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Introduction

WHEN CHRISTENDOM IN THE WEST was swept by currents of renewal and reform in the sixteenth century, the outcome was schism. A single catholic church gave way to a world divided between Catholics and Protestants and, among Protestants themselves, to several versions of true religion. This book is about one of those versions as it unfolded in early modern Scotland and England and, many years later, was transplanted to New England—the Protestantism that, in its British context, acquired the nickname of "puritanism."

Nicknames usually contain an ounce of truth alongside much that is distorted or downright untrue. William Bradford, who became one of the founders of new-world Plymouth, disliked this particular nickname because it implied that such people were reenacting the mistakes of an early Christian sect, the Novatians, who referred to themselves as the Cathari, the "pure," hence "puritans." Not this genealogy but another he would have acknowledged lies at the heart of the Puritanism I am describing, the British version of international Calvinism or, as I prefer to say, the Reformed tradition or Reformed international. On the Continent, the Reformed competed in the mid-sixteenth century with Lutherans and the Anabaptists for the allegiance of the people who abandoned Catholicism and became Protestants. The advocates of Reformed-style Protestantism in England were also competing with a fourth possibility that eventually became known as Anglicanism. For much of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth-centuries, the line between this version of Protestantism and what Puritans preferred was uncertain, for they agreed on some aspects of theology and practice. In Scotland, the party aligned with Reformed principles came much closer to succeeding, able to dominate when it came to doctrine and worship until the early decades of the seventeenth century, when its policies were disrupted by an unfriendly monarch. My answer to the question "What was Puritanism?" is to emphasize everything the movement inherited from the Reformed and how this inheritance was

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reshaped in Britain and again in early New England—as it were, the Reformed tradition with a Scottish, English, or colonial accent.

To its parent, the Puritan movement owed the ambition to become the state-endorsed version of Christianity in England and Scotland. Theological principle lay at the heart of this ambition. On both sides of the Protestant-Catholic divide, theologians and civic leaders agreed that true religion could be readily defined. All others were false—entirely false or perhaps only in part. Either way, defending true religion against its enemies was crucial. Were error to overtake truth, vast numbers of people would never receive or understand the gospel promise of unmerited grace.² Almost as crucial was a second principle, that God empowered godly kings or, as was also said, the "Christian prince," to use the powers of the civil state in behalf of true religion. In early modern Britain and subsequently in early New England, Puritans took both of these assumptions for granted. A third principle concerned the nature of the church. Its role on earth was as a means of grace for all of humankind, a role complicated by the doctrine that only the faithful few would eventually be included within the gospel promise of salvation. Whether (and how) the faithful few should be set apart from hypocrites or the "unworthy" was a question that eventually differentiated some versions of Puritan practice from others.

Because the Puritan movement took a strong stand on the Bible as "law" and insisted that the state churches in England and Scotland eliminate all aspects of Catholicism, it became intensely controversial. Although opposed by many, it enjoyed surprising success in mid-sixteenth-century Scotland. In the 1550s, the government in that country was led by a Catholic queen serving in the place of her daughter, Mary Stuart, who returned from France in 1561 and began to rule in her own right. For reform to succeed, she would have to be circumvented or, as finally happened, defeated in civil war. Thereafter, the reformers were able to enact most of their agenda. Elizabeth I, who became monarch of England in 1558, was a Protestant. But she disliked the reformers who clamored for a "thorough reformation" and thwarted them at every turn. Nonetheless, these people learned how to work around her, aided in doing so by high-placed officials in the government, some of the bishops in the state church and, depending on the issue, members of Parliament. Thanks to these circumstances, the Puritan movement began to thrive—paradoxically, as much within the state church as on its margins.

In the early chapters, I describe the substance of a "thorough" or, to quote John Knox, a "perfect reformation" and the politics that arose in the wake of this concept. Worship had a singular importance in this politics, the source of crisis after crisis in early modern Britain. Important, too, was the nature of the visible church as a community headed, in principle, by Christ as king. The implications of this argument were resisted by monarchs who insisted on what became known as the royal supremacy. By the middle of the seventeenth cen-

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tury as well as earlier, British and colonial Puritans were also disputing how best to describe the relationship between unmerited grace and the "duties" or activity of the redeemed, a quarrel often focused on how to achieve assurance of salvation. As this brief summary suggests, I do my best throughout this book to associate the Puritan movement with theological principles and biblical precepts. Always, however, I situate these commitments in an ongoing politics shaped by social, cultural, and economic circumstances, and especially by the interests of the civil state.

