

Early Modern History of Theology: Richard Hooker, Elizabethan Puritanism and Predestination

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ABSTRACT

The first part of the paper seeks to place Richard Hooker in context by examining the public debates with reformers, especially the Puritan Thomas Cartwright. Cartwright's theology is examined in some measure of detail because his position was the one Hooker responded to directly both in his major work, *Of the Lawes of Ecclesiastical Polity*, in which he cites from Cartwright's writing and also in the incomplete manuscript now held in Trinity College, Dublin, that he wrote at the end of his life in response to *A Christian Letter* and as a defence against Cartwright's accusations, entitled *Dublin Fragments*, which addresses the subject of predestination, especially with reference to the Anglican articles of religion that Cartwright had accused him of contradicting. Hooker's defence of the Church of England is said to have been a reaction to Cartwrightian Puritanism. Furthermore, Hooker disclosed the deficiencies of the Puritan understanding of revelation and introduced a strong humanist element in early modern theological thought.

The second part of the paper outlines Hooker's views on grace and predestination, and the third part concludes the paper arguing the main point of the paper, that Hooker's views on grace and predestination are consistent with other Reformation figures, despite public debates. Hooker's first public appearance created controversy on different opinions about the topic of predestination and together with his views expressed addressing those who urged reformation in the Church of England in *Of the Lawes of Ecclesiastical Polity*, led to the criticism published in the second last year of his life in *A Christian Letter*. Though Hooker has been depicted as seeking to turn the Church of England away from the Reformation, he gave Scripture priority, and a superior place in theological enquiry and his contribution to the understanding of grace and predestination within the reformation of the Elizabethan era merited him the reputation of great Anglican theologian.

EARLY MODERN HISTORY OF THEOLOGY: RICHARD HOOKER, ELIZABETHAN PURITANISM AND PREDESTINATION

In 1534 King Henry VIII declared himself the supreme head of the Church of England and established the split from Rome. In doing so, he assumed to himself and to his office of king, power that had previously been ascribed to the Pope of Rome and papal office. From that time, there was a reluctance to name the situation as "protestant," but England now had a church that was in reality protestant. The principles of the tradition of the Church of England, from Erasmus to Hooker and beyond are said to have been reason and tolerance, combined with learning and piety. There was respect for the authority of the fathers in the tradition, as well as the "twinning of Erasmian humanism and Christian or patristic theology in discussions of

Richard Hooker."¹ Richard Hooker had several connections with the Erasmian tradition, and "... the Anglican mind of Jewel, Whitgift and Hooker expressed a strong and growing predilection for episcopacy and a sense of its normative place in Christian tradition."² Nigel Atkinson provides an extraordinary analysis of Richard Hooker's views in "Richard Hooker on the Authority of Scripture, Tradition and Reason: Reformed Theologian of the Church of England?," which engages Hooker's interactions with the Puritans and most notably Thomas Cartwright. According to Atkinson, Hooker challenged his Puritan detractors with respect to this point - "whether Scripture is the only rule of all things which in this life may be done by men."³ In Atkinson's estimation, "as Cartwright's position was the one Hooker responds to directly, it is necessary to examine Cartwright's theology in some detail."⁴ In addition to Hooker's major work in which he cites from Cartwright's writing, *Of the Lawes of Ecclesiastical Polity*, Atkinson is perhaps referring also to the *Dublin Fragments*, which began as Hooker's defence against Cartwright's accusations, written in the last years of Hooker's life in response to *A Christian Letter*. In this incomplete manuscript held in Trinity College, Dublin, Hooker deliberately addresses the subject of predestination, especially with reference to the Anglican articles of religion that Cartwright had accused him of contradicting. Some go so far as to argue that Hooker's defence of the Church of England is "a product by reaction to Cartwrightian Puritanism" and that Hooker "certainly discloses the deficiencies of the Puritan conception of revelation and introduces a strong humanist element into theological thought."⁵ Furthermore, his issues with the Puritans provide an illuminating historical context for considering Hooker's writings.

After the publication of his work Elizabethan Puritanism could not be the same again, but it could be more firmly based, viz., on a foundation consisting of Cartwright's contentions clarified by Hooker's philosophy.⁶

The thesis that Richard Hooker's views are politically distinctive has been rejected in recent scholarship in favour of the view that his theory of the English constitution is the traditional medieval and Tudor view. Hooker's understanding of the supremacy of the monarchy ought to be considered in light of this, and his political and religious opinions in the context of his scholarship at Oxford. Although Hooker publicly debated with reformers on

¹ Schoek. Richard Hooker and the Construction of Christian Community, 65.

² Collinson. The Elizabethan Puritan Movement, 103.

³ Atkinson. Richard Hooker on the Authority of Scripture, Tradition and Reason: Reformed Theologian of the Church of England? 88.

⁴ Ibid., 84.

⁵ Pearson. Thomas Cartwright and Elizabethan Puritanism, 371-2.

⁶ Ibid., 372.

matters of church government and liturgy, Hooker's views on grace and predestination are consistent with other reformation figures of the Elizabethan era. According to Philip Hughes,

The Reformers were indeed, after 1559, the party in power, but it was in a country where all outside the party was Catholic – in some sense; (...) "A few Calvinists of one little island" said a Catholic controversialist; very scornfully it may seem- yet in the Reformers own language, in their private correspondence, they felt much the same. (...) "The English Reformers", it has been written of their situation at the moment of Mary's death "were without a chief; beyond Elizabeth they had no pretender to the throne; they had no apostle, no prophet; they were scattered over Europe and had been quarrelling, Knoxians against Coxians, in their foreign abodes."⁷

The first part of this paper seeks to place Richard Hooker in context by examining the public debates with reformers, especially the Puritan Thomas Cartwright. The second part of the paper outlines Hooker's views on grace and predestination, and the third part concludes the paper arguing the main point of the paper, that Hooker's views on grace and predestination are consistent with other Reformation figures, despite public debates.

