Introduction

> Nowe at the last the holy Ghost bringeth in Iesus Christ vpon the Theatre of the world, as it were to play his part in this tragedie.
>
> (Arthur Dent, *The Ruine of Rome*, 1603)

This book examines the political uses of apocalyptic and anti-Catholic language in seventeenth-century English drama. This rhetoric is part of a Europe-wide Reformed polemical culture that stresses the opposition between the Roman Catholic and Protestant religions. It allows individuals to read spiritual and temporal matters and to participate in disputation. Yet opposition does not imply inflexibility. By the beginning of the seventeenth century in England this is a commonplace and supple language, one that is well embedded in Protestant interpretative culture.[1] After the accession of James to the English throne in 1603 and the Union of the Crowns, Church and state face a number of challenges, some inherited, some new.[2] The Roman Catholic Church and its theology remains an identifiable common enemy for English Protestantism. However, the attitude of James and his government towards Rome is capable of multiple interpretations. Opposition and accommodation towards Rome strive for precedence in Jacobean England, a political legacy that the later Stuarts never quite manage to contain. This book traces that legacy through the varied dramatic uses of apocalyptic and anti-Catholic language during the seventeenth century. I argue that this language is not solely the property of Puritans or extremists, is not simply an expression of religious bigotry, and is not just a rhetoric used at moments of political crisis such as the Gunpowder Plot, the Great Fire of London, or the Popish Plot. Rather, it is an expression of 'true' religion that is made throughout the century by moderates and militants alike, by those somewhere in between, and even by those sympathetic to Rome.[3] It provides a cohesion and order that, for many, is both rational and affectively satisfying. An adaptable and multifarious language, it offers us a mirror onto broader cultural preoccupations. As the epigraph to this chapter intimates, it is also an inherently theatrical discourse. In the aftermath of the 'turn to religion' in early modern studies, fine work has been done on religion and the literary sphere.[4] This book turns our attention to the connections between theatre, theology, and polemic, examining how seventeenth-century playwrights exploit these connections for diverse political ends.[5]

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[1] By 'Protestant interpretative culture' I mean the exegetical, theological, and polemical modes of analysis and argument commonly used by Protestant writers and that are described in more detail in this chapter and the next.

[2] On the Union, see Bruce R. Galloway, *The Union of England and Scotland, 1603–1608* (Edinburgh: John Donald, 1986), and *Scots and Britons: Political Thought and the Union of 1603*, ed. Roger Mason (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994); Mark Kishlansky, *A Monarchy Transformed: Britain 1603–1714* (London and New York: Penguin Books, 1997), pp. 65–88, and *The Accession of James I: Historical and Cultural Consequences*, ed. Glenn Burgess, Rowland Wymer, and Jason Lawrence (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006). I use the term 'state' to refer to what Michael Braddick calls a 'coordinated and territorially bounded network of agents exercising political power' (p. 6) – *State Formation in Early Modern England c. 1550–1700* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

I

I begin with two ideas that are central to Protestant interpretative culture. The first is the polemical Reformist argument that the Roman Catholic Church is religiously corrupt and politically dangerous. The second is the more general religious belief that the world will come to an end as promised in the prophetic and apocalyptic books of the Bible, particularly

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[3] Anthony Milton, *Catholic and Reformed: The Roman and Protestant Churches in English Protestant Thought, 1600–1640* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 35–36. My book is indebted throughout to Milton's study. The terms 'bigot' and 'bigotry' are first used in 1598 and 1616, respectively – *Oxford English Dictionary Online* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

[4] See Debora Kuller Shuger, *The Renaissance Bible: Scholarship, Sacrifice and Subjectivity* (Berkeley and London: University of California Press, 1994); Steven Marx, *Shakespeare and the Bible* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000); Peter Lake with Michael Questier, *The Antichrist's Lewd Hat: Protestants, Papists and Players in Post-Reformation England* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2002); Brian Cummings, *The Literary Culture of the Reformation: Grammar and Grace* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007); Beatrice Groves, *Texts and Traditions: Religion in Shakespeare, 1592–1604* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2007); Hannibal Hamlin, *Psalm Culture and Early Modern English Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), and *The Bible and Shakespeare* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013); Michelle Osherow, *Biblical Women's Voices in Early Modern England* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009); and Elizabeth Clarke, *Politics, Religion and the Song of Songs in Seventeenth-Century England* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011).