Chronology and comparison drive the structure of *The Puritans*, with two exceptions. The story begins (chap. 1) with an overview of the Reformed (or "Calvinist") tradition and how it was conveyed to British Protestants through books such as John Foxe's *Acts and Monuments* (1563 in English) and firsthand encounters with Reformed practice that happened in the 1550s during the reign of Mary Tudor (1553–58), when English and Scottish ministers—the "Marian exiles"—fled to the Continent. As Foxe and the martyrs whose faith he was documenting repeatedly declared, Catholicism was wrong because it was based on "human inventions" whereas their version of Christianity was restoring the "primitive" (in the sense of first or earliest) perfection of the apostolic church. In the opening chapter, I also outline how the Reformation in Scotland differed from the Reformation in England, differences cited some eighty-five years later by Charles I when he was being pressured to endorse Scottish-style Presbyterianism (see chap. 8).

How the politics of religion unfolded after 1560 is traced in the chapters that follow (2 and 3), which carry the story of reformation in England and Scotland from circa 1555 to the beginning of the seventeenth century. Then come two chapters that are topical, not chronological, the first (chap. 4) on the "practical divinity," or how Puritan ministers and laypeople understood the workings of redemption and developed a dense system of "means," followed by another (chap. 5) situating the Puritan version of a "reformation of manners" or moral reform within a larger anxiety about "decline." Chronology returns in chapter 6, which covers the early decades of the seventeenth century, when James VI of Scotland became James I of England and controversy about worship and the structure of the state church erupted anew in Scotland. As well, chapter 6 covers "Dutch Puritanism," a convenient shorthand for the more radical or safety-seeking laypeople and ministers who went to the Netherlands as early as the 1580s. The final three chapters deal with the run-up to the civil war that broke out in 1642 and its political and theological dimensions (chaps. 7, 8, and 9). In chapter 7, the colonists who founded Massachusetts and other New England colonies finally appear and return in chapter 9, which covers their story after 1640. An epilogue traces the workings of "memory" on both sides of the Atlantic: Puritans not in their own voice but as represented by nineteenth- and twentieth-century novelists, denominational historians, cultural critics, and the like.

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To narrate the history of Puritan-style reformation in England and Scotland is not unusual, but treating them side by side as companions who share the same project is less common. From the beginning, the two were entangled, Scottish and English exiles mingling in Geneva, Frankfurt, and elsewhere during the period when England was ruled by Mary Tudor or in pre-1553 England, where John Knox lived at a moment when Protestants in his Scottish homeland could not worship publicly. The partisans of a perfect reformation in England admired what Knox and his heirs accomplished, for the Scottish reformers avoided most of the compromises that dogged the "Elizabethan Settlement" (see chapter 2). It was a different matter when James VI of Scotland became James I of England in 1603, for he brought with him a deep-seated hostility to Scottish "puritans" and set about remodeling the Scottish kirk, a project that blew up in the face of his son and successor, Charles I. With tensions building in the 1620s and 1630s, the narrative in chapter 7 concludes with an extraordinary moment in Scottish religious and political history, the insurgency of 1637-38 that led to the "National Covenant" of 1638 and the return of presbyterian governance for the state church. The implications for England were immense, for the Scottish "revolution" provoked two brief episodes of civil war with the government of Charles I. When his army was defeated, the king had to summon a new Parliament, which began to chip away at royal authority and revamp or curtail aspects of worship, doctrine, and structure within the Church of England. Because Charles I regarded royal authority and an episcopal church structure as two sides of the same coin, space for compromise was scant. The outcome was civil war in England between Royalists and Parliamentarians—a British war once the Scottish government decided to support the English Parliament against the king.

