

# “A Pestiferous Sect”<sup>1</sup>: The Anabaptists in England from 1530-1660

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Much has been written about the Anabaptists of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. However, the Anabaptist movement in Switzerland, Holland and Germany is generally better documented and better understood than its counterpart in England. For example, there is still considerable controversy over the origins of English Anabaptism. R. J. Smithson dismisses attempts made by some to link the English Anabaptists with the earlier Lollards. Smithson states: “The chief factor in the establishment of Anabaptism in England was not Lollardism but the influx of Anabaptists from the Continent, especially the Netherlands.”<sup>2</sup> Nevertheless, Irvin Horst sees similarities between the two sects. “The beginnings of Anabaptism in England during the 1530’s,” says Horst, “were associated with foreigners arrested for heresy and with local groups active in book distribution and meetings which greatly resembled those of the Lollards.”<sup>3</sup> No doubt Lollardism appealed to many of the same elements in society as did Anabaptism and may even have prepared the ground for the anti-pedobaptist doctrines imported from the continent.

What eventually happened to Anabaptism in England is also difficult to determine. E. Belfort Bax argues that the more radical wing disappeared along with other radical sects following the accession of William of Orange. “The era of direct persecution for religious opinions had passed,” according to Bax, “and the new circumstances economic and political tended towards the moderation of ‘respectability’ in all departments of life.”<sup>4</sup> Smithson also comments on the disappearance of the Anabaptists. Smithson says that, apart from the surviving mainstream Anabaptists, the Mennonites and Hutterites, there are “a number of Christian bodies in whom are to be found a reproduction of some of the distinctive features of Anabaptism. The most prominent of these parties are the Baptists, the Quakers, and the Christian Brethren.”<sup>5</sup>

Whatever the origins or the ultimate fate of the Anabaptists in England, the fact remains that dissenters known by this name were active in various parts of the country, but especially in London, from the 1530's to the latter half of the seventeenth century. This is evident from the numerous references to them in the official documents and the literature of the period. A number of scholars in this century have studied much of this primary material in an attempt to come to a better understanding of this radical group. Champlin Burrage is, without question, the pioneer in this field. In his *The Early English Dissenters in the Light of Recent Research 1550-1641*,<sup>6</sup> Burrage brings together much valuable historical data pertaining to various nonconformist groups in England. Duncan Heriot traces the development of Anabaptism in England from its beginnings in the early sixteenth century to its apparent disappearance in the seventeenth century.<sup>7</sup> Irvin Horst's *The Radical Brethren: Anabaptism and the English Reformation to 1558* is the most recent and most detailed treatment of the subject, although it does not deal with the reigns of Elizabeth I, James I or Charles I, critical years in the evolution of English Anabaptism.

One of the difficulties encountered by any student of English Anabaptism is the problem presented by the word "Anabaptism" itself. Both Heriot and Horst are aware of its many connotations. "In certain settings it was little more than a term of abuse," says Horst, "having the character of a *Schimpfwort*, like 'fascist' or 'communist' in unaligned countries."<sup>8</sup> As Horst points out, the Anabaptist side of the record is not well documented and we are therefore forced to rely on the perception of their opponents.<sup>9</sup> The opponents of the English Anabaptists included Roman Catholic as well as Anglican divines and occasionally even other Protestant dissenters. As a result these perceptions are often strongly biased and contradictory. Can an accurate picture of the English Anabaptists be derived from the records that have survived?

In the first of his three articles on Anabaptism in England, Duncan Heriot states that "an interesting volume of references to Anabaptist doctrines could be compiled,"<sup>10</sup> although this, he says, is not the aim of his study. Future research on this subject would also be greatly facilitated by a compilation of the numerous, scattered references to the Anabaptists in general, the brief allusions to this sect as well as the lengthier, better known denunciations. Such a collection would also have to include the much rarer defences of their doctrines by the Anabaptists themselves or by those who spoke out occasionally on their behalf.<sup>11</sup> This essay is the result of an examination of some of the less well known references to Anabaptism in England. It will point out certain inconsistencies and contradictions in the use of the label "Anabaptist" or "Anabaptism" in the English press from 1530 to 1660. Some tentative answers will be offered to the following questions: Which heresies, both ancient and modern, were

most often associated with Anabaptism in England? What was the prevailing English view of the origin of Anabaptism? Which doctrines were most frequently imputed to English Anabaptists? How frequent was the association of the terms "Anabaptist" and "Mennonite" in England? In conclusion, some examples of toleration and repression will also be cited.