Hooker's public debates with reformers on matters of church government and liturgy

In 1535, the influential Puritan Thomas Cartwright was born in Hertfordshire, and his writings were most influential in pointing the way towards reforms of government for the English church. Richard Hooker was born nearly 20 years after Cartwright, in Heavy-tree, within the precinct and city of Exeter in 1553, and his major work *Of the Lawes of Ecclesiastical Polity* is addressed to those such as Cartwright who sought to reform the church. Among the Anglican usages to which Cartwright objected were: reading from the Apocrypha, the ceremony of confirmation, the observance of holy days, bowing at the name of Jesus and prayers for the dead. Cartwright insisted that the sacraments should not be administered apart from the preaching of the Word, nor should they be administered in private. He believed that sitting was the appropriate posture at the Lord's Supper as it came nearest to that used by the Saviour and His disciples, though he did not regard it as essential. He referred to what is known as the Black Rubric, inserted into the 1552 edition of the Prayer Book under King Edward VI, to answer the objections of Knox; it explicitly stated that kneeling did not imply adoration of the elements of bread and wine. The main focus of Cartwright's criticism was Episcopacy and its system of diocesan bishops.

In Hooker's day, Bishops often boarded boys in their households and maintained them in schools, and Richard Hooker was one of these boys. Richard Hooker's uncle, John Hooker

⁷ Hughes. *The Reformation in England*, 55-56.

(1526-1601), was thought to have been a member of the Corpus Christi College and was active both as chamberlain of Exeter and M.P. and as a reviser of Holinshed's Chronicles. John Hooker was a friend of Bishop John Jewel of Corpus Christi College, who took a great interest in Richard Hooker and sent him for training in Exeter. Jewel supported Richard Hooker at Oxford. After Jewel's death, Edwin Sandys (1516-1588), who was successively the Bishop of Worcester, the Bishop of London and the Archbishop of York, became Hooker's patron. Edwin Sandys' son, called Sir Edwin Sandys, was a student of Richard Hooker at Corpus Christi College and became a lawyer and M.P. Isaak Walton seemingly views Cartwright's expulsion from Cambridge as retribution for his errors⁸. By contrast, he depicts a Richard Hooker who, in his behaviour consistently maintained the reverence towards God requisite for the Collegiate life. However, it is likely that Walton was seeking to enhance Hooker's reputation, which had been damaged by his earlier biographer John Gauden. According to David Neelands, "Gauden's performance as a factually accurate biographer is not inspiring."⁹ Walton's account of Richard Hooker's life was first published in 1665, and he corrected Gauden's errors, including factual information about Hooker's scholarship at Oxford. Notably, the story surrounding *A Christian Letter* is misrepresented in Gauden. Scholar Lee Gibbs, who relied on the careful analysis of records summarized by scholar George Edelen in the Folger Library Edition of Hooker's works, indicates that on October 9th, 1580, Hooker was expelled from lecturing in Corpus Christi College along with three other fellows, including his lifelong friend John Rainolds, for his Puritan sympathies.¹⁰ This runs contrary to the other accounts of Hooker's piety and opposition to Puritanism.

The time of Richard Hooker's birth was the time of trouble after Mary Tudor came to the throne in 1553, and brought the English Church once again under the sway of Rome. Thomas Cartwright began his studies at the University of Cambridge five years before Richard Hooker was born in 1547, when he was 12 years old, which was not unusual in that age. In 1550, Cartwright became a scholar at St John's College and, in early 1551, he qualified for his B.A. It is said that the Reformation flourished in this College. In 1558, four years after Richard

⁸ Walton writes of "... a Faction of Non-Conformists to oppose him; especially one Thomas Cartwright, a man of noted Learning, sometime Contemporary with the Bishop in Cambridge, and of the same Colledge, of which the Bishop had been Master; in which place there began some Emulations (the particulars I forbear) and at last open and high Oppositions betwixt them; and in which you may believe Mr. Cartwright was most faulty, if his Expulsion out of the University can incline you to it." In Walton. *The Lives of John Donne, Sir Henry Wotton, Richard Hooker, George Herbert and Robert Sanderson*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1973: 197.

⁹ Neelands. "John Gauden, First Biographer of Richard Hooker: An Influential Failure", 129.

¹⁰ See Kirby. *Companion to Richard Hooker*, 9.

Hooker was born, Queen Elizabeth ascended the throne. Cartwright became a Fellow of St John's College Cambridge in 1560 when Hooker was a child. In 1562, he became a Fellow of Trinity College Cambridge, and when the Queen visited two years later, Cartwright was found opposing the proposition debated before her - that God's sovereignty supported an earthly monarchy. In late 1565 or early 1566, Thomas Cartwright left Cambridge and crossed to Ireland to become the domestic chaplain of Adam Loftus, who was Archbishop of Armagh. Cartwright obtained an appointment in 1569 as Lady Margaret Professor of Divinity in Cambridge. He began teaching with a series of lectures on the first two chapters in the Acts of the Apostles, and his lectures were well attended and scholarly. In the course of his exposition, he dealt with points related to Church order and government.

