Unity in diversity : English puritans and the puritan reformation, 1603-1689

Pederson, R.J.

Chapter 1

Historiographical Introduction, Methodology, Hypothesis, and Structure

1.1 Another Book on English Puritanism? Historiographical Justification

Only in the past sixty-five years has the study of English Puritanism gained serious academic credence.[1] Prior to this, popular perceptions of Puritans ranged from admirable to ignoble. In the *sixteenth century*, John Whitgift, adversary of Elizabethan Puritanism and future Archbishop of Canterbury, wrote that "this name Puritane is very aptely giuen to these men, not because they be pure no more than were the Heretikes called Cathari, but because they think them selues to be *mundiores ceteris*, more pure than others, as Cathari dyd, and separate them selues from all other Churches and congregations as spotted and defiled."[2] Thomas Cartwright, the leading Presbyterian of the sixteenth century, rejected "Puritan" and thought that it should be applied only to Anabaptists.[3] In the *seventeenth century*, Oliver Ormerod mocked the Puritans in his oft-cited dialogue *The Picture of a Puritane* (1605).[4] Henry Parker, one of Ormerod's contemporaries, sought to

[1] Most historians have used "English Puritanism" as a standard reference to this sixteenth and seventeenth-century movement (or series of movements); however, other historians refer to "British Puritanism" or "Dutch Puritanism" or "Scottish Puritanism" or "American Puritanism" or even "Irish Puritanism" to reflect the diversity of thought present within Puritanism and argue for an expansive presence outside England. I refer to "English Puritanism" in its English and British (i.e. international) contexts; that is, I assume that Puritanism was not *only* an occurrence in England and its colonies but had a strong presence elsewhere, especially in the Netherlands. It is in this sense that I refer to the "Puritan Reformation." For studies of Puritanism outside of England, see Keith L. Sprunger, *Dutch Puritanism: A History of English and Scottish Churches of the Netherlands in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (Leiden: Brill, 1982); Willem op't Hof, *Engelse piëtistische geschriften in het Netherlands, 1598-1622* (Rotterdam: Lindenberg, 1987); David George Mullan, *Scottish Puritanism, 1590-1638* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000); Margo Todd, *The Culture of Protestantism in Early Modern Scotland* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002), 402-412; Janice Knight, *Orthodoxies in Massachusetts: Rereading American Puritanism* (New Haven: Harvard University Press, 1994); and Crawford Gribben, "Puritanism in Ireland and Wales," in *The Cambridge Companion to Puritanism*, ed. John Coffey and Paul C. H. Lim (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 159-173. John Coffey has recently questioned the use of "Scottish Puritanism" in "The Problem of 'Scottish Puritanism, 1590-1638,'" in *Enforcing the Reformation in Ireland and Scotland,* ed. Elizabethanne Boran and Crawford Gribben (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 2007), 68-90, and Keith Brown has rejected it in "Review of *Scottish Puritanism*," *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 53 (2002), 396. That the term "Puritan" was applied to the Scottish context by early modernists should neither be overlooked nor exaggerated.

[2] John Whitgift, *An Answere to a Certen Libel Intituled, An Admonition to the Parliament* (London: Imprinted by Henrie Bynneman, 1572), 18; quoted in Richard L. Greaves, *Society and Religion in Elizabethan England* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1981), 7. In response to Whitgift, Thomas Cartwright, an early modern Presbyterian leader, denied the imputation of Catharism and asserted that the only purity that concerned Christians was Christ's innocence and the sanctification he bestows. For an introduction to Elizabethan Puritan political ideas, see Edmund S. Morgan, ed., *Puritan Political Ideas, 1558-1794* (1965; repr., Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 2003), xiii-xlviii, 1-74; and Leonard J. Trinterud, ed., *Elizabethan Puritanism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971), 3-16.

[3] Thomas Cartwright, *A Second Replie* (London, 1575), 38.

[4] Oliver Ormerod, "The Picture of a Puritane," in *Images of English Puritanism: A Collection of Contemporary Sources, 1589-1646*, ed. Lawrence A. Sasek (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1989), 238-54.

defend his fellow evangelicals from "this detested odious name of Puritan," by stating that they upheld godliness and morals in the realm.[5] Giles Widdowes observed its ambiguity in 1631 and John Yates found it offensive in 1625, calling for a statute to "define it and punish it."[6] In the *eighteenth century*, David Hume called the Puritans "obstinate reformers" and referred to their "wild fanaticism" and "gloomy spirit."[7] Nineteenth-century Hawthornian biases predominated Victorian studies; so much so, that the classic caricature of the English Puritan throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was that of "a gaunt, lank-haired kill-joy, wearing a black steeple-hat, and compounding for sins he was inclined to by damning those to which he had no mind."[8] Even the great *nineteenth-century* English poet, Matthew Arnold, used "Puritan" "a term of opprobrium and a powerful cultural weapon…[in a] campaign to replace Christianity with culture."[9] H. L. Mencken, a *twentieth-century* satirist, opined that Puritanism was "the haunting fear that someone, somewhere, may be happy."[10] George Orwell reiterated these Victorian sentiments in his essay "The English People."[11] These popular perceptions trace to early modern anti-Puritan biases in Restoration England.[12] Consequently, Puritanism continues

---

[5] Henry Parker, "A Discourse Concerning *Puritans*," in *Images of English Puritanism*, 164, 166-71. For deeper explorations into Parker, see Michael Mendle, *Henry Parker and the English Civil War: The Political Thought of the Public's "Privado"* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995); and Jason Peacey, *Politicians and Pamphleteers: Propaganda During the English Civil Wars and Interregnum* (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 2004), 114-15. Parker's *Discourse* is important because, as Catherine Gimelli Martin has observed, "Parker divided the movement into ecclesiastical Puritans…religious Puritans or dogmatic Calvinists; moral Puritans, or scrupulous precisians in conduct; and political Puritans." Martin, *Milton Among the Puritans: The Case for Historical Revisionism* (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 2010), 61.

[6] David Scott Kastan, "Performances and Playbooks: The Closing of the Theatres and the Politics of Drama," in *Reading, Society and Politics in Early Modern England*, ed. Kevin Sharpe and Steven N. Zwicker (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 168.

[7] David Hume, *The History of Great Britain, Vol. I: Containing the Reigns of James I and Charles I* (Edinburgh, 1754), 8, 81, 396.

[8] Leland S. Person, *The Cambridge Introduction to Nathaniel Hawthorne* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 16-19; Perry Miller and T. H. Johnson, eds., *The Puritans* (New York, 1938), 2. John Netland challenges this view of Victorian sentiment, in part, by stating that contrary to popular perception Victorian England made great strides in "rehabilitating" the Puritans by employing various aspects of their politics and romanticism to justify contemporary stances. While I concede the point, Netland does say, rightly so, that as Puritanism "signified the accumulated moral capital of a newly valorized past, it also continued to bear social stigma." Netland, "Of Philistines and Puritans: Matthew Arnold's Construction of Puritanism," in *Puritanism and Its Discontents,* ed. Laura Lunger Knoppers (Cranbury: University of Delaware Press, 2003), 68-9.

See also John W. Beardslee III, ed., *Reformed Dogmatics: J. Wollebius, G. Voetius, and F. Turretin* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1965), 279f, where Gisbertus Voetius mentions those who are styled "Precisionists, Puritans, Roundheads, or shorthairs, foolish-wise, joyless, sad-humored, clothed in melancholy, Sabbatarians…salty-sour Zeelanders…etc."

[9] Laura Lunger Knoppers, "Introduction," in *Puritanism and Its Discontents,* ed. Laura Lunger Knoppers (New ark: University of Delaware Press, 2003), 14; Netland, "Of Philistines and Puritans," 67-84.

[10] Cited in Carl N. Degler, *Out of Our Past: The Forces that Shaped Modern America* (New York: HarperCollins, 1984), 9.

[11] George Orwell, "The English People," in *Orwell, As I Please, 1943-1945: Essays, Journalism and Letters*, ed. Sonia Orwell and Ian Angus (Boston: David R. Godine, 2000), 10-11.

[12] Carla Gardina Pestana, *The English Atlantic in an Age of Revolution, 1640-1661* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004), 217. For the rise of anti-Puritanism, see Patrick Collinson, *Richard Bancroft and Elizabethan Anti-Puritanism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 1-12, 28-59; Peter Lake, *The Anti-*

to mystify modern readers and remains a much-misunderstood aspect of British and American lineage.[13]

Recent scholarship has come a long way in "rehabilitating" and re-defining the Puritans. As Gordon S. Wakefield wrote in 1957, "No longer can he [the Puritan] be pilloried as the would-be *saboteur* of the Church of England, the fierce opponent of everything 'Anglican.'"[14] Far more complex identities have emerged than the small but assertive early modern "hotter-sort of Protestant" whose aesthetic tastes excluded ceremonies and happy times.[15] Puritanism could no longer be defined solely in its relation to Anglicanism. Patrick Collinson described the Puritan tradition within the established church as "not alien to the properly 'Anglican' character of the English church but…equivalent to the most vigorous and successful of religious tendencies contained within it."[16] G. R. Elton observed "that within the Church there existed both high and low streams of opinion, and that at least before the age of [William] Laud these did not represent a conflict between Anglican and Puritan as much as a struggle for ascendency between two sections of the English Church."[17] In fact, Nicholas Tyacke has recently brought early modern "Anglicanism" into question, citing the religious complexities of one of its chief intellectual architects, Lancelot Andrewes.[18] The "Anglican versus Puritan"

Christ's Lewd Hat: Protestants, Papists and Players in Post-Reformation England (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002), 521-78; Peter Lake, "Anti-Puritanism: The Structure of a Prejudice," in *Religious Politics in Post-Reformation England: Essays in Honour of Nicholas Tyacke*, ed. Kenneth Fincham and Pater Lake (Woodbridge: The Boydwell Press, 2006), 80-97; William Holden, *Anti-Puritan Satire, 1572-1642* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1954); and Kristen Poole, *Radical Religion from Shakespeare to Milton: Figures of Nonconformity in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 1-15; 45-73; 104-123. Poole shows how Puritans were portrayed satirically in the period's literature as gluttonous, sexually promiscuous, monstrously procreating, and even "worshipping naked." This last charge is no doubt an inference from the many Puritans who spoke of "naked worship" before God; that is, coming to God without any merits or claims for a hearing other than Christ's magisterial mercy, and their insistence on the removal of such mediates as pictures, statues, and icons. Cf. Gerald R. Cragg, *Puritanism in the Period of the Great Persecution, 1660-1688* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1957), 197.

[13] Francis J. Bremer, *Puritanism: A Very Short Introduction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 1.

[14] Gordon S. Wakefield, *Puritan Devotion: Its Place in the Development of Christian Piety* (London: Wakefield Press, 1957), 1.

[15] Sacvan Bercovitch, *The Puritan Origins of the American Self* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1975), 67.For a discussion of Puritans as "the hotter-sort of Protestants," see Doreen Rosman, *From Catholic to Protestant: Religion and the People in Tudor England* (New York: Routledge, 1996), 60-67. Judith Maltby cautions against the Puritan's monopoly of hot-tempered religion in Maltby, *Prayer Book and People in Elizabethan and Early Stuart England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 9-10. For Puritan sensibility, see Bernard S. Capp, *England's Culture Wars: Puritan Reformation and Its Enemies in the Interregnum, 1649-1660* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012); and Leland Ryken, *Worldly Saints: The Puritans as They Really Were* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1990).

[16] Patrick Collinson, "A Comment: Concerning the Name Puritan," *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 31:4 (1980): 484, 488.

[17] G. R. Elton, *Studies in Tudor and Stuart Politics and Government, Papers and Reviews, 1946-1972, Volume 2: Parliament* [*and*] *Political Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 165-66. For similar views, see William Haller, *The Rise of Puritanism* (New York, 1938); and Christopher Hill, *Society and Puritanism in Pre-Revolutionary England* (1958; repr., New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 1997).

[18] See Nicholas Tyacke, "Lancelot Andrewes and the Myth of Anglicanism," in *Conformity and Orthodoxy in the English Church, c.1560-1660*, ed. Peter Lake and Michael C. Questier (London: Boydell & Brewer, 2000), 5-12; 32-33. Tyacke correctly notes that the term "Anglicanism" first appeared in nineteenth-

antithesis, however, still permeates modern understanding of early modern English religious culture.[19] What has supplanted this older consensus is one of a rather robust, early modern "Calvinist consensus" that incorporates a broader spectrum of individuals and thought, including non-Anglicans, which are aptly dubbed "experimental [i.e. experiential] Calvinists."[20] David C. Steinmetz, however, has cautioned against equating Puritanism with Calvinism since "Calvinism was a more pervasive religious and intellectual movement than Puritanism."[21] Whether all Puritans were Calvinists, however, has been contested by John Coffey, and others.[22] So while older models for understanding

---

century English print. For Andrewes' place in English society and religion, see Thomas A. Mason, *Serving God and Mammon: William Juxon, 1582-1663, Bishop of London, Lord High Treasurer of England and Archbishop of Canterbury* (Cranbury: Associated University Press, 1985), 33; and Peter E. McCullough, ed., *Lancelot Andrews: Selected Sermons and Lectures* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), xi-lvii.

[19] For examples, see: J. H. New, *Anglican and Puritan, the Basis of Their Opposition, 1558-1640* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1964); Horton Davies, *Worship and Theology in England*, vols. I, II (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970, 1975), i-ii; Greaves, *Society and Religion*; J. Sears McGee, *The Godly Man in Stuart England: Anglicans, Puritans, and the Two Tables, 1620-1670* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1976); John Booty, "Anglicanism," in *The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Reformation*, ed. Hans Hillerbrand, 4 vols. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 1:38-44. Booty's article shows how Puritans can still be cut-off from the pre-Restoration Church of England. For a challenge to the Anglican versus Puritan thesis, see David Underdown, *Fire from Heaven: Life in an English Town in the Seventeenth Century* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), 23. Underdown writes, "Puritans were people within the Church of England who wished to reform it further, not people criticizing the church from without. We can distinguish between Puritans and non-Puritans within the Anglican Church; but we cannot speak of Puritans and Anglicans, because the Puritans *were* Anglicans." See also Peter Lake, *Anglicans and Puritans? Presbyterianism and English Conformist Thought from Whitgift to Hooker* (London: Unwin Hyman, 1988); and Polly Ha, *English Presbyterianism, 1590-1640* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2011), 47-120.

[20] Susan Doran, *Elizabeth I and Religion, 1558-1603* (New York: Routledge, 1994), 23-24, 26; Nicholas Tyacke, "Puritanism, Arminianism and Counter-Revolution," in *Reformation to Revolution: Politics and Religion in Early Modern England,* ed. Margo Todd (New York: Routledge, 1995), 53-70. The phrase "experimental Calvinists" seems to have originated in R. T. Kendall's *Calvinism and English Calvinism to 1649* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979). The use of "Calvinist" is not without dispute. While modern historians continue to employ the term (and often equate it erroneously with "Puritan"), its use often misrepresents the relation between Reformation and post-Reformation orthodoxy, fails to address the fact that many early modern "Calvinists" despised its use, and presents a false homogenization of early modern Protestant identities.