[5] The etymology of the word 'polemic' in Greek relates to war and hostility and the OED records the first usage as 1614 – *Oxford English Dictionary Online*. For related work in this area, see Jesse M. Lander, *Inventing Polemic: Religion, Print, and Literary Culture in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006); Antoinina Bevan Zlatar, *Reformation Fictions: Polemical Protestant Dialogues in Elizabethan England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), and *Polemic: Language as Violence in Medieval and Early Modern Discourse*, ed. Almut Suerbaum, George Southcombe, and Benjamin Thompson (Farnham: Ashgate, 2015).

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in Revelation.[6] Apocalyptic and anti-Catholic ideas do not have to go together. Yet during this period they are often closely linked. Between 1522 when Martin Luther's New Testament is first published and 1700, nearly 1000 editions of and commentaries on Revelation are published in England alone.[7] Most of these commentaries advance an anti-Catholic interpretation of Scripture. They argue that the Book of Revelation describes the emergence and eventual destruction of the Roman Catholic Church in temporal history. This is an event that prefigures the apotheosis of spiritual history: the second coming, last judgement, and end of the world. Revelation is a highly allusive text and has been interpreted in multiple ways in the West. As Christopher Toenjes notes: 'Due to its rich imagery and symbolism, it catered to a thirst for biblical verifications of idiosyncratic interpretations of the past, present, and future.'[8] In the early modern period Revelation is commonly understood as an allegory of spiritual and temporal history. It also prophesies the end of history itself. Early modern interpretative culture is steeped in imagery drawn from the book: the seven seals and vials (5:1, 15:7), the four horsemen (6:1–8), the Whore of Babylon (17:1–8), the beasts from the sea and earth (13:1–18), Gog and Magog (20:8), and the New Jerusalem (21:1–2). Revelation lends itself to the expression of rhetorical enargia, visual and verbal. Albrecht Dürer's famous woodcut series depicting scenes from Revelation is, as we see from the front cover to this book, irreducibly dramatic, and the visual imagery inspired by Revelation is striking and symbolically rich. Some feared the end; others fervently anticipated it. While some may have been sceptical of the possibility altogether, the belief that the end would come is commonplace.[9] Clearly not everyone agreed with a Protestant interpretation of the apocalypse, least of all Roman Catholics. They generally see the antichrist as a figure still to emerge, so rejecting the Protestant association of that figure with the institution of the papacy.[10] There is also a fair degree of disparity amongst seventeenth-century Protestant commentators as to how the Book of Revelation should be read, as well as a variety of attitudes to the Roman Catholic Church, ranging from moderate accommodation to militant opposition.[11] But whatever approach is taken, the recurrence of anti-Catholicism and apocalypticism in early modern English Protestantism is remarkable.[12]

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[6] Although I understand 'apocalyptic' as a theological term and 'anti-Catholic' as a polemical term, there is no clear distinction between theology and polemic in the seventeenth century.

[7] Based on the calculation in Andrew Cunningham and Ole Peter Grell, *The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse: Religion, War, Famine and Death in Reformation Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p. 4, and the bibliography in *The Apocalypse in English Renaissance Thought and Literature*, ed. C.A. Patrides and Joseph Wittreich (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984).

[8] Christopher Toenjes, *Islam, the Turks and the Making of the English Reformation: The History of the Ottoman Empire in John Foxe's Acts and Monuments* (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 2015), p. 104.

[9] Milton, *Catholic and Reformed*, pp. 36–37.