The great majority of the writers of this period who refer to "Anabaptists" or "Anabaptism" use these terms most indiscriminately. Calvin was one of the first of many who associated Anabaptists with Papists: "More over in certaine pryncipal pointes of our chrysten fayeth," Calvin writes, "they accorde verie well wyth the Papistes, holdynge opinions directly repugnaunte to all the holye scripture, as of fre wyl, of predestination, and of the cause of our salvation."<sup>12</sup> This association is not really so difficult to understand. Robert Some accuses both Papists and Anabaptists of objecting to the ecclesiastical authority of princes.<sup>13</sup> Francis Cheynell argues that "the Design of the Anabaptists pleased the Papists well because they endeavoured to root out Protestant Princes and Ministers."<sup>14</sup> Throughout this period in British history there is the constant fear of Popish plots, especially after the infamous Gunpowder plot of 1605. Anabaptists, like Papists, were seen as a radical group opposed to the civil and ecclesiastical order established by Henry VIII. Cheynell, in fact, is convinced that the Anabaptists were raised by the devil and fomented by Rome to hinder the Reformation.<sup>15</sup> Both Jesuits and Anabaptists were feared also because of their missionary zeal and their conviction that they were of the "illuminate."<sup>16</sup>

Significant also is the more general association of "Anabaptist" with "rebel." Englishmen of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries took seriously the warning of Bullinger: "All the doyngs of the Anabaptists do breath and savour tumult and confusion of all thynges."<sup>17</sup> One of Queen Elizabeth's proclamations indicates the official view of Anabaptism:

The Quenes Maiestie . . . Wylleth and chargeth all maner of persons borne eyther in forreine partes, or in her Maiesties dominions, that have conceived any maner of such hereticall opinions the Anabaptistes do holde, and meaneth not by charitable teachynge to be reconciled, to depart out of this Realme within twenty dayes after this Proclamation, uppon payne of forfayture of all theyr goodes and Catteltes, and to be imprysoned and further punyshed, as by the lawes eyther ecclesiastical or temporall, in such case is prouyded.<sup>18</sup>

The label "Anabaptist," it is clear, was frequently applied to anyone who was seen as a threat to those in power.

The association of "Anabaptist" with "rebel" can be traced directly to the reports of the debacle at Münster. The story of Münster was told as early as the 1530's in the anonymous "A treuue nyeuu tydynges of the wonderfull worckes of the Rebaptisers of Munster,"<sup>19</sup> and was still appealing to English readers in 1642 when "A Short History of the Anabaptists of

High and Low Germany"<sup>20</sup> was published. The author of "A Short History" advises parliament not to hearken to those who cry, "Let Christ rule," because they want *no* rule. "Is not that the very leaven of the Prophets of Munster, and Amsterdam?"<sup>21</sup> Daniel Featley no doubt expresses the fears of many when he argues that, because of its "malignity" to magistracy, this heresy "strikes at Authority itselfe . . . and if this Sect prevaile, we shall have no Monarchie in the State, nor Hierarchie in the Church, but an Anarchie in both"<sup>22</sup> Richard Blome warns the newly restored king, Charles II, in 1660, with the following words: "They are grown so exceeding high and daring, that if your Majesty put not out your royal hand of power suddenly to restrain them, they [the Anabaptists] are so numerous and so seducing, that they will (in little time) diffuse their poyson over the better part of your Kingdom."<sup>23</sup> Blome is, of course, using the term "Anabaptist" rather loosely, for he is referring also to Quakers and in a broad sense to all who oppose the new regime. Blome even appends the anonymous "Short History of the Anabaptists" to his treatise. That "Munster" and "Anabaptist" were ready, convenient labels can be seen in William Watson's attack on Father Parsons, a Jesuit and an eloquent opponent of the English Reformation. Watson accuses Parsons of trying to bring about the abolition of the common law and all authority in England, "as if he would become a newe Anabaptist, or King John of Leyden, to draw all the world into a mutinie, rebellion or combustion."<sup>24</sup>

English Anabaptists are frequently accused of being latter day Donatists, Catharists, Manicheists, Pelagians and even Arians. Occasionally they are compared to the medieval Waldensians and Picardi.<sup>25</sup> They are often regarded as similar to though more extreme than other Reformation heretics. They are regularly lumped together with Lutherans, Zwinglians and Schwenckfeldians on the continent, and with the Familists in England. William Wilkinson makes a rare and interesting distinction between Anabaptists and Familists. The Familists, he says, are not as willing as the Anabaptists to stand by their faith publicly:

Nay being at Poules Crosse for their fantastick opinions, why doe they deny them and renounce them with detestation openly? But herein did the Anabaptistes deale more orderly then our Fam. in England. For they procured an open conference [Marginal note: "At Tiguri and at Bern acc. to Bullinger"] and disputation to be had in the presence of the Maiestrate, thereby to testifie their schisme to be truth, but our Fam. are so far from procuring an open that dare not abide a private conference . . . and thereby shew how far unlyke they are herein unto the olde Prophets and Apostles of the Primitive Church.<sup>26</sup>