Treating the two reformations side by side sharpens our understanding of the politics that united the advocates of reform in England with their counterparts in Scotland or, as also happened, pulled them apart. Each side endorsed a Reformed-inflected theology of the church, or ecclesiology, but when the moment came (1643-46) to define an alternative to episcopacy, Scottish theologians were virtually unique in upholding a jure divino (mandated by divine law) system of church government alongside "magisterial" (state-sustained) Protestantism. As the Scottish historian Gordon Donaldson has pointed out, the reformers in his country never entertained the possibility of separating from an unlawful church, a possibility favored by small groups of Puritans in England early in the reign of Elizabeth I and acted on anew in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries.³ Already, however, one wing of the Puritan movement in England was moving toward a more decentered, "local" siting of the church. By the early seventeenth century, a handful of ministers were beginning to imagine what such a church would look like. Their ideas played a part in the decision of the colonists who founded Massachusetts in the 1630s to adopt what became known as the "Congregational Way." Soon, others

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in England were following suit, a step that undermined any possibility of agreement on what should replace the bishop-centered structure of the Church of England. Of the several factors that led to the breakdown of the alliance formed in 1643 between Scotland and the English Parliament, this seems the least understood despite its significance to most British Protestants.

Different though they were in certain respects, each quest for true religion shared a commitment to "discipline" and a social agenda known as a reformation of manners (chap. 5). At a moment when Reformed theology was under attack from various directions, the leaders on each side endorsed a statement of doctrine known as the Westminster Confession (1647). This moment dominates chapter 9, in which I also revisit the "Antinomian controversy" in mid-1630s Massachusetts and describe alternatives to the orthodoxy spelled out in the Confession.⁴

My journey through early modern British and early American history has included the company of historians as interested as I am in doctrine, the practical divinity, the Reformed tradition, and the politics that culminated in civil war and the reign of Oliver Cromwell. Argument among these historians is endemic,⁵ argument that encompasses the meaning and significance of events, people, circumstances, and—topics of special pertinence to this book—the descriptive categories on which we depend.

Calvinism is one of these categories. Does it refer to John Calvin and his many publications or to a wider movement in which he was influential but not the final authority in every debate? If the term denotes a wider movement that extended into the seventeenth century and beyond, could it designate an alternative to Calvin—for example, a way of doing theology introduced by a second or third generation of Reformed theologians? That Calvinism in and of itself seems inadequate is suggested by adjectives such as "moderate," "hyper," "experimental," "Dordtian," and "English" that some historians have attached to it. The "practical divinity" I describe in chapter 4 (the term is not mine but dates from c. 1600), is a case in point, "Calvinist" from one vantage but something else from another.⁶ In much older scholarship, Calvinism is regarded as inferior to or somehow compromising the theology of John Calvin, a thesis summed up in the phrase, "Calvin versus Calvinism." In this book, however, I temper this distinction after learning of its limitations from Richard A. Muller's numerous articles and books. Muller has put his finger on another problem, the assertion by mid-nineteenth-century German historians that predestination was the "central idea" in Calvin's theology. A misreading of both Calvin and Puritan theologizing, this argument has generated consequences that seem impossible to unwind, one of them the assertion that the doctrine was singular to Puritans and avoided by "Anglicans." As I have learned from informal events where I am asked to describe Puritan theology, someone always asks about predestination, and in far too many monographs it turns up as the centerpiece of Puritanism.⁷

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As the abundance of scholarship on the "Calvin versus Calvinism" question indicates, the limitations of the term are real. Nonetheless, it designates a stream of theological reflection embodied in creeds and confessions that, although differing in details or emphasis, were acknowledged by Reformed communities in early modern Europe, Britain, and New England as authoritative. I use it cautiously (see chap. 4) and the special circumstances of the 1640s, when orthodoxy was threatened by new enemies in the guise of Socinianism, Arminianism, and a Spirit-centered understanding of conversion that became known as Antinomianism, make it less relevant to that time of struggle. What I foreground in chapter 9, especially, is the sense of crisis that arose among the makers of the practical divinity and how one minister's response could vary from another's. For historians of international Calvinism, the practical divinity has a special importance, for the books in which it was embodied were rapidly reprinted in translation and, by the mid-seventeenth century, were influencing Continental Reformed practice. An emphasis on an "experimental" piety made it unusual, and unusual it remained once it made its way into Pietism and, eventually, evangelical Protestantism.

Among the ministers and academic theologians who turn up in this book, theological practice involved defending the truth against enemies such as Roman Catholicism and making it available in creeds and catechisms. In these genres, as in schoolbooks such as William Ames's The Marrow of Divinity (1629, in Latin), truth or doctrine was compressed into its essentials. Simultaneously, theological practice was carried on in sermons or sermon series tied to Scripture and often employing biblical examples to make a point. As a genre, sermons were very different from creeds and catechisms, for they added layer upon layer of reflection to the principles spelled out in a creed. A good example is the theological and biblical category of covenant, which acquired a fresh importance at the outset of the seventeenth century when a "covenant" or "federal" theology came into being.8 Another reason why simple rules became entangled with overlays of meaning was the ambition of Puritan ministers to reach a broad audience. In everyday life, people needed guidance on how to become a "sincere" Christian and what it meant to behave righteously. Hence the emphasis within the practical divinity on what in our own era is often described as "spirituality." In this mode, biblical and theological language owed more to the psalms of David than to a sixteenth-century creed.

