatholicism is more than a simple, anachronistic return to the ideas of earlier writers, such as Foxe. As with the rest of their political thought, these radicals update certain aspects of their antipopery to make it relevant to their contemporaries. An essential element in that updating is the inclusion of Lockean ideas about the existence of distinct Protestant and Catholic epistemologies, and about the relationship of such epistemologies to the political economies of free and unfree societies. According to Trenchard and Gordon, there are essentially two types of government, those that favor liberty, and those that rest on tyranny. Each type of government is closely associated with a particular type of religion. "False religion" favors arbitrary authority, while "true Christianity", or Protestantism, naturally fosters liberty. Although all non-Protestant faiths are included in the Real Whig diatribe against false beliefs, Catholicism

⁷. Trenchard and Gordon, Cato's Letters (1969), 10.

⁸. Trenchard and Gordon, Cato's Letters (1965), 88, 91.

and the nations it dominates are preeminent in their essays.⁹

Trenchard and Gordon argue that the failure of clear perception is the essential characteristic of "popery", which is "fertile in Superstitions, in wild Whimsies, delusive Phantoms, and ridiculous Dreams," in "dark and dreadful Horrors that banish Reason."¹⁰ "Cato" contrasts the speculative abstractions of Catholicism, whose advocates try to force unknowable truths like transubstantiation down the throats of their members, with the practical, common sense basis of Protestant nations, where the only truths insisted on are those that can be perceived through the five senses.¹¹ Reason is naturally the enemy of "popish" governments, which are forced to suppress many areas of learning, lest a free examination of truth expose the false foundations on which the religious and political authority of Catholicism rests. Even science and mathematics can threaten tyrannical power, so that geniuses like Galileo have to be silenced.¹² Ignorance is the necessary concomitant of "popish", as of all arbitrary regimes.¹³

Yet Catholicism does more than simply act as a censor, according to these Real Whigs: the chief preoccupation of "popery" is to publicize error, so that ordinary Catholics are misled by false "Opinions, Fancies, or Stories" that make the average Catholic a besotted supporter of the regimes that enslave him. Unlike Turkey, for example, where all printing is forbidden, Catholic regimes allow the publication of selected works, and even give financial support to talented writers, as long as such writers become "the Instruments of Servitude," practising

⁹. Trenchard and Gordon, Cato's Letters (1965), 161-171.

¹⁰. Ibid., 161.

¹¹. Ibid., 90-91.

¹². Trenchard and Gordon, Cato's Letters (1969), 32, 34, 37-8.

¹³. Ibid., 8-9, and Trenchard and Gordon, Cato's Letters (1965), 169.

"the worst of all Prostitutions" by supporting the establishment.¹⁴ Although the tyrants and clergy of Catholic nations benefit the most from the false knowledge that "popery" propagates, even the meanest elements of the population willingly participate in the "enthusiastical" or non-rational mentality of that faith.¹⁵ All ideas and feelings are distorted in "popish" countries: true obedience becomes servility, humility dejection, and charity "a fiery and outrageous Zeal to propagate fashionable and gainful Opinions."¹⁶ For Trenchard and Gordon, as for Locke and the moderate Whigs, "popery" is not just a negation of truth, but a publicly-supported system of illusion, where the epistemological failings and "bewildered Imaginations" of individuals are intimately linked to the structure of power and wealth.¹⁷

From this false, epistemological basis all other aspects of "popish" society follow. Tyranny, which helps to sustain the ignorance and the illusions of "popery", reaps extensive benefits from the mentality that Catholicism breeds. For those at the top of society, luxury abounds. For the rest, there is poverty and misery, but no lack of aggressive self-seeking, for the masses imitate their masters, and "become rapacious, brutish, and savage to one another, as their cruel Governors are to them all." Though few succeed in obtaining great wealth, all subjects of Catholic societies "live upon the Spoils of one another." Competition and inequality characterize the political economy of "popery", according to Trenchard and Gordon, who share this idea with the moderate Whigs.¹⁸

By contrast, "true" or Protestant Christianity rests upon self-

¹⁴. Trenchard and Gordon, Cato's Letters (1969), 33-37.

¹⁵. Trenchard and Gordon, Cato's Letters (1965), 169.

¹⁶. Ibid., 165.

¹⁷. Ibid., 161; Trenchard and Gordon, Cato's Letters (1969), 8-9, 32.

¹⁸. Trenchard and Gordon, Cato's Letters (1965), 163.

evident facts, and on a law of nature that all men would clearly see if left alone by tyrants and priests. This rational religion encourages men to be cooperative, affectionate, and dutiful towards each other. The essence of this faith is its ability to contribute to "practical Virtue", that is, to what is useful for society. Protestantism avoids abstractions, and certainly does not stir up dissension, persecution, and war over truths that cannot be established by observation. Instead, this benevolent system of beliefs, like the reason that supports it, tries to restrain men's passions, and to replace violence with peace. While "popery" is selfish and partial in its loyalties, Protestantism inspires a "universal Love and Benevolence to the whole Creation."¹⁹

The link between liberty, Protestantism, and empiricism can be seen even in the detailed workings of the British constitution. A right-thinking British Protestant is one who always relies on the direct evidence of his senses when exercising his political rights. Trenchard and Gordon urge their readers to "exert [their] Reason", to remove their blindfolds, to examine candidates for Parliament with their own eyes, and to elect only those friends and neighbors personally known to the voters. General elections are a vital opportunity not only for choosing representatives, but for examining them: when standing before their constituents, these Real Whigs argue, Members of Parliament cannot deceive the watchful elector, but when those representatives have disappeared to the distant seat of government, then they are beyond the voters' ken and control.²⁰ "Cato" recommends vigilance above all else, as the guarantee of liberty in a free society. The public spirited man in a free, Protestant nation is one who "exposes delusions" and sees through impostors.²¹ Trenchard and Gordon emphasize the empirical basis of the British political system, in its broad structure as in its

¹⁹. Ibid., 161-162, 167.

²⁰. Trenchard and Gordon, Cato's Letters (1969), 11-12, 17, 21-23.

²¹. Trenchard and Gordon, Cato's Letters (1965), 89.

detailed operation, just as they stress the blindness and ignorance that underlie "popery" and absolute governments.

How, then, do these radical Whigs differ from the moderate Whig writers who also distinguish between the empiricism of Protestant freedom and the epistemological confusion of "popish" tyranny? The essential difference is in Trenchard's and Gordon's primary identification of empiricism with the local community, and false epistemology with large-scale institutions. They argue that an individual is most likely to perceive clearly and reason correctly when he is among his family and neighbors. When immersed in the centers of power and wealth, the individual's perceptions are dazzled and warped: he begins to see, and therefore to think, differently. Empirical thinking, the foundation of Protestantism and of free constitutions, cannot survive in the wider public world of exorbitant power and wealth that governs Great Britain.

This dependence of empiricism on an individual's local associations stems from the struggle between reason and appetite for control of the individual. More than Locke, these radicals emphasize the weakness of man's reasoning faculties. "Whilst Men are Men, Ambition, Avarice and Vanity, and other Passions, will govern their Actions; in spite of all Equity and Reason."²² The only way that reason can prevail is when man's passion for his own interests becomes absorbed in his love of family, friends, and neighbors. These personal emotions channel man's selfishness towards a larger community, and help him to understand the importance of serving the public good. Only when thus aided by local affections can reason help man to become virtuous.²³

If virtue depends on a man's affection for friends, family, and neighbors, then it cannot survive in the larger world of national government and finance. In a large, impersonal, public sphere,

²². Trenchard and Gordon, Cato's Letters (1969), 14.