[21] David C. Steinmetz, *Calvin in Context* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 5. Steinmetz allows for Puritanism as a special type of Calvinism but sees Calvinism as much broader and more encompassing than Puritanism, touching anti-Puritans and Puritans, Anglicans and Dissenters, High Churchmen and Low. Depending on one's definition of Puritanism, however, one may see strong (if not equal) tendencies towards pervasiveness within Puritanism itself. Cf. Geoffrey Nuttall, *The Puritan Spirit: Essays and Addresses* (London: Epworth Press, 1967), 11-21. Also, I agree with Richard A. Muller that given the diversity within Reformed theology and development, it is more accurate to speak of the "Reformed tradition" than of "Calvinism," though because of the pervasive use of "Calvinism" in scholarship, I have, at times, retained its use. Further, use of the "Reformed tradition" is not without its problems as it less clearly expresses predestinarian motifs. See Richard A. Muller, "John Calvin and Later Calvinism: The Identity of the Reformed Tradition," in *The Cambridge Companion to Reformation Theology*, ed. David Bagchi and David C. Steinmetz (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 130-49.

[22] While Coffey acknowledges a strong Calvinistic presence among the Puritans, he argues that John Goodwin, a convert to Arminianism, was as firmly within the Puritan tradition as the high Calvinist Samuel Rutherford (thus, both persons reflecting certain polarities within Puritanism). Perhaps a better taxonomy would be "Reformed," though it is questionable whether Goodwin was "Reformed orthodox." William den Boer contends that Arminius's theology "remain well within the scope of Reformed theology."

the Puritan crisis in the Elizabethan church have moved towards more diverse understandings of these Reformed Protestants, questions still linger as to their precise religious identity or for a more reliable taxonomy that incorporates these diversities. Reflecting on the problem of pluralities in early modern religion, Tracy Fessenden, Nicholas F. Radel, and Magdalena J. Zaborowska made the deconstructionist statement that "there are only Puritans, Puritanisms, and Protestantisms."[23] Though this observation accurately identifies diverse systems of thought and practice in the early modern period, it does not assess whether there was a *unitas in diversitate* within Puritanism, nor adequately address confessionality among Puritans.[24]

Since the rise of English Puritan studies in the mid-twentieth century, nearly every facet of Puritanism has been explored, shedding light on numerous problems associated with early modern English religious culture.[25] The most conspicuous result of these studies

---

This assertion has not gone without challenge, however, and it remains to be seen how Arminianism will eventually be classified. Suffice it to say that work on this is ongoing, and far from settled. Den Boer, *God's Twofold Love: The Theology of Jacob Arminius, 1559-1609* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2010), 326. Cf. Peter Rouwendal, "The Doctrine of Predestination in Reformed Orthodoxy," in *A Companion to Reformed Orthodoxy*, ed. Herman Selderhuis (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 568.

Carl R. Trueman has recently questioned the usefulness of "Puritanism" because of its apparent minimalist criteria (e.g. the "quasi-Arian" John Milton is reputed to be a Puritan). See John Coffey, *John Goodwin and the Puritan Revolution: Religion and Intellectual Change in Seventeenth-Century England* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2006), 1-12; Carl R. Trueman, *John Owen: Reformed Catholic, Renaissance Man* (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 2007), 5. Trueman prefers "Reformed orthodox" to "Puritan" to classify Owen for its more definitive characteristics. I am not opposed to this classification but find it incomplete since it does not adequately describe Owen's distinctive pietism, which historically has been classified as "Puritan."

[23] Tracy Fessenden, Nicholas F. Radel, and Magdalena J. Zaborowska, "Introduction," in *The Puritan Origins of American Sex: Religion, Sexuality, and National,* ed. Tracy Fessenden, Nicholas F. Radel, and Magdalena J. Zaborowska (New York: Routledge, 2001), 13.

[24] Even the most radical and heterodox of writers, such as John Eaton, had a strong *sensus unitatis* with the earlier patristic and Reformation periods which is seen in Eaton's "Honey-combe" on justification, which is reminiscent of medieval florilegia, in that its margins cite, among others, Augustine, Chrysostom, Jerome, Luther, Calvin, Beza, John Foxe, Jerome Zanchi, William Perkins, William Sclater, and Joseph Hall, all authorities of the "mainstream."

[25] For a critical examination of recent trends in Puritan studies, see Richard L. Greaves, "The Puritan-Nonconformist Tradition in England, 1560-1700: Historiographical Reflections," *Albion*, 17 (1987), 449-86; Michael McGiffert, "American Puritan Studies in the 1960s," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3d Ser. XXVII (1970), 36-67; and Michael S. Montgomery, *American Puritan Studies: An Annotated Bibliography of Dissertations, 1882-1981* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1984). One of the major areas of advance has to do with our understanding of English Puritan literature and its impact on other societies. See, for instance, Peter Damrau, *The Reception of English Puritan Literature in Germany* (London: Maney Publishing, 2006); Keith L. Sprunger, *Trumpets from the Tower: English Puritan Printing in the Netherlands, 1600-1640* (Leiden: Brill, 1994); and Karen Ordahl Kupperman, *Providence Island, 1630-1641: The Other Puritan Colony* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993).

Another area of continuous debate has to do with the rise of Puritanism and its impact on science and capitalism. The former proposed positively by Robert K. Merton (thus the "Merton thesis") suggests that aesthetic Protestants were disproportionately represented among the burgeoning seventeenth century scientific community; and the latter was positively stated by Max Weber (thus the "Weber thesis"), whose "Protestant ethic" was the foundation of modern capitalist thought. See respectively, I. Bernard Cohen, ed., *Puritanism and the Rise of Modern Science: The Merton Thesis* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1990); and Robert W. Green, ed., *Protestantism, Capitalism, and Social Science: The Weber Thesis Controversy*, 2nd ed. (Lexington: D.C. Heath and Company, 1973). See also Richard L. Greaves, "Puritanism and Science: The Anatomy of a Controversy," *Journal of the History of Ideas*, Vol. 30, No. 3 (1969): 345-68; John Morgan,

is that we have become much more aware of the enormous difficulty and complexity of "Puritanism."[26] This complexity is expressed not only in its broad, trans-Atlantic and trans-insular identities,[27] but also in its theological and ideological kinship, one that dates past through early Reformed Protestantism, through medieval, and even to early Christian times.[28] Yet, even with the mass of literature now extant on Puritanism, several core questions continue to mystify researchers: precisely how should "Puritan" and "Puritanism" be defined? What are its chief cultural, historical, political, social, literary and intellectual characteristics? How does toleration and religious dissent in early modern England inform us about Puritanism's diversities? To what degree did Puritanism borrow

---

"The Puritan Thesis Revisited," in *Evangelicals and Science in Historical Perspective*, ed. David N. Livingstone, D. G. Hart, and Mark. A. Noll, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 43-74.

The current survey of literature in this chapter is an attempt to be thorough and detailed pertaining to issues in Puritan historiography. It is not an attempt to be exhaustive of literature produced in the past 50-70 years. Rather, I have attempted to engage more current issues and cutting-edge ideas within this literature.

[26] Thus, Perry Miller and Thomas H. Johnson have called Puritanism "the most conspicuous, the most sustained, and the most fecund" aspects of the "American mind." Miller and Johnson, *The Puritans*, 1.

[27] S. Scott Rohrer wrote, "The Puritans represent the mother lode of American Protestantism: no other early American group has received as much attention from historians." *Wandering Souls: Protestant Migrations in America, 1630-1865* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2010), 299. While historians today distinguish between American and British Puritanism, it should be noted that in the seventeenth century there was no such distinction—Puritanism was a whole, comprehensive, movement, bound by theology, social identity, and vision, and which can be seen as the attempt of the godly for a Puritan Reformation. Thus, "English Puritanism" is perhaps better understood as the "British Puritanism" which consists of both English and American developments.

[28] Surprisingly little has been written about Puritanism's connection with either the medieval or the early Christian church. Three notable exceptions are David M. Barbee's "A Reformed Catholike: William Perkins' Use of the Church Fathers" (PhD. Diss., University of Pennsylvania, 2013); Ann-Stephane Schafer, *Auctoritas Patrum? The Reception of the Church Fathers in Puritanism* (New York: Peter Lang, 2012) and Theodore D. Bozeman's *To Live Ancient Lives: The Primitivist Dimension in Puritanism* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1988). Barbee correctly concludes that "The normative reading of Puritans as biblicists who exclude tradition [should be] overturned" (Ibid., 306).

For an analysis of the British contexts of Puritan New England, see Joseph A. Conforti, *Saints and Strangers: New England in British North America* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006) and Walter A. Woodward, *Prospero's America: John Winthrop, Jr., Alchemy, and the Creation of New England Culture, 1606-1676* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2010), 1-13. Puritanism's relation to earlier Reformed Protestantism can be seen in its affinity to Protestant scholasticism. Cf. Richard A. Muller, *After Calvin: Studies in the Development of a Theological Tradition* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 3-21. For a detailed study of the relation between humanism and scholasticism in the Puritan tradition, see Margo Todd, *Christian Humanism and the Puritan Social Order* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 53-95. While some historians have depicted Protestant scholasticism as being antithetical to piety and thus embracing more rationalist strains, this is an improper caricature since Protestant scholastic theologians pursued reason in order to defend and understand divine revelation and thus to import piety. See Carl R. Trueman and R. Scott Clark, "Introduction," in *Protestant Scholasticism: Essays in Reassessment*, ed. Carl R. Trueman and R.S. Clark (Carlisle: Paternoster, 1998), xi-ixx; Willem van Asselt, *The Federal Theology of Johannes Cocceius, 1603-1669* (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 94-105; Adriaan C. Neele, *Petrus van Mastricht, 1630-1706: Reformed Orthodoxy: Method and Piety* (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 189-202; and James E. Dolezal, "A Practical Scholasticism? Edward Leigh's Theological Method," *Westminster Theological Journal* 71 (2009): 337-54, esp. 342-44.

or exploit earlier Catholic or Lutheran religious expressions?[29] What about early modern "Puritan" heresiographies and how do they illumine our understanding of "mainstream Puritanism?"[30] What about the diverseness of Puritan religion during the English Revolution and its impact on early modern families?[31] What about Puritanism's origins?[32] What about Puritanism's impact on other societies?[33] What impact did fringe beliefs have in Reformed consensus?[34] Who are Puritans and who are not?[35] Can Puritanism *even* be defined?[36] Or is it, as Michael P. Winship has suggested, an "unavoidably a contextual,

[29] See Gregory D. Dodds, *Exploiting Erasmus: The Erasmian Legacy and Religious Change in Early Modern England* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009), 61-92; and John Schofield, *Philip Melanchthon and the English Reformation* (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 2006), 174-85.

[30] See Ann Hughes, *Gangraena and the Struggle for the English Revolution* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 55-129.

[31] Several modern studies probe the parallel "orthodoxies" of religion during the English Revolution: David Little, *Religion, Order and Law: A Study in Pre-Revolutionary England* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1969); Christopher Hill, *The World Turned Upside Down: Radical Ideas During the English Revolution* (New York: Viking Press, 1973); Christopher Hill, *The English Bible and the Seventeenth-Century Revolution* (New York: Penguin, 1993); Christopher Durston and Judith Maltby, eds., *Religion in Revolutionary England* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007); and Nicholas Tyacke, ed., *The English Revolution, c. 1590-1720: Politics, Religion and Communities* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2008). For the impact of the English Revolution on early modern families, see Christopher Durston, *The Family in the English Revolution* (Oxford and New York: Basil Blackwell, 1989), 160-74.

[32] As historians continue to refine definitions of Puritanism, its origins will likewise need to be reassessed. See Karl Gunther, "The Intellectual Origins of English Puritanism, ca. 1525-1572" (PhD diss., Northwestern University, 2007), 9-30; Gunther, "The Origins of English Puritanism," *History Compass 4/2* (2006), 235-40; and Dan G. Danner, *Pilgrimage to Puritanism: History and Theology of the Marian Exiles at Geneva, 1555-1560* (New York: Peter Lang Publishing, 1999), 1-14.

[33] The English Puritan best-seller, Lewis Bayly's *The Practice of Pietie* (1611), was one of the first English publications to impact early German pietism, and was equally popular in the Netherlands from 1620. See Damrau, *The Reception of English Puritan Literature in Germany*, 59-70; Jan van de Kamp, "Die Einfuhrung der christlichen Diszplinierung des Alltags in die deutsche evangelische Erbauungsliteratur durch Lewis Baylys *Praxis Pietatis* (1628)," *Pietsimus und Neuzeit 37*, ed. Udo Sträter (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2011): 11-19; Cornelius W. Schoneveld, *Intertraffic of the Mind: Studies in Seventeenth-Century Anglo-Dutch Translation, with a Checklist of Books Translated from English into Dutch, 1600-1700* (Leiden: Brill, 1983); Op't Hof, *Engelse piëtistische geschriften in het Netherlands*, 169-78.

[34] Case studies of such divergent Puritans as John Preston, John Howe, and John Goodwin have all confirmed flexibility in our understanding of early modern Reformed orthodoxy. See Jonathan D. Moore, *English Hypothetical Universalism: John Preston and the Softening of Reformed Theology* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 2007), 217-229; David Field, *Rigide Calvinisme in a Softer Dresse: The Moderate Presbyterianism of John Howe, 1630-1705* (Edinburgh: Rutherford House, 2004), 18-29; Coffey, *John Goodwin and the Puritan Revolution*, 291-297.

[35] Historians continue to question whether James Ussher, John Goodwin, Joseph Hall, or others should be considered as "Puritans." In the case of Ussher and Hall there were definite puritan leanings. Goodwin stands in a class of his own and is an interesting test case. Though Arminian, Goodwin was appointed vicar of one of London's leading Puritan parishes in 1633. See Coffey, *John Goodwin and the Puritan Revolution*, 10, and (fn 22) above. Cf. David Loewenstein, *Treacherous Faith: The Specter of Heresy in Early Modern English Literature and Culture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 238-244.

[36] In his book *Fire from Heaven*, David Underdown challenges readers who question the historical validity of the term "Puritan" to read his book and reconsider their opinion. Underdown, *Fire from Heaven*, 21.

imprecise term, not an objective one, a term to use carefully but not to take too seriously in itself" that happens to be "an extremely convenient shorthand term?"[37]

Christopher Hill opined that the term and its cognates are "an admirable refuge from clarity of thought."[38] Leonard J. Trinterud observed that "there was something odd about the English Puritans" but that "there has not been any agreement about who were Puritans or what was Puritanism."[39] In other words, has "Puritan" and "Puritanism" shared the same fate as "evangelical" and "evangelicalism?"[40] J. C. Davies, Basil Hill, C. H. George, Paul Christianson, Michael Finlayson, Conrad Russell, and, at times, Patrick Collinson have rejected it (thus, reiterating Thomas Fuller's 1655 wish to banish the term from the historical record),[41] while John Coffey, Susan Doran, Christopher Durston, Jacqueline Eales, Kenneth Fincham, Crawford Gribben, Ann Hughes, Jeffrey K. Jue, Neil Keeble, Mark Kishlansky, Peter Lake, William Lamont, Paul C. H. Lim, Anthony Milton, John Morrill, John Spurr, David C. Steinmetz, Margo Todd, Nicholas Tyacke, David Underdown, Tom Webster, Blair Worden, and Keith Wrightson continue to employ its use.[42] "Puritan" and

---

[37] Michael Winship, "Were there any Puritans in New England?," *New England Quarterly*, 74 (2001), 137-8. Giles Widdowes reflected this same attitude in his 1631 treatise, *The Schysmatical Puritan* (London, 1631), sig. A4r. Five years earlier, John Yates found the term "offensive" in his *Ibis ad Caesarem* (London, 1626), sig. Eeee4v.