Oliver Ormerod provides a detailed comparison of the Anabaptists in Germany and the Puritans in England.<sup>27</sup> Among their similarities he notes their private conventicles, their emphasis on the authority of Scripture and their opposition to educated clergy and prescript forms of

prayers. Anabaptists, he says, "have nothing in their mouths but 'teach and baptize.'"<sup>28</sup> The Puritans, according to this author, differ from the Anabaptists in that they urge the rebaptization only of those baptized by women while the Anabaptists compound this error to include the teaching that no infants should be baptized.<sup>29</sup>

There are numerous parallels drawn in this period between Anabaptists and Brownists or Barrowists. Robert Browne (c. 1550-1633), "was the leader of a group of Elizabethan separatists, called after him Brownists, and a pioneer in England of what are known as Free churches, that is, churches existing in independence of secular government."<sup>30</sup> Browne saw the church as "far from being a corporation comprehensive, all-embracing, and catholic." It was to be "a society for a privileged and miraculously gifted few." He was accused of seducing "'the vulgar sort of people.'"<sup>31</sup> Henry Barrow (c. 1550-1593) was described by his contemporary, Lord Burghley, as "'a fanatastical fellow'" with "'a hot brain.'"<sup>32</sup> "Barrow was the foremost representative of the church-democracy of separatism, carrying to their logical conclusion the principles of Robert Browne. Barrow defined the church as 'a company of faithful people, separated from the unbelievers and heathen of the land, gathered in the name of Christ.'"<sup>33</sup> Browne died in prison and Barrow was hanged at Tyburn.

George Gifford is one of many writers who attack the teachings of the Brownists. He accuses them of teaching the "heresie of perfection and Anabaptisticall freedom."<sup>34</sup>

Indeed the Anabaptists do holde, that wee cannot be servants unto men in any outward bondage and yet be the servants of Christ, grounding their heresie upon the places which you alledge. If all maner of bondage be the marke of the beast, and the badge of Antichrist, and a loosing of Christian liberty, as you and the Anabaptists would have it: then how could St. Paul say, Art thou a bond man, care not: thou art the lords free man, I Cor. 7? Let no man say I charge ye over hardly, with this grosse point of Anabaptistrie."<sup>35</sup>

Gifford also cites Henry Barrow's "Anabaptisticall answer:" "I thinke it the dutie of everye Christian, and principally of the Prince, to enquire out, and to renew the lawes of God, and stirre uppe all the Subjects, unto more diligent and carefull keeping of the same."<sup>36</sup> This, according to Gifford, "denieth a great parte of that power which God hath given to Princes."<sup>37</sup>

John Dayrell says that his countrymen, the Brownists, "have gone out from us, and become Anabaptists."<sup>38</sup> Peter Fairlambe refers to Brownists who "live in the Parish, with their children unbaptized."<sup>39</sup> John Paget condemns "Anabaptists that degrade all infants from their dignity," and "Brownists who degrade such infants from their dignity [that is,

deny baptism to such infants] whose parents are no members of a particular Church with us, though otherwise of the same Religion and profession with us."<sup>40</sup> John Robinson, "Pastor of the Church at Leyden," objects to being labelled a Brownist or Barrowist. However, in the second chapter of his "Apologie," he reveals that, while he is not against infant baptism, he is not for indiscriminate baptism either. At least one parent, he argues, should be of the faith.<sup>41</sup> Apparently, the association of Anabaptists and Brownists was based on their somewhat similar views on baptism as well as their insistence on the separation of church and state.

There is considerable disagreement among the writers of this period over the question of the origin of Anabaptism. William Barlow says that "where as was but one faccion before, onely of the Lutherans: than sprang there up another which be callyd Oecolampadianes or Swynglyanes out of whom yssued also the thyrd faccion namyd Anabaptystes, conteyning above xl sectes of dyvers heresydes and sonderly opynyons."<sup>42</sup> Thomas Harding gives much the same account of their beginnings.<sup>43</sup> Fridericus Staphylus says that "Bernard Rotman began the heresy of the Anabaptistes, and that by the wordes of Luther: that no man could be compelled to any faith: that al Christen men are free, and taught of God him selfe immediately: that there nedeth no interpretation of Scripture, but it is al plaine and perspicuous: that a simple man of the countre can more readily expounde and understande holy scripture, then any Doctour in divinitie."<sup>44</sup> Petrus Frarinus, George Gifford, J. Radford and Michael Walpole all emphasize the Lutheran origin.<sup>45</sup> William Rushworth describes an evolutionary process of sorts: "... Luther broke the Ice by appealing to scripture, Swinglius went farther then he, the' Anabaptists, exceeded the Swinglians, the Adamistes passed th' Anabaptists, the Socinians the Adamistes, and some went beyond christianitie, others even beyond common sense."<sup>46</sup>

