Darren M. Pollock

Early Stuart Polemical Hermeneutics

Andrew Willet's 1611 Hexapla on Romans

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Soli Deo Gloria!

D.M.P.
May 2017
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Chapter I.
Introduction: Andrew Willet, Romans, and Post-Reformation Polemics

1. Purpose and Scope of this Study

Church of England divine and polymath Andrew Willet (1561/2–1621) began his prolific writing career as one of the Protestant world's preeminent anti-Catholic polemicists. His magisterial and influential *Synopsis Papismi*, which went through four editions in his lifetime and extended to well over a thousand pages, critiqued every element of Roman Catholic dogma in painstaking detail. Also one of England's most skilled textual critics, he shifted genres and engaged in biblical commentary work for the latter decades of his life. Willet's exegetical work has not received adequate attention, and I intend in this book to contribute to that discussion, looking particularly at how Willet's background as a leading religious controversialist informed and directed his later efforts in biblical commentary. I will argue that Willet's turn to biblical exposition represented not an abandonment of polemics, but the application of a polemical hermeneutic to a different genre.

I am focusing my attention on Willet's 1611 Romans hexapla.[1] This epistle was at the heart of the theological tension between Protestants and Roman Catholics. Willet held that it taught "the two chiefe points of Christian religion," which also happened to be two major points of contention with the "Roman foe": justification and election.[2] He later uses these same doctrines to articulate marks of "true religion":

> This is a true marke and touchstone whereby to discerne true religion from false: for that religion, which onely giveth honour unto God, and denieth all power unto man, to helpe toward salvation, and so stoppeth mans mouth, and taketh from him all ostentation and vaine glorie, that is the true religion: whereas on the contrarie, that which giveth unto

1 Andrew Willet, *Hexapla: That is, A Six-fold Commentarie upon the most Divine Epistle of the holy Apostle S. Paul to the Romanes: wherein according to the Authors former method sixe things are observed in every Chapter* (Cambridge: Leonard Greene, 1611).

2 Willet, *Hexapla upon Romanes*, 8.

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> man matter of ostentation and rejoycing, is to be suspected of falshood, and hypocrisie: such is the doctrine of Poperie, which ascribeth much unto mans freewill and merits.[3]

We see in this brief passage both the importance of Romans to Willet (and to post-Reformation religious controversy generally), and a glimpse at how Willet's polemical hermeneutic focuses and frames his interpretation of the epistle. Indeed, he is drawn to Romans largely *because of* these themes, but his opposition to "papism" also directs the way that he elicits and frames this Doctrine; had he viewed Socinianism, for instance, as the greatest threat to the Church of England, surely he would not have defined "true religion" without reference to *Christ.* But since Rome's Christology and trinitarian views were not particularly problematic, Willet can assume orthodoxy on these doctrines and focus his interpretation on the more contested matters.

Two decades ago Anthony Milton observed that "the greater proportion of printed religious literature [from England] of the period 1600–40 remains wholly unstudied," and, particularly, "the vast majority of anti-papal controversial works composed during this period have been almost entirely neglected by historians."[4] While the situation is better today than it was twenty years ago, there remains much work to be done in early Stuart polemics. And while a Romans commentary does not strictly belong to the controversial genre, it can be particularly instructive to consider how the polemical needs of the period informed other genres. Thus, I hope to contribute to the developing body of scholarly literature on the history of exegesis, early seventeenth-century anti-papism, and the hermeneutical function of polemics.

Considering the extensive body of work produced by the prolific Willet and the relative lack of scholarly focus that he has received, I will necessarily have to limit my scope primarily to issues pertaining to the Romans hexapla (which itself has material enough for several dissertations!). Thus, I will refer to the rest of his work only as it serves to clarify an issue from his interpretation of Romans, and I cannot dwell long on many of the interesting ancillary questions and debates about Willet (e. g. whether he wrote the 1599 *A Christian Letter*,[5] the degree to which he allowed political resistance, why he was not included among the King James Bible translators, the circumstances surrounding his imprisonment for opposing the Spanish Match, whether his poetry has any literary merit, and so forth).

3 Willet, *Hexapla upon Romanes*, 177 (eliciting a Doctrine from v. 3:19).

4 Anthony Milton, *Catholic and Reformed: The Roman and Protestant Churches in English Protestant Thought, 1600–1640* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 6–7.

5 An anonymous tract critical of Richard Hooker; see footnotes 15–16 in this chapter.

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2. State of the Question

2.1 Scholarship on Willet

The widely varying designations of Andrew Willet in modern secondary literature give testimony to the diversity of his abilities and the value of further examination of his work and its impact on seventeenth-century thought. He has been described in recent years both as a "noted moderate puritan divine" and as a "radical Protestant,"[6] as "a well-known English Calvinist clergyman and writer," a "Jacobean textual scholar," and a "Calvinist controversialist."[7] His vast literary output has led him to be entitled "a prodigy of learning and industry" and "that tireless commentator Andrew Willet,"[8] and in other fields he has been designated as the author of "the first book on the conversion of Jews to be printed in England,"[9] "one of the very few explicit resistance theorists to be found in Ja-

6 J. F. Merritt, "Puritans, Laudians, and the Phenomenon of Church-Building in Jacobean London," *The Historical Journal* 41, no. 4 (December 1998): 954; Neil D. Graves, "Pedagogy or Gerontagogy: The Education of the Miltonic Deity," *Texas Studies in Literature and Language* 50, no. 4 (Winter 2008): 358.

7 Lee Piepho, "Making the Impossible Dream: Latin, Print, and the Marriage of Frederick V and the Princess Elizabeth," *Reformation* 14 (2009): 134; Joseph Marshall, "Recycling and Originality in the Pamphlet Wars: Republishing Jacobean Texts in the 1640s," *Transactions of the Cambridge Bibliographical Society* 12, no. 1 (2000): 73; J. Sears McGee, "A 'Carkass' of 'Mere Dead Paper': The Polemical Career of Francis Rous, Puritan MP," *Huntington Library Quarterly* 72, no. 3 (September 2009): 355.

8 Rosemary Freeman, "George Herbert and the Emblem Books," *The Review of English Studies* 17, no. 66 (April 1941): 151; Eugene D. Hill, "The First Elizabethan Tragedy: A Contextual Reading of 'Cambises'," *Studies in Philology* 89, no. 4 (Autumn 1992): 420. Other modern writers who describe Willet as among the most learned scholars of his day include: James Brodrick, *St. Robert Bellarmine: Saint & Scholar* (Westminster, MD: The Newman Press, 1961), 81; Patrick Collinson, *Elizabethans* (London: Hambleton and London, 2003), 201; and Philip B. Secor, *Richard Hooker: Prophet of Anglicanism* (Kent, UK: Burns and Oates, 1999), 317. Other recent writers who have made reference to Willet's industry and prolific literary output include: Robert H. West, *Milton and the Angels* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1955), 49; C. A. Patrides, "The 'Protevangelium' in Renaissance Theology and *Paradise Lost*," *Studies in English Literature, 1500–1900* 3, no. 1 (Winter 1963): 22; Heather Hirschfeld, *The End of Satisfaction: Drama and Repentance in the Age of Shakespeare* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2014), 34; Kevin Killeen, *Biblical Scholarship, Science and Politics in Early Modern England: Thomas Browne and the Thorny Place of Knowledge* (Surrey, England: Ashgate, 2009), 77; James Shapiro, *Shakespeare and the Jews* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), 167; and David McKitterick, *A History of Cambridge University* Press, vol. 1, *Printing and the Book Trade in Cambridge, 1534–1698* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 124. McKitterick notes that his remarkable productivity stands out even within his era, describing him as "one of the more prolific theological authors of a generation not noticeable for its reticence." Patrides quips, borrowing a phrase from Arthur Dent, that Willet's "prolixity might have given us cause to complain were it not that his output is often 'the plaine-mans [path]-way to Heaven.'"

9 Shapiro, *Shakespeare and the Jews*, 143; so also *The Collected Essays of Christopher Hill*, vol. 2,

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cobean England," "England's first religious emblem writer," and even—through a curiously-myopic focus on those few emblems—as "the English poet Andrew Willet."[10]

While Willet is frequently cast in a supporting role in a wide range of secondary literature, currently the only extended, monograph treatment of his thought is a 1998 master's thesis by Peter Van Kleeck, which presents a basic overview of his hermeneutical approach. Randall Pederson's 2009 essay on the *Synopsis Papismi* mainly summarizes Willet's arguments, generally clearly and accurately, focusing on the doctrines of Scripture and predestination. Pederson's own commentary is fairly minimal, though he contextualizes Willet's thought well in his footnotes. Anthony Milton, who wrote the Willet entry in the most recent edition of the *Dictionary of National Biography*, employs him as his primary window into the state of the late Tudor to early Stuart era Church of England in his excellent 1995 book *Catholic and Reformed.* Milton *recounts* Willet's efforts to spur further church reforms in the early years of the Jacobean period by constantly warning of the papist threat, diverting attention away from the more radical Reformed voices, and supporting the episcopacy sufficiently to demonstrate his loyalty to the crown, yet not so strongly as to alienate his presbyterian continental Reformed brethren. Viewing the same conflict from the Roman Catholic side, Stefania Tutino likewise has Willet as her representative anti-Catholic Protestant, calling his *Synopsis Papismi* "a book of great importance in English religious history between the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries," in her 2007 book *Law and Conscience.*[11]

It is a testament to his polemical acumen (and perhaps, as one of Bellarmine's biographers has put it, his "rather pompous" nature[12]) that Willet has been

Religion and Politics in 17th Century England (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1986), 272.