Making sense of the layers of interpretation that sermons added to key terms is challenging, for historians of Puritan theology have realized that these can encompass inconsistencies or, to quote the historian of theology E. Brooks Holifield, "ambivalence." Ambivalence did not suddenly appear in early modern Britain, for Calvin wavered in some of his thinking. What he and his heirs said about assurance of salvation is a good example, as is what they said about the sacraments of baptism and Holy Communion or the visible church as a means of grace. We may not be able to understand why someone could simul-

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taneously extol the benefits of infant baptism and deny it any efficacy, or why the English minister Arthur Dent added list after list of inconsistent "signs" of assurance to a manual of devotion (see chap. 4), but both were aspects of British and early American "Calvinism." Another approach to ambivalence or ambiguity is to recognize the layers of meaning embedded in words such as "liberty" and "purity." At first glance, these are words we think we understand. But our versions vary from how such words were understood in early modern Britain. Time and again, we take for granted their meaning, a mistake that historians of ideas do their best to correct.¹⁰

Close kin to Calvinism and almost as problematic, orthodoxy is a word I use to denote an agreed-upon framework of doctrine. Nineteenth-century Protestant liberals disliked this word, as do their more recent heirs, to whom it denotes an overly abstract or "rigid" version of theology because it established firm boundaries between truth and error. Liberals also disliked the category because it exposed them to accusations of apostasy: if the truth was so clearly evident, then all other interpretations of the Trinity, justification, and Scripture were wrong, and possibly very wrong. The alternative, which liberals in Europe and America shared, was to understand religious truth and religion itself as always and everywhere historically incomplete or caught up in "development." In this book, however, the word orthodoxy denotes principles or doctrines formally endorsed by synods and state churches or closely related assumptions in the realm of ethics. Yet as I do my best to indicate in chapters 4 and 9, the contours of orthodoxy were constantly being discussed or contested, or to use a more fashionable word, "negotiated" by ministers who according to their own self-estimation remained orthodox.11 In mid-seventeenth-century England, Richard Baxter (see chap. 9) fits this description, as does another English minister, John Preston.

Some students of the religious politics I describe regard the terms *Puritan* and *Puritanism* as too uncertain to be useful. This point of view has the great merit of recognizing that, as soon as the word surfaced in Elizabethan religious politics, its meaning owed more to anti-puritanism than to the makers of the movement themselves. Anti-puritanism of the kind to which William Bradford was responding (see above) was politically motivated. The goal of its makers was to prevent certain theological ideas and practices from winning the support of kings and parliaments at a moment when advocates of a "thorough reformation" were becoming a vocal presence. Anti-puritanism is alive and well in our own times and, on the both sides of the Atlantic, is responsible for most popular misconceptions of the movement. Freeing the word from the abuse directed at it over the centuries, a task I pursue implicitly in this book, can seem impossible. Too many people in the United States have come under the sway of Arthur Miller's The Crucible and Nathaniel Hawthorne's The Scarlet Letter. The same seems true of English culture, thanks to nineteenth and early twentieth-century Anglicans who rained contempt upon the movement.

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From their perspective, it was unhealthy—too disciplining, too sectarian, and too subversive, as witnessed by the civil wars that erupted in the 1640s and the execution of Charles I in 1649. For people with this point of view, there was nothing to learn from a movement they regarded as being outside of or hostile to the "real" Church of England.