[38] Hill, *Society and Puritanism,* 1.

[39] Trinterud, *Elizabethan Puritanism*, 3.

[40] For a discussion of the problems related to defining "evangelical" or "evangelicalism," see Mark A. Noll, "Science, Theology, and Society: From Cotton Mather to William Jennings Bryan," in *Evangelicals and Science in Historical Perspective,* ed. David N. Livingstone, D. G. Hart, and Mark A. Noll (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 120-41; John R. Stone, *On the Boundaries of American Evangelicalism: The Postwar Evangelical Coalition* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 1997), 1-21; and George M. Marsden, *Understanding Fundamentalism and Evangelicalism* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1991), 1-8. More general questions arise as to how terms are used and how such use affects the readers' understanding. Cf. Tim Thornton, *Wittgenstein on Language and Thought: The Philosophy of Content* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1998), 30-68.

[41] Thomas Fuller, *The Church History of Britain*, ed. J. S. Brewer (Oxford, 1845), 6:86-87; J. C. Davies, "Puritanism and Revolution: Themes, Categories, Methods and Conclusions," *Historical Journal,* 33 (1990), 704; Basil Hill, "Puritanism: The Problem of Definition," in *Studies in Church History*, *vol. 2*, ed. G. J. Cuming (London: Nelson, 1965), 283-96; C. H. George, "Puritanism as History and Historiography," *Past and Present* 41 (1968), 77-104; Paul Christianson, "Reformers and the Church of England under Elizabeth I and the Early Stuarts," *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 31 (1970): 463-84; Michael Finlayson, "Puritanism and Puritans: Labels or Libels?," *Canadian Journal of History* 8 (1973): 201-33; Conrad Russell, *Parliaments and English Politics, 1621-1629* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979), 26-28. Both Hall and Christianson defined their terms so narrowly as to exclude separatists and Baptists from classifications of "Puritanism." Russell argues that the term "Puritan" came into positive use with the rise of English Arminianism, and that so many diverse people are called "Puritans" in the seventeenth century to render it useless. Cf. Conrad Russell, *Unrevolutionary England, 1603-1642* (New York: Continuum Publishing, 1990), ix-xxx. For a critique of George, see Ian Breward, "The Abolition of Puritanism," *The Journal of Religious History*, Vol. 7, No. 1 (1974): 20-34.

[42] John Coffey, *Politics, Religion and the British Revolutions: The Mind of Samuel Rutherford* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997); Doran, *Elizabeth I and Religion;* Christopher Durston and Jacqueline Eales, "Introduction: The Puritan Ethos, 1560-1700," in *The Culture of English Puritanism*, ed. Christopher Durston and Jacqueline Eales (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 1996), 1-31; Jacqueline Eales, *Puritans and Roundheads* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990); Eales, *Community and Disunity: Kent and the English Civil Wars, 1640-1649* (Faversham: Keith Dickson Books, 2001); Kenneth Fincham, *Visitation Articles and Injunctions of the Early Stuart Church* (London: Boydell & Brewer, 1998); Crawford Gribben, *God's Irishman: Theological Debates in Cromwellian Ireland* (New York: Oxford University Press,

"Puritanism" may be slippery but they are indispensable.[43] Few historians have produced as promising studies on Puritanism as Peter Lake, who has broadened our understanding of Puritanism's complex identities and social contexts;[44] yet, even in Lake's work, a sense of pessimism shrouds his conclusions.[45]

Can this discipline be moved forward, at least to the extent that historians can employ the use of "Puritan" and "Puritanism" more confidently and unequivocally? Can historians make sense of this complex, varied intellectual culture and retain their use in writing history? Can one successfully trace Puritan "identities" and bloodlines across its several strains and arrive at a core distinctive?[46] Or, more likely, can one discern a set or

---

2007); Ann Hughes, "Anglo-American Puritanisms," *Journal of British Studies,* 39 (2000): 1-7; Jeffrey K. Jue, *Heaven upon Earth: Joseph Mede* (*1586-1638*) *and the Legacy of Millenarianism* (New York: Springer, 2006); N. H. Keeble, "Milton and Puritanism," in *A Companion to Milton*, ed. Thomas N. Corns (Malden: Wiley-Blackwell Publishers, 2001), ch. 8; Mark A. Kishlansky, *A Monarch Transformed: Britain, 1603-1714* (New York: Penguin, 1997); William M. Lamont, *Puritanism and Historical Controversy* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's, 1996); Anthony Milton, *Catholic and Reformed: The Roman and Protestant Churches in English Puritan Thought, 1600-1640* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995); John S. Morrill, *The Nature of the English Revolution* (London: Longman, 1994); John Spurr, *English Puritanism, 1603-1689* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1998); David C. Steinmetz, *Reformers in the Wings: From Geiler von Kayersberg to Theodore Beza*, 2nd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 100-105, 168; Margo Todd, *Reformation to Revolution: Politics and Religion in Early Modern England* (New York: Routledge, 1995); Nicholas Tyacke, *Aspects of English Protestantism, c.1530-1700* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001); Underdown, *Fire from Heaven*; Tom Webster, *Godly Clergy in Early Stuart England: The Caroline Puritan Movement, c. 1620-1643* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997); Blair Worden, *Roundhead Reputations: The English Civil Wars and the Passions of Posterity* (New York: Penguin, 2002); Keith Wrightson and David Levine, *Poverty and Piety in an English Village: Terling, 1525-1700* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995).

[43] For representative positions on either side of the question, see Basil Hill, "Puritanism: The Problem of Definitions," *Studies in Church History 2* (1965), 283-96; Peter Lake, "Puritan identities," *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 35 (1984), 112-23; Lamont, *Puritanism and Historical Controversy*, 1-14; and Peter Lake, *The Boxmaker's Revenge: "Orthodoxy," "Heterodoxy," and the Politics of the Parish in Early Stuart London* (Palo Alto: Sanford University Press, 2001), 11-16. Both Alan Ford and Crawford Gribben have looked at this issue within an Irish context: Alan Ford, "Church of Ireland, 1558-1641: A Puritan Church?," in *As By Law Established: The Church of Ireland Since the Reformation*, ed. Alan Ford, J. I. McGuire, and Kenneth Milne (Dublin: Lilliput, 1995), ch. 4; and Crawford Gribben, "Puritanism in Ireland and Wales." For a helpful survey of positions, see Saseck, *Images of English Puritanism*, 1-27.

[44] Lake's voluminous writings include *Moderate Puritans and the Elizabethan Church* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988); *Anglicans and Puritans? Presbyterianism and English Conformist Thought from Whitgift to Hooker* (London: Unwin Hyman, 1988); *The Boxmaker's Revenge*; *The Anti-Christ's Lewd Hat*; and "Defining Puritanism—Again?," in *Transatlantic Perspectives on a Seventeenth-Century Anglo-American Faith*, ed. Francis J. Bremer (Boston: Massachusetts Historical Society, 1993), 3-29.

[45] Lake writes, "The difficulties involved in defining 'puritanism' are easier to identify than solve and I really have nothing original to say on that subject." Lake, *Moderate Puritans*, 10-11. Elsewhere, Lake proposes his own definition as "a set of positions on [the English religious] spectrum." See Lake's "Introduction" to Geoffrey F. Nuttall, *The Holy Spirit in Puritan Faith and Experience*, 2nd ed. (1947; repr., Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), xx. Nuttall proposes a more dynamic and open-ended approach to definition, which Lake praises.

[46] The issue of "Protestant identities" has been the subject of several recent studies. Peter Lake has analyzed early modern Puritan identities in "Reading Clarke's *Lives* in Political and Polemical Context," in *Writing Lives: Biography and Textuality, Identity and Representation in Early Modern England*, ed. Kevin Sharpe and Steven N. Zwicker (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 293-318. See also Andrew Cambers, "Reading, the Godly, and Self-Writing in England, c. 1580-1720," *Journal of British Studies*, Vol. 46, No. 4 (October, 2007): 796-825; Christopher Haigh, *The Plain Man's Pathways to Heaven: Kinds of Christianity in*

cluster of ideas, attitudes, and expressions that, when woven or fashioned within a particular sixteenth- and seventeenth-century context, form something that we can identify as "Puritan," and "Puritanism?" If so, what are its contents, and what makes it *distinctively* Puritan?[47] Can historians simply refer to Puritans as "the hotter sort of Protestants," as Percival Wilburn did, or is this an insufficient rendering of English memory?[48] Further, as more historians begin to refer to *Puritanisms*, and offer competing definitions focused on single doctrines or practices, is something lost? As the wind continues to blow towards multiple religious identities, or irreducible pluralisms, which existed both at any one time, and across time, how long can one maintain Puritanism's collective identity?[49] Winship pointed this out when he said, "It has recently been suggested, somewhat hyperbolically, that it is more useful to talk of 'puritanisms' rather than 'puritanism,' for there were almost as many puritanisms as there were puritans."[50] Admittedly this is an overstatement, but historian Ann Hughes has popularized its reference within the literature, and though "Puritanisms" has more often been associated with studies of American Puritanism, it has broad implications for English Puritanism more generally, if for no other reason than by the fact that in the seventeenth century English Puritanism was thought of as "British Puritanism," a collective identity of ministers and laypeople on both sides of the Atlantic ("the godly") who lived and expressed their ideas in communion with each other, and had equal, though sometimes competing, visions of for a Puritan Reformation, whether to build a "city on a hill" or a "Puritan Commonwealth."[51] The idea of *Puritanisms* has thus been proposed as a possible solution to the definitions problem, in that it attempts to understand the fragmenting caused by multifarious proposals on how to define Puritanism.

Historians Theodore D. Bozeman, Janice Knight, and Stephen Foster have all written about "Puritanisms" and early modern "orthodoxies."[52] Some historians have

---

Post-Reformation England, 1570-1640 (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007); Ethan H. Shagan, *Catholics and the "Protestant Nation:" Religious Politics and Identity in Early Modern England* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2005); and Muriel C. McClendon, Joseph Ward, and Michael MacDonald, eds., *Protestant Identities: Religion, Society, and Self-Fashioning in Post-Reformation England* (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 1999).

[47] Numerous historians have attempted to find the one defining feature of Puritanism. While this practice is not necessarily wrong, it is (at best) misguided . Rather than to see one prominent feature above (or to the exclusion) of all, historians should see a core set of identities (or cluster of ideas), that, considered together and expressed as a whole, form what we understand by "Puritan" and "Puritanism." This is, perhaps, similar to Wittgenstein's theory of *Familienähnlichkeit*, according to which concepts are like members of a family that share specific physical or character traits without everyone sharing the same traits. The varieties of Puritanism relate to one another in rather complex relations or family resemblances.

[48] Percival Wilburn, *A Checke or Reproofe of M. Howlet's Untimely Screeching* (1581), 15v. Quoted in Patrick Collinson, *The Elizabethan Puritan Movement* (1967; repr., Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), 27.

[49] Ronald Wells, *History and the Christian Historian* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1998), 143.

[50] Michael Winship, *Making Heretics: Militant Protestantism and Free Grace in Massachusetts, 1636-1641* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002), 3.

[51] See Hughes, "Anglo-American Puritanisms," 1-7. On congregational communion across the Atlantic, see Francis J. Bremer, *Congregational Communion: Clerical Friendship in the Anglo-American Community, 1610-1692* (Northeastern University Press, 1994), 17-40, where Bremer discusses in depth the "Cambridge connection" which fostered shared beliefs and experiences among the Puritans.

[52] Richard Pointer notes that Foster "is the least inclined towards this tendency but even his final chapter offers some hints." Pointer, "Selves and Others in Early New England: Refashioning American

traced this tendency to anti-Perry Miller tendencies in the 1960s. In their attempt to revise Miller's monolithic "New England mind," which saw a dominant mainstream Puritanism centered around notions of the covenant, revisionists have pointed out, at times convincingly, that Puritanism was much more diverse than what Miller had envisioned.[53] Thus, most present studies of American Puritanism now focus on its diversity, and contrast similarities and differences between the "puritanisms" of old and New England.[54] Moreover, it is possible, even probable, that this deconstructionism within the literature owe its origins not only to anti-Perry Miller tendencies, but also to resurgence of interest in studying the multi-fractured "radical" sectaries of the English Revolution. But this raises an important historical question: Did these religious radicals emerge *de novo*, without standing in relation to an earlier tradition or contemporary consensus; or, as the evidence suggests, were they reacting to perceived abuses and insufficiencies within the so-called "mainstream," especially in matters of obtaining assurance of faith and peace of mind?" Thus reflecting on this phenomenon, Glenn Burgess observed that historians are far more apt to be caught up with "origins" and "causes," than with "consequences," "effects," and "aftermath."[55]

Puritan Studies," in *History and the Christian Historian,* ed. Ronald Wells (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1998), 144 (n. 16). See Foster, *Long Argument*, 286-314; Bozeman, *To Live Ancient Lives*, 344-55; Knight *Orthodoxies*, 198-213; and Andrew Delbanco, *The Puritan Ordeal* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1989), 224-43.

[53] Michael P. Winship, *Making Heretics: Militant Protestants and Free Grace in Massachusetts, 1636-1641* (Princeton: University Press, 2002), 248 (n. 13); Pointer, "Selves and Others in Early New England," 143. Cp. Perry Miller, *Errand into the Wilderness* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1956), 48-98; and Knight, *Orthodoxies in Massachusetts*, 1-12. Perry Miller is known as "the father of American Puritan studies," and was largely responsible for revitalizing the study of Puritanism in the early-mid twentieth century. Miller's thesis was that of a unified Puritan theology or mainstream orthodoxy embodied by such Puritans as Thomas Hooker, Thomas Shepard, Peter Bulkeley, John Winthrop, William Perkins, and William Ames. Revisionists, such as Janice Knight, have challenged Miller's thesis and insist instead on a plurality of orthodoxies. Cf. David D. Hall, "Narrating Puritanism," in *New Directions in American Religious History*, ed. Harry S. Stout and D. G. Hart (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 51-83.

[54] See Philip E. Gura, *A Glimpse of Sion's Glory: Puritan Radicalism in New England, 1620-1660* (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 1984), 136-43, 222-24; David Cressy, *Coming Over: Migration and Communication between England and New England in the Seventeenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 191-205; Francis J. Bremer, *Congregational Communion: Clerical Friendship in the Anglo-American Puritan Community, 1610-1692* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1994), 120-1, 145-6, 150-1, 179-80; Delbanco, *The Puritan Ordeal*, 184-214; Stephen Fender, *Sea Changes: British Emigration and American Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 141-47; Susan Hardman Moore, *New World Settlers: Pilgrims and the Call Home* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), 16-35, 123-271; and David D. Hall, *The Faithful Shepherd: A History of the New England Ministry in the Seventeenth Century* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1972), 21-47. For an appraisal of English culture in early modern England and New England, including cross-fertilizations, see Francis J. Bremer and Lynn A. Botelho, eds., *The World of John Winthrop: Essays on England and New England, 1588-1649* (Boston: Massachusetts Historical Society, 2005).