²³. Trenchard and Gordon, Cato's Letters (1965), 91-92.

opportunities for satisfying appetites are unbounded, while the natural ties that bind a man to his local community are absent. Members of Parliament who live at a distance from their constituents are just as unreliable as more obviously corrupt representatives, such as stockholders in the chartered corporations and placemen, because those who share no interest with the voters have no reason to protect those voters' interests.²⁴ In such a situation, selfish passion becomes dominant, and reason is too weak to remind the individual of his duty to the public good. Essentially, anyone who becomes detached from his local roots ends up accepting the norms of the wider world. There, a struggle between individuals for self-aggrandizement becomes the order of the day, and the victors satisfy their greed by oppressing and impoverishing the vanquished. The common sense of the local man is swamped by the empty pomp of the court and capital, and he forgets the interests of his erstwhile neighbors, whom he now sees only as potential sources of plunder.²⁵

Thus, any social or political sphere dominated by large-scale institutions, even the British public world, is essentially "popish". The same selfish individualism, the same dominance by luxury, the same tendency to tyranny and oppression, the same illusions that befuddle the senses exist in London and Westminster, as in Versailles and Rome. Trenchard and Gordon draw plentiful parallels between "popery" and the corrupt aspects of the British government. For these writers, the term "popery" designates not just a particular Church, but a type of mentality and society common in Catholic nations. Britons could therefore become essentially "popish" while remaining formally Protestant, just as the constitution could become essentially tyrannical while retaining representative forms.²⁶ Trenchard and Gordon use their

²⁴. Trenchard and Gordon, Cato's Letters (1969), 22-26.

²⁵. Ibid., 10-11, 13-14.

²⁶. Ibid., 9-10, 23-24.

antipopery as they use their attacks on the use of patronage, as a means of keeping the yeomen electors of Britain suspicious of their government.

Cato's Letters constitute an excellent illustration of the manner in which writers outside the establishment can challenge orthodoxy by perceiving and articulating implications of the establishment's ideology that are invisible to the establishment itself.²⁷ Trenchard and Gordon accept the moderate Whigs' equation of particular epistemologies, religions, and political systems, but add an element of their own, the link between epistemology and institutional size. With that new element, these Real Whig writers are able to turn the philosophy of the post-revolutionary establishment into an ideal that threatened that establishment.

Bernard Bailyn argues that Trenchard and Gordon were more influential than any other political theorists on the American colonists of the 1760s and 1770s.²⁸ On the basis of this claim, it would be possible to argue that "Cato's" identification of "popish" sympathies and behavior in the imperial government simply added to other colonial anxieties about corruption and about the concentration of political power in the Empire.²⁹ In fact, however, the influence of the real Whigs' antipopery was more complex. Over the decades between the original publication of Cato's Letters and the Seven Years' War, the anticatholicism of writers in the Real Whig tradition underwent an important evolution. Trenchard and Gordon, writing in the early 1720s when Britain was at peace with its Catholic foes, focused on foreign Catholic nations primarily as examples of what Britain should not be.

²⁷. Louis Althusser and Etienne Balibar, Reading Capital, transl. Ben Brewster (New York: Pantheon, 1970), 22-28.

²⁸. Bailyn, Ideological Origins, 35-36.

²⁹. Pauline Maier makes such an argument in From Resistance to Revolution: Colonial Radicals and the Development of American Opposition to Britain, 1765-1776 (New York: Vintage, 1974), 101-102, 184-185, 238.

They were able to ignore the possibility of French or Spanish invasion of British territory, and concentrate instead on "popery's" acquisition of power in Britain through the corruption of government. Later writers in the Real Whig tradition, such as James Burgh and John Brown, who addressed British and colonial readers in the 1740s and 1750s, did not enjoy the luxury of peace. During those decades, France, Spain, and the Jacobites posed what seemed to be a serious threat to Britain's security. In such circumstances, these authors could not ignore the ruling, moderate Whigs' argument that commercial wealth, taxation, bureaucracy, and large armed forces were necessary to defend the Empire against Catholic conquest. The later real Whigs were caught in a dilemma: by attacking big government at home, they rendered Britain and its Empire vulnerable to "popish" conquest, but by accepting the need for strong, intrusive public institutions, they paved the way for virtual, if not actual, "popery" at home. Their handling of this dilemma changed certain fundamental elements of their political philosophy. Anticatholicism, far from simply reinforcing the message of Trenchard and Gordon about constitutional decay, in fact rendered the ideas of "Cato" partially obsolete by the 1760s.

The later Real Whigs' anticatholicism changed in part because of ideas imported from another political opposition group, the self-styled "patriots". The "patriots" took over from Trenchard and Gordon as the best-publicized critics of the Walpole administration after 1726, when the weekly journal the Craftsman made its appearance. From that time, a lively attack on the ruling Whigs, conducted by some of Britain's most talented writers, reached a wide audience in the mother country. Led initially by Henry St. John, Viscount Bolingbroke, these journalists articulated the ideas of the "country" opposition in Parliament and in the constituencies, and, more than any other group, educated public

opinion about the benefits conferred by a permanent, loyal opposition.³⁰ Bolingbroke and his followers had a certain amount of direct influence on the colonists, who read reprints of excerpts from the Craftsman.³¹ In addition, as I argue below, this "patriot" opposition influenced Americans indirectly, by forcing later Real Whig writers, who exerted an influence of their own on the colonists, to change key elements in their political theory.

Bolingbroke and the "patriots" influenced these later Real Whig writers in two ways. First, by pushing the Empire into war with Spain in 1739, the "patriots" helped to initiate a series of anticatholic conflicts that had a profound impact on Real Whig thought: no longer could the Real Whigs consider the rise and fall of states without taking contemporary foreign relations into consideration.³² Second, the "patriots" suggested mechanisms by which such wars might restore liberty to Great Britain, mechanisms which later Real Whig writers incorporated into their attacks on luxury, corruption, and patronage. Bolingbroke and the "patriots" had a profound impact on their fellow opposition writers by incorporating the Catholic "Other" into theories concerned with the pathology of liberty in great empires.

The essentials of "patriot" thought, as outlined by Bolingbroke in the Craftsman and other publications, are as follows. Bolingbroke, like the Real Whigs, believed that kings and ministers constantly sought

³⁰. Archibald S. Foord, His Majesty's Opposition, 1714-1830 (Oxford: Oxford University, 1964), 113-121; Habermas, Public Sphere, 60, 64; Kramnick, Bolingbroke and His Circle, 16-21.

³¹. Bailyn emphasizes Bolingbroke's influence on America, but asserts that the Craftsman was "indistinguishable from Cato's polemics on major points of political criticism (Ideological Origins, 39). By contrast, both Caroline Robbins, the foremost writer on the Real Whigs, and Isaac Kramnick, the leading authority on Bolingbroke, have asserted that Bolingbroke's Tory philosophy was quite distinct from the ideas of the opposition Whigs (Robbins, Eighteenth-Century Commonwealthman, 8-9, 274; Kramnick, Bolingbroke and His Circle, 4-5).