10 Glenn Burgess, *Absolute Monarchy and the Stuart Constitution* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1996), 10; Peter M. Daly and Paola Valeri-Tomaszuk, "Andrew Willet, England's First Religious Emblem Writer," *Renaissance and Reformation* 10, no. 2 (1986): 181; Anne Lake Prescott, "The 2011 Josephine Waters Bennett Lecture: From the Sheephook to the Scepter: The Ambiguities of David's Rise to the Throne," *Renaissance Quarterly* 65, no. 1 (Spring 2012): 8. McKitterick explains why Willet achieved notoriety as a theologian and not as a poet, describing the verses in his emblem book as "an inauspicious beginning to the printing of English poetry in Cambridge" (McKitterick, *History of Cambridge University Press*, 124).

11 Peter Van Kleeck, "Hermeneutics and Theology in the Seventeenth Century: the Contribution of Andrew Willet" (ThM thesis, Calvin Theological Seminary, 1998); Pederson, "Andrew Willet and the *Synopsis Papismi*"; Milton, *Catholic and Reformed*; Tutino, *Law and Conscience: Catholicism in Early Modern England, 1570–1625* (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 2007), 92. Cf. also Tutino's earlier essay, "'Makynge Recusancy Deathe Outrighte'? Thomas Pounde, Andrew Willet and the Catholic Question in Early Jacobean England," *Recusant History* 27, no. 1 (May 2004): 31–50. Anthony Milton, "Andrew Willet," in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

12 Brodrick, *St. Robert Bellarmine*, 81–82. I will mention one example to show that Brodrick's

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identified as an arch opponent of both Roman Catholic and Protestant foes. Conal Condren names Willet as the famous Church of England divine Richard Hooker's "principal enemy," and Diarmaid MacCulloch adds that, despite Hooker's much greater renown today, Willet was in their age the more popular author.[13] Willet was openly critical of Hooker—accusing him of a variety of heterodox opinions ranging from weakening Christ's divinity and challenging the *sola Scriptura* principle, to causing schism, treating Rome as a true Christian church, and introducing elements of works-righteousness into his theology[14]—but his most common link to Hooker is his disputed, though widely assumed, authorship of *A Christian Letter*,[15] an anonymous 1599 open letter to Hooker.[16]

description is not (at least entirely) motivated by a partisan distaste for one of Bellarmine's sharper critics. In the "Directions to the Reader" prefacing the Genesis hexapla, where one might expect a self-effacing statement in which the author takes responsibility for any errors, Willet writes: "In the reading of this booke I would premonish the Reader to take these directions, that he would first with his penne mende the faults, which are very many, escaped in my absense, through the oversight of the Printer" (Andrew Willet, *Hexapla in Genesin, that is a Sixfold Commentarie Upon Genesis* [Cambridge: John Legat, 1605], sig.¶4r). The printer, John Legat, for his part noted in the errata that "some places [in Willet's manuscript] were not very legible" (sig.Tt1r). Cf. McKitterick, *History of Cambridge University Press*, 124.

13 Conal Condren, *The Language of Politics in Seventeenth-Century England* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994), 163; Diarmaid MacCulloch, "Richard Hooker's Reputation," in *A Companion to Richard Hooker*, ed. Torrance Kirby (Leiden, Neth.: Brill, 2008), 574. MacCulloch notes that there were forty-eight pre-1640 editions of Willet's works, to Hooker's twenty (p. 574n38). An observation by Stanford Lehmberg illustrates how radical the shift in the respective popularity of Willet and Hooker has been since that time. Describing the works found in the *Short-Title Catalogue of Books Printed in England, Scotland, and Ireland, 1475–1640*, Lehmberg writes: "A number of famous books are found alongside many lesser, ephemeral works. The theological writings include the monumental *Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity* by Richard Hooker, who was a prebendary at Salisbury, together with such things as obscure Biblical commentaries by Andrew Willet, a scholarly prebendary of Ely" (Stanford E. Lehmberg, *The Reformation of Cathedrals: Cathedrals in English Society, 1485–1603* [Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1988], 242–243). How backwards this assessment would have seemed four hundred years ago!

14 See John E. Booty, introduction to *Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity: Attack and Response*, by Richard Hooker, ed. John E. Booty, vol. 4 of *The Folger Library Edition of the Works of Richard Hooker*, ed. W. Speed Hill (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1982), xxii; cf. Andrew Willet, *Ecclesia Triumphans: that is, the Joy of the English Church, for the happie Coronation of the most vertuous and pious Prince, James* (Cambridge: John Legat, 1603), 25–26.

15 [Andrew Willet?], *A Christian Letter of certain English Protestants, unfained favourers of the present state of Religion, authorised and professed in England: unto that Reverend and learned man, Mr. R.Hoo. requiring resolution in certaine matters of doctrine (which seeme to overthrow the foundation of Christian Religion, and of the church among us) expreslie contained in his five books of Ecclesiasticall Pollicie* (n.p., 1599).

16 Booty calls Willet the "most persistent and intriguing" suggestion as the letter's author (p. xix) and devotes a section of his introduction to the Letter in the collected works of Hooker to developing the Willet theory (Booty, introduction to *Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity*, xix–xxv). MacCulloch states that "we can be reasonably certain that it was either exclusively or

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Turning to Catholic foes, Gregory Dodds puts Willet first in a list of writers "associating Erasmus with heretical belief," and presents him as the "most direct refutation" of Erasmian soteriology in early modern England.[17] Several other modern authors also make use of Willet as a representative early seventeenth-century anti-Catholic polemicist, with most attention, naturally, given to his *Synopsis Papismi*.[18] Peter Marshall makes frequent reference to Willet in the context of the protestantization of England and the gradual acceptance of the term "Protestant." S. J. Barnett cites Willet as one for whom antipopery was the "main vocation of the Church of England," and Felicity Heal mentions him in an essay on the use of history in early modern religious polemics in England.[19] Daniel Swift, Gillian Woods, Jason Rosenblatt, John Curran, Heather Hirschfeld, and James Shapiro each draw on Willet's polemics in order to contextualize anti-

mainly the work of Andrew Willett." W. Brown Patterson considers Willet "most likely" the principal author, Secor names Willet as "a prime candidate," and Anthony Milton writes that the anonymous authors "may well have included Willet himself." Milton, however, seems not quite as convinced as some others, writing elsewhere that Willet in *Ecclesia Triumphans* and *Antilogie* "had joined the authors of *A Christian Letter*" in condemning Hooker. MacCulloch, "Richard Hooker's Reputation," 574; W. Brown Patterson, "Elizabethan Theological Polemics," in *A Companion to Richard Hooker*, ed. Torrance Kirby (Leiden, Neth.: Brill, 2008), 116–117; Secor, *Richard Hooker*, 317–318; Milton, *Catholic and Reformed*, 17, 128. Peter White is among those who are more skeptical, questioning whether "the man who wrote the scholarly *Synopsis Papismi*…could have written *A Christian Letter*." Peter White, *Predestination, Policy and Polemic: Conflict and consensus in the English Church from the Reformation to the Civil War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 129n26.

17 Gregory D. Dodds, *Exploiting Erasmus: the Erasmian Legacy and Religious Change in Early Modern England* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009), 91, 117. On Erasmian theology and exegesis of Romans, see also John B. Payne, "Erasmus: Interpreter of Romans," *Sixteenth Century Essays and Studies* 2 (January 1971): 1–35; Albert Rabil, Jr., *Erasmus and the New Testament: the Mind of a Christian Humanist* (San Antonio: Trinity University Press, 1972), 115–182; Greta Grace Kroeker, *Erasmus in the Footsteps of Paul: A Pauline Theologian* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2011), 29–40; Christine Christ-von Wedel, *Erasmus of Rotterdam: Advocate of a New Christianity* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2013), 145–154; Laurel Carrington, "Erasmus's Readings of Romans 3,4, and 5," in *Reformation Readings of Romans*, ed. Kathy Ehrensperger and R. Ward Holder (New York: T&T Clark, 2008), 10–20; Mark Reasoner, *Romans in Full Circle: A History of Interpretation* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2005), 49–50.

18 Andrew Willet, *Synopsis Papismi, That is, A Generall View of Papistrie: Wherein the Whole Mysterie of Iniquitie, and Summe of Anti-Christian Doctrine is set downe, which is maintained this day by the Synagogue of Rome, against the Church of Christ* (London: Thomas Orwin for Thomas Man, 1592; the Widdow Orwin for Thomas Man, 1594; Felix Kyngston for Thomas Man, 1600; fourth edition, 1613; John Haviland, 1634).