[10] See Andrew Crome, *The Restoration of the Jews: Early Modern Hermeneutics, Eschatology, and National Identity in the Work of Thomas Brightman* (Heidelberg: Springer, 2014), pp. 60–61. See also Bernard McGinn, '"Wrestling with the Millennium": Early Modern Catholic Exegesis of

By 'anti-Catholicism', I mean the polemical argument that the Roman Catholic Church is a doctrinally false and dangerous anti-Church. From John Bale to Christopher Marlowe to John Webster to Nathaniel Lee, playwrights explore this idea in numerous ways. Alison Shell has shown how Italianate settings; tropes of corruption; dazzling objects, ornaments, and idols; hypocrisy; devilry; wolfishness; and damnation are the stock in trade of anti-Catholic imagery on stage.[13] Roman Catholicism is seen as a kind of drama: alluring but deeply dangerous. These images have political implications. They underlie the commonplace claim that the Roman Catholic Church uses its performative spiritual authority to usurp temporal power and persecute the 'true' Reformed Church. These ideas are regularly connected. As William Perkins writes in 1601: 'by the Whore of Babylon is meant the present Church of Rome: & this whore is said to be drunk with the blood of the Saints . . . they of the Romane Church haue long thirsted for the bloode of prince and people in this land'.[14] Even for a moderate Puritan like Perkins who is interested in conciliation between the Churches, Roman Catholicism is a religious and political threat.[15] To oppose Rome is one's godly duty. In Anthony Milton's words: 'Conflict with Rome was seen as being of the essence of Protestantism.'[16] By 'apocalypticism', I mean the prophetic and providential idea that the final

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Apocalypse 20', in *Imagining the End: Visions of the Apocalypse from the Ancient Middle East to Modern America*, ed. Abbas Amanat and Magnus Thorkell Bernhardsson (London and New York: I.B. Tauris, 2002), pp. 148–167.

[11] See Ethan H. Shagan, *The Rule of Moderation: Violence, Religion and the Politics of Restraint in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

[12] A comparative study of Roman Catholic and Protestant apocalypticism is beyond the scope of this book. Although much less studied, Roman Catholic writers in England such as William Allen, Robert Southwell, Robert Parsons, Richard Crashaw, and those on the continent such as Thomas Harding and Robert Bellarmine, often use Revelation and apocalyptic tropes to counter Protestant polemical attacks. In his *A Trve, Sincere, and Modest Defence, of English Catholiques* . . . (Rouen: Fr Parson's Press, 1584), Allen defends Roman Catholics from charges of political sedition by criticising those Protestants who defy their Princes as examples of 'Antichristian pride' (p. 208).

[13] Alison Shell, *Catholicism, Controversy and the English Literary Imagination, 1558–1660* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), pp. 56–104.

[14] William Perkins, *A Treatise of Gods Free Grace, and Mans Free Will* (Cambridge: Iohn Legat, 1601), p. 14.

[15] See William Perkins, *A Reformed Catholike* . . . (London: I Legat, 1597).

[16] Milton, *Catholic and Reformed*, p. 37.

judgement of Christ and the end of the world as described in the Bible, particularly in the last book, will be imminently revealed.[17] I also understand 'revelation' in its more grammatical and literary manifestations as an active uncovering or disclosing of truth (*OED*, def. 2), particularly the exposure in/as drama of 'false', worldly Roman Catholic practices that masquerade as spiritual truths.[18] Of course, to say that a particular conflict feels like the end of the world can simply be a general lament in a period that was not short of terror. And to use the trope of whoredom may just be an expression of commonplace misogyny. Not every theatrical whore is the Whore of Babylon nor is every wicked character on stage an antichrist. This book argues instead for a more flexible, variform way of reading this religious language in drama, one that is sensitive to the possibility of dramatic allegory and analogy but that does not try to reduce plays to these modes of reading.

As I suggest, apocalyptic and anti-Catholic languages are commonly used in conjunction with other literary discourses on the seventeenth-century stage. In Chapter 2 I consider John Marston's ludic, sceptical use of these languages in *The Dutch Courtesan* and how they inform the broader philosophical and political concerns of his drama. As a number of plays, from the medieval Miracle pageants to *Doctor Faustus* to *The Dutch Courtesan*, show, the evocation of the end of the world does not preclude jokes and laughter, however sardonic.[19] In a time where pain and fear are never far away, the idea of end of the world can also be a source of intense hope and joy. Revelation 21, which promises 'a new heauen, and a new earth' (21:1), contains the evocative lines: 'God shall wipe away all teares from their eyes, and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, neither crying, neither shall there be any more paine: for the first things are passed' (21:4). These words offer the promise of transcendence, that humanity's corrupt, suffering body might be cast off and a pure spiritual existence attained.[20] The apocalypse discloses a truth that fallen humans can only ever glimpse dimly: spiritual truth is revealed truth. Such ideas inform dramatic writing too. We see them explored in Thomas Middleton's *The Lady's Tragedy*, Philip Massinger's *Believe as You List*, and in a number of plays written before the outbreak of the Civil Wars.