³². On the role of the "patriots" in pushing Britain to war with Spain in 1739, see Foord, His Majesty's Opposition, 194-198; Kramnick, Bolingbroke and His Circle, 31-33; and Howard H. Peckham, The Colonial Wars, 1689-1762 (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1964), 88-89.

to increase their power at the expense of the people's. "The love of power," he wrote, "is natural; it is insatiable; almost constantly whetted; and never cloyed by possession." This universal desire for power was particularly dangerous in a monarchy, even in a constitutional monarchy such as Britain's, for kings and ministers who hold office for long periods of time have every opportunity for gradually increasing their power over every aspect of government. The most mediocre ruler, if he stays in power long enough, "may destroy the liberty of the bravest people on earth."³³ The existence of a standing army in peace time, along with the unnecessary continuation of the national debt, means that too many members of Parliament, and too many voters, are dependent on the administration for military commissions or for lucrative interest payments on risk-free investments. The ability of the executive to destroy the independence of the legislature by distributing such largesse is as dangerous to British liberty as the outright assaults of Charles I and James II. In some ways, the new method of advancing executive influence is more dangerous, because it is less obvious, and because it offers many temptations to the British public to embrace luxury and ease, and to relax the vigilant defense of liberty that protected the Constitution in former centuries.³⁴ As a result, Bolingbroke argued it was his, and every responsible subject's, duty to keep alive "that public spirit of watchfulness over all national interests, which is the proper and true guardian of liberty...because if this spirit is not kept at all times in vigor, it may fail us at some particular time, when we shall want to exert it most."³⁵

Thus far, Bolingbroke's message is no different from that of the

³³. Henry St. John, Viscount Bolingbroke, Remarks on the History of England in The Works of the late Right Honorable Henry St. John, Lord Viscount Bolingbroke (London: David Mallet, 1754), vol. 1, 279, 283.

³⁴. Bolingbroke, A Dissertation upon Parties in Political Writings of Viscount Bolingbroke, ed. Kramnick (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1970), 28-31; Kramnick, Bolingbroke and His Circle, 26-30.

³⁵. Bolingbroke, Remarks on the History of England, 285.

Real Whigs, and this common concern about the fragility of liberty and the misuse of patronage explains why both "patriots" and Real Whigs were able to appeal strongly to the "country" element inside and outside Parliament. Yet, while sharing a common analysis of the threat facing British liberty, Bolingbroke developed a different solution from Trenchard's and Gordon's. The latter insist that the best means of safeguarding liberty is to place as much power as possible in the hands of the local voter, whose common sense wisdom and yeoman virtue will provide the best safeguards of general liberty and the common good. While Bolingbroke did argue, early in his career as a popular journalist, that "checks and controls," such as rotation in office and "annual or more frequent elections," would reduce the risk of tyranny, he later became disillusioned with the general public's political sense.³⁶ His successive failure to persuade voters to oust Walpole, especially after the Excise Crisis of 1733, convinced Bolingbroke that men of humble social status were no less prone to corruption than men of noble status and considerable power. Indeed, he argues in the late 1730s, the prevalent corruption in government is the result of an already-corrupt electorate, which has chosen corrupt representatives, and shares in their government's vices.³⁷

For Bolingbroke, the solution to the nation's present problems lies not with the people at large, but with the virtuous few among the English ruling classes. Indeed, Bolingbroke believes that one of the problems facing Britain is the rise of men from mean backgrounds to positions of great power.³⁸ Historically, it has been "the great lords and the great prelates" who most effectively stood up for liberty, and

³⁶. Bolingbroke, Remarks on the History of England, 280; Kramnick, Bolingbroke and his Circle, 31-36.

³⁷. Bolingbroke, The Idea of a Patriot King, in Political Writings of Viscount Bolingbroke, ed. Kramnick, 44-45, 70-71.

³⁸. Bolingbroke, Ibid., 69; Kramnick, Bolingbroke and His Circle, 6-7.

it will be "great men" who will rescue the constitution again.³⁹ Best of all would be the emergence of a great-hearted monarch, a "Patriot King", whose position at the top of the power structure could effect the most thorough and rapid regeneration of the British constitution.⁴⁰ Yet, even without the blessing of having a patriot on the throne, the cause of reform could still be advanced by other men who enjoyed noble birth or exceptional talents.⁴¹

There is nothing random or fortuitous about the emergence of such great men, according to Bolingbroke. Enough of a Lockean to believe that environment determined character, Bolingbroke argues that only a person brought up in virtuous surroundings could become a "patriot". The public world of Hanoverian England, unfortunately, is already too corrupt an environment to breed men of virtue. Hope lies in the fact that the general corruption of public institutions has not in all cases affected the private institution of the family. Some families still provide an environment in which virtue can be bred into the young, and in which individuals can be taught to put the good of others over their own private interests. Those uncorrupted families will ensure that England's ancient spirit of liberty will be passed on to future generations, until the time is ripe for the restoration of virtue in government and constitution.⁴²

In this analysis of the problems facing Britain, and of solutions to those problems, "popery" plays a significant role. While Bolingbroke regards "popery" in terms essentially similar to those both of Locke and of the Real Whigs - as a religion that fosters illusions, supports tyranny, and generally represents the antithesis of British values - yet

³⁹. Bolingbroke, A Dissertation upon Parties, 31.

⁴⁰. Bolingbroke, Patriot King, 46-47.

⁴¹. Bolingbroke, A Letter on the Spirit of Patriotism, 34-35; Kramnick, Bolingbroke and His Circle, 31-32.

⁴². Bolingbroke, Patriot King, 59-61; Kramnick, Bolingbroke and His Circle, 33-35.

this "patriot" has his own, distinct ideas about the relationship of that "popish" foe to the British constitution. "Popery's" importance in Bolingbroke's thought relates to a vital distinction that he made between the fear of losing rights and the hope of acquiring power as spurs of political activity. Such "fear is common to all; the hope can only be particular to few. The fear therefore may become a general principle of union; the hope cannot." These different motivations help to distinguish opposition that emanates from "the whole body of the people" from opposition that arises from a "spirit of faction".⁴³ Common enemies, rather than programs for political change, are ultimately the best guarantors of selfless, public-spirited, political involvement by the people.

"Popery" was an especially useful stimulus of general fear, and therefore of public virtue. Bolingbroke argues that there will always be a Catholic Pretender to the British throne. Perhaps drawing on his own, past, inside knowledge of the Stuart court-in-exile, Bolingbroke is unconvinced that such Pretenders pose a real threat to the current dynasty. Yet the reality of the threat does not matter, Bolingbroke believes. The British public's fear of "popery", however unreasonable that fear might be, will ensure that, at least as long as such Pretenders exist, British politicians will be able to rouse support for measures aimed at safeguarding the nation against the agents of the Catholic Church.⁴⁴

Effective political opposition involves recognizing the existence of this permanent object of common fear, "popery". On the one hand, corrupt administrations will always succeed in persuading the British public that standing armies, high taxes, and a national debt are

⁴³. Bolingbroke, Remarks on the History of England, 282.

⁴⁴. Bolingbroke, Dissertation upon Parties, 29-30. Of course, the military establishment also existed to combat France's commercial and territorial ambitions, but Bolingbroke focuses on what British Protestants saw as the worst possible threat from "popery", the restoration of Catholic rule to the British world.

peacetime necessities. British antipopery, rather than "popery" itself, will sustain the mechanisms of tyranny and corruption in the British constitution. The existence of this popular fear of Catholic government means that the old-fashioned "country" program, favored by the Real Whigs, of simply abolishing standing armies, the national debt, and office holders in Parliament is a noble, but impractical chimera. Certainly, Bolingbroke argues that opponents of the Walpole regime and of its successors should try to restrict patronage, but these opponents should also recognize that they are fighting a losing battle, given the popular perception of a serious threat from abroad. Patronage, like antipopery, is here to stay. Therefore, instead of fighting patronage, Bolingbroke argues that such means of influence should be used for positive ends. While patronage is corruptive in the hands of corrupt leaders, the same positions and rewards would become a force for good in the hands of virtuous "patriots", who would distribute public offices to the deserving, thus using government patronage as a means of encouraging virtue in the public at large.⁴⁵

The key part of this program, of course, is to ensure that political power, and the right to dispense patronage, end up in the "patriots'" hands. Here again, Britain's Catholic enemies have a role to play, for if the threat from foreign enemies becomes or seems to be sufficiently acute, then a shake-up of the current political order will occur. As the public abandons the government that has led them into peril, and as a fully mobilized nation seeks leaders that will serve the national, rather than factional interests, it is possible that a wholly new order will arise, in which a leader with the virtue and power of a Patriot King will become dominant.⁴⁶ The fear of "popery" that helps to ensure the continuation of big government, may also help to place that government in proper hands.

