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978-1-107-07368-5 - Anglican Enlightenment: Orientalism, Religion and Politics in England and its Empire, 1648–1715

William J. Bulman

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ANGLICAN ENLIGHTENMENT

This is an original interpretation of the early European Enlightenment and the religious conflicts that rocked England and its empire under the later Stuarts. In a series of vignettes that move between Europe and North Africa, William Bulman shows that this period witnessed not a struggle for and against new ideas and greater freedoms, but a battle between several novel schemes for civil peace. Bulman considers anew the most apparently conservative force in post-Civil War English history: the conformist leadership of the Church of England. He demonstrates that the Church's historical scholarship, social science, pastoral care, and political practice amounted not to a culturally backward spectacle of intolerance, but to a campaign for stability drawn from the frontiers of erudition and globalization. In seeking to sever the link between zeal and chaos, the church and its enemies were thus united in an Enlightenment project, but bitterly divided over what it meant in practice.

WILLIAM J. BULMAN is Assistant Professor of History at Lehigh University.

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ANGLICAN ENLIGHTENMENT

*Orientalism, Religion and Politics in England
and its Empire, 1648–1715*

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University Printing House, Cambridge CB2 8BS, United Kingdom

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Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781107073685

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First published 2015

Reprinted 2015

Printed in the United Kingdom by Clays, St Ives plc

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloguing in Publication data

Bulman, William J., 1979–

Anglican enlightenment : Orientalism, religion and politics in England and its empire, 1648–1715 / William Bulman, Lehigh University.

pages cm. – (Cambridge studies in early modern British history)

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-1-107-07368-5 (hardback) – ISBN 978-1-107-42328-2 (paperback) 1. England – Church history – 17th century 2. Catholic Church – History – 17th century. 3. Church of England – History – 17th century. 4. Christianity and politics – England – History – 17th century. 5. England – Intellectual life – 17th century. 6. Great Britain – History – Stuarts, 1603–1714.

I. Title.

BR756.B85 2015

942.06 – dc23 2015003496

ISBN 978-1-107-07368-5 Hardback

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Preface

A word about enlightenment

While the world's ongoing culture wars and security debacles have led many people to think differently about the Enlightenment in recent years, I still expect some readers to bristle at the title of this book. One British-born academic's reaction a few years back might well encapsulate the reaction of others: 'I don't know much about Anglican Enlightenment', he told me, 'but it sounds like a contradiction in terms'. This impulse may only be amplified for anyone who has correctly concluded from the book's subtitle that the Enlightenment it describes was largely the work of men who were not only pious Anglicans, but persecutors, royalists, and imperialists with no more than a marginal interest in philosophy.¹ The sentiment, of course, is perfectly understandable. After all, even the Enlightenment's sworn enemies on the right and the left prefer their Enlightenment ideologically and intellectually pure. But readers who reject the umbrella term I have employed in the title and on occasion in the pages to follow will still have to reckon, as I have, with the facts arranged under it.

One of those facts is a particularly awkward one: the basic concepts, norms, concerns, and practices that we typically associate with the Enlightenment were never even remotely confined to the domain of philosophy, and they never consistently led to the promotion of either secularism or liberation. In my view, the most compelling way of registering this fact is to admit that the Enlightenment was ideologically open-ended, socially embedded, and disciplinarily diverse. This can be done without rendering the notion of Enlightenment so pluralized, vague, or apolitical that it becomes incoherent, useless, or uninteresting. It might even capture some important truths about the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and about our own time. Enlightenment sceptics, in turn, ought to admit

¹ For the usual view of the Enlightenment as a philosophical movement of secular liberalism see, for example, Gay, *Enlightenment*; Israel, *Enlightenment contested*; Pagden, *Enlightenment*.

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that like it or not, the Enlightenment is here to stay. Whatever its value as a term of analysis, it seems unwilling to retreat in the face of relentless scholarly subdivisions, warnings, and denials. We might as well make the best of it.