19 Peter Marshall, "The Naming of Protestant England," *Past and Present*, no. 214 (2002): 87–128; S. J. Barnett, "Where Was Your Church before Luther? Claims for the Antiquity of Protestantism Examined," *Church History* 68, no. 1 (March 1999): 14–41; Felicity Heal, "Appropriating History: Catholic and Protestant Polemics and the National Past," *Huntington Library Quarterly* 68, no. 1–2 (March 2005): 109–132.

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Catholic themes in Shakespeare's plays.[20] J. F. Merritt, Ian Archer, and J. Sears McGee all more narrowly cite Willet's list of Protestant charitable giving in London as his response to Roman Catholic charges of lax Protestant philanthropy.[21]

Willet served as a chaplain and tutor to Prince Henry and penned treatises to celebrate James's ascension to the throne and Elizabeth Stuart's marriage to Frederick V, Elector Palatine.[22] This association with the Jacobean court has made him a fitting source also for those writing about early seventeenth-century English politics. Nevada Levi DeLapp's well-argued study of the Reformed use of King David in a variety of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century political contexts engages ably with Willet's political theory. DeLapp devotes a full chapter to Willet's exegesis of the David and Saul narrative in the First and Second Samuel hexaplas, showing how his connection between David and King James served both to ingratiate himself to James and to use the idealized model of David as a way to urge James to pursue further reforms.[23] Arthur Williamson and Lee Piepho each describe Willet's advocacy of unions between northern European Protestant nations.[24] Stephen Bondos-Greene, recounting the 1609 election of the new master of Christ's College, mentions Willet as one of King James's final four candidates for leading the school, and Joseph Marshall writes of the continued

20 Daniel Swift, *Shakespeare's Common Prayers: The Book of Common Prayer and the Elizabethan Age* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013); Gillian Woods, *Shakespeare's Unreformed Fictions* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013); Jason P. Rosenblatt, "Aspects of the Incest Problem in Hamlet," *Shakespeare Quarterly* 29, no. 3 (Summer 1978): 349–364; John E. Curran, Jr., *Hamlet, Protestantism, and the Mourning of Contingency: Not to Be* (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 2006); Hirschfeld, *The End of Satisfaction*; Shapiro, *Shakespeare and the Jews.* Additionally, Elizabeth Heale uses Willet in an essay on Spenser's *Faerie Queene* as anti-Catholic polemic. Elizabeth Heale, "Spenser's Malengine, Missionary Priests, and the Means of Justice," *The Review of English Studies*, n.s., 41, no. 162 (May 1990): 171–184.

21 Merritt, "Church-Building in Jacobean London"; Ian W. Archer, "The Charity of Early Modern Londoners," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 12 (2002): 223–244; McGee, "The Polemical Career of Francis Rous." N.B. J. F. (Julia) Merritt is the wife of Anthony Milton. He honors her in the acknowledgments to *Catholic and Reformed* with a delightful pun: "My old Roman Catholic schoolteachers may take heart from the reflection of this most unrepentant of lapsed Catholics that the salvation of this book and of its author has been achieved by Merritt of Good Works" (Milton, *Catholic and Reformed*, xv).

22 Willet, *Ecclesia Triumphans*; Andrew Willet, *A Treatise of Salomons Mariage* (London: F. K. for Thomas Man, 1613; Latin version in 1612).

23 Nevada Levi DeLapp, *The Reformed David(s) and the Question of Resistance to Tyranny: Reading the Bible in the 16th and 17th Centuries* (London: Bloomsbury, 2014). Cf. also James Doelman, *King James I and the Religious Culture of England* (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2000), 75; Jane Rickard, *Writing the Monarch in Jacobean England: Jonson, Donne, Shakespeare and the Works of King James* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 33.

24 Arthur H. Williamson, "An Empire to End Empire: The Dynamic of Early Modern British Expansion," *Huntington Library Quarterly* 68, no. 1–2 (March 2005): 227–256; Piepho, "Making the Impossible Dream."

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political impact that Willet had in the 1640s (two decades after his death) through the republication of some of his anti-papal pamphlets.[25] Two essays, both from 1986, describe Willet's importance to the history of English emblem writing. Peter Daly and Paola Valeri-Tomaszuk's essay on Willet portrays him as the creator of effective—if not particularly literary—emblems, while Huston Diehl focuses specifically on their anti-Catholic emphasis. Daly has also produced an annotated version of Willet's emblems.[26]

If Willet's emblem writing wanted for poetic polish, his commentary work has been cited frequently in connection with many of the great poets of his day. Since a 1939 essay by Grant McColley, it has become quite common for John Milton scholars to make use of Willet's Genesis hexapla as an interpretive aid for reading *Paradise Lost.*[27] While it is uncertain whether Willet's exegetical work directly influenced Milton,[28] Willet has proven valuable as a near-contemporary (dying five days before Milton entered his teen years) for contextualizing Milton's biblical references. Additionally, a lengthy section on angels in *Synopsis*

25 Stephen A. Bondos-Greene, "The End of an Era: Cambridge Puritanism and the Christ's College Election of 1609," *The Historical Journal* 25, no. 1 (March 1982): 203; Marshall, "Republishing Jacobean Texts in the 1640s," 72–76.

26 Daly and Valeri-Tomaszuk, "Andrew Willet"; Huston Diehl, "Graven Images: Protestant Emblem Books in England," *Renaissance Quarterly* 39, no. 1 (Spring 1986): 49–66; Peter M. Daly, ed., *The English Emblem Tradition* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993), 245–323, 463–499. Other authors who have addressed Willet's emblem writing include: Irma Tramer, "Studien zu den Anfängen der puritanischen Emblemliteratur in England: Andrew Willet-George Wither," (inaugural-dissertation, University of Basel, 1934); Josef Lederer, "John Donne and the Emblematic Practice," *The Review of English Studies* 22, no. 87 (July 1946): 182–200; Prescott, "The Ambiguities of David's Rise to the Throne"; Freeman, "George Herbert and the Emblem Books."

27 Grant McColley, "Paradise Lost," *The Harvard Theological Review* 32, no. 3 (July 1939): 181–235. McColley expanded these references in his book from the following year, Grant McColley, *Paradise Lost: An Account of Its Growth and Major Origins, with a Discussion of Milton's Use of Sources and Literary Patterns* (Chicago: Packard and Company, 1940).

28 We do know that they had at least one common acquaintance. Henry Yelverton (1566–1629), counsel to Christ's College and a friend of the Milton family, is praised in the epistle dedicatory of the second printing of the 1 Samuel hexapla (Harris Francis Fletcher, *The Intellectual Development of John Milton*, vol. 2, *The Cambridge University Period 1625–32* [Urbana: University of Illinois Press. 1961], 6; Andrew Willet, *An Harmonie Upon the First Booke of Samuel*, 2nd ed. [Cambridge: Cantrell Legge, 1614], ¶3v).
Neil Graves suggests that Milton drew on Willet as a source, listing him (along with Diodati and Rivetus) as Protestants "whom Milton is known to have acknowledged and drawn from in his prose writing," (Graves, "The Education of the Miltonic Deity," 358). Rosenblatt expresses doubt that Willet influenced Milton, at least with regard to one key element of *Paradise Lost:* "Willet is hardly likely to have influenced Milton, since, aside from rejecting this interpretation, he confuses the function of each angel, failing to connect Raphael with Abraham" (Jason P. Rosenblatt, "Celestial Entertainment in Eden: Book V of *Paradise Lost*," *The Harvard Theological Review* 62, no. 4 [October 1969]: 417).

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Papismi[29] has aided the interpretation of Milton's angelology. Of these Milton scholars, Joad Raymond provides the most extensive treatment, assigning to Willet a full chapter, which he structures around Willet's threefold division of Roman Catholic angelology errors.[30] Alastair Fowler, in the introduction to his edition of *Paradise Lost*, writes that for the notes he has drawn "extensively on Calvin's *Commentary upon Genesis* and on Willet, *Hexapla* (1608)—the latter not for its originality but precisely because it "invaluably summarizes a range of contemporary and earlier interpretations."[31] The evidence is stronger that John Donne drew on Willet as a source for his own sermons. One modern editor, Peter McCullough, has concluded that Donne "definitely or very probably" made unattributed use of "Andrew Willet's several variorum commentaries on Old Testament books," in addition to commentaries by Vermigli and Calvin. Another of Donne's recent editors, David Colclough, highlights Donne's use of Pererius and Willet. Anthony Raspa lists Willet and Thomas Tymme (who translated Calvin's Genesis commentary from Latin) as the two English divines "prominent in the immediate background" of Donne's *Essayes in Divinity*, even claiming that *Essayes* bears such a resemblance to Willet's method that they "might have more aptly borne the title of *Hexapla in Genesim et Exodum.*"[32]

Willet's Old Testament exegesis has received (limited) attention also from biblical scholars studying the history of Genesis interpretation. The *Hexapla in Genesin*, which Raymond calls "one of the weightiest commentaries produced in English," and which David Daiches lauds as "the most impressive work on the purely textual side that any scholar had yet produced,"[33] features prominently in

29 See Willet, *Synopsis Papismi* (1613), 385–397.

30 That being: the hierarchies and degrees of angels, their ministry and office, and worship and invocation directed to them (Joad Raymond, *Milton's Angels: The Early-Modern Imagination* [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010]).