⁴⁵. Bolingbroke, Patriot King, 74-75; Kramnick, Bolingbroke and His Circle, 74-76.

⁴⁶. Bolingbroke, Patriot King, 46-47.

Bolingbroke thus provides a sophisticated explanation of how the existence of Catholic enemies shape the British state. The political philosophy of his "patriot" movement avoids both the complacent view of the moderate Whig establishment, that the British constitution is protected by its basis in true reason from the evils of "popery", and also the terrors of the Real Whigs, who believe that a virtual "popery" is unavoidably creeping into the British constitution via the institutions created to combat the "popish" foe in war. Bolingbroke's philosophy is both realistic with regard to the imperfections of human nature and the limits of practical politics, and yet measuredly optimistic about the possibility of restoring the British Constitution, even from its most fallen state.

Bolingbroke's distinctive vision of the relationship between the Hanoverian establishment and the "popish" foe possibly arose from his unusual political career. Bolingbroke was peculiarly an outsider who yet had a thorough knowledge of British thought and institutions. His upbringing in England, and his power and influence under Queen Anne provided him with an insider's understanding of the British world, while his brief alliance with the first Pretender and his subsequent periods of extended residence in France, helped him to achieve a certain detachment with regard to the British fear of "popery". That detachment enabled Bolingbroke to see the British constitution and its perceived "popish" foe, not as irreconcilable opposites, but as parts of a single system. Bolingbroke realized that the imperial establishment was based on the fear of a Catholic "Other" that was largely a construct of its own imagination.

Bolingbroke's clear perception of the relationship between anticatholicism and the imperial establishment enabled him and his allies to use antipopery to manipulate British politics. Bolingbroke's argument that "distress from abroad...may beget universal confusion" in the political order, was not simply a theoretical statement. Three years after he suggested the possible benefits of a crisis induced by

foreign policy, his protégés in Parliament managed to engineer just such a crisis. By raising constant questions in Parliament about Spanish attacks on British trade, and by denouncing as a cowardly compromise Walpole's attempt to avoid war by extracting compensation from Spain, the "patriots" managed to force the administration into the very measure it least wanted, a war with Britain's traditional Catholic foe.⁴⁷ This war recalled what to Bolingbroke were England's greatest years, when Elizabeth I, the model of a patriotic monarch, united the nation at home, inspired her subjects with virtue, and carried "terror to her enemies abroad."⁴⁸

The renewal of warfare with Catholic nations after 1739 created an environment that forced all opposition writers, including those in the Real Whig tradition, to modify their political philosophies. James Burgh, for instance, combines traditional Real Whig worries about corruption with newer "patriot" ideas about solutions to constitutional decay, in Britain's Remembrancer, a pamphlet published in both the mother country and the colonies after the Jacobite invasion of 1745-6.⁴⁹ Real Whig concerns about luxury and its corrupting effect on the political system constitute one main theme of this pamphlet. Burgh inveighs against the popularity of French food, of the theater, of deism, of gambling, of drunkenness, and of extravagance among all ranks of English society, urging that such tastes demonstrate a dangerous degeneration from traditional virtue.⁵⁰ The British Empire seems on the verge of following the other great empires of history into ruin,

⁴⁷. Foord, His Majesty's Opposition, 124, 132; Peckham, Colonial Wars, 89; Kramnick, Bolingbroke and His Circle, 31-33.

⁴⁸. Bolingbroke, Patriot King, 77.

⁴⁹. On Burgh as a writer in the real Whig tradition, see Robbins, Eighteenth-Century Commonwealthman, 364-368. On his extensive influence on colonial political thought, see Oscar and Mary Handlin, "James Burgh and American Revolutionary Theory" in Massachusetts Historical Society Proceedings, LXXIII (1961), 38-57.

⁵⁰. James Burgh, Britain's Remembrancer: Being Some Thoughts on the Improvement of the Present Juncture (Philadelphia: Benjamin Franklin, [1747]), 14-27.

destroyed by the luxury generated by its own commercial and military success.

Indeed, according to Britain's Remembrancer, the British Empire is in an even worse state than most of the fallen regimes of history. Burgh argues, as did Bolingbroke, that the British world is unique in the extent to which luxury has permeated the lowest classes of society.

Whereas, in all other Kingdoms of the world, and all the Ages of it, it has ever been only the Rich and Great who have had either Taste enough to Pretend to consume their Lives and Income in Luxury and Pleasure, or Insolence enough to presume to treat all things serious and sacred with Contempt. On the contrary, with us no Rank or Status is too low for either of these polite Vices; for at this Day hardly any Man thinks himself so mean as not to be above Religion, Frugality, and Sobriety.⁵¹

Servants and "Mechanicks" are indulging in gambling, drinking, and empty entertainments. The poor are living beyond their means in emulation of their superiors, and are failing to use their time to improve themselves. Since no previous empire has survived the corruption even of just its social leaders, the British regime might well expect disaster, with both leaders and ordinary people lost to vice.⁵² By implication, the solution to national problems sought by Trenchard and Gordon - the restoration of political control to a sturdy, uncorrupted, yeomen electorate - is inapplicable to the British world of the 1740s; Burgh discusses none of the traditional constitutional remedies, such as more frequent elections, the banning of office-holders from Parliament, or restrictions on the number and on the influence of joint-stock corporations, that fill the pages of Cato's Letters.

Despite the desperate state of British society, Burgh is not without hope that reform is possible. While constitutional mechanisms for change seem hopeless, another solution is available. Ironically, Burgh believes that Britain might be saved by its "popish" foes, France and the Young Pretender. Those enemies have only the most evil of

⁵¹. Ibid., 8.

⁵². Ibid., 14-18.

designs against the life and liberty of British Protestants, and the possibility of a return of Catholic government, Burgh hopes, will shock Britons into reform.⁵³ That reform will proceed from above, as men of high social rank reassert their power over their inferiors, and enforce neglected laws against plebeian luxury. The lower ranks, who have lost all respect for government and for their betters, will rediscover their sense of duty.⁵⁴ Burgh's suggestion that foreign threats will shake up British society and stimulate reform from the top down recalls Bolingbroke's arguments, as does Burgh's explanation of why society's leaders, rather than the people, are the nation's best repository of virtue: Burgh argues that while the propertied classes are as prone to luxury as the lower ranks, the former are brought up with a virtue that can survive a degree of material comfort, while the latter are completely overwhelmed by sensual pleasures.⁵⁵ Bolingbroke's ideas permeate Burgh's thought, and distinguish Burgh from earlier Real Whig writers.

The influence of Bolingbroke on Burgh does not make the latter into a simple clone of the former, however. While absorbing "patriot" ideas, Burgh preserves elements of other traditions, also. One of these traditions is that of non-conformism, for Burgh was a Scottish Dissenter whose religious background influenced his radical politics.⁵⁶ The clearest influence of Burgh's religious faith in Britain's Remembrancer is the author's insistence on God's providence as the ultimate explanation for all major historical events, including the invasion by the Young Pretender. Part of Burgh's message is in the tradition of the jeremiad, for Burgh argues that God sends afflictions like the Jacobite invasion against a people he has chosen for a special mission, in order

⁵³. Ibid., 4-6.

⁵⁴. Ibid., 41-42.