Some authors attempt to be more specific about the beginnings of Anabaptism. William Alley says they originated in France in the time of St. Bernard. Their doctrines are similar, in his opinion, to those of the ancient Manichees and Catharists and the later "Valdenses" and "Picardi" but were further developed in the sixteenth century by one "Thomas Muncerus, a phantasticall and seditious man who sowed first the seede of thys heresie, which afterward multiplyed and increased exceedyngly, and infected the myndes of many men."<sup>47</sup> Alley continues:

Of which heresie, one Melchior Rink, Baltha Hoebmayer, and Michael Satelar were authors, untill at the last in the yeare of our Lord 1532, one Melchior Hofmannus a courier by craft, brought in thys new contagion. Which errors one Vbbo borne in Frieseland, and one Memno a Frisian also afterward much confirmed and published . . . The followers of this Memno, to whom succeeded Theodoricus, were for the most part, all they which dwelling in the partes of Belgica, and the parts of the lower Germany,

maintained this Anabaptisticall heresie. In whom a man may perceive the Argumentes and tokens of a godly mynde, which beyng sturred through a certaine blynd zeale, have swarved from the true sense of the Scripture, rather through ignoraunce, then through malice, which thyng may well appeare by this, that they dyd allwayes most earnestly resist the commotions and sturres of them of the Citie of Monasteir, and of the towne of Baten . . . Wherefore such as these be, may seeme worthy rather of pitie and correction, than of persecution and utter destruction.<sup>48</sup>

William Alley's account of Anabaptist beginnings is a good deal more informed than that of most other English writers of his time. He is also an exception in that he does not associate *all* Anabaptists with Münster.

There is also little agreement among writers of this time over the question of who actually founded the Reformation movement called Anabaptism. A number say it was "Muntzer,"<sup>49</sup> but "Nicholas Stock" or "Stork" is also mentioned quite regularly.<sup>50</sup> One calls "Baltasar Pascimontanus" "the Parent of Anabaptists."<sup>51</sup> "Baltasar Pascimontanus" was probably Hubmaier.<sup>52</sup> William Wilkinson, who provides his readers with "Certain profitable notes to know an Heretique, especially an Anabaptist," names both "Nicholas Storke" and "Thomas Muncer" as founders of Anabaptism.<sup>53</sup> Wikinson condemns the doctrines of H.N. [Henry Nicholas] along with those of "the Libertines, Anabaptists and Pelagians" and argues that the ground of all these heresies was brought to England by one Christopher Vitels from Delph in Dutchland.<sup>54</sup>

Next to their rejection of infant baptism, the Anabaptist doctrine most often mentioned by their opponents is their opposition to magistracy. Occasionally, as in the writings of Bullinger, this opposition to rulers is linked with their objection to the use of force. Anabaptists, says Bullinger, "alleage against us that it is not lawful for christianes to be magistrates bycause christianes do not contende in the market, neither do kyl anye man, neyther seke again there goodes taken awaye, neither revenge their iniuries."<sup>55</sup> William Wilkinson also mentions their opposition to magistracy and war.<sup>56</sup> As Edward Jessop points out, the Anabaptists hold "that a King or Magistrate cannot be a true Christian, except he give over his kingly office."<sup>57</sup> W. Vaughan refers to their belief that it is unlawful for one Christian to sue or strike another.<sup>58</sup> John Paget speaks of the opinion of the Anabaptists "who would take the sword from the Christian Magistrate, upon this erroneous opinion that the judicials of Moses are at an end."<sup>59</sup> The anonymous author of "The Anabaptists Catechisme" scornfully accuses them of saying, "'We are free from bloudshed, and will not kill, no not a Louse; nor do we hold it fit that any should be punished for his infirmities.'"<sup>60</sup>

There are a great number of references in the literature of the period to the Anabaptists' refusal to swear or take oaths and to their denial that Christ took his humanity from the Virgin Mary. Anabaptists are also

frequently denounced for their belief that property should be held in common and for their chiliastic views. They are often criticized for their denial of original sin. Their habit of meeting in private conventicles, their insistence on judging all controversial doctrinal matters on the basis of scripture, and their conviction that ministers must lead exemplary lives seem to blur the distinction, at times, between "Puritan" and "Anabaptist."