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[17] See Arthur Dent, *The Ruine of Rome* . . . (London: Simon Waterson, 1603), sig. AA3v. Millenarianism – the belief that Christ would return to reign for 1000 years as a prelude to the end of the world – is not particularly popular in Elizabethan and Jacobean England and is a phenomenon largely of the Civil Wars, a period when the public theatres are officially closed. See Bernard Capp, *The Fifth Monarchy Men: A Study in Seventeenth-Century Millenarianism* (London: Faber and Faber, 2008).

[18] For a classic account of the trope, see Frank Kermode, *The Sense of an Ending: Studies in the Theory of Fiction with a New Epilogue* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000). See too Stephen D. O'Leary, *Arguing the Apocalypse: A Theory of Millennial Rhetoric* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994); David Norbrook, *Poetry and Politics in the English Renaissance*, revised ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), pp. 28–52; and Shell, *Catholicism, Controversy*, pp. 23–55.

[19] On more sceptical views, see Keith Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic: Studies in Popular Beliefs in Sixteenth and Seventeenth Century England* (London: Penguin, 1991), pp. 198–206, and Alexandra Walsham, *Providence in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), pp. 218–224. Two Shakespearean characters who combine scepticism, mockery, and apocalyptic or prophetic language are Edmund in *King Lear* and Lucio in *Measure for Measure*.

Although Protestantism stresses a literal interpretation of Scripture, it also draws heavily on typological exegesis. This is an interpretative method that fuses theology and polemic, spiritual and temporal history, national and international politics.[21] In typological exegesis the Old Testament providentially foreshadows the fulfilment promised in the New Testament. Old Testament events and figures are read in relation to the work, death, resurrection, and judgement of Christ. David is a 'type' of Christ, or the Song of Songs is an allegory of the mystical marriage of Christ and the Church as described in Revelation.[22] Typological readings of Revelation stress its eschatological character: it is concerned with the 'last things': death, judgement, heaven, and hell. Other scriptural books are interpreted eschatologically in this period too, including Daniel, parts of Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, the Song of Songs, Zachariah, Matthew 24, the Epistles of John (where the antichrist is discussed), the Epistles to the Thessalonians, Timothy and Peter's Epistles, and the apocryphal 2 Esdras.[23] There is nothing particularly new about this kind of exegesis: it is a feature of patristic commentary and is part of the

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[20] This verse originates with Isaiah 25:8 and is common in *ars moriendi* books. See John Moore, *A Mappe of Mans Mortalitie* . . . (London: T.S. for George Edwards, 1617), pp. 260–261. It is also quoted during the Popish Plot at the end of a prophecy detailing the emergence of a king with powers of *renovatio* – *A Prophecy of England's Future Happiness* . . . (London: Thomas Dawks, 1680), single sheet.

[21] On typology and biblical exegesis, see Thomas H. Luxon, *Literal Figures: Puritan Allegory and the Reformation Crisis in Representation* (Chicago and London: Chicago University Press, 1995). See also Kevin Killeen, 'Chastising with Scorpions: Reading the Old Testament in Early Modern England', *Huntingdon Library Quarterly*, 73, 3, 2010, pp. 491–506; *Early Modern Drama and the Bible: Contexts and Readings, 1570–1625*, ed. Adrian Streete (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), pp. 1–26; and Hamlin, *The Bible in Shakespeare*, pp. 90–94.

[22] See Richard K. Emmerson, *Antichrist in the Middle Ages: A Study of Medieval Apocalypticism, Art, and Literature* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1981), pp. 30–35, and Clarke, *Politics, Religion and the Song of Songs*, pp. 13–15.