⁵⁵. Ibid., 14.

⁵⁶. Robbins, Eighteenth-Century Commonwealthman, 324, 364-365.

to wake that people out of their sin.⁵⁷ Even this providential theme, resembling as it does seventeenth-century models, nevertheless shows signs of the period in which it was penned. In Britain's Remembrancer, God controls human affairs, but he relies on the forces of nature and on worldly institutions to execute his designs. Catholicism, argues Burgh, is peculiarly suited to be an instrument of God for recalling Britons to the path of virtue, because only "popery" threatens such extensive tyranny, such horrific persecutions, and such general massacre, that every single Briton has reason to fear the "popish" sword "coming home to [his] own bosom."⁵⁸ Catholicism's "restless and ambitious" nature also makes it an ideal providential tool, for the never-ending desire of that faith to overrun the British Empire ensures that it will renew its attacks over and over again.⁵⁹ Thus, God is able to cloak his providential purposes in the natural impulses of the Church of Rome, a reconciliation of divine and worldly forces consistent with Burgh's avowed Newtonianism.⁶⁰

Indeed, Burgh turns the interaction between "popery" and the British Empire into a self-sustaining mechanism, one which operates according to a regular pattern. Through the previous two centuries, every time England or Britain has become corrupt and forgetful of its true duty, an acute threat from the Catholic Church recalls the nation to its senses. The evils of "popery" are the reliable guarantor that the British Empire's virtue will be sustained and renewed, just as the British Empire ensures that Catholicism's power is kept within limits. This clash between the forces of good and evil is not a millennialist concept, because there is no indication in Britain's Remembrancer that this clash will progress towards a final transformation of the world

⁵⁷. Burgh, Britain's Remembrancer, 3-4, 36-37.

⁵⁸. Ibid., 5.

⁵⁹. Ibid., 6, 28-37.

⁶⁰. Ibid., 22.

into a state of permanent bliss. Rather, this concept of history is cyclical, and it is Burgh's preoccupation with the role of virtue and corruption in creating recurring patterns of history that justifies his being categorized as a Real Whig.⁶¹

Burgh discerns two types of historical cycle. The first is the standard favorite of earlier Real Whigs, the classical republican idea that great empires that grow wealthy are seduced by luxury, become corrupt, and fall prey to younger, vigorous, poorer nations: "we find, from universal history, that no Degree of Wealth, of Trade, of Naval and Military Force, have ever been sufficient to support any Nation where Luxury and Vice have prevailed, but on the contrary, the greatest Empires in all Ages have sunk before them." This type of cycle explains the rise and fall of the Assyrian, Babylonian, Persian, Greek, and Roman Empires.⁶² The English nation, however, has experienced a different cyclical pattern, for it has been able to survive and recover from even deeper corruption than these earlier powers, thanks to the timely shocks regularly delivered by its "popish" foe. Burgh is not recommending that Britons be complacent about such rescues in future, but he is suggesting that Britain's relationship with "popery" has frequently delivered this Protestant Empire from the fate of past regimes.⁶³ Thus, Burgh has updated earlier Real Whig ideas to fit the circumstances of anticatholic war, incorporating a strange mixture of religious and Bolingbrokean ideas into his political thought.

Burgh's adaptation of real Whig ideas to fit contemporary, wartime circumstances results in a serious inconsistency. On the one hand, Burgh adheres to the standard classical republican idea that corruption weakens the ability of nations to fight, effeminizing their soldiers and

⁶¹. Ibid., 29-37; Robbins, Eighteenth-Century Commonwealthman, 10, 36.

⁶². Burgh, Britain's Remembrancer, 8-13.

⁶³. Ibid., 29-37.

destroying public spirit.⁶⁴ On the other, he argues that Catholic nations such as France, although the epitome of luxury and corruption, have mounted serious, repeated threats to the existence of the entire British Empire.⁶⁵ Here is an unresolved puzzle. How can a thoroughly corrupt and decadent nation be a serious challenge to Great Britain which, however low it has sunk, is not yet in the thoroughly degraded condition of a "popish" country? Burgh does not confront this problem, although it emerges quite patently in his discourse. It was left to writers of the succeeding decade to resolve this conundrum and to reveal still more clearly the manner in which war had profoundly altered Real Whig thought.

One writer who resolved Burgh's dangling inconsistency was John Brown, a Church of England clergyman from Westmoreland, in the north of England, who combined elements of the Real Whig tradition with Protestant and "patriot" ideas.⁶⁶ Brown's An Estimate of the Manners and Principles of the Times, published in London in 1757 and reprinted in Boston in 1758, sets out Britain's corruption in painstaking detail. Following Bolingbroke and Burgh, Brown argues that the corruption and luxury of the lower orders is a more serious problem than such vices at the top of society, since the members of the upper stratum are at least brought up to withstand the enervating effects of a certain degree of comfort. Again echoing the "patriots", Brown believed that Britain's hope for the future lay in the domestic manners of gentle families, where politeness, affection, charity, and self-sacrifice still flourished.⁶⁷ Brown hopes that the threat presented by the French will

⁶⁴. Ibid., 8-13, 19.

⁶⁵. Ibid., 40.

⁶⁶. Robbins argues that John Brown should be included as one of the Real Whig school, although she notes that one of Brown's early patrons was William Warburton, a writer connected to the "patriot" faction: Eighteenth-Century Commonwealthman, 308-310.

⁶⁷. John Brown, An Estimate of the Manners and Principles of the Times (Boston: Green and Russell, 1758), 37.

shock Britons out of their corrupt luxury, and stimulate the private virtue that governs domestic life to assert itself in the public sphere.

When the threat becomes severe enough,

Effeminacy, Rapacity, and Faction will then be ready to resign the Reins they would now usurp: One common Danger will create one common Interest: Virtue may rise in the Ruin of Corruption, and a despairing Nation yet be saved, by the Wisdom, the Integrity, and unshaken Courage of SOME GREAT MINISTER."

Almost certainly, Brown had William Pitt in mind as the great minister who would inspire and lead those of lesser virtue.⁶⁸ In his analysis of Britain's problems, and in his suggestion of how those problems might be resolved, Brown, like Burgh, combines Trenchard and Gordon with Bolingbroke in a demonstration of how much Real Whig ideas have been influenced by the "patriot" movement.⁶⁹

Brown's most interesting contribution to the evolution of the Real Whig tradition, however, is his explanation of the problem left unsolved by Burgh, the problem of how a decadent, corrupt France could present so serious a threat to the British Empire. According to Brown, the manners of France "are as vain and effeminate as our own, and the very Archetype from which ours are drawn."⁷⁰ Indeed, France has deliberately corrupted other peoples, and has "allured her neighboring Nations, by her own Example, to drink largely of the circaean and poisoned Cup of [corrupt] Manners."⁷¹ Meanwhile, however, France has taken a "secret antidote" to ensure her own continuing power. That antidote is a set of false virtues, derived from the principles of France's Catholic faith. According to Burgh, that religion teaches Frenchmen a limited and selfish benevolence, sense of honor, and love of country. These

⁶⁸. Ibid., 110.

⁶⁹. Brown criticizes Bolingbroke for being irreligious, but does praise his thought for its weightiness and seriousness. Brown believes that the frivolous tastes of his contemporaries explain why "so capital a Book as the Writings of Lord Bolingbroke" has not met with a better reception. Ibid., 33.

⁷⁰. Ibid., 70.