In this book, I use the term ‘Enlightenment’ to refer to the articulation, defence, dissemination, and implementation of ideas under a specific set of historical conditions.² The most important conditions were the products of over a century of religious war and global expansion stretching from the early days of the Reformation to the 1648 Peace of Westphalia. That era left to Europe gory spectacles of religion gone wrong, maddening confessional stalemates, persistent domestic turmoil, and a bewildering awareness of the planet’s religious diversity.³ Many elites became convinced that religious and public life finally needed to be organized in a manner that prevented the fires of zeal from laying waste to civil order. While this conviction was increasingly accompanied by a more positive commitment to worldly human betterment, the early Enlightenment – which stretched from about 1650 to 1715 – was dominated by a concern for peace.⁴ This guiding commitment to stability and improvement might also be expressed in the form of a motivating question: what forms of intellectual, social, religious, and political organization could procure these goods?⁵ This query was primarily one about order, security, and prosperity. As a result, the answers to it could be intolerant, authoritarian, and communitarian just as easily as they could be liberal, egalitarian, or individualist.⁶ To insist that the Enlightenment was ideologically multivalent is not to deny that it was defined by civic ideals.

The second basic condition for Enlightenment was bound up with the first. Europe’s violent religious fragmentation and its encounters with non-Christian religions across the globe conspired to give rise to what we might

² For a broader discussion, see Bulman, ‘Enlightenment for the culture wars’. See also Bulman and Ingram (eds), *God in the Enlightenment*. Edelstein, *Enlightenment*, 13, 125, concurs but imposes different conditions.

³ This impetus for Enlightenment merges those posited by Israel (*Enlightenment contested*, 63) and Hazard (*Crisis of the European mind*, 3–28), but my account of the immediate effects of war and expansion is fundamentally different. These historical conditions did not require forward-thinking Europeans to jettison their institutional and intellectual inheritance.

⁴ Israel’s ‘crisis’ or ‘prelude to the Early Enlightenment’ begins in 1650 (*Radical Enlightenment*, 14) and Hazard’s *crise* ends in 1715. Robertson’s post-1740 Enlightenment tackled similar problems of ‘human betterment in this world’ and ‘sociability’ (*Case for the Enlightenment*, 28, 30).

⁵ Compare Pocock, *Barbarism and religion*, I, 7; Pocock, ‘Conservative Enlightenment’, 84–94; Pocock, ‘Clergy and commerce’, 532.

⁶ Paquette (ed), *Enlightened reform*; Koselleck, *Critique and crisis*; Hunter, *Secularization of the confessional state*; Bates, *States of war*; Malcolm, *Aspects of Hobbes*, 535–45.

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call a condition of elite secularity.⁷ This state of mind was long in the making, but its emergence was precipitated by the civil conflicts of the mid seventeenth century and the concomitant rise of schism, sectarianism, libertinism, and freethinking. European elites quickly became more acutely aware than ever before that their own religious commitments (or lack thereof) constituted a choice among many available forms of religion (and irreligion), all of which could be embraced by sane and intelligent (if erring) people. It was with this awareness that many Europeans posed, answered, and tackled in practice the questions of civil peace and human flourishing that the previous century had bequeathed to them.

This tended to mean that Enlightened solutions to the riddle of public religion were defended (and alternative solutions refuted) with recourse to both immanent critique and purportedly minimal, shared epistemological and ontological assumptions. In this way elite secularity supplied a second guiding question for the Enlightenment: how could plans for moving forward be defended, evaluated, and implemented in a manner that people of widely varying types and degrees of belief and unbelief could possibly be expected to accept? The need to answer the question of civil peace under conditions of elite secularity accounts for the familiar turn in Enlightened argument away from the theological, the demonological, the providential, and the revealed, and towards the useful, the natural, the rational, the civil, the moral, the peaceful, the cosmopolitan, and the human.