[23] See Katherine R. Firth, *The Apocalyptic Tradition in Reformation Britain, 1530–1645* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979), pp. 5–6, and Paul Christianson, *Reformers and Babylon: English Apocalyptic Visions from the Reformation to the Civil War* (Toronto and London: University of Toronto Press, 1978), pp. 5–6. A number of these biblical books are also read in an anti-Catholic light.

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exegetical method favoured by medieval commentators.[24] After the Reformation, though, the religious implications of this way of reading change. The narrative of the temporal rise of the Roman Catholic Church, its perceived corruption, and its eventual displacement by the 'true' Protestant Church draws on typological arguments that anticipate this victory in the Bible. As Kevin Killeen puts it, 'typology worked as a mode of reading the present that was resolutely distinct from allegory, a practice of interpretation liable to the arbitrary and, for English Protestants, deeply tainted with Roman Catholic obfuscation of meaning . . . Typology purported to discover the conjoined nature of historically disparate events or figures.'[25] As we will see in the next chapter, the distinction between allegory and typology is perhaps not as absolute as Killeen suggests. Nevertheless, virtually all early modern Protestant commentaries on the book of Revelation offer a typological interpretation. It is also a commonplace in Protestant historiography, as we see in John Foxe's influential apocalyptic martyrology *Acts and Monuments*.[26] The Protestant Church views itself as the true 'Catholic' Church. Its emergence during the Reformation is a *restoration* of apostolic purity, not the establishment of a 'new' Church as its Roman Catholic opponents claim.[27] The anti-papal roots of Protestantism are nourished by typological reading. They support a story based on the emergence, corruption, oppression, resistance, and eventual triumph of the 'true' Church in historical and spiritual time. Ecclesiastical and national histories are read in tandem as commentators interpret politics through a typological lens. The influence of this mode of reading can be seen in many genres, including chronicles, antiquarian writing, sermons, poetry, and plays.[28]

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[24] The medieval fourfold method of biblical interpretation is literal, allegorical, moral, and anagogical. The relationship between allegorical and typological exegesis has been much debated by biblical scholars. The former is traditionally seen as more spiritual and symbolic, and the latter as more historical and literal, hence the Reformers' preference for typology. See Erich Auerbach, 'Figura', in *Scenes from the Drama of European Literature* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984), pp. 11–76, and Toenjes, *Islam, the Turks*, pp. 107–108. However, recent work has pointed to the interrelations between the allegorical and typological in Reformed theology. See John S. Pendergast, *Religion, Allegory and Literacy in Early Modern England 1560–1640: The Control of the Word* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), esp. pp. 37–66.

[25] Kevin Killeen, *The Political Bible in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), p. 35.

[26] Toenjes, *Islam, the Turks*, pp. 100–125. Toenjes notes four general approaches to the exegesis of Revelation: preterite (reading the book mainly in its early Christian context), historicist (investing contemporary history with apocalyptic significance), futurism (reading Revelation beyond the past and present), and idealism (Revelation as ahistorical battle between good and evil).

[27] See Alexandra Walsham, 'History, Memory, and the English Reformation', *The Historical Journal*, 55, 4, 2012, pp. 899–938 – Walsham notes the link between Reformed historiography and 'apocalyptic expectation' (p. 905). See also S.J. Barnett, '"Where Was Your Church Before Luther?" Claims for the Antiquity of Protestantism Examined', *Church History: Studies in Christianity and Culture*, 68, 1, 1999, pp. 14–41.

In Protestant interpretative culture, the eventual defeat of the Roman Catholic Church is taken as a necessary temporal prelude to the end of the world.[29] Following the defeat of the antichrist, the true Church will be revealed, Christ will return to judge all, the dammed will be cast into a lake of fire, and the New Jerusalem of the elect will be established.[30] In the word of Augustine Marlorat: 'whomsoeuer God hath chosen before the foundation of the worlde, hee cannot perish . . . & that whomsoeuer he hath reiected he cannot be saued although he do all the workes of sayntes'.[31] Even if one is disinclined to Marlorat's Calvinistic gloss on election and reprobation, medieval and early modern Christians of whatever confessional identity are taught that the end of world brings judgement, division, and the triumph of the elect. This view can be found at all levels of Protestant culture, from highly learned, scholarly tracts and commentaries to popular pamphlets and ballads.[32] Again, there are those who question aspects of these theories and they are subject to the same ebbs and flows in intellectual assent that all popular explanatory systems are. As we will see in Chapter 4, some Armininans during the reign of Charles I give short shrift to the Calvinistic interpretation. The cleric Richard Montagu provoked controversy by challenging Calvinist orthodoxy on the papal antichrist. During the late 1620s and '30s more generally, philosophical scepticism drives the development of a more rational theology wary of dogmatic pronouncements. A number of thinkers associated with the Great Tew Circle prefer a more minimal conception of