31 Alastair Fowler, ed., *Paradise Lost*, 2nd ed., ed. (London: Longman, 1998), 10–11. Other instances of Willet's Genesis hexapla informing Milton scholarship include: Robert H. West, "Milton's Angelological Heresies," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 14, no. 1 (January 1953): 116–123; Robert H. West, *Milton and the Angels*; Patrides, "The 'Protevangelium' in Renaissance Theology," 19–30; J. M. Evans, *Paradise Lost and the Genesis Tradition* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1968); Rosenblatt, "Celestial Entertainment in Eden"; John Leonard, *Milton and the Language of Adam and Eve* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1990); David Gay, "Milton's Samson and the Figure of the Old Testament Giant," *Literature and Theology* 9, no. 4 (December 1995): 355–369; Graves, "The Education of the Miltonic Deity."

32 *The Oxford Edition of the Sermons of John Donne 1: Sermons Preached at the Jacobean Courts, 1615–1619*, ed. Peter McCullough (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), xl; *The Oxford Edition of the Sermons of John Donne 3: Sermons Preached at the Court of Charles I*, ed. David Colclough (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), xliv; John Donne, *Essayes in Divinity*, ed. Anthony Raspa (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2001), xxiii–xxiv.

33 Raymond, *Milton's Angels*, 317; David Daiches, *The King James Version of the English Bible: An Account of the Development and Sources of the English Bible of 1611 with Special Reference to the Hebrew Tradition* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1941), 157. Killeen seems

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books by Arnold Williams and Philip Almond. Williams's *The Common Expositor* (a title borrowed from Milton's *Tetrachordon*) surveys Genesis commentaries published between 1527 and 1633, citing Willet's work regularly as one of only a few Genesis commentaries composed in English during that span. Almond narrows his focus to seventeenth-century perspectives on Adam and Eve, also turning to Willet as one of his main sources.[34] Additionally, Mark Elliott's study of Leviticus interpretation from the patristic period to the modern day engages throughout with Willet's posthumously-published Leviticus hexapla.[35]

As Willet was as prolific a father as he was an author (siring eighteen children), and because he was devoted to parish ministry in addition to his writing efforts, he is also cited frequently in essays dealing with the more localized issues of seventeenth-century family and church life. Describing the "ideal parish minister" in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century England, Neal Enssle draws on the account from Thomas Fuller (who in turn had taken most of his material from Peter Smith) of the rigid discipline of Willet's daily life. Leonard Grant and Alexandra Walsham have cited Willet as an example of, respectively, an early modern pastor who stressed the importance of catechesis with his congregation, and one in a hereditary dynasty of ministers.[36] With regard to family life, Robert Schnucker has used Willet's prodigious progeny as a case study of a pastor who clearly lived out the opposition to birth control common among Puritan clergy, and Rosenblatt and Robert Hole have drawn from Willet's Leviticus hexapla in essays about early modern views on incestuous marriages.[37]

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less enamored with Willet's exegesis of Genesis, pointing out a variety of "digressions [that] take their place within the annotations on the flimsiest of pretexts, [and] extensive marginalia motivated by only the thinnest threads of relevance…[and] far in excess of any direct exegetical relevance" (Killeen, *Biblical Scholarship*, 77–78).

34 Arnold Williams, *The Common Expositor: An Account of the Commentaries on Genesis, 1527–1633* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1948); Philip C. Almond, *Adam and Eve in Seventeenth-Century Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

35 Mark W. Elliott, *Engaging Leviticus: Reading Leviticus Theologically with Its Past Interpreters* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2012); Andrew Willet, *Hexapla in Leviticum*, finished by Peter Smith (London: by Aug. Matthewes for Robert Milbourne, 1631).

36 Neal Enssle, "Patterns of Godly Life: The Ideal Parish Minister in Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century English Thought," *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 28, no. 1 (Spring 1997): 3–28; Thomas Fuller, ed. *Abel Redevivus: or The dead yet speaking. The Lives and Deaths of the Moderne Divines* (London: by Tho. Brudenell for John Stafford, 1651), 565–577; Peter Smith, "The Life and Death of Andrew Willet, Doctor of Divinitie," prefaced to Andrew Willet, *Synopsis Papismi*, 5th ed. (London: John Haviland, 1634); Leonard T. Grant, "Puritan Catechizing," *Journal of Presbyterian History (1962–1985)* 46, no. 2 (June 1968): 107–127; Alexandra Walsham, "The Reformation of the Generations: Youth, Age, and Religious Change in England, c. 1500–1700," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 21 (2011): 93–121.

37 Robert V. Schnucker, "Elizabethan Birth Control and Puritan Attitudes," *The Journal of*

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Despite the rudiments of a Willet renaissance—twenty-one of the sources I have cited thus far, including DeLapp, Raymond, Tutino, Dodds, and Pederson, are from the last decade—insufficient attention has been given to Willet's impressive exegetical efforts that he engaged in over his final decades; treatment of his New Testament interpretation and of his general methodological approach are especially sparse. Richard Muller cites Willet's exegetical work periodically throughout the "Holy Scripture" volume of *Post-Reformation Reformed Dogmatics*, noting the comprehensive nature of his commentaries in drawing together a variety of genres (from *locus* method to vestigial tropology), but the scope of that work necessarily limits the attention that can be given specifically to Willet. Muller also offers a brief, but instructive, insight into Willet's method by way of his investigation in the Genesis hexapla into the identity of Melchizedek.[38] Van Kleeck's thesis provides a useful summary of Willet's hermeneutical approach and some commentary on Willet's work on Romans, though with limited interpretation.[39]

2.2 Scholarship on Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century Romans Interpretation

Considering the history of Romans interpretation more broadly, a good deal of literature explores sixteenth-century perspectives, while little has been written about seventeenth-century commentary.[40] Mark Reasoner's *Romans in Full Circle* provides a helpful overview of certain periods, though his circle is not large enough to contain anyone between Calvin and Barth. The collection of essays in *Reading Romans Through the Centuries* likewise skips over the seventeenth century, though with smaller leaps that visit Wesley, Hodge, and the excommunicated nineteenth-century South African Anglican bishop John William

Interdisciplinary History 5, no. 4 (Spring 1975): 655–667; Rosenblatt, "Incest Problem in Hamlet"; Robert Hole, "Incest, Consanguinity and a Monstrous Birth in Rural England, January 1600," *Social History* 25, no. 2 (May 2000): 183–199.

38 Muller, *Post-Reformation Reformed Dogmatics*; Richard A. Muller, *After Calvin: Studies in the Development of a Theological Tradition* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 169–174.

39 Van Kleeck, "Hermeneutics and Theology in the Seventeenth Century." Van Kleeck addresses Willet's exegesis of Romans 1:32, 5:12, 8:3, 10:21, 11:6, 11:31, chapter 13, and 16:25–27.

40 A brief overview of the history of the exegesis of Romans can be found in C. E. B. Cranfield, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on The Epistle to the Romans*, vol. 1 (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1975), 30–44. Cranfield, however, skips from Calvin to the eighteenth century. On sixteenth- and seventeenth-century exegesis broadly considered, see Richard A. Muller, "Biblical Interpretation in the 16th & 17th Centuries," in *Historical Handbook of Major Biblical Interpreters*, ed. Donald K. McKim (Downer's Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1998), 123–152. Muller cites Willet's work as an example of "the more technical commentaries of the early seventeenth century" (p. 144).

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Colenso en route from Calvin to Barth. The essays in this volume on Chrysostom, Augustine, Aquinas, and Calvin are useful for our purposes, given the influence of each of these theologians on Willet's interpretation of Romans. The collection *Reformation Readings of Romans* and T. H. L. Parker's *Commentaries on Romans 1532–1542* both narrow their scope so as to end prior to the seventeenth century.[41] Charles Raith II's recent book compares Thomas's and Calvin's readings of the first half of Romans,[42] and a wide range of essays (many also focusing on Calvin) have considered sixteenth century exegesis of pericopes in Romans.[43] David H.