(Cartwright)...read Presbyterianism in the constitution of the early Christian Church... he proclaimed that the Apostolic Church was the model for all time. He could not consistently approve of the, in his opinion, only allowable system, without condemning that which subverted it. (. . .) If Cartwright was right, the organisation of the Church of England must be radically altered and the existing hierarchy must go.¹¹

Many came to listen to Cartwright and people in positions of authority were soon concerned at his doctrine. For example, William Chaderton, the previous occupant of Cartwright's chair at Cambridge wrote a letter of complaint about Cartwright to William Cecil, Queen Elizabeth's foremost adviser for much of her reign, who was also Chancellor of Cambridge University. Chaderton objected especially to Cartwright's comments on the choosing of ministers and bishops. Cartwright was asked to draw up a summary of his ideas in response to an investigation by the Vice-Chancellor of the University. These have been summarised as follows:

The names and offices of archbishops and bishops should be abolished. In their stead the offices of bishops and deacons, as described in the New Testament, should be established. The bishop should have a purely spiritual function and the deacon should care for the poor. . . . Each minister should be attached to a definite congregation. No one should, like a candidate, seek the office of the minister and none should be created ministers by the authority of bishops, which should be elected by a church. All should promote this reformation according to their several vocations – that is, the magistrate by his authority, the minister by preaching, and all by their prayers.¹²

Cartwright was calling for the abolition of Episcopacy and for it to be replaced by Presbyterianism. In response to Chaderton's letter, Cecil indicated that he would support any efforts to put down disorderly preaching and teaching. The first such effort resulted in Cartwright being refused the degree of Doctor of Divinity. John Whitgift, Chaderton and

¹¹ Pearson. Thomas Cartwright and Elizabethan Puritanism, 26.

¹² Ibid., 29.

others decided that it was appropriate to suspend Cartwright from lecturing altogether. Whitgift was another previous holder of Cartwright's present position and a future Archbishop of Canterbury and opponent of the Puritans. Two months later Archbishop Adam Loftus wrote from Dublin to ask Cecil to show his "honourable lovinge favour to my deare frend, Mr Cartwright, of Cambridge, a man bothe for his profounde learninge and sincere and godly life right worthy to be tendered and mucche esteemed."¹³ Cartwright informed Cecil that the content of his lectures was not merely academic, but that he strongly believed in reforming Church government along the lines laid down by the Apostles. He was prepared to accept Cecil's demand, that he should omit controversial matter from his lectures, but the College leaders would not permit him to lecture at all. In June of the next year, Cartwright moved to Geneva. He was appointed to teach theology there, under Theodore Beza, to the students of the Geneva Academy, which had been founded by John Calvin. However, in July there was an outbreak of the plague and by September part of the school had to be closed down. In the spring of 1572, Beza is reported to have complained to John Knox that the city was no longer as the Scottish Reformer had known it, referring to the empty benches in the Academy. Cartwright's lectures were appreciated in Geneva, and he did not have to face opposition there. His fellow Puritans in England sent many letters asking him to return home to give leadership to the Puritan movement. Cartwright was finally convinced to return and set off for England in February 1572.

In 1572, the first publication of the *Admonition to Parliament* appeared, a Puritan manifesto in which Cartwright was not involved. The authors of it, Wilcox and Field, admitted under interrogation that while in matters of government and discipline, the Word of God was the only warrant of the Puritans, yet rites and ceremonies shall be used and refused as it best appears to the edification of the church.¹⁴ Its purpose was to suggest aspects of the Church of England needed reform. A *Second Admonition to the Parliament* appeared in November, explaining the functions various church courts - the consistory (at parish level), the conference (equivalent to a presbytery), above which were to be provincial, national and universal synods. When Whitgift wrote in response to the Admonitions, Cartwright entered the discussion with *A Reply*. Within a few months, a second edition of the *Reply* was in print in spite of the royal proclamation which had been issued against it. Cartwright had written in support of the *Admonition*, although he was not entirely in agreement with it and opposed the use it made of

¹³ Ibid., 36.

¹⁴ Nelson. *English Puritan Divines in the Reign of Queen Elizabeth: Cartwright and his Contemporaries*, 232.

particular scriptures. The *Reply* provoked Whitgift to a further response, and within a year he wrote *Defence of the Answer* came from the press. Cartwright then produced a *Second Reply* in two parts, one published in 1575 and the other in 1577. Whitgift did not ever respond to Cartwright's second reply. Whitgift tried to put both the Puritans and the Anabaptists into the same category, while Cartwright emphasised the Puritan opposition to Anabaptism. He insisted that the Puritans not seek separation from the Church of England; rather, they wanted to reform it. Whitgift linked the Puritans with the Roman Catholics in their opposition to the Church of England; whereas Cartwright pointed out that the Roman Catholics disliked the *Book of Common Prayer* because it differed from the mass book, while the Puritans were dissatisfied with it because the two books had too much in common. Cartwright pleaded for the further reformation of the Church of England to bring it into line with the Church of the Apostles. But Whitgift emphasised the discretion the Church may exercise in its external order, so that it may continue at liberty to keep doctrine from Roman Catholicism if it seemed to have continuing value. Whitgift's philosophy that anything is permissible in the Church provided Scripture has not explicitly forbidden it was shared by Erasmus and had earlier formed the basis of the defence of King Henry VIII's revolution by Thomas Starkey.