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[28] Milton, *Catholic and Reformed*, pp. 31–59, 128–228; Killeen, *The Political Bible*, pp. 22–51. See too David Womersley, *Divinity and State* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010).

[29] See Christopher Hill, *Antichrist in Seventeenth-Century England* (London: Oxford University Press, 1971); Richard Bauckham, *Tudor Apocalypse: Sixteenth Century Apocalypticism, Millenarianism and the English Reformation: From John Bale to John Foxe and Thomas Brightman* (Abingdon: Sutton Courtenay Press, 1978); Firth, *The Apocalyptic Tradition*; Christianson, *Reformers and Babylon*; *The Apocalypse in English Renaissance Thought and Literature*, ed. Patrides and Wittreich; Norman Cohn, *The Pursuit of the Millennium: Revolutionary Millenarians and Mystical Anarchists of the Middle Ages* (Pimlico: London, 2004); and Cunningham and Grell, *The Four Horsemen*.

[30] The *OED* cites 1340 as the year of first use of the word 'antichrist' in English (in a text by the mystic Richard Rolle) – *Oxford English Dictionary Online*.

[31] Augustine Marlorat, *A Catholike and Ecclesiasticall Exposition of the Holy Gospell after S. Iohn*, trans. Thomas Timme (London: Thomas Marshe, 1575), p. 501.

[32] For examples of popular anti-Catholic tracts, see William Kethe, *A Ballet Declaringe the Fal of the Whore of Babylone* (London: W. Hill, c. 1548), and Thomas Naogeorgus, *The Popish Kingdome . . .* (London: Henrie Denham for Richard Watkins, 1570) – the latter poem was translated 'for the benefit of the common, and simpler sorte' (p. 2). See too Walsham, *Providence in Early Modern England*.

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Christian ethics.[33] Here, the discourse of apocalypse and the papal antichrist, although still discernible, is kept at arm's length. William Chillingworth's 1638 book *The Religion of Protestants* uses the language of the papal antichrist rather carefully.[34] Indeed, Chillingworth's attempts to find moderate common ground between sectarian religious divisions led to him being accused of Socinianism.[35] The fact that apocalyptic and anti-Catholic language is so pervasively rejoined during the run-up to the Civil Wars is in part a reaction against this sceptical, minimalist turn in Caroline theological ethics.[36]

Some modern revisionist historians are also wary of this language. Kevin Sharpe, a scholar usually so sensitive to the importance of language and ideology, has written: 'Like the European witch craze, English hysteria about popery undoubtedly signals a larger psychological phenomenon: a need to explain ills that could apparently be ascribed to no natural causes.'[37] This choice of terms is revealing. Anti-popery is hysterical and irrational, a collective psychological flaw in the populace. It would be foolish to deny that some expressions of anti-popery can be understood in this way. It is not a particularly pleasant phenomenon, and it can be an outlet for bigotry and violence. But to only view anti-popery in this light is reductive. It risks simplifying one of this culture's richest if most problematic languages. As Christopher Hill, Katherine Firth, Peter Lake, Linda Colley, Anthony Milton, and others have shown, it is a language that made good 'rational' sense to many.[38] The revisionist account is on much stronger ground when it notes that anti-papal language informs the

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[33] See Richard Tuck, *Philosophy and Government 1572–1651* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), pp. 272–278.

[34] He refers to debates in English Protestantism about the papal antichrist and questions some of the Church traditions associated with the antichrist – see William Chillingworth, *The Religion of Protestants* . . . (Oxford: Leonard Lichfield, 1638), §v, p. 154.