41 Mark Reasoner, *Romans in Full Circle*; Jeffrey P. Greenman and Timothy Larsen, eds., *Reading Romans Through the Centuries: From the Early Church to Karl Barth* (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2005); Kathy Ehrensperger and R. Ward Holder, eds., *Reformation Readings of Romans* (New York: T&T Clark, 2008); T. H. L. Parker, *Commentaries on the Epistle to the Romans 1532–1542* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1986). Other essays treating sixteenth century Romans commentaries include Akira Demura, "Two Commentaries on the Epistle to the Romans: Calvin and Oecolampadius," in *Calvinus Sincerioris Religionis Vindex: Calvin as Protector of the Purer Religion*, ed. Wilhelm H. Neuser and Brian G. Armstrong (Kirksville, Mo.: Truman State University Press, 1997), 165–188; Annie Noblesse-Rocher, "Jacques Sadolet et Jean Calvin, Commentateurs de l'E´pître aux Romains," in *Calvinus sacrarum literarum interpres: Papers of the International Congress on Calvin Research*, ed. Herman J. Selderhuis (Göttingen, Ger.: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2008), 190–208; Timothy J. Wengert, "Philip Melanchthon's 1522 Annotations on Romans and the Lutheran Origins of Rhetorical Criticism," in *Biblical Interpretation in the Era of the Reformation*, ed. Richard A. Muller and John L. Thompson (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1996), 118–140; Joel Kok, "The Influence of Martin Bucer on John Calvin's Interpretation of Romans: A Comparative Case Study" (PhD diss., Duke University, 1993); Joe Mock, "Bullinger and Romans," *Reformed Theological Review* 69, no. 1 (April 2010): 34–47; Frank A. James III, "Romans Commentary: Justification and Sanctification," in *A Companion to Peter Martyr Vermigli*, ed. Torrance Kirby, Emidio Campi, and Frank A. James III (Leiden, Neth.: Brill, 2009), 304–317; Marvin W. Anderson, "Peter Martyr on Romans," *Scottish Journal of Theology* 26, no. 4 (Nov. 1973): 401–420.

42 Charles Raith II, *Aquinas and Calvin on Romans: God's Justification and Our Participation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014).

43 See, for example, Charles D. Raith II, "Abraham and the Reformation: Romans 4 and the Theological Interpretation of Aquinas and Calvin," *Journal of Theological Interpretation* 5, no. 2 (Fall 2011): 283–300; David C. Steinmetz, "Calvin and the Divided Self of Romans 7," in *Augustine, the Harvest, and Theology (1300–1650): Essays dedicated to Heiko Augustinus Oberman*, ed. Kenneth Hagen (Leiden, Neth.: Brill, 1990), 300–313; Richard A. Muller, "'*Scimus enim quod lex spiritualis est*': Melanchthon and Calvin on the Interpretation of Romans 7:14–23," in *Philip Melanchthon (1497–1560) and the Commentary*, ed. Timothy J. Wengert and M. Patrick Graham (Sheffield, UK: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), 216–237; William N. W. Pass III, "A Reexamination of Calvin's Approach to Romans 8:17," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 170 (January-March 2013): 69–81; John B. Payne, "Erasmus on Romans 9:6–24," in *The Bible in the Sixteenth Century*, ed. David Steinmetz (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1990), 119–135; Daniel Shute, "And All Israel Shall Be Saved: Peter Martyr and John Calvin on the Jews According to Romans, Chapters 9, 10 and 11," in *Peter Martyr Vermigli and the European Reformations: Semper Reformanda*,, ed. Frank A. James III (Leiden, Neth.: Brill, 2004), 159–176; Jean-Claude Margolin, "The Epistle to the Romans (Chapter 11) According to the Versions and/or Commentaries of Valla, Colet, Lefevre, and Erasmus," in *The Bible in the Sixteenth Century*, ed. David Steinmetz (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1990), 136–166;

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Kranendonk's brief *Teaching Predestination* devotes a chapter to Elnathan Parr's 1618 exposition of Romans 8–11, which includes some comments on Parr's use of Willet.[44] Additionally, John Duff's recent dissertation on seventeenth-century English interpretations of the new heavens and earth engages helpfully with Willet's exegesis of Romans 8.[45]

2.3 Scholarship on Post-Reformation Polemics

A growing body of strong scholarship addresses the polemics of the later sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, especially within the English context. Milton's *Catholic and Reformed*, besides giving Willet the spotlight he deserves, is the standard survey of Protestant-Catholic relations in England from 1600 to the Civil War. Tutino's *Law and Conscience* is, if less comprehensive in scope, equal in quality. Walsham and Tavard, like Tutino, focus on the experience of Roman Catholics living in Protestant England. Dewey Wallace's essay in *The Cambridge Companion to Puritanism*, while brief, provides a helpful overview of Puritan polemics and acknowledges that these polemics frequently overlapped with other genres, as commentary, catechesis, and devotional literature. Frances Dolan considers seventeenth-century anti-Catholic polemic with special attention given to its use of misogynistic rhetoric. The role of printing technologies in religious polemics is explored by Jesse Lander. Nicholas Tyacke and Lori Anne Ferrell each consider intra-Protestant polemics, with Tyacke recounting the rise of English Arminianism through the early seventeenth century and Ferrell focusing on the rhetoric of anti-Calvinist preachers against conforming Puritans in the battle for the English church's *via media* position.[46]

David Starling, "The Analogy of Faith in the Theology of Luther and Calvin," *The Reformed Theological Review* 72 no. 1 (April 2013): 5–19; Richard A. Muller, "Calvin, Beza, and the Exegetical History of Romans 13:1–7," in *The Identity of Geneva: the Christian Commonwealth, 1564–1864*, ed. John B. Roney and Martin I. Klauber (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1998), 39–56.

44 David H. Kranendonk, *Teaching Predestination: Elnathan Parr and Pastoral Ministry in Early Stuart England* (Grand Rapids, MI: Reformation Heritage Books, 2011).

45 John H. Duff, "'A Knot Worth Unloosing': The Interpretation of the New Heavens and Earth in Seventeenth-Century England" (PhD diss., Calvin Theological Seminary, 2014).

46 Milton, *Catholic and Reformed*; Tutino, *Law and Conscience*; Alexandra Walsham, *Church Papists: Catholicism, Conformity and Confessional Polemic in Early Modern England* (Woodbridge, UK: The Boydell Press, 1993); George H. Tavard, *The Seventeenth Century: A Study in Recusant Thought* (Leiden, Neth.: Brill, 1978); Dewey D. Wallace, Jr., "Polemical Divinity and Doctrinal Controversy," in *The Cambridge Companion to Puritanism*, ed. John Coffey and Paul C. H. Lim (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008); Frances E. Dolan, *Whores of Babylon: Catholicism, Gender, and Seventeenth-Century Print Culture* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1999); Jesse M. Lander, *Inventing Polemic: Religion, Print, and*

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2.4 Statement of the Problem

At the close of the preface to the 1607 *Loidoromastix*, his second treatise against fellow Church of England divine Richard Parkes on the issue of Limbo, the great controversialist Andrew Willet suggests that he intends to shift genres and focus on biblical commentary. This reflection comes at the end of a response (which Willet was able to append to the introduction of *Loidoromastix* due to a printer's delay) to a recent anti-Protestant polemical work by the Roman Catholic Richard Broughton.[47] In his project of using Protestants to refute Protestants, Broughton had exploited some of the internecine debates that Willet had engaged in when not writing his anti-papist works. Recognizing through this the great potential damage wrought by Protestant infighting, Willet remarks: "I wish, if it may bee, and if mine enemies would *permit*, to write rather commentaries of Scripture (which course I am now entred into) then Demosthenes or Tullies Philippices."[48] Willet suggests in a dedicatory epistle to Archbishop of Canterbury Richard Bancroft in the Exodus hexapla (1608) that it was Bancroft himself who had suggested this shift to biblical commentary, and it is possible that the archbishop

Literary Culture in Early Modern England (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006); Nicholas Tyacke, *Anti-Calvinists: The Rise of English Arminianism c. 1590–1640* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1987); Lori Anne Ferrell, *Government by Polemic: James I, the King's Preachers, and the Rhetorics of Conformity, 1603–1625* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1998).

Cf. also discussions of early modern polemics in Prior, *Defining the Jacobean Church;* Peter Marshall, "John Calvin and the English Catholics, c. 1565–1640," *The Historical Journal* 53, no. 4 (2010): 849–870; Patterson, "Elizabethan Theological Polemics"; Heal, "Appropriating History"; Condren, *The Language of Politics*; Peter Lake, *Moderate Puritans and the Elizabethan Church* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 55–76, 93–115; Graham Windsor, "The Controversy Between Roman Catholics and Anglicans from Elizabeth to the Revolution" (PhD diss., Cambridge University, 1967); Arthur F. Marotti, *Religious Ideology & Cultural Fantasy: Catholic and Anti-Catholic Discourses in Early Modern England* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2005); Arthur F. Marotti, ed., *Catholicism and Anti-Catholicism in Early Modern English Texts* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999); Hugh Trevor-Roper, *Catholics, Anglicans and Puritans: Seventeenth Century Essays* (London: Secker & Warburg, 1987); Anthony Milton, *Laudian and Royalist Polemic in Seventeenth-Century England: the Career and Writings of Peter Heylyn* (Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 2007); Joshua Rodda, "Evidence of Things Seen: Univocation, Visibility and Reassurance in Post-Reformation Polemic," *Perichoresis* 13, no. 1 (June 2015): 57–74.

47 Andrew Willet, *Loidoromastix: that is, A Scourge for a Rayler* (Cambridge: Cantrell Legge, 1607); [Richard Broughton], *The First Part of Protestants Proofes, for Catholikes Religion and Recusancy* ([England: English secret press], 1607).