[55] Glenn Burgess, "Radicalism and the English Revolution," in *English Radicalism, 1550-*1850, ed. Glenn Burgess and Matthew Festenstein (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 62. David Loewenstein, in his seminal work on John Milton, writes of "orthodox" and "radical" Puritan clergy. *Representing Revolution in Milton and His Contemporaries: Religion, Politics, and Polemics in Radical Puritanism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 3, 14, 94, 175, 186, 323. David R. Como differentiates between "mainstream" and "antinomian" Puritanism, but states that Nuttall was correct in seeing continuities in style that bridged the gap between the radicals and their mainstream counterparts.

These questions and issues illustrate the difficulty involved in this task. That historians continue to debate the precise meaning of these terms shows how important this discussion is; further, the plethora of unqualified or non-nuanced usage within scholarship contributes to this quagmire. Further, the numerous definitions circulating current academic literature naturally tends toward deconstructionism because it gives the impression that all those "distinguishing" characteristics are somehow unique or independent from a greater consensus. Thus, some historians have offered *precise* definitions by identifying a particular characteristic of Puritanism; as David R. Como noted, "Through the centuries, puritans have been made to wear many historical masks."[56] Michael Walzer emphasized the revolutionary spirit of the English Puritans and suggested that radicalism was a core feature of the movement (thus, Puritans were political revolutionaries wanting to overthrow the state); William Lamont saw similarities in the "godly rule" of the Puritans; Geoffrey F. Nuttall mused upon the experience of the Holy Spirit as the most vital element within Puritan thought and experience; J. Sears McGee distinguished Puritans by their emphasis on first table duties toward God, "such as avoiding idolatry and the profanation of the Sabbath, more than on second table duties, such as charity;"[57] Bernard Bailyn referred broadly to the "spirit of Puritanism;" Lake has defined Puritanism as "a set of priorities centered on religious experience," creating something of a "puritan style;" Peter Ivan Kaufman sees Puritanism chiefly within the rubric of self-despair; the great patriarch of Puritan studies, Patrick Collinson, portrays Puritans as evangelical protestants who reacted the to profane society which surrounded them, and as part of a greater network to reform church and state; Austin Woolrych defined it as broadly as possible, as "a strain of piety within the established church;" and Bernard S. Capp sees Puritanism as a culture war in the reform of "morals and manners," which centered on swearing, Sabbath observance, parish life, sex, alcohol, dress, music, dancing, art, plays, shows, and sports.[58]

Como further sees radical Puritanism as a natural evolution of inherent tendencies within the godly. Como, *Blown by the Spirit: Puritanism and the Emergency of an Antinomian Underground in Pre-Civil-War England* (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 2004), 13-24. Sarah Apetrei states, "Both antinomian and Behemist currents represent a 'spiritist,' or spiritualizing, tendency in English puritanism towards transcending structures in religion." Apetrei, *Women, Feminism, and Religion in Early Enlightenment England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 190. Thus, Radical Puritanism emerges out of mainstream Puritanism and comes into its own identity, but nonetheless had the same goal of Puritan Reformation. See Chapter 7.3.

[56] Como, *Blown by the Spirit*, 10.

[57] Ilana Krausman Ben-Amos, "'Good Works' and Social Ties: Helping the Migrant Poor in Early Modern England," in *Protestant Identities: Religion, Society, and Self-fashioning in Post-Reformation England,* ed. Muriel C. McClendon, Joseph P. Ward, and Michael MacDonald (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999), 134. Margo Todd has challenged this view, stating, "Countless puritan preachers exhorted their congregations to give generously to their unfortunate brethren." Todd, *Christian Humanism and the Puritan Social Order*, 158.

[58] See Michael Walzer, *The Revolution of the Saints: A Study in the Origins of Radical Politics* (New Haven: Harvard University Press, 1982); William Lamont, *Godly Rule: Politics and Religion, 1603-1660* (New York: Macmillan, 1969); Nuttall, *The Holy Spirit in Puritan Faith and Experience;* McGee, *The Godly Man in Stuart England*, 93-94; Bernard Bailyn, *New England Merchants in the Seventeenth Century* (New Haven: Harvard University Press, 1979); Lake, "Defining Puritanism—Again?," 3-29; Peter Ivan Kaufman, *Prayer, Despair, and Drama* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 5-7; Patrick Collinson, *The Religion of the Protestants: The Church in English Society, 1559-1625* (New York: Clarendon Press, 1982); Collinson, *The*

Another popular method in recent scholarship has been the attempt to define Puritanism by discussing particular Puritans, such as Richard Baxter, Thomas Shepard, William Prynne, Nehemiah Wallington, TheaurauJohn Tany, Lodowick Muggleton, doomsday poet Michael Wigglesworth, the Harleys, and the Mathers.[59] Still others have emphasized the role of "experiential piety" in their approach to Puritanism.[60]

As one can see, several abstract concepts have been proposed as a rationale for understanding Puritanism. Yet, as critics of the term point out, such concepts can equally be applied to other religious groups and often they are too narrow and exclude other groups, such as Separatists or Baptists;[61] how then can one apply them to Puritanism as defining characteristics? And if one loses the term altogether, as some historians would wish, would not a complex, vibrant religious culture be abandoned along with the term? Others argue that the terms cannot be defined and any attempt to do so would prove unfruitful. Ann Hughes opined, "We have learnt from Collinson, Lake, and Tyacke that Puritans cannot be neatly separated from the mass of English Protestants and counted."[62] Further, Hughes questions any method that would define Puritans "by a number of simple,

---

Elizabethan Puritan Movement (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967); and Austin Woolrych, *Britain in Revolution, 1625-1660* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 76; Capp, *England's Culture Wars:*.

[59] Spurr, *English Puritanism,* 3. See Paul C. H. Lim, *In Pursuit of Purity, Unity, and Liberty: Richard Baxter's Puritan Ecclesiology in Its Seventeenth-Century Context* (Leiden: Brill, 2004); Michael McGiffert, ed., *God's Plot: Puritan Spirituality in Thomas Shepard's Cambridge,* rev. and exp. (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1994); Lamont, *Godly Rule: Politics and Religion, 1603-1660* (New York: Macmillan, 1969); Paul S. Seaver, *Wallington's World: A Puritan Artisan in Seventeenth-Century London* (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 1988); Ariel Hessayon, *"Gold Tried in the Fire." The Prophet TheaurauJohn Tany and the English Revolution* (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 2007); T. L. Underwood, ed., *The Acts of the Witnesses: The Autobiography of Lodowick Muggleton and Other Early Muggletonian Writings* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999); Edmund S. Morgan, ed., *The Diary of Michael Wigglesworth, 1653-1657: The Conscience of a Puritan* (Gloucester: Peter Smith, 1970); Eales, *Puritans and Roundheads*; Robert Middlekauf, *The Mathers: Three Generations of Puritan Intellectuals, 1596-1728* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999)

[60] See Pieter de Vries, *"Die Mij Heft Liefgehad:" De Betekenis van de Gemeenschap Met Christus in de Theologie van John Owen, 1616-1683* (Heerenveen: Groen, 1999), 63. Trueman questions this last approach to Puritanism in *John Owen: Reformed Catholic, Renaissance Man*, 5. While the Puritans had a strong experiential element to their theology and church life, so too did other early modern Protestants; further, limiting one's definition primary to expressions of piety does not adequately address the relation of Puritanism to Reformed orthodoxy.

[61] It is nearly universally accepted that John Bunyan was a Puritan. However, by many historians' definitions, such as Paul Christianson's, Bunyan would be excluded being a Puritan. Timothy George suggests, alongside Collinson, that Separatists "advocated a totally alien, select Christian society," which is only partially true. There was, in fact, great harmony between so-called "Separatists" and their "Anglican-Puritan" counterparts both in their divinity and respect for biblical interpretation. Cf. George, *John Robinson and the English Separatist Tradition* (Macon: Mercer University Press, 2005), 242 (fn 7); and cp. Christopher Hill, "Bunyan's Contemporary Reputation," in *John Bunyan and His England, 1628-88*, ed. Anne Laurence, W. R. Owens, and Stuart Sim (London: Hambledon & London, 2003), 3-16; and Paul Christianson, "Reformers and the Church of England under Elizabeth I and the Early Stuarts," *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 31 (1970), 463-84. Christianson attempts to solve the problem of definitions by narrowly delimiting "Puritan" to those nonconformist Presbyterians who chose not to obey conforming bishops but refused to separate from the Church of England and accepted royal supremacy. The problem with this solution, however, is that it is too narrow to account for separating nonconformists reputed as Puritans, such as William Ames and Henry Ainsworth.

[62] Ann Hughes, *Politics, Society, and Civil War in Warwickshire, 1620-1660* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 66.

formal tests" since the historical facts are too complicated for that.[63] Still, such attempts have been made and are so numerous that John H. Primus has suggested, "Some day, no doubt, an entire dissertation will be devoted to the history of the efforts to define Puritanism."[64] Indeed, Collinson commented that a "secondary academic industry has arisen, devoted to the search for an acceptable definition."[65] Michael Finlayson has observed that while many opinions have been postulated as to the defining feature of Puritanism, there still lacks a consensus.[66] Lawrence A. Sasek wrote, "Nearly everyone agrees that there were puritans and that there was a puritan movement in England between 1560 and at least 1640, but just who were puritans and who were not, or what tenets or practices were central to the movement, seems impossible to determine with any precision;"[67] and, finally, as Kenneth L. Campbell astutely pointed out, "[understanding Puritanism] brings us right back to the thorny problem of religious identity."[68] In other words, what *distinguishes* a Puritan from the rest of the early modern Post-Reformation world?

This industry of defining Puritans will continue to produce mixed results as long as it focuses on one element as preeminent or superior to another. What is needed is a holistic, as opposed to an atomistic, approach that incorporates insights from multiple fields and arrives at core sets of values or expressions or clusters of concepts, that, when woven together within an early modern English religious context, form what we call "English Puritanism;" in other words, one needs to consider the whole *in relation to* its parts. This proposal is similar in concept to both Wittgenstein's theory of *Familienähnlichkeit*, and Norbert Elias's concept of "configuration." For Wittgenstein, there was what may be called *synchronic* family resemblance in similar and overlapping concepts, but where one defining feature does not exist; as members of a particular family share resemblance to one another, and have common features identical to them all (*unitas*), they are nonetheless distinct persons (*diversitas*). For Elias, the concept of "configuration" emphasizes that individuals must not be seen as existing in isolation from the society to which they belong; nor, conversely, as a society to which there was no individuality (*unitas in diversitate*).[69]

Further, one must consider the changing nature of early modern English Puritanism; that is, that the Puritanism of the 1560s was not exactly that of the 1640s, since Puritanism was a protean, evolving movement, that adapted to the times in which it flourished. Nonetheless, the evidence is highly suggestive of a normative tradition which

---

[63] Hughes, *Politics, Society, and Civil War in Warwickshire*, 65-66.

[64] John H. Primus, *Richard Greenham: Portrait of an Elizabethan Pastor* (Macon: Mercer University Press, 1998), 12.

[65] Patrick Collinson, *English Puritanism*, rev. ed. (London: Historical Association, 1987), 6.

[66] Michael G. Finlayson, *Historians, Puritanism, and the English Revolution: The Religious Factor in English Politics Before and After the Interregnum* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1983), 165.

[67] Sasek, *Images of Puritanism*, 1.

[68] Campbell, *Windows into Men's Souls*, 13.

[69] See Michael Forster, "Wittgenstein on Family Resemblance Concepts," in *Wittgenstein's Philosophical Investigations: A Critical Guide*, ed. Arif Ahmed (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 66-87. For Elias's concept of "configuration," see Elias, *The Society of Individuals* (New York: Continuum, 1991). While it is beyond the scope of this work to engage in ongoing debates within sociology, it is, perhaps, sufficient to note that Elias's work is important in that it emphasizes human relationships in the construction of a society with its own distinctiveness.

can be traced to the mid-sixteenth century, if not earlier, and which came to maturation in the middle of the seventeenth. Therefore, my working hypothesis is that what is needed is a metanarrative for understanding this sixteenth and seventeenth-century English religious phenomena. Moreover, due consideration has to be given to the fact that the terms "Puritan" and "Puritanism" changed over its long history; so, while "Puritan" initially arose within an Anglican context by the time of the English Revolution, "Puritan" had a much more eclectic meaning and was broadened to incorporate many of the more radical sects of the period, such as the Muggletonians, whose architect had strong ties to Puritanism, but nonetheless moved beyond it.[70] Yet, even within this increasing *diversitas*, arguably there was a main line, or "mainstream," Puritanism, as expressed in the meetings of "the godly" who sat at Westminster Abbey, from 1643-1652, and which was preached and published since its earliest origins.[71] While Parliament admonished the assembly to consider theology as a tertiary consideration, their chief concern being ecclesiastical government, it is telling that majority of their time was caught up with producing a doctrinal consensus, thus confirming the urgency of establishing and codifying a theological identity within Puritanism.[72] These meetings at Westminster produced several confessional documents and catechisms, which set forth a highly unified system of theoretical and practical divinity, and which became the basis for assessing the bounds of English-Puritan Reformed orthodoxy.[73] Sydney E. Ahlstrom observed this point when he said, "Though looking back with thanksgiving to the great confessions of the Reformation era, the Puritans also entered into the making of new confessions with thoroughness and

---

[70] William M. Lamont, *Last Witness: The Muggletonian History, 1652-1979* (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 2006), 19; Lamont, *Puritanism and Historical Controversy,* 27-40.

[71] The "Westminster Assembly," which derives its name from the historic church where these meetings were held, consisted of 121 Puritan divines, lay assessors, and Scottish delegates, who were charged by the Long Parliament, who was then in open conflict with Charles I, to come up with proposals for the reform of the English Church. The divines at Westminster sought to codify what was seen as the mainline tradition within Puritanism, but also allowing for variance on matters of church order and polity. The theological harmony among its members, between Presbyterians and Independents, and those dissenting Baptists within London is attested to by Laurence Clarkson, the alleged founder of the Ranters, who, in his own religious journey, went from the zealous Presbyterians, being "tormented [in] soul, [by reading a book by Thomas Hooker] that I thought it unpossible to be saved," to the Independents, whose, "greatest difference betwixt them, was about baptizing of infants," to the doctrine of "one Doctor *Crisp*…[who] held forth against all the aforesaid Churches, That let his people be in society or no, though walked all alone, yet if he believed that Christ Jesus died for him, God beheld no iniquity in him." From here he moved onto the more radical "higher and clearer" teachings of Giles Randall and John Simpson, "which was then called *Antinomians*," and then onward from there. Clarkson, *The Lost Sheep Found; Or, The Prodigal Returned to His Fathers House, after Many a Sad and Weary Journey Through Many Religious Countreys* (London, 1660), 8-10. In his *Radical Religion in Cromwell's England*, Andrew Bradstock remarks on the fluidity of the radical sects of the English Revolution, which is seen in "the ease with which people moved from one to another." This itself is suggestive of some degree of *unitas* with the normative tradition, as, presumably, radical departures or conversions would be less "fluid." Bradstock, *Radical Religion in Cromwell's England: A Concise History from the English Civil War to the End of the Commonwealth* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2011), xix.

[72] John Coffey, "A Ticklish Business: Defining Heresy and Orthodoxy in the Puritan Revolution," in *Heresy, Literature and Politics in Early Modern English* Culture, ed. David Loewenstein and John Marshall (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 114.