⁷¹. Ibid., 72.

virtues are illusory, because they are not born of universal principles, applicable to all mankind. Yet the confusion of thought that sustains "popery" also enables Frenchmen to believe themselves virtuous, even when they are not, and enables them to set aside their vices from time to time, and to act as effectively in war as a truly virtuous man would act.⁷² The national character that emanates from the creation of false virtues on a basis of selfishness and vice consists of a set of paradoxes:

"[The French] have found, or rather invented, the Art of uniting all Extremes: They have Virtues and Vices, Strengths and Weaknesses, seemingly incompatible. They are effeminate yet brave: insincere, yet honourable: hospitable, not benevolent: vain, yet subtile: splendid, not generous: warlike, yet polite: plausible, not virtuous: mercantile, yet not mean: in Trifles serious, gay in Enterprize: Women at the Toilet, Heroes in the Field: profligate in Heart, in Conduct, decent: Divided in Opinion, in Action, united: in Manners weak, but strong in Principle: Contemptible in private Life, in public, formidable."

These strangely inconsistent beings have the capacity to drive Britain from all her colonies, and from the oceans of the world.⁷³

Brown's explanation of France's simultaneous decadence and success is achieved by taking what Locke, Burnet, and other writers associated with the moderate Whigs, regarded as the chief weakness of "popery", its rejection of objective truth in favor of inventions and illusions. Brown shows how that weakness could become a source of strength. Frenchmen can possess all the stereotypical vices of "popery", its self-indulgence, its dishonesty, its love of show, and yet imitate true virtue, for the irrational foundations of their faith free them from any respect for logic or consistency. The play-acting of "popery" can cast Frenchmen in a military role they perform all too realistically, with deadly consequences for Britons. The French ability to achieve national greatness by affecting a partial and short-term virtue when it was needed, means that they have escaped the usual fate of decadent peoples,

⁷². Ibid., 70-71.

⁷³. Ibid., 73.

and remain powerful in circumstances that had destroyed previous imperial states.

Brown does not advocate that Britons imitate Frenchmen either in their religious faith or in their false, illusory principles. Yet he takes hope in the contrasts that riddle France, where extremes of virtue and vice can coexist in the same society, and even in the same individual. These contrary traits depend on what, in today's terms, would be called multiple personae: individuals who live in a complex society, divided into public and private spheres, assume different characters and identities, as they pass from one social environment to another. Thanks to the flexible personalities of its citizens, France was able to bring virtue, or a close imitation of it, to the forefront when national military needs so required. Brown believed that Britons, too, in their present state of decadence, possessed multiple personae, living virtuous private lives while behaving in a degenerate manner in public.⁷⁴ Such variation in morality, even by the same individuals, meant that Britain, like France, might possibly escape the usual consequences of national decadence by being able to bring forward the virtuous elements of its national character in time of crisis. If such temporary, partial reform were possible, Britain could hope to survive and flourish, without the kind of radical reforms in government and in manners that Brown deemed impractical. In Brown's Estimate, real Whig criticisms of the establishment had arrived at a surprising point of evolution. Brown had abandoned the idea of a pure "republic" where every individual put the common good before self-interest. He still idealized such a society, but no longer felt it was practical to try to establish such an ideal in Britain, given the economic and military realities of the day. Instead, he drew on the example of Catholic France to argue that hybrid societies of virtue and vice could exist and even thrive on a permanent basis. Rivalry with a powerful, "popish"

⁷⁴. Ibid., 37, 70, 73.

rival had exposed a major fallacy at the heart of classical republican and real Whig thought, forcing a reformulation that rendered many of Trenchard's and Gordon's ideas anachronistic, as assessments of mid-eighteenth century Britain.

The updated versions of Real Whig ideas offered to Americans by Burgh and Brown were taken up by Thomas Barnard, the politically-oriented minister of the First Church of Salem, Massachusetts. In A Sermon Preached to the Ancient and Honourable Artillery Company in Boston, published in 1758, this clergyman demonstrates an acquaintance with "patriot" ideas about the regeneration of a decadent society, and about the role of anticatholic war in that regeneration. Barnard laments the lack of virtue in Massachusetts, but argues that the pressure of warfare will stimulate reforms.⁷⁵ Those reforms, Barnard emphasizes, must come from above, from the governor of the province, Thomas Pownall, and from other men of the propertied classes. By taking the lead in mobilizing the colony for war, and by providing a martial education for New England's youth, the men at the top of society will forge a new, virtuous community, that will be both martial and strictly hierarchical. Public spirit, Barnard believes, emanates from men of breeding, and the surest sign that such spirit is securely established over society as a whole is the willing obedience shown by lesser men towards greater.⁷⁶

Barnard rejoices in the wars that are to help forge this new virtue in New England, even though he believes that such wars will last "for Generations to come."⁷⁷ As Burgh argues in Britain's Remembrancer, Barnard believes that it is God's providence that sends these wars against the British Empire, and that God works not through miracles, but

⁷⁵. Thomas Barnard, A Sermon Preached to the Ancient and Honourable Artillery Company of Boston, New-England, June 5th 1758 (Boston: Edes and Gill, 1758), 28.

⁷⁶. Ibid., 29-31.

⁷⁷. Ibid., 31.

through natural and human forces.⁷⁸ Catholic France is an ideal instrument for chastening British Protestants, since the restless ambition of that nation prompts it to break every treaty of peace, guaranteeing the conflicts necessary for the restoration of virtue to New England, and to the Empire as a whole.⁷⁹ Barnard, who stresses the absolute compatibility of Christianity and reason, is firmly opposed to the "enthusiastic" notion of direct supernatural intervention in human affairs.⁸⁰ For him as for Burgh, the natural tendencies of "popery" enable God to achieve his purposes without intruding upon the Newtonian order.

Barnard, like Brown, while drawing on classical republican ideas about how corruption and virtue create patterns of historical change, found it necessary to revise those ideas to reconcile problematical inconsistencies. Unlike Brown, Barnard was not concerned with the problem of how a thoroughly corrupt and decadent nation like France could defeat a less corrupt British Empire. Barnard simply argued that the more corrupt nation might achieve victories in the short term, but that the more virtuous nations would win in the longer perspective.⁸¹ Writing a year after Brown, when the Empire's fortunes on the battlefield had begun to change for the better, it was easier for Barnard to arrive at this simple solution to the problem of Catholic success.

Instead of worrying about the ability of corrupt nations to achieve victory, Barnard was preoccupied by a different problem in classical republican thought. Classical republic models argued that virtuous nations, possessing greater military strength, rose to achieve world empire by conquering more decadent nations. For Barnard, that

⁷⁸. Ibid., 19.

⁷⁹. Ibid., 23, 25.

⁸⁰. Ibid., 15, 19, 22.

⁸¹. Ibid., 20, 23-26.

argument posed a difficulty because ambitious self-aggrandizement was not a virtuous type of behavior; a truly virtuous people would respect other nations' territory, and strive for peace, not war.⁸² In his struggle with the problem of how virtuous nations can expand, Barnard finds a perfect solution in the attributes of "popery", which he, in common with the general opinion of eighteenth-century Britons and colonists, believes to be endlessly ambitious, grasping, and in favor of change. The faithlessness of Catholics, who find arguments for breaking any kind of law, operates just as easily against diplomatic treaties, as against laws of morality and science.⁸³ "Popery" by its very nature, provides the dynamic principle in history by continually throwing the world into a state of turmoil; virtuous nations, because of their superior qualities and martial abilities, reap benefits from Catholic restlessness. In Barnard's historical model, Catholic aggression not only stimulates reform in British society, but also provides an opportunity for just and fair expansion.