48 Willet, *Loidoromastix*, sig.¶¶¶¶¶3v. Willet's reference is to the two great polemicists of ancient Greece and Rome, Demosthenes (whose polemics against Philip II of Macedon gave rise to the eponymous synonym "philippic") and (Marcus Tullis) Cicero, whose own philippics attacked Mark Antony. Cf. *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Greece and Rome*, s.vv. "Demosthenes," "Cicero."

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—given his many Roman Catholic friends[49]—had hoped that Willet would ease up on the anti-papist focus of his writings.[50] Willet's own intention at this point, however, seems to have been to set aside open contention with other Church of England divines (thus ending the stream of ammunition such debates provided to the Roman enemy) and to shift the genre of his anti-papist work from "polemics" proper to polemically-focused biblical exegesis. In the dedicatory epistle to Prince Henry preceding the second half of his 1610 Daniel hexapla, however, Willet expands his claim of leaving behind polemics in a way that seems to include an intention to cease targeting Roman Catholics as well:

> I have heretofore exercised my penne in handling of controversies against the common adversarie, and as I was provoked, have written also in mine owne defence, both against forren enemies, and some domesticall: But now, those occasions beeing if not altogether removed, yet somewhat intermitted, I have propounded unto my selfe this course in the explaning of Scripture.[51]

Despite this assertion, Willet's subsequent writing maintains its distinctly anti-Catholic focus. While he does indeed largely avoid further open conflict with other Church of England divines, his suggestion that he has moved on from combatting "the common adversarie" is not supported by his actual work. He continues in this same Daniel hexapla his old practice of referring to Jesuits as "Judasites" and to the Pope as "Antichrist."[52] In 1613 he would publish a revised and expanded edition of *Synopsis Papismi*, with additional anti-Catholic material appended. And in the Romans hexapla of 1611 he consistently frames his interpretation against Roman doctrine.

Several scholars have given much weight to Willet's claim to have moved away from religious controversy, leading them to characterize his midlife shift to

49 See Patrick Collinson, "Richard Bancroft, Robert Cecil and the Jesuits: the bishop and his Catholic friends," in *Richard Bancroft and Elizabethan Anti-Puritanism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 173–192.

50 Willet writes in the dedication to Bancroft: "These my labours, as your Grace was my great encourager first to undertake them, so it is meet that you should with the first reape the fruit of them" (Andrew Willet, *Hexapla in Exodum* [London: by Felix Kyngston for Thomas Man, 1608], sig.A6v).

51 Willet, *Hexapla in Danielem*, sig.R4v (before page 197). Willet's statement seems to imply a general movement away from all polemics, and his mention of his new "course" of commentary work supports this reading. However, if "those occasions" that have been "somewhat intermitted" are taken more narrowly to refer only to the additional provocations that necessitated his response, the statement can also be read to express the cessation of all polemics *besides* those directed toward "the common adversarie." The continued anti-Catholic polemical focus of Willet's commentary work and the reissuing of additional editions of the *Synopsis Papismi* would support this reading.

52 E.g. Willet, *Hexapla in Danielem*, 440. Considering the Pope to be Antichrist, as we shall see later, was far from a fringe view among English Protestants. Emphasizing this, however, is a curious way of "abandoning polemics."

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commentary as a turn away from polemics and towards more irenic pursuits. Milton tells of the aftermath of Willet's Limbo debates, writing that Parkes "disappeared into the obscurity from whence he came, while Willet (possibly with Bancroft's encouragement) vowed to abandon religious controversy altogether and to concentrate instead on scriptural commentary, which he continued to publish at a phenomenal rate throughout James' reign."[53] Milton hedges his own statement somewhat by writing only that Willet "vowed to" move on from religious controversy, but his phrasing ("altogether") suggests that Willet also had his *anti-papist* work in mind, whereas the context implies only "domesticall contentions" among English Protestants.[54] Milton's lack of any further comment here suggests, too, that Willet in fact carried out this plan. Pederson qualifies his account of Willet's move to commenting on Scripture, though his wording implies that Willet spent his final years out of the public eye, and he makes the context of the shift more of politics than of polemics: "From 1607 onwards Willet retired to the life of a private commentator, based largely on the suggestion of Richard Bancroft (1544–1610); Willet complied but only in part; for the rest of his life his commentaries were used as a springboard for political comment, however nuanced and subtle."[55] While some of Willet's political comments could accurately be considered "subtle" (Pederson gives the example of his "modest, highly qualified endorsement of resistance theory"[56]), the background of Willet's own account of his genre shift concerns doctrinal *polemics*, and the polemical elements of his commentaries are anything but subtle. Peter Van Kleeck's thesis on Willet's hermeneutics alludes to, but does not in any detail expound upon the polemical element in his exegetical work.[57]

Other interpretations of Willet's move to biblical commentary have more obvious shortcomings. Robert Smith's curious comment that "Willet favored a

53 Milton, *Catholic and Reformed,* 25.

54 Willet uses this phrase, "domesticall contentions," in both *Loidoromastix* and the Exodus hexapla. Willet, *Loidoromastix*, sig.¶¶¶¶¶3r; Willet, *Hexapla in Exodum*, sig.A6v.

55 Randall J. Pederson, "Andrew Willet and the *Synopsis Papismi*," *Puritan Reformed Journal* 1 (2009): 125.

56 Pederson, "Andrew Willet and the *Synopsis Papismi*," 125n33.

57 Van Kleeck, "Hermeneutics and Theology in the Seventeenth Century." For instance, Van Kleeck describes Willet's Controversies category as "the primary vehicle to weave a polemic based on his exegesis against the papacy or Ubiquitarians, separatists and Judaism, but Willet also includes attacks upon the Manichees and Nestorians … and any doctrinal system opposed to that espoused by the Church of England" (pp. 35–36). Besides overstating Willet's dogmatic commitment to all Church of England theology, this assessment fails to connect Willet's references to Judaism and the older heresies to his polemic against Roman Catholicism; his concern was not so much with refuting Manichaeism and Nestorianism as with demonstrating that modern Roman Catholics repeated the errors of these earlier widely-condemned heresies. Van Kleeck also understates the polemical focus of the other five hexapla sections.

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noncontroversial approach" seems to stem from a misunderstanding about the nature of this shift,[58] which he later refers to as "a retreat into non-controversial safety."[59] Smith describes Willet accurately as "a specialist in theological disagreements between Protestants and Catholics," and writes that "the accession of King James sparked Willet's desire to see the completion of England's reform," which sentiment Willet expressed in *Ecclesia Triumphans*. But then Smith claims that Willet's career as a commentator was motivated by polity-induced disappointment: "As the king's commitment to Anglican episcopacy became apparent, Willet turned his energies to biblical exegesis."[60] This statement makes Willet's supposed frustration with the episcopal form of church government—rather than the damage done by intra-Protestant quarrels—the motivation for his focus on commentary. But even if his personal associations with the more radical presbyterians indicate that he too had once desired this form of church polity for the English church, he had moved on to open advocacy of episcopal government long before James came to the throne.[61] Granted, Willet opposed the notion of *iure divino* episcopal rule and his support for the bishops was contingent upon their doctrinal orthodoxy,[62] but there is no suggestion that James's continuation of episcopal polity itself either demoralized Willet or drove him to focus on biblical commentary.

Leticia Álvarez-Recio represents Willet in a nearly opposite fashion, making him a representative of an English Protestantism the highest concern of which was ecclesiastical uniformity, all in support of a strange contention that anti-Catholic works in Willet's period were no longer driven by theological concerns. This argument Álvarez-Recio expresses by claiming:

> Anti-Catholic literature of the second half of the reign of Elizabeth I takes a somewhat different tack by comparison with the works of previous years. The most notable example of this is the abandonment of theological polemics. Mention of the Word of God

58 Robert O. Smith, *More Desired than Our Owne Salvation: The Roots of Christian Zionism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 79. His subsequent comment that Willet favored the principle of *adiaphora* among Protestants might also explain his characterization of Willet as "noncontroversial," but even if this is the case, his unmodified use of the term is misleading, as it ignores his earlier controversies with fellow Protestants and fails to exclude his current Roman Catholic foes.

59 Smith, *The Roots of Christian Zionism*, 218n48.

60 Smith, *The Roots of Christian Zionism*, 79.

61 Cf. Tutino's counter-depiction of Willet as an example of "how a sincere adherence to episcopalism in the terms James made central could coexist with discordant opinions to those of the sovereign on the question of how to confront the Catholic problem" (Stefania Tutino, *Law and Conscience: Catholicism in Early Modern England, 1570–1625* [Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 2007], 117–118). Cf. also Kenneth Fincham, *Prelate as Pastor: The Episcopate of James I* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1990), 299–300. On Willet's personal ties to English presbyterians, see Milton, *Catholic and Reformed*, 14, 25.