[73] Indeed, as Chad van Dixhoorn has stated of the period in which the divines sat at Westminster: "It was an hour of glory for the puritan experiment." Van Dixhoorn, ed., *The Minutes and Papers of the Westminster Assembly, 1643-1652, Vol. 1: Introduction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 81.

vigor. In Britain, as it happened, their thinking seemed to lead almost inexorably to the doctrinal views so carefully articulated in the Westminster standards and their derivative symbols…Puritanism, in short, is generally marked by careful thought; it is an intellectual tradition of great profundity."[74] Seeing Puritans as generally "Reformed" is not new; A. G. Dickens posited this idea in his *The English Reformation*.[75] Confusion as to the terms has arisen, in part, because English sectaries were often accustomed to use "Puritan" to describe themselves, though they had sometimes self-consciously departed significantly from its orthodox consensus.[76]

Before we turn to the methodology and structure of this book, let us first look at the origins of the words "Puritan" and "Puritanism," since they are suggestive not only of something that was perceived as a distinct strain within the English Church, as far back as the 1560s, but also of a growing theological identity and consensus that came to be associated with their use.

Jacqueline Eales stated that part of the difficulty in defining Puritanism stems from the fact that when contemporaries used the term they did not always agree on what they meant by it, which is further complicated in that as often as the term had any static presence for a short time, it soon evolved with new meaning and nuance.[77] Nonetheless, historians have found artful, if not brilliant, ways to qualify its use or present alternatives. Margo Todd, for instance, opines, "The historian who talks about the likes of Laurence Humphrey and John Rainolds as 'advanced protestants' need not disturb us. We know what he means by the term because we know of whom he speaks: a puritan by any other name is still a puritan." Todd makes this observation because, when assessing the beginnings of the terms of abuse, "The people who called themselves 'the godly,' 'professors,' and even 'saints' and were called 'puritans' by their foes, were a sufficiently self-conscious and popularly identifiable group in their own day to deserve a name, and the traditional 'puritan' seems as good as any."[78] Before Todd, Leonard J. Trinterud made

---

[74] Sydney E. Ahlstrom, *A Religious History of the American People*, 2nd ed. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), 130.

[75] A. G. Dickens, *The English Reformation*, 2nd ed. (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1989), 367-77.

[76] This self-conscious moving away from orthodox Puritanism can be seen throughout Lodowick Muggleton's (1609-1698) posthumous autobiography, *The Acts of the Witnesses* (1699). In the text, Muggleton recounts his youthful embrace of the zealous "Puritan religion and practice," which had such a great impression on him that he chose only to hear the preaching of the "*Puritan* ministers." However, over time, many of his Puritan acquaintances, having "no Comfort nor Peace of Mind, as to a Life to Come," became disenfranchised with the Puritan way, and "left that Zeal, and turned Ranters" (possible reference to his cousin John Reeve, who began as a Puritan but turned Ranter). Sometime later, after himself becoming dissatisfied with Puritanism, Muggleton moved beyond its confessional mores and chose "not to mind any Religion more…and if there were anything, either of Happiness or Misery after Death, I left it to God, which I knew not, to do what he would with me." But at times, however, his fears of hell and damnation would resurface, "as it did formerly, when [I was] a *Puritan.*" T. L. Underwood, *The Acts of the Witnesses: The Autobiography of Lodowick Muggleton and Other Early Muggletonian Writings* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 35, 38, 43; cf. William Lamont, "Muggleton, Lodowicke," *ODNB;* Lamont, *Puritanism and Historical Controversy*, 27-40.

[77] Eales, *Puritans and Roundheads*, 12.

[78] Margo Todd, *Christian Humanism and the Puritan Social Order* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 9.

this astute observation: "There was something odd about the Puritans. On that, everyone seems to have been in agreement for the last four hundred years."[79]

As just stated, the terms "Puritan" and "Puritanism" first arose as pejorative terms sometime during the 1560s.[80] Their first printed use dates to the 1572 publication of the anonymous *Admonition to Parliament,* a text Patrick Collinson describes as "public polemic in the guise of an address to Parliament."[81] The *Admonition* appeared at a time "when those English ministers hoping for further reform, especially in the matters of the Prayer Book and ceremonies, were frustrated by the queen's suppression of parliamentary appeals that dealt with the topics of religion."[82] Those who sought further reform were styled "Puritanes, worse than Donatistes," and were considered too radical in their reforms; thus ensued a conflict over Puritanism and its ramifications for the English church. [83] The authors of the *Admonition* were soon discovered and sentenced to prison in order to suppress their voices; however, as Marcy L. North observes, they defended their publication by stating that in Parliament there "should be a time of speaking and writing freely," presumably so that various ideas could be expressed without fear of reprisal.[84] Further, their anonymity, says North, suggest that political and religious freedom was not yet possible for these early Puritans, and that attempts for further reform would be suppressed and censored.[85] Thus, the *Admonition* initiated an early modern academic warfare over Puritanism that spawned numerous anonymous texts.[86] This is known as the first "Puritan" controversy and moved historians initially to define Puritanism in its negative relation to the more ceremonial Anglicanism in that it was a clash of motives, interests, and desires.[87] Responding to personal charges of favoritism to "Puritans," Gabriel Harvey, "the noted Puritan man of letters," wrote of "Puritanism" or "Precisianism" in one of his letters, dated 1573; it appears to be the first recorded use of the term.[88] By the end of Elizabeth's reign in 1603, the name "Precisians" and "Puritans" was a common choice of slander to describe overly zealous Protestants who were thought to be too precise in their beliefs or in the way they lived.[89] Thus, even from its inception, there was an irrevocable

---

[79] Leonard J. Trinterud, ed., *Elizabethan Puritanism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971), 1. Trinterud goes on to distinguish between various phases within Elizabethan Puritanism: the "original, anti-vestment party;" the "passive-resistance party," and the "Presbyterian party."

[80] For a history of the pejorative use of "Puritan," see Holden, *Anti-Puritan Satire*.

[81] Collinson, *Elizabethan Puritan Movement*, 118. Cited in Marcy L. North, *The Anonymous Renaissance: Cultures of Discretion in Tudor-Stuart England* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2003), 134.

[82] North, *The Anonymous Renaissance*, 134.

[83] John Field and Thomas Wilcox, *Admonition to Parliament* (1572), 2. The texts of their *Admonition* can be found in W. H. Frere and C. E. Douglas, eds., *Puritan Manifestoes* (London, 1954), 8-19; and Hans J. Hillerbrand, ed., *The Protestant Reformation* (New York: Harper, 1968), 257-66.

[84] North, *The Anonymous Renaissance*, 134.

[85] North, *The Anonymous Renaissance*, 134.

[86] For the historical circumstances surrounding the *Admonition*, see North, *Anonymous Renaissance,* 134-158.

[87] For appraisals of Puritanism as anti-Anglican, see Haller, *Rise of Puritanism*; and J. F. H. New, *Anglican and Puritan: The Basis of Their Opposition, 1558-1640* (London: A. and C. Black, 1964). See also Patrick Collinson, *Richard Bancroft and Anti-Puritanism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 60-82.

[88] Victor Houliston, *Catholic Resistance in Elizabethan England: Robert Person's Jesuit Polemic, 1580-1610* (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 2007), 44; Gabriel Harvey, *Letter-Book of Gabriel Harvey, 1573-1580,* ed. Edward John Long Scott (London: Printed for the Camden Society, 1884), 30.

[89] Underdown, *Fire from Heaven*, 20.

tie between *dogma* and *praxis*. Based on certain doctrinal formulations and understandings, these "Puritans" deduced or inferred that the mainstay of the English Church was sorely wanting, not only in how its members chose to live and conduct their business, but in the way they thought about God and his majesty, and the broad implications this reverence had for perceiving doctrine, conducting worship services, observing the Sabbath, guarding one's mouth, giving to the poor, dying well, cultivating a robust devotional life in public and private society, and many other "planks in the puritan platform."[90]

By the dawn of the seventeenth century, the terms "Puritan," "Puritanism," and "Precisianism" were nearly synonymous terms of reproach. Thus, in a bit of irony, the "theological father" of English Puritanism,"[91] William Perkins, reputed as the most influential Cambridge theologian, moralist, and casuist of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century, disregard "Puritan" as a contemptuous term.[92] Those who were styled as "Puritans" generally despised its use because, as with Perkins, they often associated with the medieval Cathari.[93] They preferred more neutral and apropos terms, such as "the godly" or "saints." It was not until the early to mid-seventeenth century that "Puritan" would be "owned and acknowledged…as an honorable flag under which to sail—'the good old English Puritans.'"[94] John Geree's depiction of the Puritan in his oft-printed tract, *The Character of an Old English Puritan, or Nonconformist* (1646) was indeed one of the first positive portrayals in early modern England, though there were those even before Geree who struggled over its representation.[95] In 1626, the word was still disparaged, evidenced

---

[90] This latter phrase, which pervades current literature, and popularized by Collinson, seems to have its origins in the nineteenth century. Cp. Collinson, *The Elizabethan Puritan Movement,* 44; Collinson, *From Cranmer to Sancroft,* 136; with *Eighty-Fifth Anniversary Celebration of the New England Society in the City of New York* (1890), 39.

[91] Martin, *Milton among the Puritans*, 107. Current literature has made elaborate, albeit justifiable, claims about Perkins: "puritan father of British practical divinity;" "a major English Puritan spokesman;" "the father of Pietism" (which competes, perhaps, with William Teellinck's designation "father of Continental Pietism"); "father of British reformed casuistry;" "archetypal puritan;" among many, many others. James F. Keenan, S. J., "Jesuit Casuistry or Jesuit Spirituality? The Roots of Seventeenth-Century British Practical Divinity," in *The Jesuits: Cultures, Sciences, and the Arts, 1540-1773, Vol. 1* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000), 627; Alden T. Vaughan and Edward W. Clark, eds., *Puritans among the Indians: Accounts of Captivity and Redemption, 1676-1724* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1981), 186 (fn. 29); Damrau, *The Reception of English Puritan Literature in Germany*, 110; Christopher P. Vogt, *Patience, Compassion, Hope, and the Christian Art of Dying Well* (Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield, 2004), 25; Milton, *Catholic and Reformed*, 13.

[92] William Perkins, *The Workes of That Famous and Worthy Minister of Christ in the University of Cambridge, Mr. William Perkins* (Cambridge: Printed by Cantrell Legge, 1616-1618), 1:342, 3:15.

[93] Joel R. Beeke, *Assurance of Faith: Calvin, English Puritanism, and the Dutch Second Reformation* (New York: Peter Lang, 1991), 106; James Calvin Davis, *The Moral Theology of Roger Williams: Christian Conviction and Public Ethics* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2004), 72. On sixteenth-century attempts to equate "Puritan" to the medieval "Cathari," see Richard L. Greaves, *Society and Religion in Elizabethan England* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1981), 7-8; and on James Ussher's use of "Cathari," see Alan Ford, *James Ussher: Theology, History, and Politics in Early Modern England* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 75.

[94] Patrick Collinson, *Elizabethan Essays* (New York: Continuum Publishing, 1994), 236.

[95] Andrew McRae, *Literature, Satire, and the Early Stuart State* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 172. Michael R. Watts, referring to Geree's tract, has simplistically stated, "Historians have agonized over the meaning of the term 'Puritan' but there is really little need. A brief but comprehensive description was given in the seventeenth century by the Presbyterian minister John Geree." Watts, *The*

in Francis Rous's comment that "In the Devil's language, a Saint is a Puritan."[96] What happened between Perkins and Geree to account for this shift? This question is not easily answered, but undoubtedly it has something to do with changing perceptions within early Stuart religion and culture, which indicates that the times were changing.[97] One possible explanation is implied in Rous's complaint before the Short Parliament that "The word Puritan is an essential engine…For this word in the mouth of a drunkard doth mean a sober man, in the mouth of an Arminian, an orthodox man, in the mouth of a Papist, a Protestant. And so it is spoke to shame a man out of all religion." Thus J. P. Kenyon states: "The most serious complaint in 1640 was that the word 'Puritan' was being used by the enemies of Protestants to libel its defenders—the effect being to enhance the prestige of 'Puritanism' and enlist on its side a great deal of bi-partisan support which was not basically 'Puritan' at all."[98] It is possible, perhaps probable, that the association of "Puritan" with "anti-Catholic" in the 1630s-1640s was partially responsible for its switch from derision to banderole. Whatever the cause for this change, it is certain that the religion of the "Puritans" was a clearly identifiable strain within English Protestantism, which gave rise to the slander in the first place; and while their religion changed and evolved with the times, it did not lose its characteristics or identifiably. This perception is attested not only in Neal and Brook's histories, but also in the continued use, even if only reluctant, by the majority of scholars currently working in this field.

The early use and changing perceptions of "Puritan" and "Puritanism" only provide hints as to the full nature of its complexity. Sir Matthew Hale, a prominent seventeenth-century jurist, shared definite Puritan sympathies, seeing "religious feeling where others saw 'enthusiasts' and knaves, their cloak of irrationalist folly concealing seditious intent."[99]

Dissenters: From the Reformation to the French Revolution (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 15. Before Geree, John Downame published the anonymous *A New Anatomie; Or, Character of a Christian, or Round-head* (1645), which depicts the Puritan "in his most noble right temper," against the "unjust censures" of "this blind World," as one who journeys through this worldly wilderness towards heaven, being "Heavens Darling, Earths Paragon, the Worlds onely wonder…[and who is] is justly said to be the wonder of God himself."

[96] Francis Rous, *The Onely Remedy* (London, 1627), 162.

[97] See David Scott Kastan, "Performances and Playbooks: the Closing of the Theatres and the Politics of Drama," in *Reading, Society and Politics in Early Modern England*, ed. Kevin Sharpe and Steven N. Zwicker (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 167-184; Tyacke, *Aspects of English Protestantism*, 132-175; Milton, *Catholic and Reformed*, 10-30; David Cressy, *Agnes Bowker's Cat: Travesties and Transgressions in Tudor and Stuart England* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 234-250; and Ian Atherton and Julie Sanders, "Introducing the 1630s: Questions of Parliaments, Peace and Pressure Points," in *The 1630s: Interdisciplinary Essays on Culture and Politics in the Caroline Era*, ed. Ian Atherton and Julie Sanders (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2006), 1-27.

[98] J. P. Kenyon, *The Stuart Constitution*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 177.

[99] Alan Cromartie, *Sir Matthew Hale, 1609-1676: Law, Religion, and Natural Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 139. Charles M. Gray calls Hale a "psychological" Puritan but not a "programmatic" one. Holly Brewer, however, calls Hale a Puritan throughout his life, if for no other reason than that he dressed like one and refused to enforce laws against them. Cp. Sir Matthew Hale, *The History of the Common Law of England*, ed. Charles M. Gray (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1971), xvi; with Holly Brewer, *By Birth or Consent: Children, Law, and the Anglo-American Revolution in Authority* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005), 176-77. It is noteworthy to add that Gisbertus Voetius, one of the leading Dutch theologians of the *Nadere Reformatie*, opposed both luxury in dress and long hair on men; he also fought against dancing and "the new habit" of smoking tobacco, thus echoing general Puritan disdain

The seeming "obfuscating nature" of Puritanism since the seventeenth century has contributed to the problem of its definition.[100]

What is suggested as a possible solution to the definitions problem is a metanarrative that perceives its constitutive parts in relation to its whole: to what degree were Puritans *united* together in a common motif, even amid their plurality of expressions? Is the motive of further reform (or, of a "hotter-sort" of temperament) adequate as a predominant unifying theme to signify something of a *Puritan* style? To what degree do these unities express a common bond or brotherhood? What were its theological continuities with Reformed Protestantism? What was unique about its particular expression of spirituality?