Richard Hooker was a defender of order and discipline, and of the sacraments and liturgy of the Elizabethan church. Whitgift remained loyal to Hooker despite their theological differences. Puritan discussion and action continued to attempt to organize parishes according to new discipline and new worship for the church, seeking new Church order.

Men are called to the ministry of God, and confirmed by the assent of the congregation and the laying-on of hands. The ordination is to be by other ministers who form a senate or presbytery. Thus, the congregation is under the authority of one who is called of God. Ordination does not confer authority, but merely confirms the authority given by God. Excommunication is to be used to purge the Church of evil doers and is to be in the hands of those called by God himself to have authority over the Church. This is the source of the theocracy of the Cartwright-Travers Puritanism. God himself has given the authority to his ministers to rule his people.¹⁵

Richard Hooker entered the controversy with the Puritans when Whitgift in his position as Archbishop of Canterbury appointed him Master of the Temple, at the Queen's discretion. Bishop Jewel, Hooker's patron, wrote the first great defense or apology for the Reformed Church of England, and Hooker's allegiances must be understood in this context. "Hooker's whole life was lived with the thought of the Reformation in mind, particularly the Elizabethan

¹⁵ Marshall. *Hooker and The Anglican Tradition*, 36.

Reformation."¹⁶ One of the great defects of the Elizabethan Church was the high proportion of ministers who could not preach, and this gave rise to complaints from the Puritans. The main focus of Cartwright's criticism was Episcopacy, with its system of diocesan bishops. Whitgift argued that it was wrong that the Christian magistrate now possessed the authority that elders may have exercised in the apostolic age. Cartwright's views differed from the Anglican position on the place of the monarch in the Church – that the monarch is, at least nominally, the supreme Governor of the Church. Cartwright ascribed to Queen Elizabeth full authority as head of state, but he insisted that Christ alone is Head of the Church. He went so far as to say, "That Princes should be excepted from ecclesiastical discipline, and namely from excommunication, I utterly dislike."¹⁷ This sort of speech was not favourable with the Queen or with those, including Whitgift, who formed the ecclesiastical establishment of the time.

A proclamation was issued by the Queen in June 1573 commanding that all copies of the *Admonition* and of Cartwright's *Reply* be handed over to the authorities within 20 days. At least in London, the demand was ineffective, and no books were given over. A fresh edition of 1000 copies of the *Reply* was printed soon after the proclamation. The printer of these was subsequently arrested and forced by Bishop Sandys of London to subscribe to three points, which included the admission "that Cartw. booke is nether godly nor lawfull."¹⁸ Not surprisingly, a warrant was issued for Cartwright himself before long. After this, the only alternative to imprisonment was exile, and Cartwright fled to Heidelberg. In January 1574, Cartwright enrolled at Heidelberg University. In September 1577, Thomas Cartwright left Heidelberg, and after spending some time in Basel, acted as a factor for the English merchants in Middelburg, in the Netherlands, and later in Antwerp. He was not able to continue his ministry, though wealthy merchants were among the most generous supporters of Puritanism. In 1578, Cartwright married Alice Stubbe whose brother John Stubbe had written a controversial pamphlet against the proposed marriage of the Queen to the Roman Catholic Duke of Anjou. About this time, the merchants in Antwerp were urgently seeking a chaplain and eventually it was Walter Travers, who was appointed. Travers was ordained in Antwerp in May 1578. According to Neelands, Travers' sermons paled in comparison to Hooker's which had more substance, and "Travers drew a larger but more vulgar audience."¹⁹ Hooker was a less popular preacher than Travers who was of greater interest in his day, but neither was

¹⁶ Ibid., 37.

¹⁷ Pearson. *Thomas Cartwright and Elizabethan Puritanism*, 95.

¹⁸ Ibid., 111.

¹⁹ Neelands. "John Gauden: First Biographer of Richard Hooker: An Influential Failure", 126.

summoned before the Queen and her Council as early biographer Gauden claimed in error.

Before he left Antwerp, Cartwright was asked to undertake a refutation of the writings of the English Jesuits and, in particular, of the Roman Catholic translation of the New Testament, part of what was to become known as the Douay Bible. However, in 1586, Archbishop Whitgift ordered him not to proceed any further – the reason was fear on the part of the ecclesiastical authorities that some of Cartwright's arguments against the Roman Catholics would also apply to certain practices in the Church of England. Cartwright's work was later published in Leiden under the title, *A Confutation of the Rhemists' Translation, Glosses and Annotations on the New Testament, so far as they contain manifest Impieties, Heresies, Idolatries, Superstitions, Profaneness, Treasons, Slanders, Absurdities, Falsehoods and other evils. By occasion whereof the true Sense, Scope and Doctrine of the Scriptures, and human Authors, by them abused, is now given. . . . By that Reverend, Learned, and Judicious Divine, Thomas Cartwright, some time Divinity Reader of Cambridge.* This Douay translation was based on the Latin Vulgate, which Cartwright opposed in favour of the "royal value of the original Greek." Cartwright furthermore declared the Pope to be the Antichrist and described the Council of Trent as a conspiracy of which "we make no account."²⁰

In 1569, Hooker matriculated at Corpus Christi College, and in 1573, he gained his B.A., was admitted and determined in 1574, and in 1577, he supplicated M.A., was licensed and incorporated and became a Scholar or probationary Fellow of Corpus Christi College and in 1578, he became a full Fellow of Corpus Christi College. From 1579-80, Hooker was appointed deputy Professor of Hebrew. "By every tie, Hooker was linked with the Reformation Church of Queen Elizabeth."²¹ In the 16th century, Rashi's commentary on the Old Testament was copied by hand in its entirety twice, one more magnificent copy for the president of Corpus Christi College, possibly by predecessors or students of Hooker. George Cranmer, the great-nephew of the Archbishop Thomas Cranmer, was one of Hooker's students. Hooker remained at Corpus Christi College until 1584 and then moved to the household of merchant John Churchman near St Paul's Cathedral in London. In 1588, he would marry Churchman's daughter Joan, and together have four daughters and two sons who did not survive.