Barnard neatly ties together these two effects of "popish" aggression against the British world, in order to escape the evil consequences of success in the classical republican model. Wars against "popery" enable the British Empire to gain in territory and in virtue at the same time, for Catholic pressure on the British world ensures that territorial gains do not outstrip the growth of virtue. The balance between material and ethical gain is vital, for, Brown argues, it is only rapidly acquired wealth that corrupts men; wealth gained in the process of virtuous striving does not corrupt its holders, who develop the strength of character necessary for resisting wealth's evil temptations.⁸⁴ The "patriot" idea that those born to wealth can handle

⁸². Ibid., 25. See also Barnard, A Sermon Preached in Boston, New-England, Before the Society for Encouraging Industry and Employing the Poor (Boston: S. Kneeland, 1758), 6.

⁸³. Barnard, Artillery Company, 19-20, 23, 25.

⁸⁴. Barnard, Society for Encouraging Industry, 12-13, 18; Artillery Company, 27.

its ill effects better than those of lower rank takes root in Barnard's thought not only as a means of differentiating between the levels of virtue in different social classes, but also as means of differentiating between the imperfect present, and a future of permanent wealth and power for the British Empire as a whole.

Barnard, Brown, and Burgh demonstrate how real Whig ideas about corruption and its effect on the British Empire had changed since the 1720s. War and the "patriot" movement had brought critics of imperial society to see "popery" not simply as an objectionable religious, political, and social system, to be shut out of the British world as far as possible, but rather as an entity intimately connected to Great Britain, and destined to play a role in the Empire's future. Later writers in the real Whig tradition, even more than Trenchard and Gordon, had launched a severe challenge against the imperial establishment, by turning the static oppositions of "popery" and Protestantism, illusion and reality, vice and virtue posited by the moderate Whigs, into pairs of principles involved in a dialectic. According to these later writers, Britain and its Empire depended on many of the vices of "popery" to survive and to grow, and the Catholic "Other" provided a beneficial external environment for the British world. By invoking the Catholic "Other" as a crucial determinant of history and of human behavior, oppositionist political writing had arrived at a new set of assumptions about historical change, and had placed the individual British Protestant in a world defined in part by the perceived principles of the Church of Rome.

Thus did the political opposition writers of the mother country succeed in helping to transform the public sphere of the British Empire during the 1740s and 1750s. In part, the change that took place in the public sphere represented a simple extension of that sphere, in terms both of the range of topics and points of view debated, and in terms of the numbers of those who constituted public opinion. Such sudden extensions of the public sphere, by the inclusion of elements hitherto

on the fringe, were a common occurrence in early modern societies.⁸⁵ A more important change that took place during the mid-eighteenth century, however, was a profound reshaping of the conceptual basis that underlay the public sphere. These political opposition groups had managed to articulate the notion that the public sphere was not simply a forum where intelligent persons engaged in a rational debate that would lead all participants to a greater understanding of simple, objective truths. Rather, it was an arena of deadly competition, where disparate interests struggled for survival and domination. The concept of a public sphere generated by an anarchic contest between self-centered individuals was heavily influenced by the perceptions of the Catholic "Other" that had evolved in various types of published discourse since the Glorious Revolution. The only difference between British Protestant and foreign Catholic nations, according to real Whig and patriot writers of the Seven Years War, was that in the former, many more enclaves of virtue remained intact in the private sphere, enclaves that might emerge from the chaotic struggle between competing interests to impose, if only temporarily, a new, virtuous order in the public arena.

⁸⁵. Habermas, Public Sphere, 22-24.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

The texts examined in this dissertation establish one point, at least, about the nature of anticatholicism in the early modern, English-speaking world: despite a great many common themes that run through all anticatholic discourse, opinions of the Catholic Church varied considerably over time, and from writer to writer. These variations become apparent only when rhetoric about the Church of Rome is examined in detail, since the differences often consist of shifts in emphasis, or of new ways of logically interrelating the many faults of which Catholicism was accused. Historians should therefore treat Anglo-American rhetoric about "popery" with the same sensitivity to the writer's personal, social, and political context that they employ when examining other terms, such as "liberty" and "equality", whose meaning varies according to the user.

Given this variation in views on the Catholic Church, certain recent attempts by historians to reconstruct a composite anticatholicism and a single, related identity for Britons or colonists, have, I feel, missed the mark.¹ The texts examined in this dissertation demonstrate that there were differences in antipopery among residents of the same region and time period, and therefore, in so far as the Catholic Church represented an "Other" against which Anglo-American Protestants defined themselves, there were occasions when distinct senses of identity coexisted simultaneously in the same part of the Empire. Moreover,

¹. Colley's Britons and Cogliano's No King, No Popery are notable examples of recent historians who have attempted to construct a single anticatholicism for regions of the Empire.

while residents of the same region took up different positions on Catholicism, particular versions of antipopery sometimes served to unite Anglo-American Protestants from different regions. Region-based studies of antipopery and identity run the risk of obscuring the real pattern of tensions and allegiances in the early modern, English-speaking world.

The need to recognize the many different versions of anticatholicism in the English and British Empire sets limits on the broad conclusions that can be drawn from this study, also. While the sources examined provide a sufficient insight into the antipopery of Foxe, of the moderate Whigs in England, of the prerogative party in Massachusetts, and of popular authors, patriots, and real Whigs across the Empire, they do not provide any help towards understanding the views of other groups of English-speaking Protestants on the Catholic Church. Sixteenth-century advocates of aggressive imperial and commercial expansion, seventeenth-century Puritans and Independents, and eighteenth-century evangelicals constitute groups that clearly held strong views about the Church of Rome, but have not been examined in this dissertation. Until these and other writers' variants of antipopery have been thoroughly explored, and placed within the context of imperial society and politics, it is impossible to draw general conclusions about the role of antipopery and identity in the two hundred years before the American Revolution.

What this dissertation has done, I hope, is to outline a method for approaching the study of anticatholicism, that can be applied to other anticatholic writers. On the basis of the sources I have examined, I suggest that there were three fundamental factors that helped to shape particular attacks on the Church of Rome. One factor may be labelled the "public tradition" of antipopery in the English-speaking world. This public tradition consisted of attacks on the Catholic Church that reached wide audiences and became part of the common stock of ideas held by most English-speaking Protestants in the early modern period. Though some of these ideas were undoubtedly

transmitted orally, from neighbor to neighbor or, more importantly, from parents to children, most of these anticatholic notions were propagated in print and were therefore integrally connected with the growth of a public sphere in England, Britain, and the colonies. Any particular writer's attack on the Catholic Church was likely to be shaped by this common tradition. Moreover, if his attack on "popery" did not bear some general resemblance to the common stock of anticatholic ideas, the author was unlikely to convince many readers or make a broad impact on public opinion. This need to relate attacks on the Church of Rome to a preexisting body of anticatholic writing explains the reiterated themes in the sources examined in this dissertation. The public tradition of antipopery, which has received more attention from historians than the other factors that shaped anticatholic rhetoric, thus played an important, though not exclusive role, in determining the content of any particular writer's anticatholicism.

A second factor that influenced the antipopery of the writers here examined was their tendency to tailor their anticatholic rhetoric to suit particular viewpoints or preferences in their readers. Such tailored rhetoric sometimes served ideological purposes, as in the case of the moderate Whigs who tried to persuade "country" opinion to support the government's fiscal and diplomatic policies, and such tailoring sometimes aimed at little more than increasing sales by appealing to popular tastes. The texts I have examined demonstrate how the different emphases that authors placed on common elements in the public tradition of antipopery emanated in large part from the desire to satisfy different bodies of opinion within the Empire.