Numerous historians have recognized Puritanism's appeal throughout early modern England, spreading like wildfire among English towns and localities, but what was it about *Puritanism* that made it so appealing in the first place?[101] Further, can one devise a definition that is both nuanced and expansive, allowing for such diverse Puritans as John Downame, Francis Rous, and Tobias Crisp (and Baxter and John Goodwin), to co-exist on a continuum of English Puritan "identity?" Moreover, what did it means for English Puritans to be English *and* Reformed?[102]

1.2 Methodology, Hypothesis, and Structure

This study seeks to shed insight into what unites and defines orthodox Stuart Puritans, but more work will need to be done to explore facets of Elizabethan Puritanism (c.1558-1603), and the later decline of Puritanism after the close of the Stuart age (c.1714-1758). Thus, this study is broadly confined to Stuart Puritanism (c. 1603-1689), but its working hypothesis may have broad implications for the other eras of Puritanism.

---

for public and social vices. Kaspar von Greyerz, *Religion and Culture in Early Modern Europe, 1500-1800* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 82.

[100] Lim, *In Pursuit of Purity, Unity, and Liberty,* 7.

[101] For the urban popularity of English Puritanism, see Robert Tittler, *English Urban Experience, 1540-1640* (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 2001), 1-38; Peter Lake, "Puritans, Popularity and Petitions: Local Politics in National Context, Cheshire, 1641," in *Politics, Religion and Popularity: Essays in Honor of Conrad Russell*, ed. Thomas Cogswell, Richard Cust, and Peter Lake (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 259-289; Patrick Collinson, "Elizabethan and Jacobean Puritanism as Forms of Popular Religious Culture," in *Culture of English Puritanism*, 32-57; Vanessa Harding, "Reformation and culture, 1540-1700," in *The Cambridge Urban History of Britain, 1540-1840*, ed. Peter Clark (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 263-288.

[102] Tom Webster allows for a "recast Arminianism," epitomized in John Goodwin, to coincide with Puritan orthodoxy. See Webster, *Godly Clergy*, 147. Both John Spurr and John Coffey affirm Webster's thesis. For Coffey, John Goodwin helps scholars to understand the evolution of English Puritanism in the seventeenth century; for Spurr, men like John Milton and John Goodwin reaffirm the existence of Arminians who were "undoubtedly puritan." Ellen More is more cautious and states that Goodwin's "theology is more difficult to locate…[it] looked back to the Puritanism of the 1620s and forward to the rational theology of the post-Restoration era." Cf. Coffey, *John Goodwin and the Puritan Revolution*, 10; Spurr, *English Puritanism, 1603-1689*, 68; Ellen More, "John Goodwin and the Origins of the New Arminianism," *Journal of British Studies,* Vol. 33, No. 1 (Autumn, 1982), 70. Alan Cromartie devotes a whole chapter to Sir Matthew Hale's "puritanism" in *Sir Matthew Hale*, 139-155.

While Puritan origins precede the year 1558, are closely tied to the Marian exiles and their networking in Geneva, and could possibly be traced to Lollardy, for the purposes of our study it is best to assess Puritanism in its mature expression and age of codification.[103] Thus, the dates are broadly confined to 1603/4-1689/90 or from the coronation of James I to the English throne (1604 being the year in which the first edition of Downame's *Christian Warfare* was issued) to the Glorious Revolution (1690 being the year Crisp's *Christ Alone Exalted* was reissued in its definitive and controversial edition).

Seventeenth-century Puritanism in its mainline consensus and context of debate from the time of the calling of the Westminster Assembly to the Great Ejection obligates certain theological issues and boundaries, and that, arguably, in its mainstream expression can be identified as one form of a broadly defined Reformed orthodoxy. It is also necessary to limit this discussion to theological identity, since during this time "Puritanism" as a non-Anglican or ceremonial religious phenomenon was the dominant religious movement, albeit diverse, within England. Further, it is the time in which Downame, Rous, and Crisp published and engaged in advancing the Puritan Reformation. Although none of these authors wrote systematic works of theology, they nonetheless were acquainted with orthodox structure and boundaries, which itself contributed to "the specter of heresy." Changing perceptions and perceived threats to the consensus were taken seriously, even if handled in oft-contradictory ways.[104]

---

[103] Coffey and Lim, among others, trace the beginnings of Puritanism to 1564 or thereabouts. As muddied as its origins are so with its ending. The Stuart monarchy ended in 1714, and Thomas Kidd places the decline of Puritanism from 1689, tying it to the "Glorious Revolution" which instigated more "Protestant identities." These dates are somewhat arbitrary in that they do not account for the strong Puritan dynasties within New England (e.g. the Mathers), nor Jonathan Edwards's own affinity with it. In *The Idea of Progress in the Eighteenth Century* (1990), David Spadafora credits Puritanism's demise to changing perceptions in religion and its perceived excesses. There were, of course, many factors that led to the disenfranchising of Puritanism and are beyond the scope of this study. Coffey and Lim, "Introduction," 1; Thomas S. Kidd, *The Protestant Interest: New England After Puritanism* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), 2; Robert C. Neville, *The Puritan Smile: A Look Toward Moral Reflection* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1987), 17; David Spadafora, *The Idea of Progress in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990), 98-99.

[104] Early modern English heresy culture was as complex and varied as its orthodoxy, and one cannot minimize the impact of rhetoric and misrepresentation on how heresy was often portrayed and classified. See, for instance, the work of David D. Loewenstein, and specifically his *Treacherous Faith: The Specter of Heresy in Early Modern English Literature and Culture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013); and Loewenstein and John Marshall, eds., *Heresy, Literature and Politics in Early Modern English Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009). It should be noted that "heretics" and "heresies" are classifications made by opposing parties; those who were branded as such did not see themselves espousing heresy, and undoubtedly believed themselves to be "orthodox" in some sense of the term. Indeed, Loewenstein has stated that "in the climate of extreme religious divisiveness, such accusatory terms as 'error' and 'heresy' had…enormous rhetorical power" in that they could induce fears of all kinds, thus "fueling ferocious opposition to religious toleration in any kind or degree" (Loewenstein, *Treacherous Faith*, 224). Finally, a distinction could be made between "heresy" and "blasphemy" in that the latter was seen as a more willful and vile attack on the object of Christian religion, and often resulted in severe punishment, and even, at times, public execution. See John Marshall, *John Locke, Toleration, and Early Enlightenment Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 212ff; and Michael Hunter, "'Aikenhead the Atheist:' The Context and Consequences of Articulate Irreligion in the Late Seventeenth Century," in *Atheism from the Reformation to the Enlightenment* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 221-54.

The method of this study is to examine three carefully chosen case studies to inquire whether there were common theological interests and confessional sensibilities that may be found within Stuart Puritanism, and especially within writers who did not write a system of divinity akin to that of William Ames's *Medulla* or Edward Leigh's *A Systeme or Body of Divinity*, which may justify use of the term "English Puritanism" in the singular; that is, to see whether a greater movement or narrative united these English Reformed Protestants during this central period and core country of development. I have focused chiefly on theological identity, in order to assess whether there is a *sensus unitatis* across a diverse spectrum of confessionally minded Puritans.[105] The themes examined in these case studies are representative of a theological focus, are characteristic of Puritans understood as "Reformed," and appear within writers who wrote within different genres of literature. It is suggested that there is significant theological harmony across a wide spectrum of beliefs and "strains" within Puritanism, which will, in turn, warrant further studies and more investigation.[106] The presence of these themes within pietistic writings of Puritans is further suggestive of a *unitas in diversitate*.

This study will draw from the published sources of Puritans John Downame, Francis Rous, and Tobias Crisp.[107] Much of this corpus consists of sermons revised for

---

[105] Wim Janse has observed that "The late sixteenth and seventeenth century European churches were confessional churches: they stuck to a creed or confession as an internal and external norm and 'party statute,' and monopolized their world view." Janse, "Church Unity, Territorialism, and State Formation in the Era of Confessionalization," in *Unity of the Church: A Theological State of Art and Beyond*, ed. Eduardus Van der Borght (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 33. The same is true of the Reformed and Puritan parishes within Britain, evidenced not only in the doctrinal statements of their divines, and their confessional mores, but also in the precise way in which Puritans developed a distinctively experiential divinity which instructed Puritans how to live and worship.

[106] On picking which themes within Puritanism to study, Patrick Collinson advised, "If we share with contemporaries a sense of Puritanism which is at once polemical and nominalistic, then far from circumscribing its meaning we should regard the incidence of the term in contemporary discourse as indicative of theological, moral, and social tensions which should be the prime object of our investigations, especially if we wish to understand what followed, in the 1640s and beyond." Collinson, "A Comment: Concerning the Name Puritan," *Journal of Ecclesiastical History, Vol. 32, No. 4* (October, 1980): 488. Further, Perry Miller was correct that "ideas and purposes shaped the course of events. Human beings could not move without a thought in their heads…and those men and women that moved others did so with well articulated thoughts." Joyce Appleby, Lynn Hunt, and Margaret Jacob, *Telling the Truth about History* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1994), 143. This work is an attempt to study the theological identity of three diverse Puritans, from which their moral and social understandings flowed; indeed, as Thomas Shepard wrote, "the knowledge of Divinity" was necessary to clear the way for a genuine conversion and life of piety. Shepard, *The Sincere Convert* (London, 1640), sig. A7r.

[107] In this book I do not attempt to prove that Downame, Rous, and Crisp were Puritans. That they are "common consent" Puritans is well established in current academic literature. While seventeenth-century classifications are sparse, major influences on current scholarly consensus stems from their association with the Westminster Assembly, some comments in Wood's *Athenae Oxonienses* (1691-1692), Daniel Neal's *The History of the Puritans* (1732-1738), and Brook's *Lives of the Puritans* (1813), the two latter classifying Downame and Crisp as Puritan divines, but nowhere mentioning Rous (possibly because Rous was never ordained). However, Edmund Calamy lists Rous among the Puritans in his *Abridgement of Mr. Baxter's History of His Life and Times* (London, 1702), 83. It is interesting that in response to criticisms of his *History of the Puritans*, Neal published a response in which he clarified, "My Design in writing the *History of the Puritans*, was not to defend *their* Doctrine or Discipline, but to set their Principles in a fair Light, with their own Arguments in defence of them…Have not the Papists published the History of their Sufferings by the *English* Reformers? And Dr. *Heylin*, *Fuller,* Bishop *Burnet, Collier, Strype*…all Clergymen of the Church of

print. It will also draw, in part, from other Protestant and Reformed writers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, such as Martin Luther, Philip Melanchthon, John Calvin, William Perkins, Richard Greenham, Edward Dering, James Ussher, William Ames, Stephen Charnock, William Gouge, Andrew Willet, Thomas Edwards, John Howe, Edward Leigh, John Preston, Samuel Rutherford, John Eaton, John Saltmarsh, Henry Vane, Samuel Willard, and Thomas Hooker. By ascertaining what sources were read and disseminated, and which ones were censored and suppressed one can possibly discern the major influences in one's thought, however with some hesitancies.[108] It will also consider, to a limited extent, various political, social, cultural, economic, literary and religious spheres pertaining to English Puritanism. It will map Downame, Rous, and Crisp into their unique historical and religious contexts and suggest ways in which they influenced the forming of an English Puritan identity.

The English Puritans did not exist in a vacuum; they inherited a varied and complex religious culture, were receptive of a codified system of ideas that was shaped by countless heresies and heterodoxies dating to the early Christian church. As with Calvin, the Puritans received, used, and transmitted theological ideas, which, in turn they accepted, modified, or rejected. Their heritage was distinct enough to be their own, but it was never *only* their own; it was a *shared* expression of ideas that formed a unique cluster and style of divinity and piety, such as "plain style" preaching, experimental predestinarianism, Sabbath observance, and heavy stress on family worship.[109] This study, therefore, does not envision Puritanism as an isolated phenomenon but as a contextual movement that received and expressed attitudes and ideas that united Puritans, even

---

England…Why then should it be criminal for the Puritans…to tell their Story?" Neal, *A Review of the Principal Facts Objected to the First Volume of The History of the Puritans* (London, 1734), 1, 4.

Further, on Downame, it is telling that in 1645 he published an anonymous "character tract" called *A New Anatomie, or Character of a Christian, or Round-head*. Typical of positive "Puritan" character literature, this short work sets out to defend the Christian-Round-head-Puritan as one who is a pilgrim travelling through this world onto his heavenly home, depicted much in the same way "Christian" is in John Bunyan's later *Pilgrim's Progress*. The tract concludes: "Thus a right Puritan or Round-head is in his most noble right temper…and let my Round-head be thus beautified, and let mee live his life, whatsoever his death may be, and I dare venture my Eternity with his."

[108] For a detailed study of the reading habits of early modern England, see Alec Ryrie, *Being Protestant in Reformation Britain* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 259-97; Kevin Sharpe, *Reading Revolutions: The Politics of Reading in Early Modern England* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000). On press censorship, see Debora Shuger, *Censorship and Cultural Sensibility: The Regulation of Language in Tudor-Stuart England* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006), ch. 1; and David Cressy, *England on Edge: Crisis and Revolution, 1640-1642* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 281-309. The phenomenal cross-fertilization that occurred between England and the Continent can be seen in the libraries of early modern English readers. See, for instance, Peter Clark, "The Ownership of Books in England, 1560-1640: The Example of Some Kentish Townsfolk," in *Schooling and Society*, ed. Lawrence Stone (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976), 95-111.

[109] Lake, *Boxmaker's Revenge*, 33. Historians have often referred to Puritan "plain-style" preaching or "naked" church architecture that elevated the role of the minister and the centrality of the preached Word. While the culture of "plain style" (as Puritans termed it) was not exclusive to the Puritan tradition, it did stand in contrast to other more florid forms of rhetorical expression, and did not suggest simplicity in content but "a simple, direct regard for the truth of their beliefs." Lim, *In Pursuit of Purity, Unity, and Liberty*, 41; Bruce C. Daniels, *Puritans at Play: Leisure and Recreation in Colonial New England* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 1995), 32-34; and Stephanie Sleeper, "Plain Style," in *Puritans and Puritanism in Europe and America,* ed. Francis J. Bremer and Tom Webster (Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2006), 2:479-480.

amid significant diversity. This unity is suggested in their common ancestry with early Reformed Protestantism and their identities as Reformed Catholic Christians. Bound by a rather robust and diverse covenant theology, these Protestants engaged in sober worship that emphasized "hot-tempered" spirituality and the Bible's centrality. As such, these unities will be explored in the life and writings of John Downame, Francis Rous, and Tobias Crisp.