Richard Bancroft tried to engage Thomas Cartwright in controversy over the existence of Presbyterian structures in early Christianity. Cartwright declined, yet he told Bancroft that he had clearly shown in his published writings that, in Augustine's time, there were elders who

²⁰ Ibid., 207.

²¹ Marshall. Richard Hooker and Anglican Tradition, 37.

were not ministers. He spoke of the importance of appointing ministers for the exercise of church discipline – and pointed out that the *Book of Common Prayer* itself speaks of godly discipline. Bancroft described the Puritan representatives as "Cartwright's scholars." Cartwright was nominated as one of the ministers who were to represent the Puritan side at the Hampton Court Conference. In the words of John R de Witt:

Doubtless the most representative early Presbyterian Puritan was Thomas Cartwright, who . . . with a burning passion quite careless of the consequences asserted the sole lordship of Christ in His Church. Granting that the authority of Queen Elizabeth was 'the greatest in the earth,' yet he affirmed that it was limited by the Word of God. . . . What Cartwright demands is not the dominance of the Church over the state, but the independence of the Church in its own realm and its divinely-given right to exercise the functions peculiar to it, particularly in the matter of discipline. . . .²²

Cartwright denied some of the charges against him and emphasised that the *Book of Discipline* had never been put in operation; it merely stated what he and others wished to be put in practice. This treatment of the Puritans was bound to attract sympathy in Scotland and the General Assembly, meeting in March 1590, resolved "that the brethren recommend to God, in their public and private supplications, the afflicted brethren, in England, for the confession of the purity of the religion."²³ Queen Elizabeth was annoyed; three months later, she protested to the Scottish King by letter. James replied to "his dearest sister and cousin," having heard of the apprehension of Cartwright and others, that he was "requesting you most earnestly that . . . it may please you to let them be relieved of their present strait."²⁴ Although it was becoming clear that no actual seditious conduct had been proved, the ministers were kept in prison. It became clear that the best hope of release was for the ministers to look to Archbishop Whitgift. It was probably the Attorney General who drew up a form of submission which the ministers were required to sign before they could be released. Among other demands, it required them to acknowledge the full ecclesiastical supremacy of the Queen, that it was seditious and unlawful for anybody to attempt to alter existing church usages without the consent of her Majesty, that the existing church government was allowed by the Word of God, and that the Presbyterian system of government was both unlawful and dangerous.

Hooker's views on grace and predestination

Richard Hooker wrote only one known treatise on the subject of predestination, the *Dublin Fragments* and the doctrine found therein is consistent with even his earliest work, despite

²² De Witt. *Ius Divinum, The Westminster Assembly and the Divine Right of Church Government*, 174-6.

²³ Pearson. *Thomas Cartwright and Elizabethan Puritanism*, 343.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 463-4.

criticism that he received. His understanding of predestination can be said to have been influenced by medieval theologian Thomas Aquinas and Italian theologian Peter Martyr Vermigli. Vermigli famously believed that the gospel makes Christians more virtuous than moral philosophy does make heathens. Vermigli was the chair of theology at Oxford and said to have also influenced the Archbishop Cranmer, who under King Edward VI had been involved in inviting reformers including Melancthon to England. Vermigli's treatise on predestination would have probably been known to Hooker, as well as Vermigli's view that vocation, justification, and glorification were caused by election and not the other way around. Peter Martyr raised the question whether the damned are separate from the elect by the predestination of the elect and whether the damned and their judgment are to be considered providential but not predestined. Like Vermigli, Hooker also investigated the issue of the corporate and collective nature of election. Hooker believed in the resistibility of grace, but he cannot be said to have embraced Vermigli's concerns verbatim. Neither can Hooker be said to have directly inspired the later work of Dutch theologian James Arminius, who viewed election as conditional upon good works, despite accusations that he espoused Arminian doctrine at the end of his life.

In Hooker's major work of the 1590s, *Of the Lawes of Ecclesiastical Polity*, Hooker dealt with the subject of predestination incidentally. His view has been interpreted as understanding predestination to be based on the appropriation of grace, and accompanying works. Censorship on this issue caused Hooker to refrain from expressing his full opinion on the matter. Hooker frequently cites Thomas Cartwright using his initials T.C., and he viewed "Cartwright's controversial works as containing a representative exposition of the Puritan position."²⁵ For example, Hooker's understanding of the angels sheds light on his understanding of grace and predestination. He believed that the elect angels are without the possibility of falling at present.