[35] Sarah Mortimer, *Reason and Religion in the English Revolution: The Challenge of Socinianism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), pp. 63–87.

[36] Apocalypticism and anti-Catholicism are central, although in very different ways, for two of the greatest political thinkers of the period, John Milton and Thomas Hobbes. See David Loewenstein, *Representing Revolution in Milton and His Contemporaries: Religion, Politics, and Polemics in Radical Puritanism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), pp. 175–201; *Milton and the Ends of Time*, ed. Juliet Cummings (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003); and J.G.A. Pocock, 'Time, History and Eschatology in the Thought of Thomas Hobbes', in *Politics, Language and Time: Essays on Political Thought and History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989), pp. 143–201.

[37] Kevin Sharpe, *Remapping Early Modern England: The Culture of Seventeenth-Century Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), p. 287.

[38] See Peter Lake's classic essay 'Anti-Popery: The Structure of a Prejudice', in *Conflict in Early Stuart England: Studies in Religion and Politics*, ed. Richard Cust and Ann Hughes (London and New York, 1989), pp. 72–106, as well as Hill, *Antichrist*; Bryan W. Ball, *A Great Expectation: Eschatological*

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Whiggish historiography that first emerges in the aftermath of 1688.[39] The relationship between anti-popery, Protestant triumphalism, and national identity is a complicated one. We can see why the hegemonic aspects of this narrative have been criticised by revisionists. Nevertheless, while the charge of Whiggery may add piquancy to this historical critique, it is less useful for explaining the political relationship between anti-popery and Protestantism during the seventeenth century.

In the most well-known eighteenth- and nineteenth-century iterations of Whiggish historiography, the triumph of the British nation-state is underpinned by an account of spiritual history that is often deeply anti-Catholic. Such language reflects a common prejudice that by this stage needed little justification.[40] The problem with the revisionist critique is that it is always in danger of collapsing early modern and modern anti-Catholicism into each other. Early modern anti-Catholicism may be related to its various modern manifestations. But it is not the same thing. During the later sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, what can look like polemical triumphalism is often deployed to shore up a deeply embattled, unstable sense of nationhood. This is especially the case when considering England's inconsistent, often precarious involvement in European affairs. In a commentary on Revelation published in 1573, William Fulke says: 'in our age, what tumults he [Antichrist] hath raised vp in France, in Germanie, in Spaine, and in Flanders, who is there throrow out all Europe which knoweth not? and in England, what hath he practised and wroughte euen this present yeare that we write these thinges'.[41] Important events,

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Thought in English Protestantism to 1660 (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1975); Bauckham, *Tudor Apocalypse*; Firth, *The Apocalyptic Tradition*; Christianson, *Reformers and Babylon*; Marjorie Reeves, *The Influence of Prophecy in the Middle Ages: A Study of Joachimism* (London and Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1993); Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation 1707–1837* (London: Pimlico, 1994), pp. 11–54; Walsham, *Providence in Early Modern England*; Bernard McGinn, *Anti-Christ: Two Thousand Years of the Human Fascination with Evil* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000); *The Encyclopaedia of Apocalypticism*, 3 vols, ed. John J. Collins, Bernard McGinn, and Stephen J. Stein (London and New York: Continuum, 1997–2000); Milton, *Catholic and Reformed*; and Cunningham and Grell, *The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse*.

[39] See Sharpe, *Remapping Early Modern England*, pp. 4–20.

[40] On the Victorian rewriting of seventeenth-century foreign policy, see Steven Pincus, *Protestantism and Patriotism: Ideologies and the Making of English Foreign Policy, 1650–1688* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 1–4. See too Colin Haydon, *Anti-Catholicism in Eighteenth Century England, c. 1714–80* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1993), pp. 16–19.

[41] William Fulke, *Praelections vpon the Sacred and Holy Reuelations of S. John*, trans. George Gifford (London: Thomas Purfoote, 1573), sig. H3v. The 'tumults' mentioned here refer to the European conflict over the Low Countries, the French Wars of religion, and the threat of Mary Queen of Scots, who was discussed repeatedly in the 1572 parliament. On the last point, see J.E. Neale, *Elizabeth and Her Parliaments 1559–1581* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1958), pp. 241–312.