The content, dissemination, and implementation of those arguments were in turn conditioned by a novel panoply of media. These included practices and institutions, both invented and inherited, that underwent important changes after 1650: scholarly methods, learned disciplines, literary genres, rhetorical techniques, voluntary associations, and reading publics, to be sure, but also universities, churches, governments, and empires. These media themselves often amounted to partial answers to the Enlightenment's guiding questions.⁸ Enlightenment could thus be pursued in a variety of institutional and learned settings, and on a variety of geographical scales,

⁷ This concept merges the phenomenological and discursive models of secularity employed, respectively, in Taylor, *Secular age*, esp. 3–4, 12–14, 19–20, 192–4; and Stout, *Democracy and tradition*, 92–117. Yet it also registers the role of globalization and eschews Taylor's narrative and anthropology. See also Rubiés, 'From antiquarianism to philosophical history', 323; Edelstein, *Enlightenment*, 34.

⁸ See Bulman, 'Hobbes's publisher and the political business of Enlightenment'. Compare to Sheehan, 'Enlightenment, religion, and the enigma of secularization', 1075–7; Sheehan, *Enlightenment Bible*, xi–xiii; Siskin and Warner (eds), *This is enlightenment*. The following account differs from Sheehan's in emphasizing the prevention of religious war and including ecclesiastical and governmental practices (see Edelstein, *Enlightenment*, 10–11, 32, 79–98). Sheehan implicitly acknowledges the role of elite secularity when he argues that the Enlightenment Bible answered anew the question of why one should read it.

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from the local to the international.⁹ The fact that specific people, institutions, ideas, and practices were vehicles for Enlightenment does not imply that they were Enlightened *in toto*. This is why we can speak of many people and institutions as Enlightened even when they retained traditional theological and doctrinal commitments and engaged in behaviour that did not lead to peace.¹⁰ To do so is to capture only one aspect of their existence: the extent to which they were sites for active attempts to tackle the problem of civil peace and worldly flourishing under conditions of elite secularity. On this reading, Enlightenment becomes less a framework for studying intellectual, social, religious, or political history than a lens on their interrelationships.

If Enlightenment is understood this way, Anglican Enlightenment should not be so hard to stomach. It simply denotes the participation of conforming members of the Church of England in the Enlightenment, under a variant of the Enlightenment's characteristic historical conditions: the aftermath of the English Civil Wars and Revolution, the fragmentation of English Christianity, the rise of English freethinking, the emergence of an imperial state, and the transformation of the pastoral and political activities of the established church. In all these realms, this book describes the Anglican Enlightenment's early, largely conformist, and predominantly clerical phase, which has never been acknowledged, let alone studied in detail. I also approach the other major condition for Enlightenment in England – Europe's many realms of scholarly and literary practice – in an intentionally selective manner. I sideline the much-discussed and over-emphasized worlds of science and philosophy in favour of historical scholarship. The study of the past was arguably far more important to the early Enlightenment than other spheres of inquiry, because of its central role in religious and political conflict and the enduring importance of the humanist culture that it embodied.¹¹ While no aspect of the Anglican Enlightenment was without close continental parallels, the national conditions under which it emerged inevitably distinguished it. For like all species of Enlightenment, it was only indirectly an intellectual phenomenon: it extended from erudition and polemic to political practice and pastoral care.¹² Its history is as much a history of culture, religion, and politics as it is a history of ideas.

⁹ See Withers, *Placing the Enlightenment*; Hesse, 'Towards a new topography'.

¹⁰ On this point from a different perspective, see Pocock, *Barbarism and religion*, esp. V, x–xii, 12–18, 221, 309.

¹¹ See Bulman and Ingram (eds), *God in the Enlightenment*.