It seemeth therefore that there was no other way for angels to sin, but by reflex of their understanding upon themselves; when being held with admiration of their own sublimity and honour, the memory of their subordination unto God and their dependency on him was drowned in this conceit; whereupon their adoration, love and imitation of God could not choose but be interrupted. The fall of angels, therefore, was pride. (...) For being dispersed, some in the air, some on the earth, some in the water, some among the minerals, dens, and caves, that are under the earth; they have by all means laboured to effect a universal rebellion against the laws, and as far as in them lieth utter destruction of the works of God.²⁶

²⁵ Pearson. *Thomas Cartwright and Elizabethan Puritanism*, 372.

²⁶ Walton. *The Works of Mr Richard Hooker*. Volume 1, 161.

The original state of the angels has been to exist in admiration and adoration grounded in the greatness of God, love from apprehending the purity, glory, and beauty of God, and imitation of God's exemplary goodness. The angels have since their fall changed their practices to the clean opposite of these three practices and states, as described above. Hooker believed that angels are spirits, intellectual, and need to be considered not only with reference to what they are and do in their own being, but also with reference to that which "concerneth them as they are linked into a kind of corporation among themselves, and of society or fellowship with men."²⁷ Hooker considered that angels are "glorious inhabitants of those sacred places, where nothing but light and blessed immortality..." persist and that the angels are in number and order "huge, mighty and royal armies..."²⁸ They exist in perfect obedience to the law, and God moves them as he stirs the heart of man. Hooker looked to the hierarchy among angels, and considered them as associated, "and their law is that which disposeth them as an army, one in order and degree above another."²⁹ This type of reasoning about order shows that Hooker had an advanced understanding of hierarchical authority in the ecclesiastical and theological sphere against recent criticism of historian GR Elton who argues that Hooker misses the point that "the essence of government in Tudor England was quite independent of the Convocations of the archepiscopal provinces."³⁰ Elton argues that from the 1530s, "an ultimate legislative supremacy of the king was half-grasped and wholly practised."³¹ Contrary to Elton's opinion, Hooker's views are advanced concerning authority in an era not long after King Henry VIII declared himself head of church and state in the place previously claimed by the Pope of Rome.

Hooker addressed a similar issue in *A Learned Sermon of the Nature of Pride*, where he seeks to define justice. Hooker here argues that even if man had no faults neither pride, "the fall of angels doth make it almost a question, whether we might not need a preservative still, lest we should haply wax proud, that we are not proud."³² This reasoning shows that Hooker's views were not in line with Arminius that election is conditional upon works, but that he understood humanity's inability and need of grace in every moment. He believed that God ordained Christ as a sufficient remedy for the sin of all. "Granted, it is and agreed upon, that he which hath not the Son of God in him hath not life."³³ Furthermore, Hooker examines the

²⁷ Ibid., 160.

²⁸ Ibid., 159.

²⁹ Ibid., 160.

³⁰ Elton. *The Tudor Constitution*, cited in Faulkner. *Richard Hooker and the Politics of a Christian England*, 167.

³¹ Walton. *The Works of Mr Richard Hooker*. Volume 1, 160.

³² Ibid. Volume 2, 707.

³³ Ibid., 709.

quality of justice requisite for salvation.

...neither God, nor angels, nor men could in any sense be termed just, were it not for that which is due from one to another in regard of some received law between them: some law either natural and immutable, or else subject unto change, otherwise called positive law.³⁴

Hooker esteemed that God is the permissive, but not a positive cause of evil, and he also wrote of the supernatural power of God as the greatest mercy.

Richard Hooker's views were considered to be heretical, and in the last two years of his life, he attempted to defend himself against an attack on Books 1-5 of *Lawes* published in *A Christian Letter* whose authorship is recorded as anonymous but can be ascribed to Thomas Cartwright and Andrew Willet. His defence found in the *Dublin Fragments* is his one work that deals with the subject of predestination directly. Responding to the 10th article of *A Christian Letter* on the subject of predestination, Hooker considers the difference between things contingent and necessary. Hooker argued that to be learned or virtuous is a contingent effect because not all human beings have these qualities. He wrote of dependable contingencies including virtuous habits with predictable results and the role of the Providence of God. Hooker believed in God's eternal and infallible foresight of all things, but he argued that the foreknowledge of God include possibilities that are never actualized; and on the other hand that sin is foreknown of God but not foreordained of God. For Hooker, God's determinate will is either positive, or permissive or privative, yet all of God's determinations are for good. God is not the author of sin, but God permitted that sin come into the world, yet he offered undeserving angels and men liberty and eternal life even though they must take responsibility for their sin through mortality. God's governance includes divine wrath on account of sin. God's justice proportions and appoints punishment of sin, yet the mercy of God offers reward for virtues when performed with his grace, including eternal life.

Neelands points out that "the topic of predestination seems to have surfaced more frequently in the surviving sermon material, something apparently related to the pastoral context of parish ministry."³⁵ Though not dealt with directly, the topic of Richard Hooker's sermons gets to the heart of theological questions of contemporary relevance in the subject of predestination. Nigel Voak points out that "the Anabaptists, according to Hooker, place less emphasis on the saving power of preaching than do the Presbyterians." Voak points out that both Anabaptists and Presbyterians are alike in that they believe that the Holy Scripture can

³⁴ Ibid., 716.

³⁵ Kirby. Richard Hooker and the English Reformation, 50.

only be understood by the power of the Holy Spirit. More than the work of the Holy Spirit in the human reason, Hooker refers to direct inward manifestations of the Spirit. Rowan Williams writes of Hooker's contemplative pragmatism notably found in his famous 1586 sermon "The Certainty and Perpetuity of Faith in the Elect." Hooker believed that Roman Catholics could go to heaven, as noted in this sermon, and his reasons were Protestant. He believed that human righteousness is always flawed, even when the perfect righteousness of God freely offered in Christ Jesus guarantees the possibility of full forgiveness.