62 Cf. Milton, *Catholic and Reformed*, 16, 25.

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> is only made when it is needed in order to justify the imperial theory of sovereignty, and with it the power of Elizabeth in relation to the Pope. Given the bellicose state of the international situation, it is not surprising that anti-Catholic authors replaced doctrinal elements with descriptions of Catholic aggression in order to encourage a collective act of rejection.[63]

In advancing this argument Álvarez-Recio ignores a large body of anti-Catholic literature from this period that focuses overwhelmingly on doctrinal issues, not the least of which are the first three editions of *Synopsis Papismi*.[64] Willet's exegetical efforts (granted, all but the 1602 *Catholicon* on Jude falling narrowly outside of the time frame Álvarez-Recio highlights) directly contradict the notion of an abandonment of theological polemics, these commentaries being—quite literally—the "Word of God" used in theologically focused anti-Catholic polemics. Álvarez-Recio does mention Willet but, again, paints him as a strict conformist whose primary concerns were political. She writes that the "criticism of Catholicism allows it to be linked with other groups that were considered sectarian within Anglican discourse, as they inhibited religious uniformity. Willet points out the importance of fighting against these groups—'Brownists, Anabaptists, Papists'—which, according to the author, made peace in the Kingdom difficult." Thus far, this note is defensible, although her interpretation of Willet's linking of these various groups in *A Catholicon* seems to project King James's heightened concern for peace through uniform doctrine onto Willet. However, she continues:

> the fact that Protestant authorities equated the Catholic menace with that posed by Puritanism or by separatist groups indicates an advance in the policies of the Elizabethan government, which kept itself in the exact middle between all these currents. This explains the abandonment of religious polemic or of the ideological struggles that could only slow down the process of conformity.[65]

63 Leticia Álvarez-Recio, *Fighting the Antichrist: A Cultural History of Anti-Catholicism in Tudor England*, trans. Bradley L. Drew (Brighton, UK: Sussex Academic Press, 2011), 114–115. Alison Shell's review in *Huntington Library Quarterly* rightly calls into question this supposition: "Again, Álvarez-Recio's startling statement that the second half of Elizabeth's reign saw the 'abandonment of theological polemics … mention of the Word of God is only made when it is needed in order to justify the imperial theory of sovereignty' (114–15) is so counterintuitive that it needs more careful contextualization for the reader to be convinced" (Alison Shell, review of *Fighting the Antichrist*, by Leticia Álvarez-Recio, *Huntington Library Quarterly* 75, no. 4 [Winter 2012]: 602).

64 Álvarez-Recio's statement might be explained by her narrow focus on plays and pamphlets, but she also claims that "only one text has been found that deals extensively with the argument between tradition and Scripture, a recurring theme in the anti-Catholic texts of other times. This is *A Comparison between the Auncient Fayth of the Romans and the Romish Religion* (1595) by Francis Bunny," (Álvarez-Recio, *Fighting the Antichrist*, 199n49).

65 Álvarez-Recio, *Fighting the Antichrist*, 203n91.

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The conclusions that Álvarez-Recio draws from Willet's connection between the schismatic tendency of the papists and the separatist nature of the Brownists and Anabaptists misrepresent Willet's conception of unity and schism.[66] Willet's opposition to these groups is not simply because of their separatist tendencies; they have separated themselves, Willet would argue, by their heretical doctrine. This focus on doctrinal *orthodoxy*, rather than on either doctrinal or institutional *uniformity*, is evident throughout Willet's work, and will be demonstrated throughout the chapters that follow here. To address only the immediate context of Álvarez-Recio's citation of Willet, however, it should be noted that he is commenting on a verse about sects (Jude v. 19) and is writing from a defensive position, against the Rhemist charge of the Protestants being schismatic for breaking with the Roman communion. Willet rebuts that "the protestants then leaving the society of the false & corrupt Romane Church" simply follow the pattern set by Noah leaving the sinful world for the ark, Lot moving out of Sodom, and Jesus rejecting the traditions of the Pharisees. Immediately preceding the passage that Álvarez-Recio quotes, Willet writes: "and they are the true Catholike Church, which retaine the trueth, and professe the right faith, how small soever their number is."[67]

Anabaptists to Willet were nothing like the nonconforming Puritans, the one being doctrinally heretical, and the other a group that should be treated with a policy of "brotherly connivence."[68] The suggestion, then, that Willet opposes all separatists, regardless of their theology, because of his concern for conformity in the English church exactly reverses his priorities.

These misconceptions about Willet's work and the arc of his writing career reflect a broader misunderstanding of the role of biblical exegesis in early seventeenth-century polemics and, correspondingly, an insufficient understanding of the role that polemics had in shaping and focusing Scripture interpretation.

66 Cf. my arguments in VI.2.3, VII.3.1, and VII.3.2. On later seventeenth-century understandings of unity and schism, see Sungho Lee, "All Subjects of the Kingdom of Christ: John Owen's Conceptions of Christian Unity and Schism" (PhD diss., Calvin Theological Seminary, 2007).

67 Andrew Willet, *A Catholicon, that is, A generall preservative or remedie against the Pseudo-catholike religion, gathered out of the Catholike epistle of S. Jude*…(Cambridge: John Legat, 1602), 125–128.

68 Tyacke, *Anti-Calvinists*, 12. Cf. also Charles W. A. Prior, *Defining the Jacobean Church: The Politics of Religious Controversy, 1603–1625* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 78.

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2.5 Summary of the State of the Question

While numerous studies have recognized Willet's influence on fields ranging from Genesis scholarship to seventeenth-century poetry to early Stuart era politics, rarely has this earlier scholarship focused on him as to treat any of his works in depth or to consider his place more broadly within the early seventeenth-century religious landscape. Despite playing a significant role in recent decades in fine works by historians such as Milton, Tutino, and DeLapp, significant aspects of Willet's theology and exegesis remain unexplored or underexplored. The lack of a comprehensive study of Willet has contributed to various misrepresentations of his thought. Several recent works have missed the nuances of his political orientation, presenting him as either an unyielding conformist or—conversely—as a radical presbyterian. More to the point of this present study, a consensus has emerged that Willet's mid–career shift to biblical commentary represented not only a shift in genre, but a move away from polemics entirely. This view, as expressed to different degrees by Milton, Pederson, and Van Kleeck, tends to underestimate the polemical aspect of Willet's exegetical work. The neglect of exegetically-based polemics has, in turn, led others such as Álvarez-Recio to conceive of the anti-Catholic polemics of Willet's era as more politically than theologically motivated, suggesting a polemical dogmatism that was untheological and non-exegetical. This study seeks to address some of these deficiencies in Willet scholarship, and to clarify the integral connection between scriptural exegesis and theological polemics in the early Stuart period.

3. Statement of the Thesis

I argue in this book that, far from being a retreat from religious controversy, Andrew Willet's biblical commentary work maintained a significant element of anti-Catholic polemics, only expressed in a different genre. This polemical hermeneutic did not impose rigid doctrinal concerns upon his exegesis, but rather served as an organizing principle and as a means by which to clarify the presentation of traditional Reformed readings in relief against a body of theology (which itself had developed polemically since the Reformation) that Willet believed threatened the gospel of grace. I focus on Willet's hexapla commentary on Romans because of the importance of this epistle to the development of Protestant theology and because Willet identified it as the epistle that "beateth downe all both old and newe heresies," and which functions as a "catechisme and introduction to Christian religion."[69] Paul's letter thus provides ample oppor-

69 Willet, *Hexapla upon Romanes*, 24, i.

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tunity for Willet to identify what is distinctive about Reformed theology—or rather, as Willet would have it, the particular ways in which papist dogma has diverged from the true line of Christian belief running from the Fathers through to the Reformed church of the seventeenth century.

Willet's exegesis of Romans highlights many of the polemical issues that had long been contended between Protestants and Roman Catholics, including the authentic versions of Scripture, Scripture's attributes (including its perspicuity and the authority to interpret it), and principles of interpretation (including when and how to employ the *analogia fidei* and *analogia scripturae*), as well as doctrines like justification, predestination, the assurance of salvation, and the place of good works.[70] Willet's exegesis reveals also the impact that different polemical contexts have on Scripture interpretation—as he is opposing different foes and addressing different issues, Willet's early Stuart era exegetical work looks different from that of his Reformed forebears and his continental counterparts, despite their broad doctrinal harmony.

A close investigation into Willet's exegetical method, moreover, helps to see how an identifiable hermeneutical lens is consistent with a disciplined reading that is faithful to the text. His polemical focus does not corrupt his exegesis or impose upon it meanings that are alien to the text itself; rather, his polemical hermeneutic serves to focus his attention, govern his distinctions, organize his observations, and frame positive doctrinal statements against the sharp relief of erroneous readings. His exceptional skill as a textual critic, his fidelity to the scriptural record, and his methodological rigor (as employed in his unique hexapla format and making use of refined tools from humanist and scholastic traditions) ensure that his polemical hermeneutic directs, and does not substitute for, his careful exegetical efforts.

4. Willet's Life and Context

Since Willet is, in the words of Daly and Valeri-Tomaszuk, "today little known and less often read,"[71] a brief introduction to his life and context is necessary. While their "today" is now thirty years in the past—and three decades, moreover, that have seen a definite surge of scholarly interest in Willet—it would be hard to argue that he has returned to a level of notoriety in which his reputation precedes him.