¹² Enlightened Anglicanism therefore denotes those styles of thought, scholarship, apologetics, and ministerial and political practice that were part of the Church of England's participation in the

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Another variety of enlightenment has also been a part of this book from the beginning. Fortunately there were not so many burdens, pitfalls, and ambiguities in the way of appreciating it. This was the brilliance of the scholars, friends, and family around whom this book was conceived and written. The leading lights, without question, were Peter Lake and Anthony Grafton, who have been constant sources of insight, encouragement, and advice to me for over a decade now. It is impossible for me to conceive of the genesis, development, or completion of this book without thinking of my conversations with both of them. I will be forever in their debt. But without inspiration from Jeffrey Matson, Mark Pegg, and Derek Hirst, I would have never become an historian, and without early reflections on the value of this project from Linda Colley, Brendan Kane, and Steve Pincus, it may never have gone anywhere. Peter, Tony, Mark, Derek, Brendan, and Linda all read and commented on at least one version of this book and helped shape it at many other junctures. So did a number of other bright minds from whose writing, criticism, counsel, and camaraderie I have benefited immeasurably over the years, including Alex Barber, Carolyn Biltoft, Justin Champion, Alastair Hamilton, Robert Ingram, Anthony Milton, Jason Peacey, Nicholas Popper, Jonathan Sheehan, Brent Sirota, Nigel Smith, and Philip Stern. Countless others – too many to list – have often unwittingly shed light on difficult aspects of this project in conversation and in their responses to reading or hearing about either my dissertation or portions of the book, including David Armitage, Adam Beach, Alexander Bick, Brian Cowan, Richard Cust, Natalie Davis, Sarah Ellen Zweig, Kenneth Fincham, John-Paul Ghobrial, Gabriel Glickman, Mark Goldie, Philip Gorski, Karl Gunther, Paul Halliday, Tim Harris, Ann Hughes, Khurram Hussain, Mark Knights, Nitzan Lebovic, Dmitri Levitin, Paul Lim, Jan Loop, Michael Raposa, Andrea Schatz, Scott Sowerby, John Spurr, Victor Stater, Isaac Stephens, Heather Thornton, Dale Van Kley, James Vaughn, Charles Walton, Benjamin Wright, and Craig Yirush. Needless to say, any shortcomings that remain in the text are due not to the purveyors of all this enlightenment, but to its intended recipient.

Like its upper-case cousin, the enlightenment from which I sought to benefit while writing this book merits description not simply in intellectual terms, but also with reference to the groups, institutions, and networks that made that writing possible. *Anglican Enlightenment* was planned,

Enlightenment and influenced by that participation. Following Sheehan, *Enlightenment Bible*, xii–xiii, we might say that ‘the Enlightenment Church of England’ was a set of new answers to the question of why one should accept the establishment, liturgy, and priesthood of that church. The new answers, of course, co-existed with the old.

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researched, and written alongside other projects while I was a doctoral student at Princeton University, a postdoctoral fellow at Vanderbilt University and Yale University, and a junior faculty member at Lehigh University. The library staff at all these institutions have been crucial sources of book supply and banter, and without the help of experts at scores of libraries and archives in Britain, my work would have been impossible. At both Princeton and Vanderbilt, Elizabeth Lunbeck managed to be an unforgettable welcoming presence. At Yale, in addition to Pincus, Gorski, and Walton, whom I have already mentioned, Keith Wrightson and a wonderful cohort of graduate students quickly made me feel at home. At Lehigh, nearly every one of my generous colleagues in History and Global Studies helped me finish this book in one way or another, but I would be remiss in not singling out (in addition to Lebovic, mentioned earlier) Michael Baylor, Stephen Cutcliffe, Jack Lule, John Pettegrew, John Savage, and John Smith. This project was also made possible through the support of fellowships and grants from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, the Jacob K. Javits Fellowship Program, Princeton's Centers for the Study of Religion and Human Values, and the Religion and Innovation in Human Affairs (RIHA) Program of the Historical Society, funded by the John Templeton Foundation. The opinions expressed in this book are mine, and do not necessarily reflect the views of any of these entities. The final site for the production of this book, of course, was Cambridge University Press, where Chloe Dawson, Elizabeth Friend-Smith, Chloé Harries, and Rosalyn Scott offered sound advice and smooth management while the series editors provided truly searching and indispensable commentary. I also ought to acknowledge the illuminating feedback I received on aspects of this project over the years from audiences at Bangor, Harvard, Lehigh, London, NYU, Oxford, Penn, Princeton, Texas, Vanderbilt, William and Mary, and Yale, not to mention a series of hotel conference venues.