Neelands examines the controversy surrounding Hooker's 1584 Paul's Cross sermon and the conflicts at the Temple, and concerning the doctrine contained in three sermons preached consecutively in April 1586. The objections that Walter Travers raised were to the doctrinal positions taken by Hooker, and it was these objections that prompted Archbishop Whitgift to suspend Travers' right to preach. In the dispute between Travers and Hooker on the subject of predestination, Travers complained that Hooker taught that the Church of Rome is a true Church of Christ whereas Travers thought it was his "bounden duty to God and to his Church ... to teach the truth in a general speech in such points of doctrine."³⁶ Travers expressed concern that Hooker's teaching on the Church of Rome would "encourage the ill-affected to continue still in their damnable ways, and others weak in faith to suffer themselves easily to be seduced to the destruction of their souls."³⁷ Hooker responded in a treatise, a brief apologia entitled *Answer to a Supplication* that was addressed to Whitgift, which he wrote in good confidence that not only Whitgift would be convinced of his views but Travers himself would as well. The issue of kneeling or standing at communion was mentioned, among other issues. Primarily from the apologia, Neelands summarizes Hooker's position on predestination in the 1580s as follows:

- a) There is a secret determination by God that some particular human beings should live (i.e., The eternal life of glory) (thesis B.1.1); those not so determined are "foreseen" to be worthy of rejection, although this foresight is a question of "order" rather than "time" (thesis B1.2.1); that is, it is the reason for their rejection, which is finally determined only much later, when they actually come to judgement (thesis B1.2);
- b) The determination of this elect status is not only secret but presupposes the *positive* foreseeing of their being, and the *permissive* foresight of their being "miserable" (these B1.1.1, B2.3); it also presupposes foresight of their "believing, fearing and obediently serving him" (thesis B1.1.2); but

³⁶ Walton. *The Works of Mr Richard Hooker*, 560.

³⁷ *Ibid.*

- c) There is a complete asymmetry of responsibility for ultimate human destinies; the elect has only God to thank, and not their faith, fear or obedience (thesis B1.1), while the "forsaken" have only themselves to blame (theses B1.2.1, B2.2).³⁸

Neelands points out that Hooker understands rejection to depend upon worthiness for rejection, but argues that this not mean that election is contingent upon good works, nor does the acceptance of grace and growth in grace cause election. Neelands points out that allegedly Hooker's motive "for addressing these questions in this way is twofold: first, to avoid the presumptuous security of the elect (...and) to silence those who would blame God for anyone's damnation."³⁹ Ten years after the debates at the Temple, and those debates in connection with his Paul's Cross sermon of 1584, the topic of predestination was raised in a controversy that led to the Lambeth Articles, written for the Archbishop Whitgift in 1599 (written by Dr. William Whitaker). At the end of the *Dublin Fragments*, Hooker re-wrote the Lambeth Articles himself. According to Nigel Atkinson, Hooker's reason was wholly compatible with a reformed view, even while he sought to highlight differing uses of reason, whether it be reason employed in the Regnum Christi or in the Regnum Mundi.

Hooker's views on grace and predestination are consistent with other Reformation figures of the Elizabethan era, despite public debates.

Nigel Atkinson points out that Hooker's work has been neglected in evangelical circles of the church, and his reformed heritage has been overlooked in favour of depicting Hooker as seeking to turn the Church of England away from the reformation. Atkinson investigates Hooker's theological method and proves that Hooker did not regard Scripture, tradition, and reason as equally important, rather Hooker gave Scripture priority and a superior place in theological enquiry. Thus, his contribution to the understanding of grace and predestination within the Reformation of the Elizabethan era was perhaps what merited him the reputation of great Anglican theologian, and other titles of esteem.

For Hooker's opponents their adherence to the concept of the Church as fallen was well nigh absolute. Calvin sought to restore the Church to its doctrinal purity, but for him that did not mean a complete return to the institutions, ceremonies and rites of the Primitive Church. Doctrinal purity was his primary aim. (...) The charge of novelty levelled against this doctrine could be overcome, they thought, by emphasizing what all Reformers emphasized, namely that they were restoring the Church to her original purity. For Hooker's opponents, the corruption of the Church was most visibly seen in the creation of episcopal government.⁴⁰

³⁸ Kirby, Richard Hooker and the English Reformation, 48.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Atkinson, Richard Hooker on the Authority of Scripture, Reason and Tradition: Reformed Theologian of the Church of England? 42-43.

Erasmus was a Latin scholar, and a humanist rather than a reformer, who avoided serious disputes and controversy and advocated a return to apostolic simplicity in his *Enchiridion*. However, the great humanist Erasmus overlooked that what was at stake for reformers was the essential truths of the gospel on which the church relied, and that it was vital for them that doctrine spearhead their attacks, "hence, they insisted, again and again, that a person's will was corrupt and totally 'bound', unable in matters of salvation to produce any meritorious good work..."⁴¹ Thus, Hooker's works must be considered as a response to the Biblicism of reformers, illuminating the relationship between grace and nature, reason and revelation, and that they are not identical. Hooker is often seen to differ from other Reformation figures of the Elizabethan era with respect to the power he ascribes to reason.