The precise ways in which these ideas were disseminated are equally complex, and involve the selective use of fiction, church architecture (including the use of the hour glass, which often was turned two or three times during the course of a sermon), propaganda, and education, as well as the more traditional venues of the sacraments, the preaching of the Word, and the codification of Protestant scholasticism; the imaginative world of the Reformation thus carried over to the post-Reformation era. What emerges is a remarkably diverse and complicated English religious culture that was formed by trans-Atlantic, trans-insular, and trans-continental influences encompassed in a variety of social networks and cross-fertilizations. This complex network is seen not only in the rich diversity of writings published in the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries but in the communion of saints and academic pursuits that the divines shared, even in their pursuits to be educated abroad, often traveling great distances to the Netherlands or to other parts of the Continent, to be fully trained in proper method.

Some divines, such as John Bunyan and Richard Baxter, were largely self-taught, something that would not have been possible without a robust English printing system that made books readily available and affordable. What used to be the sole prerogative of an English medieval clergy (i.e. ownership of books) became a prominent characteristic of the Puritan thinking class; further, arguably, the most prominent diversities within English Puritanism were at its highest during times of no censure, when presses overflowed with orthodox and heterodox, even heretical, drift during the apex of the English Revolution. By ascertaining what sources of literature were available to whom and when, the picture just mentioned moves from the suggestive to the more definitive; that is, the *British* or multi-ethnic quality of Puritanism's bloodlines become evident. This study is, therefore, has arisen in response to tendencies towards deconstruction, suggests a more nuanced approach to revisionism of Perry Miller's influential monolithicism, and hypothesizes that historians have much to gain not only by looking at individual Puritans (narrative), but at the Further Reformation or Puritan Reformation (metanarrative) to which they belonged. Thus, it is hypothesized that *sensus unitatis* and *unitatis in diversitate* will prove to be important concepts in our understanding of Puritanism.

Thus, this study seeks to understand better some fundamental questions that have arisen within Puritan historiography: What are prominent themes within Stuart Puritanism? How should historians make sense of its diversity? What were its unities? Were Puritans united in a quest for further Reformation? Was there a "mainstream" orthodoxy? Is it better to write of "Puritanisms" or "Puritanism?"

While diversity among Puritans has gained recent academic attention, few studies have devoted significant length to their underlying unities. The aim of this study, therefore, is to investigate whether Puritanism can be better understood by using narrative and metanarrative, in which Puritans are assessed not only as individuals, but also as members of a religious society.

Finally, in terms of taxonomy, I use "Reformed," "Reformed orthodox," and "Puritan," throughout this book. These terms are often overlapping among various thinkers, but are not identical categories that can be equally applied to all Puritans. For instance, there are numerous English Reformed thinkers who can be identified as "Puritan" but who did not disapprove of episcopacy (e.g. William Perkins), and there were those "Puritans" who were neither strictly Reformed nor orthodox (e.g. John Goodwin). Moreover, there were fairly numerous Anglican "Calvinists" following the Great Ejection in 1662 (e.g. John Edwards). While I will revisit this issue in Chapter 7, suffice it to say that I distinguish between mainline Puritanism, as represented by those who were both "Reformed" and "orthodox," and those outside that consensus, but who nonetheless stood in relation to it,[110] and were, in many cases, reacting to what was seen as a hyper-sensitivity to orthodox structures.[111] The question of how Puritans relate to a Reformed confessionality is a significant one, because, as said before, there was always a strong confessional impetus within Puritanism since its beginnings, and, as we will see, Puritanism was much more than a reform of morals and manners, and had to do with theological and religious identity, or, put another way, both *doctrine* and *discipline*. While these doctrines were contested, especially in how far one could go and still be considered "orthodox," the far majority of Puritans agreed that there should be some sort of normative belief and practice, if, for no other reason, than to have an orderly society.[112]

1.2.1 Narrative and Metanarrative

Franklin H. Littell observed that in the periodization of history, "The Ocean of facts is infinite. Every writer reveals his presuppositions in several ways but never more clearly than by selecting certain persons to feature, certain reports to highlight, certain events to emphasize in telling the story."[113] This is equally true for studies in English Puritanism. The initial decision to examine one person to the exclusion of another, one facet of their thought or activities independent of another, or to address the evidence of one academic discipline rather than another invariably affects the outcome. To adequately approach history one must be cognizant of one's own fallibility and must work with utmost fairness and care to relate things as they were and not merely as we think they may have been.

---

[110] Thus Richard L. Greaves and Murray Tolmie challenge the contention that "radical" Puritans were as different from mainline Puritanism as vinegar is from wine. Greaves, *Saints and Rebels: Seven Nonconformists in Stuart England* (Mercer: Macon University Press, 1983), 2-3; Tolmie, *The Triumph of the Saints: The Separate Churches of London, 1616-1649* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977).

[111] Thus John Milton defined heresy not as deviation from an objective standard, but as "a *subjective* attitude of blind submission to tradition rather than to scripture." Coffey, "A Ticklish Business," 130.

[112] There remains the question, of course, as to whether some of the more "radical" Puritans should be considered as "anarchists." Cases could be made that the Ranters, Diggers, and other extremists envisioned a utopian society centered on "a primitivist Millennium in which private property, class distinctions and human authority would have no place." Norman Cohn, *The Pursuit of the Millennium: Revolutionary Millenarians and Mystical Anarchists of the Middle Ages,* rev. and exp. ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1970), 288.

[113] Franklin H. Littell, "The Periodization of History," in *Continuity and Discontinuity in Church History: Essays Presented to George Huntston Williams*, ed. F. Forrester Church and Timothy George (Leiden: Brill, 1979), 18.

Further, as Fernand Braudel wrote, "All thought draws life from contacts and exchanges."[114] Thus, this present study attempts to take into account the proliferation of books and articles from various social and intellectual disciplines. Its limitations of scope have naturally been determined to the extent these studies have been utilized. Further, the lives of the Puritans here discussed span across the seventeenth-century religious scene.

I hypothesize that by looking at three diverse Puritans, who promoted vying streams within a normative orthodox tradition, that the concept of unity in diversity will play an integral role in understanding Puritanism. In order to test my hypothesis regarding unity in diversity, this book will assess the similarities and disparities of three Puritans who are broadly representative of specifics aspects of what has been identified as Puritanism. By ascertaining what binds and unites them, it will surface common religious motifs of Puritan identity, thus placing its unities and diversities within their social and intellectual contexts. Due to size restraints, I have only chosen Downame, Rous, and Crisp as case studies. To further confirm this work's thesis, consideration should be given to Richard Baxter, John Goodwin, John Pym, Peter Sterry, and others.[115]

The first of these three-divines, the "harshly anti-Catholic" John Downame (1571-1652)[116] made himself a place in the history of the English Bible largely for having produced a succession of concordances. He considered the success of the English Reformation as a miracle, given the "weake instruments (a childe and a woman [i.e. Edward VI and Queen Elizabeth I]" that succeeded in defeating the "mightie Engines" of the papacy.[117] As representative of the precisianist strain, his theology and spirituality will serve as a litmus test to assess whether Francis Rous and Tobias Crisp belonged to the normative tradition. A prolific author, Downame published nineteen treatises, most famous of which is his two-part, *The Christian Warfare* (1608-1611). Downame, like contemporary Reformed theologian, Richard Sibbes, was well known for his educated practical divinity; as such, he

---

[114] Fernand Braudel, *Civilization and Capitalism from the Fifteenth to the Eighteenth Century, Vol. 1: The Structures of Everyday Life: the Limits of the Possible* (1981; repr. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), 401. Cited in Webster, *Godly Clergy in Early Stuart England*, 1.

[115] Baxter's importance derives from the fact that he was a leading Puritan minister and author of the "longest, most ambitious and influential guide," *A Christian Directory* (1673) which sets forth the Puritan paradigm for social behavior, and that he was the spokesman for the "protestant ethic." A nineteenth-century edition of Baxter's "practical" works, edited by William Orme, swell to twenty-three volumes. Goodwin's significance rests in that his intellectual milieu contributes to ongoing debates over the parameters of Puritanism and intellectual change in the seventeenth century. Lamont, "R. H. Tawney, 'Who Did Not Write a Single Work Which Can Be Trusted?'" in *Historical Controversies and Historians*, ed. William Lamont (New York: Routledge, 1998), 114; Hill, *World Turned Upside Down*, 330; Coffey, *John Goodwin and the Puritan Revolution*, vii, 1-12, 291-97.

[116] Bozeman, *Precisianist Strain,* 177.

[117] John Downame, *Annotations Upon all the Books of the Old and New Testament* (London, 1645), sig. B2; David S. Katz, *God's Last Words: Reading the English Bible from the Reformation to Fundamentalism* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), 77.

was a popular theologian of experience.[118] Downame's service as parliamentarian censor sheds further insight into the acceptable religious parameters of Stuart England.[119]

The second Puritan, pro-Scottish, anti-Arminian, anti-Catholic, parliamentarian, Sir Francis Rous (1580/81-1659), represents the mystical strain within Puritanism, even being styled "the first Puritan mystic."[120] Rous was renowned as a writer of godly prose that sought to unite English Reformed in a cosmic vision against the hordes of Antichrist and their various manifestations, which include vices and Catholic cultures. His vehement opposition to Arminianism (or, Anti-Calvinism) throughout the 1620s-30s, along with his stepbrother John Pym (reportedly the most powerful man in England),[121] was closely connected to his fear of Catholicism.[122] Rous was unique in early modern England because of his close ties to mainstream divines and his parleying with various late-medieval streams of mysticism, which would not have been as popularized (or accepted) without Rous.[123] Rous held close affectionate friendships with several powerful personas, including

---

[118] John Morgan, *Godly Learning: Puritan Attitudes Towards Reason, Learning and Education, 1560-1640* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 59-60. For Sibbes' spirituality in its historical context, see Mark E. Dever, *Richard Sibbes: Puritanism and Calvinism in Late Elizabethan and Early Stuart England* (Macon: Mercer University Press, 2000).

[119] Ian Green, *Print and Protestantism in Early Modern England* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 344-345.

[120] Jerald C. Brauer, "Francis Rous, Puritan Mystic, 1579-1659: An Introduction to the Study of the Mystical Element in Puritanism" (PhD diss., University of Chicago, 1948); Brauer, "Types of Puritan Piety," 53-6. Brauer distinguishes between two types of mystics within Puritanism: "classical mystics" like Rous who were deeply entrenched in medievalism, and "Spirit mystics" like John Saltmarsh and William Dell who were at the most extreme ends of the "radical spectrum." See also Tom Schwanda, *Soul Recreation: The Contemplative-Mystical Piety of Puritanism* (Eugene: Pickwick Publications, 2012), 12-13. For a discussion of Rous's relation to Reformed orthodoxy, see John Barber, *The Road from Eden: Studies in Christianity and Culture* (Palo Alto: Academica Press, 2006), 330-332. For Rous's strong political and family connections, see Anne Duffin, *Faction and Faith: Politics and Religion of the Cornish Gentry Before the Civil War* (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 1996), 52.

[121] As a testament of Pym's greatness, John S. Morrill remarks that Pym's funeral "was the grandest…ever given to a commoner in the early modern period, and if the procession did not match the formal splendors of the funeral arrangements for the 3rd early of Essex, his resting place within [Westminster] Abbey was the more striking." Morrill, "The Unweariableness of Mr. Pym: Influence and Eloquence in the Long Parliament," in *Political Culture and Cultural Politics in Early Modern England: Essays Presented to David Underdown* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995), 19. Cf. Vanessa Harding, *The Dead and the Living in Paris and London, 1500-1670* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 257.

[122] Nicholas Tyacke places Rous at the center of English parliamentary debates on Arminianism. See Nicholas Tyacke, *Anti-Calvinists: The Rise of English Arminianism, c. 1590-1640* (New York: Clarendon Press, 1987). See also, L. J. Reeve, *Charles I and the Road to Personal Rule* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 74; C. A. Patrides, "The Experience of Otherness: Theology as a Means of Life," in *The Age of Milton: Backgrounds to Seventeenth-Century Literature*, ed. C. A. Patrides and Raymond B. Waddington (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1980), 189; Peter White, *Predestination, Policy, and Polemic: Conflict and Consensus in the English from the Reformation to the Civil War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 308; Duffin, *Faction and Faith*, 42-43. For a portrayal of Arminius within the context of the medieval scholastic tradition, see Richard A. Muller, *God, Creation, and Providence in the Thought of Jacob Arminius: Sources and Directions of Scholastic Protestantism in the Era of Early Orthodoxy* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1991), 31-51.

[123] Johannes van den Berg writes, "More clearly than with many others, various seemingly disparate aspects of the Puritan movement [the extraverted and introverted] are reflected in [Rous] as we know him from his activities and his publications." Van den Berg, "The English Puritan Francis Rous and the Influence of His Works in the Netherlands," in *Religious Currents and Cross-Currents: Essays on Early Modern*

James Ussher, archbishop of Armagh, and Oliver Cromwell, Lord Protector.[124] Though Rous typifies the pressing of early modern English religious bounds, he has recently been dubbed "a broadly tolerant puritan" for his ecumenicism.[125] Johannes van den Berg has further observed Rous's influence in the Netherlands.[126] That Rous was a lay educator, provost, and politician, shows that Puritanism was not confined to conservative clergy but spread across social classes and boundaries.

The third Puritan, Tobias Crisp (1600-1642/3), a former Arminian from wealthy nobility and one of the few Puritans to earn a Doctor of Divinity degree, represents the antinomian strain within Puritanism, along with William Dell, Paul Hobson, John Eaton, and John Saltmarsh, though these latter "Puritans" were not "mainstream" or "Reformed orthodox." Crisp was called "a controversial divine" and "the great champion of antinomianism" because many believed that he transgressed the bounds of the orthodox tradition.[127] Like Baxter, Crisp was revered for his godly conduct even though many Reformed theologians did not tolerate his theological deviancies from the precisianists. The tension in his life, between orthodoxy and orthopraxy, illustrates the complex interrelatedness of English Puritanism, and its complex formulations of such common Reformed motifs as law and gospel and testifies that there were many variants to common doctrinal themes.[128] Crisp's unique place in early modern English religion is seen in the numerous subscriptions to the republication of his work in the 1690s. Twelve ministers, including John Howe, Vincent Alsop, Increase Mather, and Hanserd Knollys, signed a certificate, which was placed in the volume, stating that the work had "been faithfully transcribed from [Crisp's] own notes."[129] Richard Baxter, who despised Antinomism, responded to this republication and accused the ministers of "hanging up a sign to show where Jezebel dwelt."[130] Seven of the twelve responded that they were attesting only to the work's authenticity, not its content. The times were rife with accusations.[131] When Crisp's

---

Protestantism and the Protestant Enlightenment, ed. Jan de Bruijn, Pieter Holtrop, and Ernestine van der Wall (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 25.

[124] Alan Ford, *James Ussher: Theology, History, and the Politics of Early-Modern Ireland and England* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 100; Patrick Little, ed., *Oliver Cromwell: New Perspectives* (New York: Routledge, 2009), 33; Blair Worden, "Oliver Cromwell and the Council," in *The Cromwellian Protectorate*, ed. Patrick Little (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2007), 85.

[125] Woolrych, *Britain in Revolution*, 543.

[126] See Van den Berg, "The English Puritan Francis Rous," 25-42. For a broader discussion of Rous's relation to Jacob Boehme, see B. J. Gibbons, *Gender in Mystical and Occult Thought: Behmenism and its Development in England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 60-88.