We owe to the late Patrick Collinson (d. 2011), who concluded his distinguished career at Cambridge University, a sharp retort to such assumptions. In essays and books that included *The Elizabethan Puritan Movement* (1967) and The Religion of Protestants (1982), he argued exactly the opposite. 12 The movement arose within the Church of England and aspired to reform it from within. As he quietly pointed out, important leaders of the state church acknowledged that the institution was imperfect and sided with the reformers on certain issues. The bishops who felt this way had allies in the queen's Privy Council, an alliance tied to the centrality of the movement or, to say this differently, the common ground shared by various wings of the state church. Only when a small group of "radical" intellectuals, most of them associated with Cambridge University, began to question the royal supremacy, the legitimacy of the Book of Common Prayer, and the scriptural basis of episcopacy did an aggressive, sharp-edged version of Puritanism come into being. Even so, the organizers of this Puritanism rejected the more extreme alternative of "Separatism." Like the Scottish reformers, they wanted an inclusive state church and a "Christian prince" (monarch) who would *preserve* uniformity in practice and belief. For everyone who absorbed the lessons of Collinson's scholarship, the movement ceased to be "revolutionary" or inherently "radical."13

To this forceful argument, Collinson added another. Acknowledging the push and pull of conscience versus conformity or of "lawful" versus "things indifferent" (see chap. 2), he excelled at describing the tensions that accumulated within the movement. One version of these arose around the difference between "voluntary religion" and magisterial Protestantism, a tension allied with another: the difference between a church consisting only of the faithful and one that was broadly inclusive. Properly understood, therefore, the English version struggled with its own internal differences even as it contended against its critics in the state church or government. To capture some of these nuances, Collinson used adjectives and nouns such as "pragmatic," "dogmatic," "moderate," "revolutionary," and "sectarian," a vocabulary I use myself, although sparingly, to suggest a dynamics that spun out of control in the 1640s and 1650s. My version also includes the people who are usually classified as "Separatists" because they denied the lawfulness (legitimacy) of the Church of England and formed their own worshipping communities. Collinson excluded these groups because they fell outside his magisterial version of the Puritan movement. My reasons for doing the opposite are implied in the final pages of chapter 2.14

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Movements are not the same as institutions. No person or self-designated elite headed the movement I am describing and, when disagreements erupted, it had no internal means of restoring consensus. A Puritanism at once tightly bounded and restless complicates the task of deciding who really qualifies as a Puritan—and when. Early modern British history is littered with examples of people, policies, and practices that seem impeccably Puritan from one perspective but not from another. Was John Milton a Puritan? Not if orthodoxy is required. Could a bishop in the Church of England be one? Yes, if the hallmark of identity is doctrine, not ecclesiology. Could Puritans support the monarchy? The answer is yes, despite assertions to the contrary by kings and their allies, to which I add the observation that in mid-seventeenth-century England, "republicans" such as James Harrington (d. 1675) were not involved in the movement. When the scene shifts to the landowning class known as the gentry, some were outspoken in behalf of reform, but in contexts such as Parliament, where consensus and social rank were highly valued, hard-edged identities often became blurred. According to Jacqueline Eales, the high-status Harley family mingled in their home county with others of the same rank who were Catholics, and when Robert Harley attended sessions of the House of Commons, he worked alongside men of quite different convictions. 15 In Scotland as in England, the nuances were many—too many, in fact, for all of them to be adequately acknowledged in this book.

Where does the presence of Puritanism in early modern Britain seem most obvious? Most of us are likely to say it is as an advocate of disciplinary religion, by which we mean a forceful ethics of obedience to divine law, coupled with a machinery of overseeing that obedience. In point of fact, a reformation of manners (another name for this agenda) was widely endorsed, an observation I expand on in chapter 5 in the wake of work by social historians who discount the singularity or importance of a Puritan-derived "civic godliness." In the same chapter, however, I identify a cluster of assumptions that differentiate the Puritan version of a reformation of manners from its near neighbor. The line between the two was not always clearly drawn, a case in point being the preference of ministers of all persuasions to protect the Sunday Sabbath. Nor was one version more enduring than another, although in the epilogue, I instance some of the legacies of the Puritan version.

When it comes to the practical divinity, its identity as "Puritan" is genuinely in doubt. Ministers in good standing in the Church of England—Arthur Dent, for one; William Perkins, for another—contributed to the making of this version of the Protestant message about salvation. Yet to deny it any connections with the movement is a mistake. We have only to ask why it was impossible for the Church of England to endorse the Westminster Confession of 1647—a text keyed to the practical divinity as well as to disputes about the Trinity and divine sovereignty—to expose how "Anglicanism" of the kind associated with

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John Donne, Lancelot Andrewes, Richard Hooker, William Laud, and William Chillingworth was different. 17

From my perspective, the controversies about who was a Puritan or "presbyterian" or possibly something else hold two lessons. One of these is that historians (literary, social, political, religious, etc.) should pause before they acclaim or denounce this or that practice as singularly "Puritan." This happens constantly in American scholarship—as in the assertion that a "Puritan" mode of child-rearing existed, an argument usually based on a handful of examples or (at an extreme) a single sentence from a sermon, when in fact people of middling social status in England treated children in the same manner. Ways of dying were also widely shared among Protestants, as were ways of understanding sickness, healing, and gender. Everyone wanted to protect the Sunday Sabbath, although not always for the same reasons. We do better as historians if we qualify all such claims for singularity.