Hooker elevates reason, almost exalting it into an independent source of revelation. But what exactly does this use of reason amount to? On the one hand it could be argued that it amounts to a great deal. It tells people that there is a God who is to be worshipped (...) This is no small achievement for it lies at the heart, as Hooker pointed out, of the Law and the Prophets. But beyond this point it could not go.⁴²

Hooker, like the reformers, believed that reason itself does not have the power or the ability to make salvation attainable or to secure the gift of eternal life. Rather Hooker concludes that the way to salvation is a supernatural way "utterly beyond their reason to conceive or imagine."⁴³ The supernatural way Hooker refers to "is the way given to mankind by the gracious act of God in revealing his son Jesus Christ in the Holy Scriptures."⁴⁴

After Hooker's death, predestination became the subject of debates in England and was raised controversially at Cambridge, leading to the composition of the Lambeth articles by Archbishop Whitgift in 1595. Hooker's first public appearance, a sermon at Paul's Cross in 1581, had created controversy on different opinions about the topic of predestination, and this event together with hints about his views found in *Of the Lawes of Ecclesiastical Polity*, led to the criticism published in the second last year of his life in *A Christian Letter*. Hooker taught against predestination that God has a mutable and occasioned will. In Book II of *Of the Lawes of Ecclesiastical Polity*, Hooker speaks to those who urge reformation in the Church of England, namely that Scripture is the only rule of all things that can be done by men. Hooker there argues that all actions endued with reason, voluntarily done, are either good or evil. In Book III, Hooker addresses the issue that in Scripture there must be contained a form of church

⁴¹ Ibid., 11.

⁴² Ibid., 16-17.

⁴³ Ibid., 17.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

polity and that the law thereof may not be altered. In Book V Hooker addresses the need for grace in every moment.

The grace which we have by the holy Eucharist doth not begin but continue life. No man therefore receiveth this sacrament before Baptism, because no dead thing is capable of nourishment. That which growth must of necessity first live. If our bodies did not daily waste, food to restore them were a thing superfluous. (...) In that life therefore where neither body nor soul can decay, our souls shall as little require this sacrament as our bodies corporal nourishment, but as long as the days of our warfare last, during the time that we are both subject to diminution and capable of augmentation in grace, (...) Yea even in this point no side denieth but that the soul of man is the receptacle of Christ's presence.⁴⁵

This section of Book V is a strong exhortation to the duty of believers to partake of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, and the province of the Eucharist to nourish the divine life of grace. After Mary's short reign, there was a return to Catholicism of many who accepted not only Royal Supremacy but also the new continental doctrines of reform. Reformers were generally against the Mass of the Roman Catholic Church, and some violently condemned the Eucharist as idolatry. The 39 articles condemn certain aspects of Catholicism, like transubstantiation, and Hooker's idea of continuance of life through the sacrament may have seemed in sympathy, especially when taken out of context by later research in the centuries to follow. This major work of Hooker has also been said to have announced a counter-Reformation. Hooker quotes Cartwright and Travers extensively, in dialogue with them, following Whitgift's work to set out a systematic statement of the beliefs of the Church of England. The very address of *Lawes* is to them that seek Reformation, whose views are acknowledged and engaged in dialogue. Hooker's work was thought out in the heart of the city of London, in the society of some of the most active contenders of the Puritan controversy, and he begins with a call to consider what law is and what are the different kinds and different forces according to each kind. Hooker denounced popish rites and ceremonies that corrupted the right form of church polity, yet his opponents accused him of being a Papist.

Hooker has brought to bear on the discussion of Scripture – philosophy, that is to say, the wisdom of the heathen Aristotle and the love of the Popish schoolmen; he has invoked these against his opponents, and has refused to allow that he pious man, equipped with none of these, is the better interpreter of the sacred text.⁴⁶

For Hooker, as for reformers, the testimonies of God are true and perfect, and Hooker challenged the use of extra-biblical sources, especially when treated as Scripture. Hooker's connections with the Erasmian tradition were several, not least, in the priority of Scripture.

⁴⁵ Walton. *The Works of Mr Richard Hooker*. Volume 1, 80-81.

⁴⁶ Hughes, *The Reformation in England*, 222.

Hooker believed that supernatural laws could not be discovered in a natural way, and that reason was powerless to discover what we should do to obtain eternal life. Atkinson points out that Hooker was successful in defending the Church of England's reformed pedigree due to his ability to demonstrate that Puritans had abandoned Reformed orthodoxy and that his own position was much closer to that of the Reformers. According to Atkinson, Hooker points out that Puritans were trying to out-reform the Reformation and, in the process, had created a new theological synthesis that had little to do with orthodox Christian thought. In particular, the view that Scripture is the only rule of all things which in this life may be done by men was not a view held by Hooker, and it was not a view held by the Reformers either but belonged to Puritans. It was this point that Hooker challenged his Puritan detractors, especially Cartwright, who was, in turn, influenced by John Hooper and William Turner. Cartwright attempted to give direction to the study of divinity, and his views of biblical inspiration may be orthodox. However, Atkinson points out that in Cartwright's hands, the doctrine of inspiration "is so manipulated that no attempt is made to distinguish between the various genres present in the biblical text."⁴⁷ Hooker's complaint was that when Scripture delivered historical information, it was understood to be legally meant.

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⁴⁷ Atkinson. *Richard Hooker on the Authority of Scripture, Tradition and Reason: Reformed Theologian of the Church of England?* 86.

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