70 Cf. Richard A. Muller, *Post-Reformation Reformed Dogmatics* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2003), 2:108–119.

71 Daly and Valeri-Tomaszuk, "Andrew Willet," 181.

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4.1 Biographical Sketch of Willet

Andrew Willet was born in 1562, or possibly at the very end of 1561, in "that little Citie of Ely in Cambridge-shire."[72] His father, Thomas Willet, was also a pastor, and had in his younger years been a schoolmaster and subalmoner [involved in the distribution of alms] to Richard Coxe. When Queen Mary came to the throne upon the death of Edward VI in 1553, Coxe went into exile and Thomas lost his job. He and his wife were protected during Mary's persecution, but struggled and were forced to spend a lot of time apart. DeLapp suggests that this period of family history contributed to the younger Willet's fierce opposition to Catholicism.[73] When Coxe returned from exile and was made Bishop of Ely, he rewarded Thomas Willet's earlier service with a prebendal stall in his church, and later added his own congregations in Thurkiston (in Leicestershire) and in Barley (Hertfordshire).[74]

Andrew was a devoted student, finding his studies "the most voluptuous" way to spend his time. He eschewed recreation as an "impediment to his studies," to the point of worrying his parents, and Peter Smith indicates that he "became the sole delight and solace of his Teacher" (which may say more about the poor teacher than about Willet's academic gifts).[75] At the age of fourteen ("or thereabouts"), Willet was sent to the University of Cambridge, under the care of his Godfather and namesake, Andrew Perne, who was the Master of Peter-house. He soon transferred, for reasons unknown, to Christ's College, where he became acquainted with other future luminaries of the Church of England, as George Downame and William Perkins.[76]

After thirteen years at Cambridge, Andrew was given the prebendal stall at Ely upon his father's resignation, and around that time he married the daughter of King's College Provost Roger Goad.[77] Together he and his wife Jacobine had

72 Smith, "The Life and Death of Andrew Willet," sig.a2r. The uncertainty about his birth year is because Peter Smith did not give his date of birth in his biography, but noted that he was fifty-nine at the time of his death on December 4, 1621. Thus, he was born either in 1562 or in the last three weeks of the previous year. Smith's biographical preface provides the vast majority of information that we have about Willet's life. I give an overview of additional biographical material—all of which draws heavily on Smith—in a following section (I.2.3) on Willet's legacy.

73 Smith, "The Life and Death of Andrew Willet," sig.av; DeLapp, *The Reformed David(s)*, 102.

74 Smith, "The Life and Death of Andrew Willet," sig.av.

75 Smith, "The Life and Death of Andrew Willet," sig.a2v.

76 Smith, "The Life and Death of Andrew Willet," sig.a3r. On the University of Cambridge during this period, see Mark H. Curtis, *Oxford and Cambridge in Transition 1558–1642: An Essay on Changing Relations between the English Universities and English Society* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1959).

77 Peter Smith describes their union in romantic terms, writing that Willet "betook himselfe to

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eighteen children, thirteen of whom survived him, and he actually enjoyed being a father: "so children, which to many are occasions of great trouble, to him were but the subjects of his delight and recreation." Smith makes a cryptic reference to one son who fell away, perhaps with a grievous sin. Jacobine's domestic heroism enabled Andrew to engage in his study and ministry "without any the least distraction," but he made time to recreate by playing the organ and singing, playing with his children, engaging in various "delights" ("not unlawfull or uncomely"), and splitting wood.[78]

Soon after his father's death in 1598, Andrew Willet took over the parsonage of the same church in Barley that Thomas had led for twenty-seven years, and Andrew kept that position until his death.[79] While continuing to preach regularly, Willet took the Doctor of Divinity degree from Cambridge in 1601, and around this time he also served as one of the chaplains to King James's son Prince Henry.[80] Despite being one of England's best Hebraists, Willet was not selected as one of the fifty-four (or forty-seven, depending on the account) scholars appointed in 1604 to translate the King James Bible—an unexplained omission glaring enough to be mentioned in several accounts of the origins of that bible.[81] In his church and community Willet was known for his generosity, paying for the

the societie of a wife, which was worthily commended unto him" (Smith, "The Life and Death of Andrew Willet," sig.a3v).

78 Smith, "The Life and Death of Andrew Willet," sig.a3v; the account of the son who fell away is given on pp. sig.b2v-b3r. Smith notes that Willet sought to "order his house, like to a little Common-wealth: Hee had his lawes and ordinances set up in tables, directing his family in their severall offices and duties, both oeconomicall and morall: to these hee annexed some penall comminations for offenders," though except for particularly heinous cases, these punishments were "verie rarely put in execution" (p. sig.b2v); in other words, he was "the fun dad."

79 Arthur Howard Frere and Walter Howard Frere, *A Sketch of the Parochial History of Barley, Herts; Together with some account of The Life and Death of Andrew Willet, Parson there 1598–1621* (London: George Reynolds, 1890), 23, 26.

80 Smith, "The Life and Death of Andrew Willet," sig.bv; Milton, "Andrew Willet," 26. DeLapp notes that Willet was one of twenty-four chaplains to Prince Henry, making it difficult to know precisely how close their relationship might have been (DeLapp, *The Reformed David(s)*, 104n22).

81 The two most gifted English linguists left off of the translation team were Willet and Hugh Broughton. Several scholars have cited Broughton's brash personality as the likely reason for his exclusion, but Willet's absence is more baffling. Daiches suggests that it may have been connected to Willet's opposition to the Spanish Match, though this would have entailed a good deal of foresight on James's part, seeing as that controversy would not fully bloom for a decade (Daiches, *The King James Version of the Bible*, 158n16). Daiches adds that Willet was "perhaps the best textual critic of his day." Cf. also S. L. Greenslade, "English Versions of the Bible, 1525–1611," in *The Cambridge History of the Bible: The West from the Reformation to the Present Day*, ed. S. L. Greenslade (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1963), 165; Olga S. Opfell, *The King James Bible Translators* (London: McFarland, 1982), 8–9; Daniell, *The Bible in English*, 437.

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majority of the university expenses for two sons of his friends, setting up a trust for the poor of Barley and overpaying the poor for goods and services, advocating for poorer pastors, and petitioning to have a local hospital built.[82]

In February of 1618 Willet was punished with a month of house arrest (under the custody of one Dr. White) for his opposition to the proposed "Spanish Match" between Prince Charles and the Roman Catholic Spanish Infanta Maria Anna. Willet's open opposition to the union was expressed in the context of trying to persuade James's subjects to provide him with more funds so that James would not view the proposed Match as an economic necessity.[83]

A riding accident in November of 1621 led to Willet's death at the age of fifty-nine. Returning home from business in London, his horse stumbled and fell, causing Willet to break his right leg. Having been taken to a local inn, he was seen by an orthopedic surgeon ("Bone-setter"), who advised ten days of rest before continuing home. He worked and preached from his sickbed, and on the tenth day of his convalescence he awoke early, discussed the subject of death and the heavenly fellowship of the saints, and sang a hymn that he had composed and some psalms. Then, having fallen into a brief trance, he was roused for his final words—which, as Smith reports them, were: "Let me alone, I shall doe well; Lord Iesu—–." Upon his death, his body was taken back to Barley, where he was interred in the chancel of his church.[84]

4.2 Willet's Sources and Hexapla Method

Willet the man was known in his time as a "living library,"[85] and this breadth of learning is manifested in his encyclopedic use of a wide range of sources in his commentaries. Among these copious citations, Augustine, Chrysostom, and Origen predominate the Church Fathers, and Thomas Aquinas, Nicholas of

82 Smith, "The Life and Death of Andrew Willet," sig.b3r-b4v.

83 An entry in the Calendar of State Papers from March 6, 1618 indicates that "Dr. Willett [is] still in prison, for sounding people in Norfolk and Suffolk as to what they would give in Parliament, to prevent a Spanish match." The following line reports that "a Spanish monk [was] delivered over to the Sheriffs, and [is] likely to be burnt"—which rather puts Willet's own "ordeal" in perspective (Mary Anne Everett Green, ed. *Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series, of the Reign of James I. 1611–1618* [London: Longman, Brown, Green, Longmans, & Roberts, 1858], 525); see also pp. 505, 521–522. Cf. also *The Letters of John Chamberlain*, ed. N. E. McClure, vol. 2 (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1939), 140–141; Milton, *Catholic and Reformed*, 58; Burgess, *Absolute Monarchy and the Stuart Constitution, 11n36.* On the controversy around the Spanish Match, see Thomas Cogswell, "England and the Spanish Match," in *Conflict in Early Stuart England: Studies in Religion and Politics 1603–1642,* ed. Richard Cust and Ann Hughes (New York: Longman Inc., 1989), 107–133.

84 Smith, "The Life and Death of Andrew Willet," sig.c2v-c4v.

85 Joseph Alden, *Anecdotes of the Puritans* (New York: M. W. Dodd, 1849), 69.

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