Historians of early New England wrestle with other versions of this problem. Usually unaware of how British scholars have complicated the meaning of the term, they use Puritan or Puritanism without any hesitation, as if Puritanism arrived on this side of the Atlantic in a tidy box or perhaps as a single text (usually, John Winthrop's essay or discourse, "A Modell of Christian Charity"), a Puritanism shorn of the complexities arising out of the English and Scottish reformations and a hard-fought politics of religion in early modern Britain. This practice abets the quest for "origins," for we marvel as the colonists unpack the luggage labeled Puritanism and magically turn into "founders" of the America-to-be—founders of a literary tradition or of something resembling democracy, and especially founders of a ready-made "identity," as though (for example) the colonists equipped their venture with a singular understanding of the "millennium." ¹⁸

This was how things stood when I began my doctoral work in 1959. Ignorant of the British side of the story, I took for granted an essentially denominational perspective. The "pilgrims" had been "Separatists" and the founders of Massachusetts "Congregationalists," so any backward glance across the Atlantic could start and end with these two groups or their theorizers. By the close of the 1960s, I was beginning to recognize the limitations of this approach and, in a brief preface to a new edition of Perry Miller's *Orthodoxy in Massachusetts* (1933, 1970), questioned his reliance on denominational categories. In a monograph on the ministry in seventeenth-century New England, I also questioned a vigorously "Americanist" interpretation of its development in response to arguments along those lines.

But the real awakening to a more fully Atlantic or Reformed framework—my own awakening, if not always shared by others—happened in the wake of scholarship that reclaimed the richness of theological speculation on the other side of the Atlantic and, in doing so, altered our understanding of theological controversy in New England. Pride of place in this enterprise belong to Mi-

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chael McGiffert, E. Brooks Holifield, Baird Tipson, W.G.B. Stoever, Theodore Dwight Bozeman, and Charles Hambrick-Stowe.¹⁹ Later, and continuing to this day, they were joined by Norman Fiering, Charles Lloyd Cohen, Francis J. Bremer, Richard Cogley, and Stephen Foster. The point of view that informs Foster's *The Long Argument: English Puritanism and the Shaping of New England Culture*, 1570–1700 (1990), is indicative of how an origins narrative tied to a thick history of the Puritan movement in England looks very different from one that begins at water's edge or depends on denominational categories.²⁰

My own confidence in a theological perspective rests on work by another group of historians who share a deep interest in the Reformed tradition as embodied in a Puritanism that remains a resource to this day. Richard A. Muller stands apart from this group in various ways, but his work in historical theology set a standard for evangelical scholars such as Mark E. Dever, Joel Beeke, Lyle Bierma, Randall Gleason, Tom Schwanda, and especially Paul C. H. Lim. My citations to them in chapters 4 and 9 are a small token of their presence in these pages.

I have already alluded to the anti-puritanism of nineteenth-century British Anglicans. This rhetoric was flourishing in the late sixteenth century and became a significant weapon in the religious politics associated with Charles I, who knew that his father had characterized the movement as antimonarchical.²¹ Renewed after the restoration of Charles II to the throne in 1660 and periodically reenergized during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, it remains with us to this day. The American version, which I describe more fully in the epilogue, mainly dates from a schism in the early nineteenth century that divided Unitarians (today, Unitarian Universalists) from Congregationalists. As post-Calvinist Protestants, Unitarians justified their newfound independence by denouncing the intolerance of the seventeenth-century colonists and the cruelties of Calvinist theology. To them we owe the popular assumptions that the colonists persecuted large numbers of innocent people and burned witches at the stake. Neither happens to be true. 22 On the British side as on the American, anti-puritanism included the assumption that Puritans were joyless except when it came to punishing others, an assumption translated by some social and cultural historians, or anyone constructing a scenario of repression versus liberation, into the thesis that the goal of the movement was to impose social discipline on those beneath them in rank or status. This too is an argument with major weaknesses.23