The association of the terms "Anabaptist" and "Mennonite" is relatively rare in England during this period. William Alley refers to "one Memno a Frisian."<sup>61</sup> William Rainolds briefly alludes to "Memnonists" in a treatise in which he calls Anabaptists "perfite sacramentaries."<sup>62</sup> Daniel Featley<sup>63</sup> and Guy de Brès<sup>64</sup> list the "Mennonists" among fourteen or fifteen "Sorts of Anabaptists." William Rainolds indiscriminately lists "Memnonists" with such heretics as Calvinists, Lutherans, Zwinglians, Trinitarians and Schwenckfeldians.<sup>65</sup> Thomas Stapleton says "the Mennonite," "Swenckfeldian," the "Osiandrin," the "Libertin," the "new Arrians," and "new Pelagians, new Maniches all swarming under pretence of protestants and ghospellers this present daie . . . saie they have all lerned their faith in scripture."<sup>66</sup> Fridericus Staphylus includes in his treatise an elaborate genealogical tree to illustrate the progeny of Luther. Bernard Rotman, the Anabaptists and "Memnonists" make up one of the three main branches.<sup>67</sup> Willelmus Lindanus says that "Menno" was one of those who "affirmed that Christ took not on hym our nature of the Virgin Mary."<sup>68</sup>

That there were similarities between the English Anabaptists and Dutch Mennonites can be seen in the history of John Smith, widely reputed to be the founder of the English Baptists.<sup>69</sup> Smith wrote his "The Character of the Beast" in part to object to the infant baptism practised by R. Clifton's Brownist congregation in Nottinghamshire.<sup>70</sup> Late in life Smith was excommunicated by his own church and subsequently sought acceptance, without success, in a Mennonite congregation in Amsterdam.<sup>71</sup> Smith's tract is of considerable importance today since it is one of the few published defences of adult baptism that have survived from this period.

As mentioned at the outset, any study of the English Anabaptists must rely largely on the publications of their opponents. The arguments for repression of the movement greatly outnumber the pleas for toleration. George Gifford even denies these heretics the status of martyrs: "But if a man have not the truth, it is great obstinacie to die for it, as sundrie Anabaptists, and other Heretikes have shewed by their dying."<sup>72</sup> There are numerous documented examples of so-called Anabaptist martyrs, although most are nameless.<sup>73</sup> Of special interest, therefore, are the much rarer pleas for toleration. One of the earliest is that of Henry Jacob who speaks not only for Anabaptists but for all non-conformists. In his "A



christian and modest offer of a conference betwixt the prelates and the deprived ministers" (1606), Jacob writes as follows:

It were a shame for a state professing the true Religion publicly, to deny to the free subjects thereof, desiring it, such an indifferent hearing of their opinions, as this is, be they of the Separation, or Anabaptists, or what they may be. For if the Heathen had not, much lesse should true Christians have any such law, to condemne any sect or faction whatsoever before they heare of them: and heare them they doe not, that will refuse to admit of such an indifferent offer as this is.<sup>74</sup>

These moderate words anticipate a similar plea by the poet John Milton:

When there is much desire to learn, there of necessity will be much arguing, much writing, many opinions; for opinion in good men is but knowledge in the making. Under these fantastic terrors of sect and schism, we wrong the earnest and zealous thirst after knowledge and understanding which God hath stirred up in this city.<sup>75</sup>

To the Roman Catholics on the continent, seventeenth century England seemed to be a haven for heretics. The archbishop of Spalatto complains in one of his works of the religious freedom in England:

Concerning Religion, there are in England sundry Sects: There are Puritanes that is the rigid Caluinists; There are some milder, who call themselves onely Protestants, and reformed: There are Anabaptists who are also deuided into diuers Sects: There wanteth not Arians, nor Photinians, and such a like mish-mash of wicked people, who though they be not permitted to professe their errorrs publicly, yet are they not cast forth of their Church nor punished, but tollerated whilest they publish their poyson. Moreouer, that the Anabaptists swarme with heresies, none but the Anabaptist himselfe will denie it, yet they haue their free meetings in England, and the Kings Maiestie one day tolde me, that lately at London a woman did in an assembly of Anabaptists both make a publicke Sermon, and also administer their supposed Sacraments.<sup>76</sup>

By the 1640's, when Milton made his plea for toleration in his *Areopagitica*, there was indeed a climate which encouraged men to speak their opinions more openly. There were many disputations and conferences during this decade.<sup>77</sup> It was a time in British history when radical reformers looked to an anti-monarchist parliament for sympathy. The author of "The Anabaptists late Protestation" describes his treatise as "a Relation of the Proceedings of diuers Anabaptists at their late meeting near old-Street, March 18, 1647."<sup>78</sup> The purpose of the meeting was to complain of the "late oppressions by Parliament." Those present resolved to "become Strangers to Foreign Princes" if liberty of conscience were not allowed in England. In 1660, shortly after the restoration of Charles II, a spirited plea on behalf of English Anabaptists was presented to the King.