[127] See the entry on Crisp in Stephen Jones, *A New Biographical Dictionary: Containing a Brief Account of the Lives and Writings of the Most Eminent Persons and Remarkable Characters in Every Age and Nation, Third Edition, Corrected* (London, 1799).

[128] Robert Rix, *William Blake and the Cultures of Radical Christianity* (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 2007), 30-33.

[129] Howson, *Erroneous and Schismatical Opinions*, 102.

[130] Cited in Peter Toon, *The Emergence of Hyper-Calvinism in English Nonconformity, 1689-1765* (London: The Olive Press, 1967), 49-50. More generally on Richard Baxter and antinomism, see Tim Cooper, *Fear and Polemic in Seventeenth-Century England: Richard Baxter and Antinomianism* (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 2001).

[131] See Barry H. Howson, *Erroneous and Schismatical Opinions: The Question of Orthodoxy Regarding the Theology of Hanserd Knollys, c. 1599-1691* (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 79-132; Bozeman, *Precisianist Strain*, 183-332; and Como, *Blown by the Spirit*, 33-137.

works were reissued in 1755 (and reprinted in 1791), John Gill, the editor, clearly anticipated a negative response to its publication, and insisted that Crisp's "life was innocent and harmless of all evil…zealous and fervent of all goodness."[132] Yet, in 1773, Crisp's sermon "Free Grace the Teacher of Good Works" was reissued with the name *Doctor Crisp's Ghost; or, A Check Upon Checks, Being a Bridle for Antinomians and a Whip for Pelagian and Arminian-Methodists*. The issuance of this short sermon was to correct eighteenth-century Antinomian abuses as well as free-will religion. It is clear that whoever printed the pamphlet held Crisp's legacy to be free grace and pious religion, and innocent of actual doctrinal antinomism.[133]

It is theorized that these three Puritans, when considered together, will give the terms "Puritan" and "Puritanism" more stability as they seem to elucidate the unities and diversities within Stuart Puritanism. Further, due to size-restrictions it will not be possible to add a fourth "representative" to the mix, Richard Baxter, who depicts both the "Protestant ethic" and the oft-blurred lines between seventeenth-century notions of religious orthodoxy and heterodoxy.[134] Nor do we have time to assess John Goodwin who is an interesting test case since he had close affinities with Puritanism and Reformed orthodoxy but who converted to Arminianism.[135] However, to offset possible deficits by only examining three Puritans, comparisons and contrasts with other Puritan thinkers of the era will be interspersed throughout. This will alleviate concerns that the three thinkers chosen are either too narrow or limited to resolve the greater question of unity in diversity. It should be reiterated that the three Puritans examined here appear to represent varieties within Puritanism's mainstream or normative expression, and are suggestive of a broader definition and confessional plasticity than has sometimes been allowed. Further, some recent studies of "Radical Puritanism" have also suggested a degree of *unitas* with the mainstream, and have challenged the period's heresiographies as consisting of overly-charged rhetoric that had as often political aims as it did a concern for the parishioner.[136]

---

[132] Tobias Crisp, *Christ Alone Exalted: Being the Compleat Works of Tobias Crisp*, ed. John Gill (London: R. Noble, 1791), 1:lxxvi. For a negative reading of Crisp, see Edward Wells, *An Help for the Right Understanding of the Several Divine Laws and Covenants* (London, 1729), 140.

[133] Tobias Crisp, *Doctor Crisp's Ghost; or, A Check Upon Checks, Being a Bridle for Antinomians and a Whip for Pelagian and Arminian-Methodists* (London, 1773), 2.

[134] See Tim Cooper, *John Owen, Richard Baxter and the Formation of Nonconformity* (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 2011), 55-86; 137-68; Paul C. H. Lim, *In Pursuit of Purity, Unity, and Liberty: Richard Baxter's Puritan Ecclesiology in Its Seventeenth-Century Context* (Leiden: Brill, 2004); William Lamont, *Puritanism and Historical Controversy* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1996), 41-54.

[135] For Goodwin's relation to mainstream Puritanism, see Coffey, *John Goodwin and the Puritan Revolution*, 131-67.

[136] Loewenstein, *Treacherous Faith*, 197-213. The mainstream divine Jeremiah Burroughes, who favored toleration of dissidents and conciliation among the godly, criticized Thomas Edwards's *Gangraena* (1646) for its numerous factual errors and "abusive" nature. See Burroughes, *A Vindication of Mr. Burroughes, Against Mr. Edwards His Foule Apsersions, in His Spreading Gangraena, and His Angry Antiapologia* (1646). For studies of *Gangraena* as a political artifice, see Ann Hughes, *Gangraena and the Struggle for the English Revolution* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 318-415; and Hughes, "Print, Persecution, and Polemic: Thomas Edwards's *Gangraena* (1646) and Civil War Sectarianism," in *The Uses of Script and Print, 1300-1700*, ed. Julia Crick and Alexandra Walsham (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 255-74.

Edwards's seeming skewed perspective on the radical sects of the English Revolution has moved some historians, such as J. C. Davis, to question its historical use: "Relying on Thomas Edwards for evidence

This book's overarching thesis is that Puritanism, as a construct and term, should not be abandoned in historical conversations; nor should one minimize the differences between Puritans and their various manifestations in the English-speaking world. It is hypothesized that narrative and metanarrative can help advance this proposition.[137] Bound by a common language and heritage, English Puritans (narrative) seemed to form a cohesive historical movement, the Puritan Reformation (metanarrative), that expressed itself in diverse ways, but which had as its goal a further Reformation of the religion and society to which they belonged. *American Puritanism* is distinct from its *British* counterpart in that it faced and adapted to new challenges in a wilderness frontier, but nonetheless is irrevocably tied to it culturally and theologically. This is seen not only in American Puritanism's British flavor, but also in cross-fertilizations between American-born and British Puritans ministering abroad.[138] Further, the *international* aspect of this cross-fertilization between Britain, the Netherlands, Germany, Ireland, and other European societies[139] shows the need of building a cohesive metanarrative in order to see a Puritan Reformation, not only in the way Puritans behaved outwardly, but as forming a certain style and expression that combined divinity with piety.[140]

In *Prospero's America*, a recent examination of John Winthrop, Jr., one of America's most well-connected Puritans, Walter A. Woodward observed: "The larger Atlantic world connections of colonization are now transforming Puritan studies. Colonial historians are rediscovering, although in new ways, something that Perry Miller noted more than two generations ago: New England's Puritans were continuing participants in a complex culture whose intellectual roots extended throughout Protestant Europe."[141] As John Donne, dean of Saint Paul's, once put it, "No man is an island, entire of itself; every

---

of the reality of sectarian development in his time, is like relying on Horatio Bottomley or Joseph McCarthy for sound, objective depictions of the social and political realities of their day." Davis, *Fear, Myth and History: The Ranters and the Historians* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 126. Before Davis, Christopher Hill opined that *Gangraena* had historical value and "that what was needed was a critical edition to test Edwards's accounts." Hill, "Irreligion in the 'Puritan' Revolution," in *Radical Religion in the English Revolution*, ed. J. F. McGregor and Barry Reay (New York: Oxford University Press, 1984), 206. Both sources are cited in Edward Vallance, *Revolutionary England and the National Covenant: State Oaths, Protestantism and the Political Nation, 1553-1682* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2005), 137.

[137] It should be noted that all modern definitions are constructs because they take "Puritan" and "Puritanism" beyond its original negative application. Narrative and Metanarrative are also constructs but have the advantage of identifying doctrinal foci uniting major writers who have consistently been identified as "Puritan."

[138] See Bremer, *Congregational Communion*, 17-40.

[139] For recent studies on international Calvinism, see Alastair Duke, "Perspectives on International Calvinism," in *Calvinism in Europe, 1540-1620*, ed. Andrew Pettegree, Alastair Duke, and Gillian Lewis (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 1-20; Graeme Murdock, *Calvinism on the Frontier, 1600-1660: International Calvinism and the Reformed Church in Hungary and Transylvania* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 1-9; and Murdock, *Beyond Calvin: The Intellectual, Political, and Cultural World of Europe's Reformed Churches, c.1540-1620* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 1-5, 118-24.

[140] This is not to deny the significance of seeing a "Reformation of morals and manners," nor to belittle its usefulness in assessing Puritans. Rather, that since Puritanism has often been portrayed merely by its piety, to suggest that in addition to social and pietistic concerns that the question of theological *unitas* should have some scholarly attention.

[141] Walter W. Woodward, *Prospero's America: John Winthrop, Jr., Alchemy, and the Creation of New England Culture, 1606-1676* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2010), 1.

man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main…The *Church* is *Catholike*, *universall*, so are all her *Actions*; All that she does, belongs to *all*;"[142] and so, no manifestation of Puritanism is truly independent, having borrowed its view on biblical authority, vocabulary, culture, ideology, theology, social norms, from not only a common "normative" heritage, but from a broad and robust interaction between the saints across time and continents. Thus, I hypothesize that there is a coherent theological tradition within Puritanism that crosses its vying strains, is expressed in its "family resemblances," and binds Puritans together within their diversity.

As Reformed orthodoxy must be regarded as a rather diverse phenomenon within identifiable but flexible confessional boundaries, it is postulated that operating within Puritanism is a tradition centered around certain theological themes or topics, which bound Puritans of various emphases together.

In short, the method proposed in this book is identifying theological foci within Stuart Puritanism, as seen through the eyes of Downame, Rous, and Crisp. Since I have, due to size restrains, focused chiefly on theological identity, more work will need to be done on social and cultural material. Indeed, it is difficult to assess how social issues may have impacted or altered theological concerns, but the connection seems inevitable, and raises questions of the interplay between *dogma* and *praxis*. What appears to be distinctive in these authors, however, is this very thing; that is, in the precise way in which doctrine and practice are interwoven. This *praxis pietatis* is suggestive of a certain "ethos" within Puritanism, and will be looked at more fully in Chapter 7.

1.2.2 Structure

The structure is as follows: Chapter 2 presents an overview of seventeenth-century background, presents a synopsis of the major political epochs in which Puritanism first arose, flourished, and declined, and introduces four strains in Puritanism: precisianism, mysticism, antinomism, and neonomianism.

Part I (Chapters 3-5) introduces the three representative Puritans—their life, theology, culture, major works, and influence, followed by Part II (Chapters 6-8), which investigates the *unitas in diversitate* and metanarrative question, and then concludes the work.

In Chapter 3, John Downame will be introduced as a progeny of precisianist Puritanism. His chief works of edited theology and piety, *The Summe of Sacred Divinitie* (c.1620), *A Guide to Godlynesse* (1622), and the giant and peerless summa of English affectionate divinity, the four-part *Christian Warfare* (1604-1618), will be presented and discussed. Due consideration will also be given to the influence Downame's corpus (nineteen treatises, including biblical concordances, and collections of sermons) had on codifying the Puritan practical divinity within the early seventeenth century. Downame's role as public censor and editor of James Ussher's *A Body of Divinity* (1648) will also be examined.

---

[142] John Donne, *The Works of John Donne, D.D., Dean of Saint Paul's 1621-1641* (London: John W. Parker, 1839), 3:575.

Chapter 4 will introduce Sir Francis Rous, one of the longest standing members of Parliament and the "first Puritan mystic." His major work *The Mystical Marriage* (1635) illustrates the mystical union of all souls with Christ, and reflects the atmosphere of mid-century mystical piety, and more radical notions of the believer's subjective experience of the divine.

Chapter 5 will place Tobias Crisp among the many mid-seventeenth-century antinomian controversies. He was known as a leading antinomian among his contemporaries and yet equally revered as a godly saint. Perry Miller states that though Crisp began his ministry "as an orthodox federalist…he came to the conclusion, as did Anne Hutchinson, that the Covenant of Grace had nothing to do with moral behavior, and that therefore no ethical duty could be imposed upon or any response expected from mankind;" and thus, "in New England eyes, Crisp figured as an arrant Antinomian."[143] However, it is suggested that Crisp is not strictly antinomian in a "rigid" sense. Within the seventeenth century, he is counted among orthodox Puritans, and had wide influence into the eighteenth century.[144] While other prominent English antinomians shared some of Crisp's beliefs, none were as revered or defended by the precisianists as Crisp. This vindication, though contested in the 1640s and again in the 1690s, is suggestive of a distinct antinomian strain within the mainstream normative tradition.

Part II will consider the unities and diversities among these three Puritans. Chapter 6 will coalesce the three prior chapters and discuss unity in diversity. It will compare and contrast identifiable theological foci within their writings, and assess possible ways in which this continuity exists. Chapter 7 will attempt to define Puritanism, and investigate more fully my hypothesis regarding narrative and metanarrative as useful, even necessary, constructs in understanding Puritanism. I will briefly look at how Puritans might better be identified, using John Goodwin, John Milton, Lodowick Muggleton, Gerrard Winstanley, and others as grounds for exploration. Chapter 8 will summarize the book's contents and conclude the work.

1.3 Summary

Since the sixteenth century, there have been widely diversified beliefs about the Puritans, and common mis-caricatures and satires that have made jest of the seriousness with which they viewed the godly life. Though the study of English Puritanism has gained serious academic credence within the past sixty-five years, there have been few significant advances or consensus in how Puritanism should be defined and understood. This lacuna within the literature is due to historical preference for neat and easy classifications, often based on single defining themes, which can the applied across the spectrum of belief and practice. However, this preference for easy taxonomy does not coincide with the massive

[143] Miller, *New England Mind: From Colony to Province*, 219. See also the entry on Tobias Crisp in *A Biographical History of England, from Egbert the Great to the Revolution*, ed. James Granger, 2nd ed. (London: T. Davies, et al, 1775), 2:179-80.

[144] Notable among Crisp's critics were Richard Baxter and Robert Traill. See Howson, *Erroneous and Schismatical Opinions,* 83-84; and Richard L. Greaves, *Saints and Rebels: Seven Nonconformists in Stuart England* (Macon: Mercer University Press, 1985), 95-96.

body of evidence on the subject, or, for that matter, with the complex nature of human beings who interact and interrelate within a society. As such, there is a need for revisiting this "thorny problem" of English Puritan religious identity to assess whether *unitas* or *diversitas* are appropriate concepts to employ when referring to Puritans, and whether these concepts can, in the end, help illuminate the very meaning and definition of Puritanism. Further, it is suggested that narrative and metanarrative concepts further attenuate the definitions problem by seeing English Puritans not only in their own contexts, but as part of a greater reform movement, which can be called the Puritan Reformation, a distinct attitude and cluster of attitudes and priorities that sought to advance their vision for the Christian life, both on a personal and a more national level.

Therefore, it is proposed that current winds within the literature towards deconstruction or irreducible pluralisms result in an insufficient rendering of Puritanism, and leads to useless terminology. As such, the subject of English Puritan theological identity, especially as it relates to a Reformed confessionality, is an important one because it attests to a *sensus unitatis* within the movement, which is seen not only in its overall theological harmony, but also in its affinity and longing for its past.

This work is an attempt, however limited, to incorporate insights from both social and intellectual historians, to come up with a more holistic approach to the subject, and to pave the way for a revision of revisionism. It does not suggest that Puritans were coined from the same stamp, in which case there would be no *diversitas*, but that the stamps were made, and originated, from the same or similar metals, and which relates to a Reformed confessionality.

Finally, this work is based, for the most part, on printed sources. The inaccessibility, and paucity, of archives pertaining to Downame, Rous, and Crisp have limited extensive archival research.