In the nineteenth century and continuing into ours, anti-puritanism was likely to reemerge whenever the emphasis fell on the benefits of progress, or of being more enlightened. Puritanism became akin to the Dark Ages once liberals on both sides of the Atlantic embraced the story of progress from superstition to rationality or from dogma to free inquiry, a story endorsed even more widely in our own times despite the horrors of the twentieth century. We may

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recognize that the price we pay for "modernity" includes severe damage to the environment and ongoing inequality, but it seems impossible to jettison the assumption that things are better now than they were in the past.

A simple response to anti-puritanism in any of its forms is to reemphasize that this book is about the Protestant Reformation as it unfolded in early modern Britain. No serious student of the past doubts the importance of this Reformation and its Catholic counterpart. Nor should any serious student of early America, for the conflicts associated with these two reformations played an oversized role in determining who moved from Britain or elsewhere in Europe to the colonies—people who identified themselves (e.g.,) as Catholics, Quakers, Puritans, Scots-Irish Presbyterians, German Pietists, and Moravians—and an outsized role as well in the making of Native American and African-American forms of Christianity.²⁴

By way of conclusion, I note a few questions of interest to historians of early modern Britain and early America I do not address. That Protestantism and, especially perhaps, anti-Catholicism, played a major role in fashioning English or Scottish popular nationalism seems obvious, but as Arthur Williamson has shown for early modern Scotland, much else was involved.²⁵ Only in chapter 3, which concludes with the making of a "myth" of the kirk uniquely aligned with divine law, do I deal with the intersecting of national identity with the rhetoric of the reformers. How the people of early modern Scotland and England became Protestants—how, in other words, centuries of Catholic practice were replaced and Protestantism as culture and doctrine implanted—is a fascinating question that animates Peter Marshall's remarkable Beliefs and the Dead in Reformation England (2002), Margo Todd's The Culture of Protestantism in Early Modern Scotland (2002), and much of the scholarship of Christopher Haigh and Arnold Hunt.²⁶ Here, however, I pass it by, as I also do a question of more immediate interest to me, how Protestantism was "lived" or, alternatively, what counted as "popular" religion in this period.²⁷ Addressing either of these became impossible once I decided to foreground theology, the institutional church, and the politics of religion as it was carried on (or by) monarchs, general assemblies, parliaments, and the like.

Given the ambiguities that inhere in so many key words I use, the practical question becomes when to capitalize. Collinson tilted toward a lowercase p for puritanism, but other historians vary in their practice, as I did while this book was being written. Because a copyeditor has insisted on consistency, I have capitalized *Puritanism* and *Puritan* but not terms such as *Presbyterian* until I reach the 1640s, which was when the Scottish theologians who participated in the Westminster Assembly advocated *jure divino* Presbyterianism. At this point, therefore, it seems appropriate to acknowledge their point of view with a capital letter. Their many English allies in the Westminster Assembly were a mixed lot, some persuaded by the Scots and others more middling in their sentiments. No good way of naming them exists. Mindful of Collinson's obser-

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vation that historians should not repeat the error of pushing the history of nineteenth-century denominations back into the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, I have wavered in how I treat the colonists who brought into being a "Congregational Way," not wanting to baptize them prematurely as Congregationalists but needing a label of some kind. On the other hand, Baptists and Quakers (although this term postdates 1660) seem sufficiently distinctive to merit capitals, even though each was tugged this way and that in deciding matters of doctrine and practice.

In the pages that follow, biblical quotations conform to the King James Version of the Bible. Contrary to the practice of some historians of early modern Scotland, I spell Mary Stuart's name in this manner and translate most examples of Scots English into ordinary English. When quoting from a sixteenth- or seventeenth-century text, I drop the long-tailed i and change u's into v's, but I do my best to preserve capitalization and punctuation. Place of publication for early modern texts cited in my narrative is London unless otherwise noted. Readers wanting to know more about arguments within the field of Puritan studies should consult Peter Lake, "The historiography of Puritanism," chapter 20 of *The Cambridge Companion to Puritanism*, ed. John Coffey and Paul C. H. Lim (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008); and the essays cited in the bibliographical note in *Puritans in the New World: A Critical Anthology*, edited by David D. Hall (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004).

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