It was an attempt to convince the newly restored king that Anabaptists were among his most loyal subjects:

The Anabaptists have particular commands from God in Scripture (far above all oaths, Covenants, Statutes and Proclamations) to fear God and honour the King: To be subject unto the higher Powers . . . nor speak evil of Dignities, nor of the Ruler of the People: But to honour all men, to do good to all men, to pray for all men, for kings, and all in Authority, to follow peace with all men, to do as they would be done by, to pay tribute to whom tribute is due, custome to whom custome, fear to whom fear, honour to whom honour; and to owe no man anything but Love. If then both Judges and Magistrates, Courtiers & Lawyers concur with the Anabaptists in all these Principles, may we say that Judges and Magistrates Courtiers and Lawyers are all Anabaptists. Oh that his Majesty never had worse Subjects nor Courtiers!<sup>79</sup>

By the late 1670's the Quaker Robert Barclay is even able to perceive the atrocities of Münster in a new light:

But if we come to Practices, though I confess, I do with my whole heart abhor and detest those wild Practices which are written, concerning the Anabaptists of Munster; I am bold to say as bad if not worse things, have been committed by those that lean to Tradition, Scripture and Reason . . . If we then compare these actings, with those of Munster, we shall not find great difference; for both affirmed and pretended they were called, and that it was lawful to Kill, Burn, and Destroy the Wicked. We must Kill all the Wicked, said those Anabaptists, that we that are the saints, may possess the Earth. We must burn obstinate Hereticks, say the Papists . . . . We must cut off seducing Separatists, say the Prelatick Protestants . . . . we must kill, say the Calvinistick Presbyterians, the Prophane malignants . . . . What difference I pray thee, impartial Reader, seest thou betwixt these?<sup>80</sup>

This does not mean that all attacks on the Anabaptists suddenly ceased. The rational neo-classical period which began with the return of Charles II to England could hardly be described as tolerant of sectarians. Nevertheless, there could be no return to the harsh repressions under Elizabeth I or even to the dictum of a more benevolent James I: "I will have one doctrine and one discipline, one Religion in substance, and in ceremony."<sup>81</sup> Milton had condemned such thinking as "gross, conforming stupidity."<sup>82</sup> Milton's admonition "that many be tolerated, rather than all compelled,"<sup>83</sup> seems to have been gradually accepted in the second half of the seventeenth century.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup>The phrase is from Heinrich Bullinger, A moste sure and strong defence of the baptisme of children, against the pestiferous secte of the Anabaptistes (1551). *A Short-Title Catalogue of Books Printed in England, Scotland, & Ireland and of English Books Printed Abroad 1475-1640*, compiled by A. W. Pollard & G. R. Redgrave (London: The Bibliographical Society), 4069. In subsequent references to this catalogue the title will be abbreviated as STC 1475-1640.

<sup>2</sup>R. J. Smithson, *The Anabaptists: Their Contribution to our Protestant Heritage* (London: James Clarke & Co. Ltd., 1935), p. 192.

<sup>3</sup>Irvin Buckwalter Horst, *The Radical Brethren: Anabaptism and the English Reformation to 1558* (Nieukoop: B. De Graaf, 1972), p. 31.

<sup>4</sup>E. Belfort Bax, *Rise and Fall of the Anabaptists* (London: Swan Sonnenschein & Co. Ltd., 1903), p. 382.

<sup>5</sup>R. J. Smithson, p. 206.

<sup>6</sup>Champlin Burrage, *The Early English Dissenters in the Light of Recent Research 1550-1641* (New York: Russell & Russell, 1912).

<sup>7</sup>Duncan B. Heriot, "Anabaptism in England during the 16th and 17th Centuries," *Trans. of the Congregational Hist. Society*, XII, 6 (Sept. 1935), 256-271; XII, 7 (Aug. 1936), 312-320; XIII, 1 (Sept. 1937), 22-40.

<sup>8</sup>Irvin B. Horst, p. 32.

<sup>9</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 33.

<sup>10</sup>Duncan B. Heriot, 265.

<sup>11</sup>I am now in the process of compiling such a detailed bibliography. I also wish to acknowledge the assistance of Professor Jackson Campbell Boswell of the University of the District of Columbia, Washington, D.C. in finding a number of the more obscure references to English Anabaptists. Most of the treatises cited in this paper were examined firsthand at the Folger Shakespeare Library, Washington, D.C., the University of Cambridge Library, Cambridge, England and the British Library, London, England.

<sup>12</sup>John Calvin, A short instruction agaynst the pestiferous errors of Anabaptistes (1549) STC 1475-1640, 4463, Sig. A6<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>13</sup>Robert Some, A godly treatise (1589) STC 1475-1640, 22912.