Finally, and again like what I will describe in the pages to follow, the enlightenment that helped push this project forward was not simply a matter of clever ideas, vibrant institutions, and productive practices. It was ultimately a matter of guiding and motivating concerns and commitments. I have been unfathomably fortunate to have loving friends and family who have not only practically enabled my work more consistently and caringly than any academic entity, but also ensured that I approached it in the right frame of mind. Among the many friends who have guided me along the way, J. Andrew Harris has been my most steadfast supporter and a singular example to follow in learning and in life. Without the uncanny ability of my parents, Catherine and William III, to simultaneously dedicate themselves

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to my endeavours, let me go my own way, and keep me grounded, the path to this book would have never been open to me. My grandfather, William Jr, an inspiring storyteller, remains my greatest fan. My parents in law, Susan and Eric Busch, have stepped in on countless occasions when I had to travel or meet a deadline, and they have always shown effortlessly genuine appreciation for what I do. My brother Bryan has helped me keep perspective, and my sister, Bridget Matarazzo, now also an academic of sorts, has been a sympathetic listener and a role model in a dozen different ways.

Ever since they could string sentences together, my sons Andrew and Liam have politely inquired about how the seemingly endless reading and typing on the computer in my office is going. They have buoyed my existence with these words, and with every other bright moment they have conspired to create since their arrival. As they remind me every day, talking to Kathryn Busch (now Bulman) on the back steps of my St Louis apartment after my first research trip to England was probably the most enlightened thing I have ever done. Her support, patience, sacrifice, and encouragement have been unyielding but never indulgent, and her companionship, acumen, and perspective have kept me content, poised, and present from start to finish.

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In quotations from Anglophone historical sources, orthography and transliterations have usually been modernized. Greek, Hebrew, and Arabic words have been transliterated throughout the main text except in cases where doing so would introduce ambiguity. Dates are rendered in Old Style, with the year beginning on 1 January. The footnotes contain short title and author or editor references. Full references appear in the Select Bibliography, where the titles of early modern printed books have been abbreviated, and the place of publication for all works listed is London, unless otherwise noted.

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Abbreviations

<i>AR</i>	<i>Archiv für Religionsgeschichte</i>
BL	British Library
Bodl	Bodleian Library
CAC	Carlisle Archive Centre
<i>CDS</i>	Addison, <i>Christians daily sacrifice</i>
<i>FSM</i>	Addison, <i>First state of Mahumedism</i>
<i>GU</i>	Addison, <i>Genuine use and necessity of the two sacraments</i>
<i>HJ</i>	<i>Historical journal</i>
<i>IS</i>	Addison, <i>Introduction to the sacrament</i>
<i>JEH</i>	<i>Journal of ecclesiastical history</i>
<i>JHI</i>	<i>Journal of the history of ideas</i>
KAC	Kendal Archive Centre
LPL	Lambeth Palace Library
LRO	Lichfield Record Office
<i>MP</i>	Addison, <i>Modest plea for the clergy</i>
<i>ODNB</i>	<i>Oxford dictionary of national biography</i>
OUA	Oxford University Archives
<i>PI</i>	Addison, <i>Primitive institution</i>
<i>PSJ</i>	Addison, <i>Present state of the Jews</i>
QCA	The Queen's College Archive, Oxford
QCL	The Queen's College Library, Oxford
<i>Spectator</i>	Addison and Steele, <i>Spectator</i>
<i>Tatler</i>	Addison and Steele, <i>Tatler</i>
TNA	The National Archives of the UK
<i>WB</i>	Addison, <i>West Barbary</i>
WSA	Wiltshire and Swindon Archives