The content of particular writers' antipopery was also influenced by a third factor: the real nature of the Catholic Church and the societies it dominated. That reality affected the formulation of anticatholic texts, even though most English-speaking Protestants in the early modern period had only vague and inaccurate views of how Catholicism actually operated. The need for antipopery to reflect, at

least to some degree, the true nature of Catholicism went back to the time of the publication of Foxe's Acts and Monuments, whose attack rested more on history than on theology. A concern for accuracy, admittedly superficial at times, pervades all the documents examined in this dissertation, even those narratives that minimized the dry details of politics, law, and diplomacy in favor of sensational matter. Although particular writers of anticatholic texts, and indeed most English-speaking Protestants, tended to see only those aspects of Catholicism that reflected their prejudices and expectations, they could not always manage to blind themselves entirely to aspects of "popery" that did not fit the portrait they were trying to create. Since anticatholicism was a means by which competing political factions in the English-speaking world vied with each other, Protestant authors occasionally pointed out errors in their rivals' formulations of "popery", when such corrections served useful, political purposes. Thus, Burnet adjusted his anticatholic arguments in the face of opponents who claimed Catholicism was ameliorating its persecuting tendencies. Similarly, the patriots and real Whigs had to change their views of "popery" and of its relationship to the British Empire, in order to reflect the real power of France in the mid-eighteenth century, a power that confounded the expectations of their political philosophy.

This third factor in the shaping of anticatholic rhetoric, the objective reality of the Catholic Church and Catholic countries, appears less frequently in the texts than influences from the public tradition of antipopery or from anticatholic writers' ideological needs. Nevertheless, this factor was especially significant, because it made anticatholicism a source of change in the English-speaking world. If ideology alone had governed the formulation of anticatholic arguments, each writer could have invented whatever portrait of "popery" he wished, and changed that portrait as his political needs altered. Antipopery would, in such a situation, have reflected changes the English-speaking world, but would not have caused such change. The need to adjust

portrayals of "popery" to fit the reality of the Catholic world meant that British and American Protestants were forced also to adjust, in ways that did not accord with their own desires, the political philosophies that they had tied to antipopery.² The patriots' and real Whigs' adaptation to France's power is the best example, among the sources examined in this dissertation, of a reluctant adjustment of ideas by English-speaking Protestants in the face of objective developments within Catholicism.

The full extent to which rivalry with an external, Catholic "Other" forced change on the English-speaking world cannot be known until a more exhaustive exploration of antipopery has been undertaken. At this stage of research, I would only suggest that one type of fundamental change that anticatholicism might well have influenced was the modernization of the English-speaking world between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries. In the texts examined in this dissertation, certain aspects of what we today, with hindsight, regard as aspects of modern society, were attributed to the institutions and mentality of the Catholic world. The bureaucratic and secular nature of Catholic government, the materialistic, competitive, and faddish pursuits of ordinary Catholics, the primacy of selfish over public interests, and the flexible, multiple personalities of "papists" all resemble key elements of modern societies.³ Arguably, anticatholicism between the time of Foxe and the Seven Years' War helped English-speaking Protestants to denounce certain modernizing changes that were taking

². The distinction drawn here between pure ideology on the one hand, which is blind to all reality that does not accord with its own preconceptions, and that therefore encounters nothing that challenges and alters its ideas, and the careful observation of an objective reality on the other, where unpredicted facts can emerge that do force changes in thinking, is drawn from Althusser and Balibar, Reading Capital, 40-46, 54-63, 131-135, and 145-157.

³. Richard D. Brown, Modernization: the Transformation of American Life, 1600-1865 (Prospect Heights, Ill: Waveland Press, 1976), 3-22; E.A. Wrigley, "The Process of Modernization and the Industrial Revolution in England" Journal of Interdisciplinary History vol. III (1972), 225-259.

place in their own world, to explore the implications of those changes, to become familiar with the pluses and minuses of those implications, and finally to adjust to the transformation that was taking place around them. Whether antipopery simply reflected, or helped to spur the adjustment to modernization, is a question that I hope to take up in a future study.

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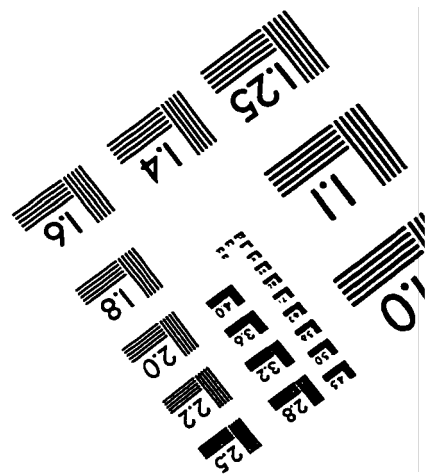
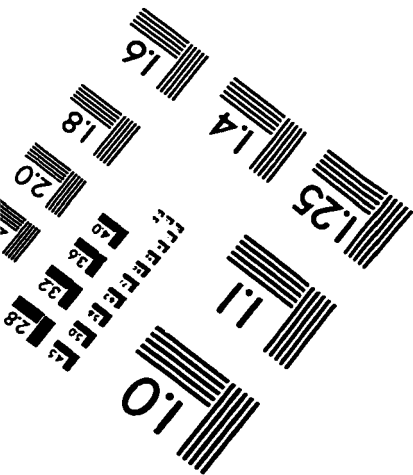
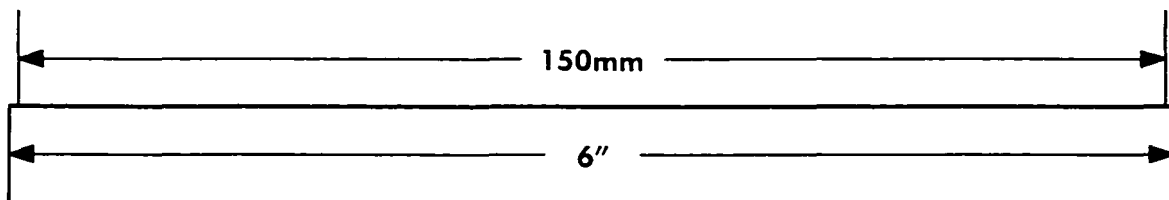
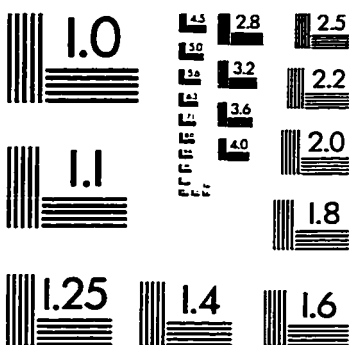
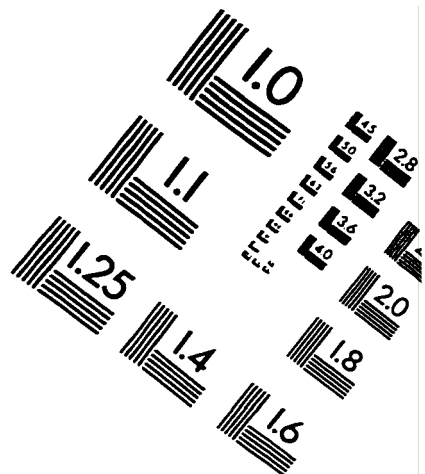
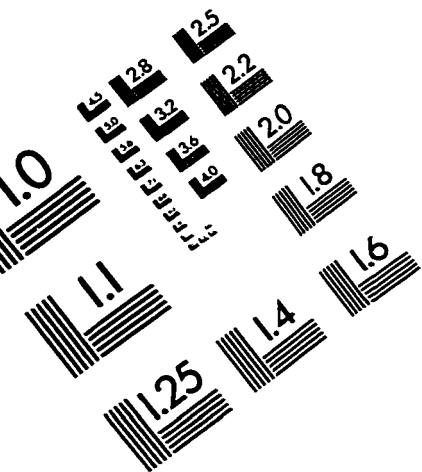
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