<sup>14</sup>Francis Cheynell, The rise, growth and danger of Socinianisme (1643). *Short-Title Catalogue of Books Printed in England, Scotland, Ireland, Wales and British America and of English Books Printed in other Countries 1641-1700*, compiled by Donald Wing (New York: Columbia University Press), C3815, p. 56. In subsequent references to this catalogue the title will be abbreviated as STC 1641-1700.

<sup>15</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 51-54.

<sup>16</sup>William Watson, A sparing discoverie of our English Jesuits (1601) STC 1475-1640, 25126, Sig. B2.

<sup>17</sup>Heinrich Bullinger, A most necessary a. frutefull dialogue btw. the seditious libertin a. the true christian (1551) STC 1475-1640, 4068, Sig. E3<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>18</sup>Proclamation for banishing the Anabaptists (1560) STC 1475-1640, 7916.

<sup>19</sup>A treuue nyeuu tydynges of the wonderfull worckes of the Rebaptisers of Munster (1535?) STC 1475-1640, 564.

<sup>20</sup>A Short History of the Anabaptists of High & Low Germany (1642) STC 1641-1700, S3597.

<sup>21</sup>*Ibid.*, Sig. H<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>22</sup>Daniel F. Featley, The Dippers dipt. or the Anabaptists duck'd and plung'd over head and eares, at a disputation in Southwark (1645) STC 1641-1700, F585, Sig. B3.

<sup>23</sup>Richard Blome, The fanatic history or an exact relation and account of the old Anabaptists, and new Quakers (1660) STC 1641-1700, B3212, Sig. A2<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>24</sup>William Watson, A decacordon of ten quodlibetical questions concerning religion and state newly imprinted (1602) STC 1475-1640, 25123, Sig. T7<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>25</sup>See The original & sprynge of all sectes & orders by whome, when or were they beganne (1537) STC 1475-1640, 18849; William Alley, The poore mans librarie (1565) STC 1475-1640, 374; Fridericus Staphylus, The Apologie of Fridericus Staphylus. Intreating of the true understanding of holy scripture (1565) STC 1475-1640, 23230.

<sup>26</sup>William Wilkinson, A confutation of certaine articles delivered [by H. Niklaes] unto the Familie of Love (1579) STC 1475-1640, 25665, Sig. K1<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>27</sup>Oliver Ormerod, The picture of a puritane; or a relation of the Anabaptists in Germanie a. of the puritanes in England (1606) STC 1475-1640, 18851.

<sup>28</sup>*Ibid.*, Sig. H2<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>29</sup>*Ibid.*, Sig. I2-12<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>30</sup>"Browne, Robert," *Encyclopedia Britannica* (1973), 4, 287-288.

<sup>31</sup>"Browne, Robert," *Dictionary of National Biography* (1908), 3, 58.

<sup>32</sup>"Barrow, Henry," *Encyclopedia Britannica* (1973), 3, 200.

<sup>33</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>34</sup>George Gifford, A short treatise against the Donatists of England whome we call Brownists (1590) STC 1475-1640, 11869.

<sup>35</sup>*Ibid.*, Sig. M3.

<sup>36</sup>*Ibid.*, Sig. P2.

<sup>37</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>38</sup>John Darrell, A treatise of the Church. Written against them of the separation, called Brownists (1617) STC 1475-1640, 6286, Sig. A2.

<sup>39</sup>Peter Fairlambe, The recantation of a Brownist (1606) STC 1475-1640, 10668, Sig. B<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>40</sup>John Paget, An answer to W. Best against the baptizing of infants (1635) STC 1475-1640, 19097, Sig. P2<sup>v</sup>-P3.

<sup>41</sup>John Robinson, A just and necessarie apologie of certaine Christians commonly called Brownists or Barrowists (1625) STC 1475-1640, 21108, Sig. B4.

<sup>42</sup>William Barlow, A dyaloge descrybyng the orygyneall ground of these Lutheran faccyons (1531) STC 1475-1640, 1461, Sig. G<sup>v</sup>-G2.

<sup>43</sup>Thomas Harding, A confutation of a book [by Bishop Jewell] intituled An apologie of the Church of England (1565) STC 1475-1640, 12762.

<sup>44</sup>Fridericus Staphylus, The Apologie.

<sup>45</sup>Petrus Frarinus, An oration against the unlawfull insurrections of the Protestantes of our time (1566) STC 1475-1640, 11333; George Gifford, A plaine declaration that our Brownists be full Donatists (1590) STC 1475-1640, 11862; J. Radford, A directorie teaching the way to the truth (1605) STC 1475-1640, 20602; Michael Walpole, A treatise of Antichrist (1613) STC 1475-1640, 24993.

<sup>46</sup>William Rushworth, The dialogues of W. Rushworth, or common sense in the choise of religion (1640) STC 1475-1640, 21454.

<sup>47</sup>William Alley, The poore mans librarie.

<sup>48</sup>*Ibid.*, Sig. Yi<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>49</sup>Silvester Norris, An antidote or treatise of thirtie controversies (1622) STC 1475-1640, 18658; J. Sharpe, The triall of the protestant private spirit (1630) STC 1475-1640, 22370.

<sup>50</sup>A warning for England especially for London, in the famous History of the frantick Anabaptists (1642) STC 1641-1700, W919; Francis Cheynell, The rise, growth and danger of Socinianisme, p. 54; Daniel Featley, The Dippers dipt, Sig. Aa2<sup>v</sup>; Alexander Ross, A view of all religions in the world (1655) STC 1641-1700, R1972.

<sup>51</sup>Edmund Campian, Campian englished (1632) STC 1475-1640, 4535, Sig. G7-G7<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>52</sup>Irvin Horst identifies "Balthasar" as "Hubmaier." See *The Radical Brethren*, p. 32. n. 2.

<sup>53</sup>William Wilkinson. A confutation of certaine articles.

<sup>54</sup>*Ibid.* For further information on Christopher Vitel, see J. W. Martin, "Christopher Vitel: an Elizabethan Mechanick Preacher," *The Sixteenth Century Journal*, 10 (Summer, 1979), 15-22.

<sup>55</sup>Heinrich Bullinger, A treatise or sermon concernynge magistrates (1549) STC 1475-1640, 4079.

<sup>56</sup>William Wilkinson, A confutation of certaine articles. See the appended "Certain profitable notes to know an Heretique, especially an Anabaptist."

<sup>57</sup>Edmund Jessop, A discovery of the errors of the English Anabaptists (1623) STC 1475-1640, 14520, p. 1.

<sup>58</sup>William Vaughan, The golden grove, moralized in three books (1600) STC 1475-1640, 24610, Sig. E3.

<sup>59</sup>John Paget, An arrow against the separation of the Brownists (1618) STC 1475-1640, 19098, Sig. R4<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>60</sup>The Anabaptists Catechisme (1645) STC 1641-1700, A3039, Sig. A4.

<sup>61</sup>William Alley, The poore mans librarie, Sig. Yi<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>62</sup>William Rainolds, A treatise conteyning the true catholike faith of the holy sacrifice ordeyned by Christ (1593) STC 1475-1640, 20633, Sig. D3<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>63</sup>Daniel Featley, A tractate against the Anabaptists. See Chapter I of this tractate in *The Dippers dipt*.

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- <sup>65</sup>William Rainolds, A treatise conteyning the true catholike faith, Sig. Dd8-Ee.
- <sup>66</sup>Thomas Stapleton, A fortresse of the faith (1565) STC 1475-1640, 23232, Sig. Z4.
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- <sup>70</sup>John Smyth, The character of the Beast or the false constitution of the Church discovered in certayne passages betwixt Mr. R. Clifton a. John Smith, conc. true christian baptisme (1609) STC 1475-1640, 22875.
- <sup>71</sup>"Smith, John," *Dictionary of National Biography*, 18, 477.
- <sup>72</sup>George Gifford, A short treatise, Sig. O.
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- <sup>74</sup>Henry Jacob, A christian and modest offer of a conference betwixt the prelat and the deprived ministers (1606) STC 1475-1640, 14329, Sig. D2.
- <sup>75</sup>John Milton, *Areopagitica*, in *John Milton: Prose Selections*, ed. Merritt Y. Hughes (New York: The Odyssey Press, 1947), p. 256.
- <sup>76</sup>Marco Antonio Dominus, The second manifesto of M. A. de Dominus, wherein he publicly repenteth, etc. (1623) STC 1475-1640, 7001, Sig. C<sup>v</sup>-C2.
- <sup>77</sup>Note, for example, the "Conference at Terling in Essex, Jan. 11, 1643," STC 1641-1700, S6166, and the "Disputation in Southwarke . . . Oct. 17, 1642," STC 1641-1700, F585.
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- <sup>79</sup>The character of an Anabaptist (1660) STC 1641-1700, C2004.
- <sup>80</sup>Robert Barclay, An apology for the true Christian divinity, 2nd ed. [London?] (1678) STC 1641-1700, B721 pp. 31-32.
- <sup>81</sup>William Barlow, The summe and substance of the conference, wh. it pleased his Majestie to have with the Lords Bishops, and other clergie at Hampton Court (1604) STC 1475-1640, 1456, Sig. K3-K4.
- <sup>82</sup>John Milton, *Areopagitica*, p. 264.
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